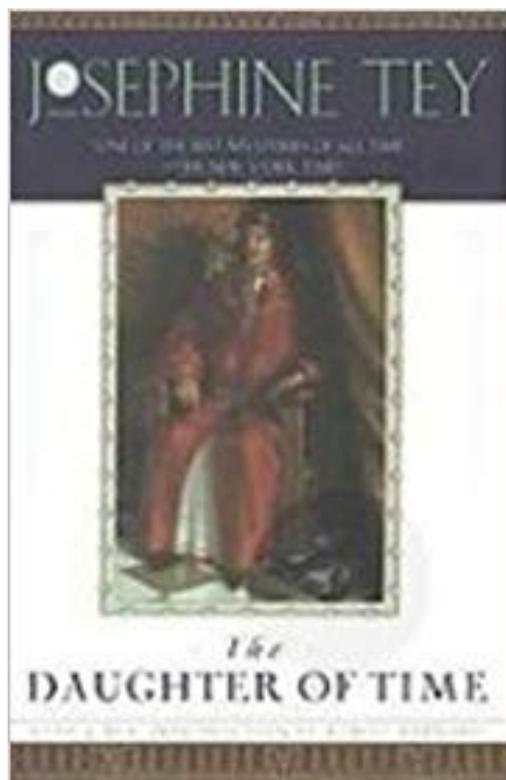


The Daughter of Time *by* Robert Barnard,Josephine Tey



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Reviews of the *The Daughter of Time* *by* Robert Barnard,Josephine Tey

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Recently, a popular mystery writer of today called this the "greatest mystery novel of all time." Ms. Tey died in 1952 at the age of 56, so right away,. we know this is a much different mystery than we're used to reading these days.

By today's standards, it starts slowly, The main character, Recuperating from an injury received during a chase after a thug, Inspector Alan Grant is flat on his back throughout the novel. Two or three other characters drop in from time to time to bring him information that he needs to solve the crime. Which, by the way, occurred in the late 15th century. In short, the book has some of the characteristics that fiction-writing advisors tell aspiring authors never to do. The inciting incident is the gift of a picture of a long dead king, Richard the Third, for example.

So it's not a book for everyone, OK? Alan Grant becomes intrigued with the portrait, and decides to find out if Richard really did murder his two young nephews. For hundreds of years history has said he did it. (Or had it done.) But are the historians right?

I've loved this novel most of my reading life. Try it. If you're an aspiring writer, you'll learn something. If you like being challenged, you'll learn something about the way history becomes fact. And if you're a general reader of mysteries, this one is a gem.

Mojar

I first read *The Daughter of Time* long ago in my callow youth. I can't recall much about that first reading experience. I don't think it made much of an impression on me. I was not well-versed in English history and knew little of the Plantagenets, the Wars of the Roses, or the Tudors except what I had gleaned from Shakespeare, so there was very little background for my understanding of what Josephine Tey was doing with this novel.

Since that long ago time, I have read dozens of books about that period of history, especially during the past couple of years when it has been something of an obsession of mine. The result is that I'm now much better equipped to follow Tey's plot and the reasoning of her protagonist Inspector Alan Grant.

When I ran across a reference to her book recently, I was intrigued and decided it was time to read it again. I'm very glad that I did.

The plot of the book is that Inspector Alan Grant has been seriously injured in a fall while chasing a miscreant and is now bedridden in the hospital with a broken leg and injuries to his spine. He must lie flat on his back. He is extremely bored.

In order to divert him, his friends have been bringing him piles of books, but he can't get interested in them. One of his friends, an actress, knowing of his fascination with faces, brings him pictures of several historical figures who have mysteries attached to them. Most of the pictures do not pique his interest, but finally one of them does capture his imagination. It is a copy of the famous portrait of Richard III.

Grant knows little about Richard III except what he remembers from Shakespeare which is, basically, that he killed his two nephews, the "Princes in the Tower," and that he died on Bosworth Field calling for a horse, but, as a student of faces and one whose career depends on being able to read faces, he begins to doubt, while studying the portrait of Richard, that this man was a murderer. He determines to conduct an investigation, four hundred years after the fact, to determine the accuracy of the charges against the man.

His actress friend is delighted to have found something that will occupy Grant's mind and distract him from his predicament. What he needs is someone to do research for him and she happens to know just the person, a young American friend of hers who has an interest in history. Soon he is introduced to Brent Carradine and the two form an alliance and a working partnership in search of the truth.

The two pore over history books and historical accounts of events of the late 15th century, but they soon discover that the most famous accounts of the period - that of Sir Thomas More, for example - were not contemporaneous but were actually written later, during the Tudor period. Since the Tudors were mortal enemies of Richard, can their accounts really be trusted? Grant, the

consummate detective, doesn't think so.

At length, the two investigators find that none of the reports that were actually written during the time of Richard's life refer to the death of the two princes and that there is evidence that the mother of the two remained in a friendly relationship with Richard and that her daughters continued to attend events at his court. None of that seems to be the action of a mother or a family who considered Richard to be the murderer of their sons and brothers. Grant and Carradine come to the conclusion that the princes were, in fact, still alive in the Tower throughout Richard's reign.

So, what happened to them? Were they killed, and, if so, who killed them?

Grant decides to follow the clues, as he would in any murder investigation, to try to uncover the culprit. The first question he asks is, who stood to gain from the princes' death?

It wouldn't have been Richard, since after his brother Edward IV's death, Parliament had declared his children with Elizabeth Woodville as illegitimate because there had been an earlier, undissolved marriage with another woman. But there were other children, those of his brother George, who stood ahead of Richard in line to become king, and yet those children continued to live and thrive.

After Richard's death, Henry VII, the first of the Tudors, rescinded all of that and made the Woodville children legitimate again because he wished to marry the oldest of them, the young Elizabeth. In short order, he also sent the children's mother (his mother-in-law) to a convent to live out her days. He also began to systematically rid the government and the aristocracy of the various Woodville relatives who had permeated it during the Yorkist reigns. No mention is made of the princes.

Grant forms the theory that it was Henry who caused the princes to be killed since, by the order of succession, the older one would have been legitimately seen as king and would have provided a rallying point for his enemies. He sent the princes' mother to a convent so that she would be out of the way and have no means of protesting. He then purged other members of the extensive family.

Tey, through Grant, lays out a very plausible case for her theory. She was not the only one who believed Richard innocent. Throughout the more than 450 years since Richard lived and died, there have been loyal groups in Britain who have continued to believe that he had been falsely maligned and to work to rehabilitate his reputation. Tey's book, which was published in 1951, influenced that movement and convinced many to join it. Such has been the far-reaching influence of this unique murder mystery.

This was a work of fiction, of course, and yet it offered a fascinating journey through English history. It also gives us a study of a high-minded obsession, as well, as Grant becomes thoroughly convinced of the falsity of the charge against the accused and he is determined to prove him innocent and bring the guilty to justice. It is, after all, what he does.

Some have noted the obvious relationship between this story and Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*. Since the movie came a few years after the publication of the popular book, it is possible that Hitchcock was influenced by it. Certainly, the obsession of a wheelchair-bound James Stewart with the activities of his neighbors that he is able to view from his window is comparable to the obsession of the bedridden Grant with the idea of balancing the scales of history.

Most likely we will never know with one hundred percent certainty what happened in the Tower of London long ago, but Josephine Tey through Alan Grant at least makes a strong argument for

reasonable doubt about the guilt of Richard III and she makes us hungry to read more about that period. Yes, my obsession continues.

Sixty-four years have passed since the publication of this book, which has been voted number one among the top 100 British murder mysteries, and archaeology has added to Richard's story. A few years ago, his remains were found near Bosworth Field where he had been hastily buried after the battle. After excavation and confirmation of his identity, those remains were reburied with full honors and great ceremony at Leicester Cathedral, with the service conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury and royalty in attendance. Truth may be the daughter of time, but irony is its son.

Mustard Forgotten

This is an amazing book.

Ms Tey has created Scotland Yard Inspector Grant. He has been injured and is in bed, flat on his back in a hospital.

He has named his two nurses The Midget and The Amazon. He has memorized the cracks on the ceiling of his room. In short, he is bored.

His good friend, Marta, brings him a group of pictures, among the pictures is a picture of Richard III. Immediately, Grant wants to investigate. That is his nature. He looks at the face and finds it difficult to believe this man could have murdered two little boys.

Marta sends Grant a "wooly lamb". The wooly lamb is Brent Carradine, a young American man who is doing research at the British Museum. Brent is just the person to become the searcher on Grant's behalf. Both men have huge curiosity for facts and research. Each of them come to the facts from different areas. Between the two of them they can figure out nearly anything.

This book was amazing for me.

It is a mystery, it is history, it is a description of two men who are compulsive about finding answers to questions. Both of them want solutions even if the question is over 500 years old.

This is the first book I have read by Ms Tey, and it will not be the last.

She has created a story which introduces the reader to British history in such a manner that the people from centuries ago are very real people. We see them as human beings living lives that would create history. We see motivations and personalities and people who are not necessarily very nice.

But, I guess power does not necessarily come with nice attached.

When all is said and done, it is evident that Henry VII was a sneak and Richard III has been accused of crimes that were against his very nature.

I will look at history with a jaundiced eye and doubt will be my middle name.

If you are looking for a book that is filled with amazing information and a mystery that is as fresh and new as anything that happened in the last week.

Thank you Ms Tey, for being such a really amazing author.

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