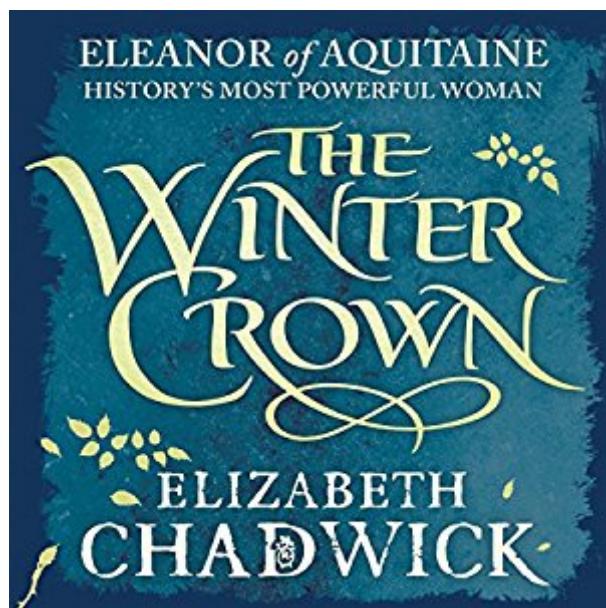


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The Winter Crown: Eleanor Of Aquitaine Trilogy, Book 2



Synopsis

It is the winter of 1154 and Eleanor, Queen of England, is biding her time. While her husband King Henry II battles for land across the channel, Eleanor fulfils her duty as acting ruler and bearer of royal children. But she wants to be more than this - if only Henry would let her. Instead, Henry belittles and excludes her, falling for a young mistress and leaving Eleanor side-lined and angry. And as her sons become young men, frustrated at Henry's hoarding of power, Eleanor is forced into a rebellion of devastating consequences. She knows how much Henry needs her, but does Henry know himself? Overflowing with scandal, politics, sex, triumphs, and tragedies, *The Winter Crown* is the much-awaited new novel in this trilogy and a rich, compelling story in its own right.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

After having read the *Summer Queen*, I knew I would have a strong woman to learn about. But in the *Winter Queen*, Eleanor comes forward as not only strong, but occasionally ruthless. She has her agenda, and neither husband, brother, or a reigning King is going to prevent her from putting her son on the throne. In a way she reminds me of Margaret Beaufort. She has evolved from the *Summer Queen*, and sometimes in questionable ways. However, this book reads easily, and keeps you turning pages, or swiping as fast as you can. It was nice to read of someone from another period as so many rest with the Tudor period.

This is the second book in Chadwick's series about Eleanor of Aquitaine. I found it somewhat darker than the first book (*The Summer Queen*), but it was still a page turner for me. In this book, we see

her husband King Henry II as a "control freak" who treats Alienor, aka Eleanor, as a brood mare and his children as pawns in his grab for power and land. He treats others as pawns too, including Thomas Becket. However, Alienor is not innocent in this story. She too plots and connives. She is shown as a strong woman in parts of the book, but she does not have the power that Henry has. In fact, she doesn't have the power that many of the other men have. The little power that she has comes from her scheming and manipulating as well as the alliances that she makes. I look forward to reading the third book in this series which should be published in a few months.

Like all of Elizabeth Chadwick's books, it's pretty much a masterpiece. This one was not my favorite, though, probably because of the subject matter. Not a happy time in the life of Eleanor of Aquitaine. The characters are well drawn, however, and the book paves the way for the third part of the trilogy. Henry is a character you will remember. Her children are also growing up into memorable characters. Eleanor experienced a difficult life. Chadwick makes this very clear. I had to order this book from Britain, since it is not yet available in the U.S. It was worth the \$20+ price, but do not expect a romantic bed of roses. Far from that, this book lays the groundwork for Eleanor's twelve years of imprisonment in middle age.

Winter Crown continues from Summer Queen and is every bit as good. Elizabeth Chadwick brings 12th century England/France to brilliant vibrant life. I could hardly put it down. All the facts are there but she enriches them with a vision of what life was like and how Aileanor and Henry vied with each other to raise their children in the best way possible, failing miserably. Henry, having fought so hard to gain his kingdom and keep it, was incapable of handing it over to his sons and trusting them to do it competently. I believe he instigated Thomas Beckett's death, however much he insists he didn't do it on purpose, he was too slick to make a mistake like that. Aileanor is one of my true heroines in history. An amazing woman who fought for what she believed in and always capable of acting in a pragmatic manner, even though her emotions were involved. A super book for anyone interested in this time period which truly shaped the next 4 centuries in England and France.

Alienor's story continues, and continues to be fascinating. She comes alive in the pages. Even already knowing most of her history, I was pulled into her story. The first book in the series pretty much ended at the end of her time as Queen of France, and this one covers the years of getting to know her new husband (and bearing him 5 sons and 3 daughters). Elizabeth Chadwick is a wonderful writer, able to be accurate with the history while remaining totally readable and

engrossing. Read the series! other long biographies of Eleanor have tended to drag during some parts of her life. This one doesn't.

I really liked this book. While this is historical fiction, I feel the author stayed close to the historical facts in terms of people and events surrounding Eleanor and Henry. Her books always pique my curiosity and I find myself researching further to satisfy my interest. I was happy to re-visit William Marshall in this book, as I was introduced to him in The Greatest Knight and The Scarlet Lion, and I'm a fan! The only reason I didn't give this book five stars was the constant "lip curling". I was quite distracted by that repetitive description, which I find even more disturbing than nostril flaring. I'm looking forward to reading the final book in the series. I would recommend this book to anyone who is fascinated by medieval history.

I love the Elizabeth Chadwick books better than Philippa Gregory's partially because I like the people better and the time period as well. Eleanor of Aquitaine has fascinated me since I was a child. It is nice reading about her and feeling her happiness and pain. She appears in other Chadwick books and I find it interesting that even though this is a more in depth look at her life it is still in sync with the other books she has written which shows that she studies well and uses reference books that help her stay on course. This book is the 2nd in a trilogy about Eleanor's life and it is full of the political, emotional and physical struggles that Eleanor's life embodied during this time in her life. I really am looking forward to the next in the story.

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