



The Princeling

Cynthia Harrod-Eagles

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1558 - Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots

Protestantism is sweeping the land and threatens the position of the Catholic Morlands, so they must seek new spheres of influence. John, the heir, rides north to the untamed Borderlands to wed the daughter of Black Will Percy, Northumberland cattle lord. But he finds he must first prove himself, and win her heart through blood and battle. John's gentle sister Lettice is given in marriage to the ruthless Scottish baron, Lord Robert Hamilton, and in the treacherous court of Mary, Queen of Scots, she learns the fierce lessons of survival.

The Princeling Details

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From Reader Review The Princeling for online ebook

Jane Menard says

John, the Morland's gentle oldest son, journeys north to marry a war lord's daughter. The arranged marriage turns out to be a love match. The book is the description of John's adventure - by traveling north from modern 16th Century England he journeys back into the dark ages. The description of the hardships and beauty of ancient borderlands and the wild princess/soldier he marries are wonderful. I wish I could read other books describing such a place.

Marie Z. Johansen says

This is the third book in the Morland Dynasty series that I have read - and I have to admit that I am still smitten with both the series and with the writing style of Ms. Harrod-Eagles

You can find my reviews of the first two books in the series "The Founding" and "The Dark Rose" on my book blog at <http://booksbythewillowtree.blogspot.com>.

"The Princeling" takes place during the reign of Elizabeth I when the tensions between Protestants and Catholics (the Morland clan) are at their peak. The religious tension of the times does not escape the Morland family where some members have come to embrace the 'new' religion while other family members cling to the faith of their forbears.

Ms. Harrod-Eagles keeps the sub-plots intricately and adeptly woven and the fabric of the lives of the Morlands is revealed - replete with a real 'feel' for what life would have been like during this period of spiritual tumult. There are many characters in this book and their lives, through births and deaths, are strongly interwoven - but I did not find it all difficult to follow each family member as they moved through their lives and affected the lives of their family. Some chose to leave the family whilst others remained. One son, William, leaves to pursue a career as an actor in the seedier parts of London. Another son, John, who is the Morland heir, heads North to the Borderlands where he meets and marries Mary, the bold, challenging daughter of cattle lord 'Black' Will Percy. One of the Morland sisters, Lettice - the gentle one of the clan- is married to a pitiless Scots Baron, Lord Hamilton ,who life revolves around the treachery within the Court of Mary, Queen of Scots.

Each time I finish a book in this series I am ready to read the next one. In fact I think it would be best if I was, indeed, able to have the whole series on hand - ready to read one after the other. I don't believe that I would become bored with the reading and I know that I could maintain the relationship continuity more easily if I had multiple volumes ready to read on my bedside table. Sourcebooks has done a wonderful job in re-releasing this excellent series. Better covers, nice paper and a good font choice all make the reading even easier. You can see the entire series-to-be on Cynthia Harrod Eagle's website along with more information about the Morland lands and Yahoo discussion group.

I am, as you can tell, a real fan of this excellent series. Whilst the characters may be fictitious the history and the 'feel' of these books are based on real happenings, buildings and history, all of which Ms. Harrod-Eagles explains quite well on her website. She also has a handy page that places the volumes of the series in order. I am ready for the next couple of books "The Oak Apple" and "The Black Pearl". Obviously, I highly recommend this series. It's highly addictive!

Amy Bruno says

In *The Princeling*, book three in the Morland Dynasty series, introduces readers to a new generation of Morlands. Paul's grandson, also named Paul and his wife Elizabeth are now the owners of Morland Place and an aging, yet still feisty Nanette is holding strong as the family matriarch.

England is now ruled by the Protestant Elizabeth I and the hot button topics of the day are what the new Queen will do regarding the topic of religion, her choice of husband and how she is going to handle the antics of her cousin Mary Queen of Scots. Readers follow the Morlands' adventures at the court of Elizabeth I, to Scotland and the court of Mary Queen of Scots, the wilds of Northumberland and of course, home at Morland Place. As the country's religious discord heightens it creates an inner conflict of the Catholic and Protestant factions in the Morland family.

Having been really disappointed in book two, *The Dark Rose*, I believe the series redeemed itself with *The Princeling*. I really enjoyed this generation of Morlands and the book held my attention from start to finish. One thing about this series is to never get too attached to a member of the Morland family because Eagles has no qualms about killing them off!

Next up in the series is *The Oak Apple*, which takes place during the time of Charles I and the English Civil War. There is no release date yet for the Sourcebooks re-issue.

Ana T. says

The third book in the Morland saga brings back Nanette, Paul and their respective families. Their children are now adults and marriages have to be arranged to consolidate their wealth and power during Queen Elizabeth's reign. Although Nanette and Paul still yield considerable power in the Morland house hold, despite Nanette being mostly away at court, this is the time that sees the generation of Jan, John, Lettice and their siblings and cousins reach adulthood and while some obey the patriarch's wishes, others decide to follow their own path. The breach between the generations goes further as the older still follow the old religion and the young ones adopts the new one.

The historical background brings forth Queen Elizabeth's most important political events, the reign and fall of Queen Mary of Scotland and the problems in the border. While I did not feel that this time the characters were in the middle of the political intrigue, they are used to tell us those realities. Jan, Nanette's adoptive son, finally finds the truth about his parentage and that seems to widen the gulf between him and his mother. I have to say that I thought it interesting that Harrod-Eagles should have included in her story Mary Seymour, the daughter of Katherine Parr, that here becomes Jan's wife, and of which nothing is known after her second birthday.

While Jan and his wife want to fight to become masters of Morland Place, John is sent away to marry Mary Percy. I quite liked this Mary, totally unlike the other female Morlands, she is a warrior and a leader that

fascinates John who feels he must woo her carefully and quite differently from what he was used to. Through Lettice we see the events in the Scottish court, a dangerous place where the lords had to change allegiance each time someone controlled the queen. I can't say I much liked Lettice's husband, he seemed the consummate political courtier who sacrificed everything for his political goal. Through others of the young generation we get to know the theater world or Sir Francis Drake's expedition.

While I did enjoy the historical background I think it was the characters that stood out for me in this story. There are moments of doubt, fear, pain but also happiness. Some feelings are timeless and it is easy to feel with these characters. It did strike me, reading this story, that nowadays we almost take for granted that we will have long lives or at least good health care. For these Morlands death was something that came often and fast taking away their loved ones.

Grade: 4/5

Aileen Chase says

Love the Morland Dynasty series but found this so emotionally draining that I've taken a two year hiatus. Think I'm ready to dive back in now.

Jennifer says

Ah, the continuing saga of the Morland family, where the women rule the men and the family is most successful for it. In this installment, we revisit Nan from Book 2, The Dark Rose. Back then, Nan was a Lady in Waiting to her dear friend Anne Boleyn. Now, Nan serves the woman she once held as a baby, Queen Elizabeth I. We only get small glimpses of the Tudor court, and equally small exchanges between the Queen and Nan. What is important, is how dear to the Queen Nan is. Elizabeth didn't have many close friends, and Nan is one of lucky few. The Queen adores Nan, therefore when Morlands adhere to their old Catholic faith, albeit secretly, the Queen looks the other way. As long as the Morlands are not openly brazen in their faith, they will escape sanctions. This is a testament to Nan, and truly marks her as the matriarch for the Morland dynasty during this period.

What I enjoyed the most about this book, besides the mostly strong female characters, was how the story checks in on each of the Morland family members. We may never get extensive character development, but to see how each person weathers their circumstances, and what happens to them in the end, is enough for me. There are way too many members of this family to have extensive character development, and I think the story threads that CHE writes about each member gives the reader a good glimpse of the people these Morlands turn out to be. It is difficult at times to keep names and relationships straight in one's head, but by checking the family tree, and going with the flow allowed me to enjoy the story.

I also enjoyed the various story threads with this generation: the branching out of the Morland dynasty's relations to the Borderlands, hence the title The Princeling; the adventurous travels of one member who joined Francis Drake on his travels (wonder if this comes up again in later books); the marriages of the later generations and such. I fancy this ongoing story about the Morland dynasty, because it is more about the

family and their journeys through life, with the actual historical events in the background, not as the main focus. Overall this book was an enjoyable read and much better than the last one. I look forward to the next chapter in the Morland family history.

Rhona says

Rushing out to find the rest of this series!

Jane Irish Nelson says

When Queen Mary Tudor dies and Elizabeth comes to the throne, much of the country rejoices. Except for the die-hard "Pope-Catholics" who worry about the effect this will have on their religion. Elizabeth returns to her father's English version of Catholicism, but as time passes more and more protestant reforms are made. Naturally this affects the Morland family of Yorkshire; while most of the family are Catholics of one kind or the other, one branch is becoming more and more protestant. As the story continues, the reader experiences how the various major events of Elizabeth's long reign affect the Morland family. As the new generation grows up, the family becomes scattered for a time. But, like the phoenix of legend, the family eventually experiences a rebirth. This is a fascinating tale, set during a very critical time in history. The characterizations and the plotting are believable, and the reader really cares what happens to the entire family. Highly recommended.

Bryn (Plus Others) says

[I felt like the characterisation suffered a little -- or rather, Harrod-Eagles d

Don Heiman says

Cynthia Harrod Eagles wrote "The Princeling" which was first published in 1981. The book is volume 3 in Eagles' 31 volume Morland Dynasty series. This historic fiction chronicles the relationships among the Catholic side of King Henry 8th's lineage in the middle to late 16th century. I enjoyed reading about the inner workings of the Elizabethan era and the unrelenting forces of nature, religious thought, and economics that occurred a century before the English Enlightenment period.

Emma Griffiths says

The Princeling is the third book in this series by Cynthia Harrod-Eagles. This book continues to follow the Morlands in the era of Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots. As each book delves further into the Morland dynasty, It also follows the real lives of the aristocracy in the 1500s. There is love, death, lust and hatred aplenty and that is just between members of the family. This story has a lot of characters from the previous

book, and introduces new characters within the family and in history. In the background there is still controversy between the Protestants and Catholics that tears families and England and Scotland apart. There is plenty of political intrigue between the factions of Queen Mary and Elizabeth I. I am thoroughly enjoying the series and can't wait to continue with it.

Heidi says

So, I was wrong on the identity of "The Princeling". Instead of the Queen, it's John Morland's intended.

There seems to have been a definite improvement in the character of Morland heirs. At least for the moment.

On looking at the next book in the series (The Oak Apple), I found that it had skipped James I and VI entirely, and I found this to be quite a shock. But in thinking about it, there's a reasonable gap between The Dark Rose and The Princeling as well. Long enough, at least, for Nanette to spirit Mary Seymour away in really interesting use of the ambiguity of history.

The Princeling opens with Nanette and James Chapham at home with Jan, their own boy Alexander, and Mary Seymour. One probably has to be a devotee of Tudor history, and particularly of Henry VIII's final wife, Katherine Parr, to realise what a shock that was for me to read. 'But Mary Seymour died!' I said to myself - and dashed off to do some cursory internet research.

Mary Seymour, the daughter of Katherine Parr and Thomas Seymour, almost certainly did die, probably around age two. But the point is, there's no absolute proof of her death, just her disappearance from the historical record at about age two. Her mother died giving birth to her, and her father died - executed for treason against Edward VI - less than a year later.

By breaking the narrative for ten years between the end of The Dark Rose and the beginning of The Princeling Harrod-Eagles forgoes what might have been an interesting tale of bringing Mary Seymour to the Mill House and Morland, but she also avoids the tangle of explaining exactly how that happened. By the time The Princeling opens, Mary is well past the age where there is no more mention of her in the historical record, and so she is able to fall in love with John Morland, marry Jan Chapham, and go entirely un-merrily through the rest of her life. (I do wish she had been a bit pleasanter a character, but her resentment regarding the loss of her fortune rang entirely reasonable to me.)

Also on the topic of the ambiguity of history - I was worried for a time that Will was going to turn out to be the "real author" of Shakespeare's plays. My timeframe may have been a little wonky there, but I'm **VERY** glad that Harrod-Eagles didn't go in that direction.

But still, a ten year break in narrative is not that much. Nanette got a book and a half, after all (for which I'm pleased, even crochety and old, I still loved Nanette.) Going into The Oak Apple (arrived on hold at the library today) we're about to skip an entire reign and thirty years, going straight to Charles I. I realise that the series began with the intention of covering "great moments" in British history rather than the whole of it, but why do so few writers of historical fiction cover the succession of James I? (Plaidy skipped the accession of James I as well, focusing instead on the story of Robert Carr and Frances Howard.)

Kissmekate says

Mit der Thronbesteigung Elizabeths I. bricht für England eine neue Ära an. Eine schwierige Zeit für Katholiken wie die Morlands, denn die neue Königin ist der neuen, protestantischen Glaubensrichtung zugetan und lässt dies die Katholiken im Land unmissverständlich spüren.

Während die ältere Generation der Morlands wie etwa Nanette, die einst als Hofdame von Anne Boleyn die kleine Prinzessin Elizabeth auf dem Arm hatte, sich strikt weigern, von ihrer religiösen Überzeugung abzuweichen, sehen die Jüngeren das Ganze lockerer, zumal die Repressalien gegen Katholiken immer heftiger werden. So ist nicht nur das Land in zwei Lager gespalten, sondern auch Konfliktpotential innerhalb der Familie vorhanden.

John, der Erbe der Morlands, soll in diesen Zeiten eine politisch kluge Ehe mit der Tochter eines Adeligen an der schottischen Grenze eingehen und stellt fest, dass es sich bei Mary Percy um eine sehr ungewöhnliche junge Frau handelt und dass dort im Norden Englands nicht nur buchstäblich ein rauherer Wind weht, als er das von zu Hause gewohnt ist.

Seine Schwester Lettice wird derweil mit einem schottischen Baron vermählt, Lord Robert Hamilton, um den sich wüste Gerüchte ranken. Nicht nur die Ehe verläuft stürmisch, sondern auch die Geschehnisse am Hof der Stuarts in Schottland nehmen einen dramatischen Verlauf, als der Streit um die Rechtmäßigkeit Elizabeths als Thronfolgerin eskaliert.

Die Endlosserie um die Morlands ist anschaulicher Geschichtsunterricht vom Feinsten. Anhand der weit verzweigten Großfamilie bringt Cynthia Harrod-Eagles ihrer Leserschaft hier die Geschehnisse unter der legendären Elizabeth I. nahe und webt gleichzeitig aus vielen verschiedenen Fäden ein anschauliches Bild vom Leben in jener Zeit, im Herrenhaus der Morlands, am englischen und am schottischen Hofe, im rauen Northumberland und in den Schenken Londons.

Charaktere gibt es in Hülle und Fülle, und sie sind genau das - Charakterköpfe mit deutlichen Stärken und Schwächen, knapp und treffend geschildert, an deren Schicksalen man gespannt und interessiert teilhat, ob man sie nun mag oder nicht. Schön auch, dass man einige alte Bekannte aus dem Vorgängerband wiedertrifft und ihren Weg ein Stück weiter verfolgen darf.

Die politischen Zusammenhänge und die Intrigen und Machtkämpfe am Hof werden nahtlos in die Handlung eingebunden und mit gerade so viel Detail versehen, dass verständlich wird, was warum passiert und der Hintergrund der Entwicklungen, die unsere Protagonisten betreffen, deutlich wird.

Zum Ende hin wirkt die Erzählung etwas gerafft, da hätte die Autorin ihren Figuren gerne noch etwas mehr Raum geben können. Davon abgesehen ist dieser historische Roman, prallvoll mit Ereignissen und lebensechten Figuren, wieder eine Geschichtsstunde der sehr gelungenen Art, die ich sehr gerne weiterempfehle (und mal wieder bedaure, dass die Serie nie ins Deutsche übersetzt wurde).

Lolly's Library says

4.5 stars

I have to say, I am enraptured by this series; I must be as I don't use the word *enraptured* very often. Actually, I think this is the first time I've ever used that word. Huh. Weird. Anyway, with these books I may not always agree with the historical viewpoint Harrod-Eagles presents (at least not initially, not until I do further research and some critical thinking and realize, duh, I should've come to these conclusions myself years ago, knowing what I know about how history is written. But I digress). What was I saying? Oh, yes, I might not always agree with her viewpoint, but she involves me in these characters' lives to the point where I feel the same sort of disappointment when the younger generations fall away from Morland traditions, when they move away, marry poorly, choose different destinies than what their parents and grandparents had in mind for them. I become so wrapped up in the story that I feel the same sense of loss when the world the previous generations knew falls away and becomes lost; these on-paper people become real to me so that I cry when they lose babies, feel happy when they fall in love, become angry when they make stupid decisions and hurt their loved ones. Which is exactly why I gobble each book up because I just can't get enough.

This book is set during the reign of Elizabeth I, with a lot of focus on her struggles with Mary of Scotland and the Catholic threat to her throne. As with the previous two books, though, the history is not the main focus – it's simply a ribbon floating through the plot, a line to which stories can be tied, even used to propel the action or as a setting, but which always remains firmly in the background. And that might seem strange to say when the storylines of certain characters, Nanette and William, mainly, actually focus on their time at Court serving Queen Elizabeth and includes conversations between, say, Nanette and the Queen. But those scenes are actually in service to the story of the Morlands, to the drama revolving around that family and the problems encountered by them at any particular time. And the Morlands at the center of this book are Nanette Morland, the young girl embroiled in the last book's romantic drama, now middle-aged and reminiscent of her ancestor, Eleanor Courtenay; John Morland, the son and heir of Paul Morland III; and Jan Chapham, Nanette's adopted son whose connection to the Morland blood and name leads to friction later on. Of course, there are quite a lot of other assorted Morlands to the story, as well as Butts, the other family inextricably tied to the family, but those are the three main satellites around whom the other Morland tales revolve. I will admit, toward the end of the book, the many names can get a bit overwhelming especially of the younger - second and third - generaions, to the point where every few pages or so I was flipping back to the family tree printed at the front of the book, for which I was extremely grateful.

The only issue I take with the book is the subplot involving the younger son of Paul III, William Morland. As a young boy he's called an angel-child by his governess for his fair looks, his gentle, biddable nature, and his pure treble voice. It's that voice that initially propels his story, taking him to a life in the church and thence to Court, where his looks dazzle all. When we finally meet William properly, hear his thoughts and pick up the thread of his story, he's at Court and a troupe of actors has blown in; William, who has always felt something was missing from his life, is completely bewitched by these men, especially their leader, Jack Fallow. Suddenly something clicks and, close to a personal epiphany, William runs off with this acting troupe; after searching for him, his family decides he must be dead and so writes him off as such. Except for Nanette. She sends her personal servant out as a private investigator and he eventually tracks William down in a tavern, dressed, made up, and behaving as a woman. And quite obviously the lover of Jack Fallow. Eventually, disillusioned with Jack (who by now has a new lover) and the life of an actor, William gets a job in a tavern, marries the daughter of the owner, has children, remarries when his wife dies in childbirth, marries again when his second wife dies in childbirth, leaves the tavern and returns to the acting troupe, all in a mental fugue as he tries to understand what his life's purpose is. It's only when he returns home that he has that ultimate epiphany and achieves his goal. My issue with all of this is, what is William? Initially I thought him to be Harrod-Eagles first gay character; I mean, it only took three books to get one, which seems rather unreal even taking into account the lowered life expectancy, famine, disease, infant mortality, and other methods of weeding out the population in medieval England. But then William marries and has kids without ever acknowledging his earlier homosexual behavior with Jack. It just seems like something of a cop-out.

There were many effeminate young men who played women's roles on the Elizabethan stage who were raging heterosexuals; there were many who were also homo- and bisexual. Was gay life during that era dangerous? You bet your sweet bippy! But keeping William gay all the way through would've felt more authentic than the wishy-washy, everything-and-the-kitchen-sink manner in which he was portrayed. And if it was simply about William's need to find his *raison d'être*, couldn't that have been done without him dabbling as a gay man? I don't know, it just made me scratch my head.

Other than that one little blip with William, I ate this book up, to the point where I had to slow myself down until I could finish when I was able to afford the next couple of books in the series. Thank you, eBay!

Lindsey Sparks says

I really like this sprawling family epic and it's wonderful historical fiction that blends in just the right amount of real-life people and events. The one thing I HATED about this book though was that a character fell in love with her rapist. I know it's hard with historical novels not to put our modern views on them and it was not uncommon for a woman to have to marry her rapist. Then she's forced to make the best of it. But in this story the character really seemed to fall in love and forgive him pretty easily, even when she thinks he may have killed his first two wives. This was a minor story within the whole and I might have given up if it had been one of the main characters. He is an awful person and the reader clearly isn't supposed to like him, so that also helped some. I've read a few romance novels that use this scenario and then the reader is supposed to root for the couple or think he's redeemed himself and this is not that. But it was still troubling. I did like seeing Nanette again and having a lot of the book from her perspective and seeing how the actions of the previous generation impacted the generation that grows up in this book. I already have the next three books so I will continue on for now but am a little worried these will start to get formulaic like with the story of the prodigal son returning with his family.
