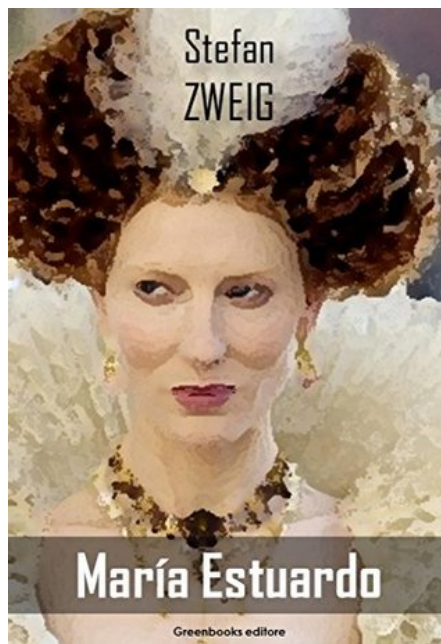




# María Estuardo

*Stefan Zweig*

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## María Estuardo Stefan Zweig

María Estuardo es un libro biográfico del escritor austríaco Stefan Zweig.

Es la historia de María I de Escocia, llamada María Estuardo, (Palacio de Linlithgow (Escocia); 8 de diciembre de 1542 – Castillo de Fotheringhay, Northamptonshire (Inglaterra); 8 de febrero de 1587), reina de Escocia desde el 14 de diciembre de 1542 hasta 24 de julio de 1567. También denominada popularmente como María, reina de los escoceses, quizás sea la más conocida de los monarcas escoceses por su tempestuosa vida y trágica muerte.

## María Estuardo Details

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# From Reader Review **María Estuardo** for online ebook

**Nicole~** says

**4.5 stars**

***No one could guess what the soul of a woman was capable of...***

- Stefan Zweig: *Mary Stuart* (1935)

Aroused by the differing opinions on this controversial queen, Stefan Zweig sought to illuminate the view of the legend, not within the typical frame of researching a historical figure, but by psychological profiling of the protagonist, giving this biography the uniqueness of a dramatic thriller. He would interpret Mary Stuart as a strong-willed person but easily misdirected by her passion and idealized romantic values, who carved out her own destiny with flawed judgement to her ill-fated end.

A political pawn from birth, Mary Stuart was used to secure Scotland's and France's alliance. The same year Mary married the dauphin, Elizabeth succeeded Mary Tudor as queen of England. With issues still at hand over Elizabeth's illegitimacy, all the Catholic world thus viewed Mary Stuart the rightful claimant to the throne of England. This put Elizabeth politically on guard, making the most powerful woman in Europe a dangerous adversary of Mary's.

Mary Stuart widow of Francis II

Zweig perceived the recently widowed Mary's first impression on returning to Scotland like stepping backward 100 years, leaving behind a great civilization rich and luxurious: the sensual, refined and open-minded culture of France, in exchange for a narrow-minded one, ravaged and plundered for years, which kept no palace that could receive her with the dignity befitting her rank. From the moment Mary set foot to Scottish soil, she was made to battle her most formidable religious foe, John Knox, who defied the zealous Catholic Queen's rule over Church. Zweig believed Mary came "*to realize that there were limits to her royal power,*" and, like a heroine from his novels, gave "*way to her bitterness of soul in a passion of tears.*"

As the country struggled through religious conflicts, rebellion and civil wars funded to undermine the throne of the Catholic Stuarts by none other than Queen Elizabeth, Mary's survival eventually came down to the war of the cousin-queens. A life or death battle took place between them and only death was able to settle the playing field. Zweig's analysis of the two monarchs uncovered the reasons why Mary lost that struggle.

Unlike her royal cousin, Mary rose to power with good fortune, unmarred by scandal, a queen since infancy, and hardly more than a child when she was anointed a second time, anticipating a second throne; whereas Elizabeth fought illegitimacy and charges of treason, barely keeping her own head from being axed while imprisoned, eventually succeeded the throne from the half-sister who first sought to annihilate her.

Not only did they differ in their rise as monarchs, but were equally different in feminine traits; their natures "*were diametrically opposed.*" Mary was lighthearted, possessed a surplus of self-assurance, lacked seriousness of mind and lived for her own self-needs; her mind was stuffed with romance and she accepted her queenly position as a God-given right.

Nature had not only excluded Elizabeth from motherhood - well, not voluntarily as she purported - but perforce that she remained a "*virgin queen.*" She could neither feel, nor think, nor act unambiguously or

naturally and quite incapable of yielding to complete self-abandonment. Elizabeth lived for her country, was a realist, contemplating her position as ruler and looking upon it as a profession. While Mary gave in to primal basic feminine instincts, Elizabeth learned from her past to have dominion and reserve over hers.

*Passion is needed in order that a woman may discover herself, in order that her character may expand to its true proportions; love and sorrow is needed for it to find its own magnitude.*

Mary innately succumbed to impulsivity and the passion of love; to be swept off her feet and swallowed up in her desires. For the sake of one moment of passionate accomplishment, she risked kingdom, power and sovereign dignity, setting a trap for herself that was planted with the conception of her husband's murder. When Zweig examined Mary's feverishly penned letter of the night of Darnley's murder, he concluded it was significant evidence of her collusion, written by a guilt-ridden person, wrestling with her conscience.

*We have a vision of black thoughts fluttering through the darkness like bats. Hatred flames up between the lines; compassion overwhelms it for a moment...it is not written alertly and clearly, but confusedly and stumblingly. It is not Mary's conscious mind that is speaking, so much as an inner self, the voice of trance and fatigue and fever- the subconsciousness with which it is so hard to get into touch, the realm of feeling that knows no shame. Very few documents have been preserved that revealed so admirably as this the hyperexcitability of one who is in the course of committing a crime.*

He exposed her hand in Darnley's murder like a forensic investigator in a psychological-noir, surmising that her motives were directed by reckless passion and foolhardiness, manipulated by the will of bullish persons - the likes of Bothwell. It is with this same folly and the belief in her infallibility as a sovereign that she later married Bothwell, defended him, maintaining that she could not separate herself from him: "*for if she did so, his child, which she bore in her womb, would be a bastard.*" Regarded by this time as lightminded, she continued to live in a 'cloud', a confirmed romanticist, unable to foresee her doom as an inevitable reality.

Conspiracy and intrigue up to the very last, Mary continued to ensnare herself in a net of her own making, while Cecil and Walsingham stood by to reel her in. Mary falls as a result of the impetuosity she imperially wore like a jeweled crown.

### Queen Elizabeth I

As for Elizabeth's part, Zweig diagnosed her as bipolar, hysterical, excessively theatrical, double-faced in nature; believing unequivocally that she fabricated her ignorance of the death warrant.

*One of the most remarkable capacities of persons of hysterical disposition is, not only their ability to be splendid liars, but to be imposed upon by their own falsehoods. For them the truth is what they want to be true, what they believe is what they wish to believe, so that their testimony may often be the most honorable of lies, and therefore the most dangerous.*

Zweig prescribes that from a political standpoint, England was right in ridding the world of Mary Stuart. Morally, however, the execution was an unjustifiable action considered in a time of peace, but more especially from one monarch by another. Although Zweig concluded that Mary Stuart was culpable of criminal actions, having never learned to act with caution or forethought, he praised her nobleness of character and called her a morally superior individual, while he condemned Elizabeth as a dissembling, political murderess. In Zweig's eyes, Mary Stuart achieved victory over Elizabeth in a spiritual sense: martyred, dying a hero's death.

We all know the historical facts surrounding Mary Stuart, the most infamous of queens; and at this point, one more biography may not yield much difference than the next, especially one as dated as this. But seldom would we find a biographer such as Zweig whose flair for dramatizing psychological behavior in his characters brought freshness to a legend.

Commendable, readable, recommended.

Read 2009

Reread June 2014

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### **Karen says**

This is an excellent example of how a biographer is influenced by his culture. It was published in 1935, pre-dating not just modern feminism but the earliest stirrings of change in the role of women during WWII. "In spite of their superlative traits these two women remained women throughout, and were unable to overcome the weaknesses inherent in their sex," he says of Elizabeth I and Mary. "If..two kings had been faced by the same circumstances, they would have come to a firmer decision, declared war, countered one threat by another, set courage against courage." He proceeds to present their history as one of romantic gallantry (Mary) versus shrewishness and indecision (Elizabeth). He excuses Mary's conduct with Bothwell as the result of passion resulting in the abandonment of free will--"enthralment," and attributes Elizabeth's conduct throughout her life to her "feminine infirmity." Regardless of your viewpoint on these two women, it's fascinating to see how this shapes the selection and interpretation of the facts.

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### **Carmo says**

*"Com seis dias rainha da Escócia, com seis anos noiva do príncipe mais poderoso da Europa, com dezassete anos rainha de França."*

Li esta e outra biografia da rainha da Escócia por uma teimosia. Não tinha nem conhecimento, nem grande interesse na mesma, contudo, acabei deslumbrada com esta mulher. Não pelo que tenha feito pelo seu país ou pelo seu povo, mas pela intensidade que pôs em tudo o que fez. Para o bem e para o mal, para o seu louvor e para a sua perdição.

Nada como as palavras de **Stefan Zweig** para ilustrarem com rigor e beleza o que foi a vida de **Maria Stuart**.

*" Em tempo verdadeiramente curto, viveu todos os contrastes com intensidade prodigiosa: enterrou dois maridos, perdeu dois reinos, passou pelo cativo, seguiu pelos sombrios atalhos do crime, e de cada vez, tornou a subir os degraus do trono e do altar, com novo orgulho. As últimas semanas, os últimos anos, viveu-os entre chamas - chamas tão altas e tão ardentes que o seu reflexo brilha através dos séculos. Mas, em seguida, o incêndio diminui, apaga-se, depois de ter devorado o melhor dela própria: o que resta é escória e cinzas, vestígio miserável dum esplendor magnífico. Tornada sombra de si mesma, Maria Stuart avança no crepúsculo do seu destino."*

Nem vinte anos de cativo, nem a ameaça de morte a vergaram ou a demoveram do seu sentido do dever e

do seu papel na História da Escócia.

*" Não falemos na possibilidade de renunciar à coroa. Estou mais pronta a morrer do que a consentir nisso, e as minhas últimas palavras serão as de uma rainha da Escócia."*

E foram! Goste-se ou não de História, a vida de **Maria Stuart** consegue ser mais empolgante que muitas histórias de ficção.

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## **Yann says**

Cet auteur a le chic pour composer des biographies à la fois très vivantes et très intéressantes. Celle ci n'échappe pas à la règle. J'ai dévoré d'une traite cet ouvrage, qui jette une lumière vive sur le destin extraordinaire de cette femme livrée aux tumultes de ce 16eme siècle violent et passionné.

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## **Pat says**

Maria Stuarda, regina a 6 giorni dalla nascita e incoronata a 9 mesi. Non ha ancora respirato la vita che, prima ancora d'essere creatura, è strumento di trattative. A 5 anni e 8 mesi viene impacchettata e spedita in Francia. Lì, a 16, sposa il Delfino Federico e un anno dopo è regina di Francia. E c'è un'altra corona, quella d'Inghilterra, posata sul capo di Elisabetta, che Maria Stuarda reclama per sé. Sono solo piccoli tasselli della vita di Maria Stuarda, vissuta in un'epoca in cui vita e morte sono decise dalle convenienze, un'epoca in cui non c'è tempo per gli scrupoli di coscienza e per salire al potere si compiono omicidi, si sparge sangue innocente, si toglie la vita al proprio padre o fratello, si stringono patti segreti e si consumano tradimenti. E al potere della terra si mescola quello "divino", ognuno coi propri capi, i propri eserciti e torme di fedeli (tutti sempre pronti a tradire a seconda del vantaggio). Maria Stuarda è donna orgogliosa, passionale, impulsiva. Vittima di tranelli e inganni, la vita segnata dalle tragiche vicende che accompagnano i suoi 6 anni di regno e i quasi 20 di prigionia in Inghilterra, dove si rifugia pensando di trovare protezione. E sarà qui, che all'età di 45 anni verrà decapitata. Nessuno si batterà per lei, non lo faranno coloro che le hanno giurato fedeltà, così come non lo farà suo figlio. Unico amico sincero e fedele fino alla morte sarà il suo cagnolino. Tanto fedele da rimanere con lei, nascosto sotto l'ampio abito, sino a che il mondo, per lei, non sarà più.

La brama di potere è una sciagura per chi ne è schiavo e per l'umanità tutta. Ieri come oggi. Basterebbe leggere, o rileggere, di tanto in tanto, le infinite pagine di storia che grondano sangue. Forse, forse, si eviterebbe qualche tragico errore.

E mentre rifletto, mi par di vedere quelle labbra che, per un quarto d'ora dopo la decapitazione, tremano convulsamente, e di udirne l'agghiacciante stridore di denti.

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## **Katerina says**

Era da un po' che avevo voglia di leggere una biografia di Maria Stuarda, personaggio che conosco solo tramite adattamenti più o meno riusciti. Non sapevo, però, quale: di biografie non me ne intendo, so solo che la Erikson non mi piace e qui pare che traducano solo lei, per cui alla fine ho scelto quella di Stefan Zweig, pubblicata nel 1940, perchè tutti sottolineavano la sua abilità non solo nel ricostruire gli eventi, ma proprio nel mettere in piedi un'analisi psicologica della sfortunata regina.

La scelta è stata più che felice: sicuramente leggerò altro di suo.

Il libro mi è piaciuto, e ad avermi fatta innamorare è stato, indubbiamente, lo stile: per quanto si senta che non è stato pubblicato ieri, Maria Stuarda è scritto benissimo. Zweig scrive in modo poetico ed evocativo, ad un livello che non credevo fosse possibile trovare nelle biografie - troppo legate alla realtà per permettere eccessivi giochi di fantasia e di parole. Invece lui è in grado di tratteggiare gli ambienti, la situazione politica, la stessa Maria, con una proprietà di linguaggio così totale che quasi ogni paragrafo meriterebbe di essere una citazione. E poi è vero quello che dicevano sulla sua ricostruzione della dimensione umana di Maria: analizzando il contesto storico, le testimonianze, i documenti, le decisioni da lei prese, Zweig riesce a dipingere una donna assolutamente credibile, forte, orgogliosa, passionale, in cui cuore e ragione sono costantemente in lotta, destinata a lasciare un'impronta indelebile nella storia.

Stefan Zweig, inoltre, fa una cosa che io apprezzo moltissimo quando si tratta di scrivere di storia: non si limita ad una sterile ricostruzione degli eventi, né si lancia in romanzzate eccessive. Lui sfrutta al massimo quanto successo, nel senso che qui siamo in una di quelle situazioni dove sembra quasi che il destino l'abbia fatto apposta a mettere l'una contro l'altra due donne tanto simili quanto diverse, in modo da avere tutti gli ingredienti pronti per una tragedia vera e propria: due regine in un mondo di uomini, sulla stessa isola. Due cugine in una situazione quasi identica, eppure l'opposto l'una dell'altra: una protestante e una cattolica; una incoronata a sei giorni e convinta del proprio diritto divino a regnare, una regina a venticinque anni e dopo averne viste di ogni.

Una sovrana dominata dalla passione, e una dal raziocinio.

Non c'è bisogno di volare chissà dove con la fantasia: ci ha pensato la realtà a creare qualcosa di narrativamente potente.

Ad ogni modo la rivalità tra Maria ed Elisabetta non è il punto focale del libro da subito: prima vediamo l'infanzia di Maria, nascosta ai suoi nemici ed infine mandata in Francia, regina di una nazione che non ha quasi mai visto. Ci rendiamo conto di quanto debba essere stato traumatico lasciare la corte francese per tornare in Scozia, un paese molto più rozzo e violento.

Ma, ahimè, i libri perfetti non esistono e questo non fa eccezione: finché la protagonista indiscussa è Maria rimane su un livello altissimo, ma quando torna in Scozia le cose cambiano - per noi e per lei.

Ci sono molti personaggi notevoli da lì in poi, su tutti il fratello James (spero esista una sua biografia perché la voglio), ma nel momento in cui entra in scena Darnley la narrazione diventa molto ridonante, e in generale le parti dedicate agli amori della regina le ho trovate ripetitive.

Il difetto più grande, però, è la scarsa stima che Zweig sembra nutrire nei confronti del genere femminile: per lui le donne non possono essere razionali, e se lo sono è un difetto.

Il ritratto che fa di Maria funziona perché era una donna che, effettivamente, ha tirato delle cantonate politiche incredibili per dare la precedenza ai sentimenti, ma Elisabetta - che era l'opposto - è presentata in una luce negativa per la semplice colpa di essere stata una sovrana migliore... cosa comunque dovuta al suo fallimento come donna.

Sul serio, ma che cavolo.

Che gli abbia dato lo stesso quattro stelline nonostante questo è la prova di quanto sia bello tutto il resto.

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## ?ntellecta says

I've read the biography of Marie Stuart written by Stefan Zweig. I am sure that I won't remember all the details of this story in the near future, but I will definitely have a lot of memories of Maria Stuart. Her great character and her personality sum up an incredible woman, who refers to this amazing literature of Stefan Zweig. This biography is based on facts not on speculations, but it still touches the reader. Especially persons with big interests in historical events should read this story and also I can definitely recommend this biography of Maria Stuart by Stefan Zweig.

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## Emina says

Zweig nije Škot, a nije ni Englez i to se vidi. Ovo je, po mom sudu, jedna dosta objektivna biografija prije svega ŽENE, a zatim kraljice, Marie Stuard. Pisana je više sa psihološkog aspekta, prožeta autorovim razmišljanjima o pobudama i postupcima ove zaista neobične historijske ličnosti. Mislim da je Marie vrlo često previše izromantizirana ili sa druge strane demonizirana ali autor je dosta uspješno izbjegao obje zamke s tim da se u tonu osjeti doza simpatije.

Stil je arhaičan ali i vrlo pitak (uzevši u obzir da je knjiga pisana 1935 godine) i pronašla sam par vrlo dobrih pasusa koji govore generalno o politici, o moći, vlasti, beskrupuloznosti, okrutnosti političkih pobjednika, odnosu velikih sila prema svojim pijun državama itd.

Vijekovima političke igre funkcionišu po istim pravilima: "sve te strane sile drage volje i spremno plaćaju prolivanje škotske krvi" - možemo samo zamijeniti "žrtvovanu" zemlju i dobiti sliku sadašnjeg globalnog društva.

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## Camille says

Les biographies romancées écrites par Zweig se dévorent à toute vitesse, et il faut bien admettre que la vie de Marie Stuart se prête particulièrement bien à ce genre littéraire, tant elle est riche d'aventures et de rebondissements tous plus rocambolesques les uns que les autres : que ce soit sa rivalité avec la reine Elizabeth I, ou bien sa trépidante vie sentimentale, tous les événements majeurs de sa vie sont une matière idéale pour un récit palpitant. A cela s'ajoutent des vers de Pierre de Ronsard écrits en l'honneur de notre héroïne – l'orthographe est d'époque ! – et qui donnent envie de se replonger dans les œuvres du poète. En revanche si je n'accorde pas à *Marie Stuart* une meilleure note, c'est parce qu'on perçoit une certaine misogynie chez son auteur à plusieurs reprises. Je ne l'avais pas remarqué dans *Marie-Antoinette*, mais ici c'est flagrant et assez agaçant. Enfin, je pense que le meilleur résumé de *Marie Stuart* que l'on puisse proposer est de Zweig lui-même : « Marie Stuart n'a rien donné à son pays de plus fécond que la légende de sa vie. »

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## Ma says

On m'avait pourtant prévenue, que Zweig était un grand biographe, que cette biographie de Marie Stuart était très bien. Mais je n'étais tout de même pas préparée à ça. Un document, une biographie, qui se doit d'être composée de faits datés, rangés, expliqués, vérifiés, prouvés et approuvés? J'espérais que ça soit digeste, au mieux. Je ne m'attendais pas à vibrer simplement (j'aurais dû me méfier, j'aime pourtant beaucoup la période et ces pays). Mais voilà, le couperet tombe (sic) : c'était chant-mé les gars! Manifaik ma chérie! Grandiose, éblouissant, tout ça tout ça.

Zweig est écrivain avant d'être historien. Sans faiblir à donner une exigence scientifique à ses écrits, il sait délivrer les faits, les interprétations, faire vivre les événements avec les qualités de l'écrivain. Quand il use d'un parallèle avec Lady Macbeth pour nous faire ressentir l'atmosphère qui règne en Ecosse autour de la mort de Darnley, on vibre autant qu'une pièce de théâtre.

Il aborde l'Histoire comme Shakespeare le faisait : des passions, des coups bas, des coups du sort, de la



grandeur humaine et beaucoup de faiblesses.

Zweig écrit aussi comme un fin psychologue - malgré quelques réflexions qui m'ont peu gênées mais qui appartiennent peut-être à son époque (l'hystérie d'Elizabeth et les "faiblesses de leur sexe" de Marie Stuart et Elizabeth Tudor). Il appuie avec intelligence ses théories, et son choix de regarder la reine d'Ecosse comme une figure passionnée. Il fait parler les preuves factuelles au-delà pour y lire la psychologie d'un personnage, fut-il aussi grand que les reines Elizabeth et Marie Stuart.

Cette biographie a été un véritable bonheur à lire, abordable même sans grandes connaissances de l'Histoire de l'Europe à cette période. Un gros coup de coeur!

(petite gloire personnelle : dévoré en moins de 48h, malgré les affres de la fatigue et du quotidien, un de mes records.)

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### **Alexandra says**

I'm half way through my second Stefan Zweig book. I don't find this kind of writing anymore. The author gives his readers the gift of time and patience so we can start to feel what it must have been like at that point in history. You become emotionally involved with the era and can better understand Zweig's characters as real people, giving you an insight we aren't normally privy to in modern writing.

Finished! Just loved it....

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### **Michael Finocchiaro says**

Stefan Zweig was an excellent biographer. This deep look into the controversial and tragic life of Marie, Queen of Scots is unforgettable for its detail and the insights into the power games that sealed her fate. It is written in an extremely readable tone and is exciting and at times breathtaking. Definitely a must if you wish to understand this turbulent period of England and Scotland's history.

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### **Christian Martel says**

Stefan Zweig is one of the best author of biographies that I have had the chance to read. His almost read like a novel, which in this case is facilitated by the novel-like life of its subject, Mary Stewart, one of history's most fascinating monarch.

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### **FeReSHte says**

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## Laura says

The best biography on Mary Stuart's life, no doubt about it.

*Le mystère qui entoure la vie de Marie Stuart a été l'objet de représentations et d'interprétations aussi contradictoires que fréquentes: il n'existe peut-être pas d'autre femme qui a été peinte sous des traits aussi différents, tantôt comme une martyre, tantôt comme une folle intrigante, ou bien encore comme une sainte.*

With an objective narrative, the author describes without passion, her first marriage with the French king Francis II, the murder of her first husband, Lord Darnley as well as her love affair with Lord Bothwell.

Her long period of captivity is also described with plenty of details as well as the case of the casket letters.

Further readings and references may be found in the following books:

Mary Stuart: A Tragedy by Friedrich Schiller - available at Project Gutenberg.

The Abbot by Walter Scott - available at Project Gutenberg.

Mary Queen of Scots by Antonia Fraser

Mary Queen Of Scots: And The Murder Of Lord Darnley by Alison Weir

A splendid and unforgettable movie was made based on her life: Mary, Queen of Scots (1971) with Vanessa Redgrave, Glenda Jackson, Patrick McGoohan.

3\* The Royal game

3\* Beware of Pity

4\* Amok

3\* Chess Story

5\* Marie-Antoinette

4\* Burning Secret

3\* Buchmendel

TBR Balzac : le roman de sa vie

TBR The World of Yesterday

TBR The Post-Office Girl

TBR Invisible Collection

TBR Letter from an Unknown Woman: The Fowler Snared

TBR Balzac, Dickens, Dostoevsky

