



Elizabeth of Bohemia: A Novel about Elizabeth Stuart, the Winter Queen

David Elias

ECW Press (Jun 4, 2019)

Softcover \$16.95 (360pp)

978-1-77041-463-1

David Elias's *Elizabeth of Bohemia* brings Elizabeth Stuart, the daughter of England's King James I, to life. Elizabeth was married at age sixteen to Prince Frederick of the Palatinate. Her intelligence, candor, and strong will illuminate *Elizabeth of Bohemia*, wherein she becomes the short-reigned Winter Queen and endures more tragedy than triumph.

The novel follows Elizabeth from her teenage union to Prince Frederick in 1613 to her final years as a widow in England following the Restoration. Though Elizabeth's marriage is a strategic alliance arranged by her father, Prince Frederick is devoted to his new bride and to assuring her happiness at Heidelberg Castle, his ancestral home.

Elizabeth tries to return Frederick's love, but a lingering remoteness keeps her from experiencing great passion. She uses her influence to make Frederick as powerful as possible, and throughout the years she gives birth to thirteen children. The strain of these pregnancies is evident as Elizabeth notes that she spends decades "incubating progeny," swollen and "waddling about" while preparing for the next ordeal of labor.

Lively and engrossing, *Elizabeth of Bohemia* includes Sir Walter Raleigh, William Shakespeare, and Rene Descartes among its royal characters. The novel is also shadowed by sadness, as Elizabeth suffers the too-early deaths of her brother Prince Henry, her husband, and many of her children.

Despite her beauty and sharp mind, Elizabeth is limited by regal obligations and her gender, and her inner conflicts are well defined. Even as a jewel-encrusted crown is placed upon her head at coronation, she feels no thrill or awe but instead longs to tear off its painful weight with irritable defiance and "dash it to the marble floor."

Rich with historical detail and political intrigue, *Elizabeth of Bohemia* is a complex portrait of a reluctant yet captivating queen.

MEG NOLA (May/June 2019)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.