



Elizabeth & Leicester: Power, Passion, Politics

Sarah Gristwood

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A gripping account of one of history's most fascinating of alliances—the love affair between Queen Elizabeth I and her political advisor and confidant, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

No one knows quite when and where their relationship began — though Leicester once said he'd known Elizabeth since she was eight years old. They shared an important commonality of experience — both with a parent dead on the headsman's block, both imprisoned in the Tower just yards away.

Within days of the death of her sister, Mary, he was at her side and within months, openly spoken of as her lover, even her future husband. Her relationship with her “bonnie sweet Robin” was one of the most important in the life of Elizabeth. For thirty years he loved her, advised her, understood her, sat by her bed in sickness, and represented her on state occasions. Yet, much of the fascination in their relationship comes from what is not on display: the sudden death — some said murder — of Leicester's wife, which damaged his reputation irretrievably; and Elizabeth's persistent refusal for ever afterwards to marry anybody at all.

Not a conventional biography, **Elizabeth & Leicester** is, rather, an intimate portrait of an affair between two people at a crucial moment in history.

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