

Lady Jane Grey (XXXX)

TEXT 1:

Edward VI ruled for just six years and his ambitious advisor, John Dudley, was determined to remain in power. To that end, he persuaded Edward to write his own will in 1552 as Edward's health was rapidly failing, urging him to leave the throne to his pious cousin, XXX

According to parliament and Henry VIII's will, Mary was Edward's heir – but she was Catholic, in her late thirties, and never robust. Though just fifteen at the time, XXX was known for her Protestant piety and learning; it was this religious devotion which persuaded Edward to alter the succession.

XXXX spent little time with her lords during her nine days as queen. She sent an order to the Master of the Wardrobe for twenty yards of velvet, twenty-five ells of fine Holland linen cloth, thirty-three ells of coarser material for lining; she also collected the royal jewels. She made no explicit political statements; she was her father-in-law, Dudley's puppet. He was the one who met with the council, he was the one who wanted to capture Mary Tudor; he was the one who tried to shore up their perilous situation.

When they fell from power, XXXX never protested or attempted another coup. On the 18th of July, most of her councilors had left the Tower on the pretext of visiting the French ambassador. In reality, they were planning a visit to the Imperial embassy. Once there, they assured Charles V's envoys that they had always been loyal to Mary; they had been kept prisoner by Dudley, forced to declare Jane queen. But now they were free and determined to proclaim Mary queen of England. They did so around 5 o'clock in the evening, on Thursday, the 19th of July. London erupted into a joyous celebration.

XXXX was left alone in the Tower. Lady Throckmorton, one of her ladies-in-waiting, returned to the Tower for her duties but could not find her. She asked for the queen's whereabouts and was told that XXXX was now a prisoner, detained elsewhere in the Tower. XXXX was in the deputy lieutenant's house, awaiting her fate. The indignities began. Her belongings were sorted through, all her money confiscated; within the day, she was accused of stealing valuables from the royal wardrobe. Mary was riding to London, now accepted as queen. Dudley was arrested, his entire family was taken to the Tower; as they were marched through the streets, the crowd pelted them with filth and insults. Even the Imperial envoy called it 'dreadful' and 'a strange mutation.' For Dudley's fall from power had been rapid, extraordinarily so – the nine days' progress from ruler to traitor was a confusing mix of treachery, rumor, and disgrace.

While Mary prepared for her coronation, XXXX remained in the Tower. The Trial was held two months later. Jane dressed soberly for the occasion, as befitted a proper young lady of the reformed church. She was clad all in black; she wore a black cloth gown, black cape trimmed with velvet, and a black French hood trimmed with velvet. At her girdle hung a prayer book also bound in black velvet. She held a book of prayers. The date of the execution was set for Friday 9 February 1554. Mary, who so hated executing her cousin, tried one last time to save her soul. She sent John Feckenham, dean of St Paul's, to XXXX. He was given a few days to sway XXXX to the Catholic faith. XXXX was polite. But she rebutted each of Feckenham's arguments with her own. After hours of argument, she remained Protestant. She watched by her window her husband as he was taken from Beauchamp Tower at 10 o'clock in the morning and led to the execution area on Tower Hill.

Mary did not execute XXXX because of their religious differences. Rather, she was motivated by political necessity and her own desire to marry and reinstate the Catholic church in England.

TEXT 2:

Edward VI was a devout Protestant and deeply pious, he could not leave the throne to his Catholic half-sister, Mary as he did not want Roman Catholicism restored in England. Urged on by his self-interested advisors, he removed Mary from the succession on the grounds of her illegitimacy (she was declared so by parliament in 1532.) But if he removed Mary, he also had to remove his other half-sister Elizabeth even though she was a Protestant; Elizabeth had also been declared a bastard by parliament in 1536. In his Device for the Succession, written in his own hand, Edward wrote that they were both "illegitimate and not lawfully begotten."

People realized there would be a succession crisis when XXX was quickly wed to Lord Dudley's son, Guildford whom she disliked and feared as most people did. But the duke convinced her easily because she was a devout and committed Protestant, and she didn't want Mary as queen any more than he did. XXXX was crowned queen of England in July 1553 and it was then that she realized the extent of Dudley's duplicity. He had manipulated Edward, knowing the devout Protestant king wanted the throne to go to his equally devout cousin; but, all along, Dudley simply wanted his own son crowned king. She ruled for just nine days, trapped and unhappy.

Mary Tudor claimed the throne with great popular support and immediately after her accession, she had XXXX imprisoned in the Tower of London. The former queen was well-treated but undoubtedly frightened. Her subsequent execution was a political necessity for Mary Tudor. Despite her youth, XXXX met her end with great dignity and courage. She wore the same black outfit she had worn at her trial. She carried her prayer book in her hands; she was escorted by Sir John Brydges, the lieutenant of the Tower. Her nurse, Mrs Ellen, and her attendant, Mrs Tylney, also accompanied her. They both cried but Jane was calm and composed. She had, after all, watched her scaffold being erected near the White Tower; her rooms provided an excellent view of its construction. Since she was a princess of royal blood, her execution was private. Only a small crowd had been invited.

During the reign of her Protestant cousin, Queen Elizabeth I, Jane was celebrated as a martyr to her faith and she remains one of the most famous queens of England.

Hanson, Marilee. "Lady Jane Grey – Facts, Biography, Information & Portraits" https://englishhistory.net/tudor/relative/lady-jane-grey/, February 1, 2015