



## To Shield the Queen

By Fiona Buckley

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**To Shield the Queen** By Fiona Buckley

*Loyal Servant. Devoted Friend. Perfect target.*

Rumor has linked Queen Elizabeth I to her Master of Horse, Robin Dudley. And what rumors, at that: but for his ailing wife, Amy, Dudley would wed her majesty, the gossipmongers are whispering. To quell idle tongues, Elizabeth dispatches Ursula Blanchard to tend to the sick woman's needs. But not even Ursula can prevent the "accident" that takes Amy's life. Did she fall or was she pushed? Was Ursula a pawn of Dudley and the Queen?

Suddenly Ursula finds herself at the center of the scandal, trying to protect Elizabeth as she loses her heart to a Frenchman who may be flirting with sedition against her Queen. She can trust no one, neither her lover nor her monarch, as she sets out to find the truth in a glittering court that conceals a wellspring of blood and lies.

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### Editorial Review

#### From Library Journal

In order to quell widespread rumors about their supposed murderous intentions, Elizabeth I and Sir Robert Dudley dispatch one of her ladies-in-waiting, young widowed mother Ursula Blanchard, to help tend Lord Dudley's sickly wife, Amy. Despite Ursula's friendly attentions, Amy dies violently. Ursula's subsequent search for the murderer of a trusted retainer uncovers evidence of Catholic scheming and tests her love for a dashing Frenchman. Buckley's tantalizing re-creation of Elizabethan life and manners is told with intelligence and gentle wit. A noteworthy debut and first of a series.

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#### From Kirkus Reviews

An accomplished debut set in 1560 at the Court of Queen Elizabeth I. Impoverished young widow Ursula Blanchard, whose mother had served Queen Elizabeth's mother, has agreed to join Elizabeth's Ladies of the Presence Chamber. Estranged from her own and her late husband's families, she leaves behind her faithful groom John Wilton and puts small daughter Meg in the care of nursemaid Bridget. Once at Court, Ursula grows quickly aware of gossip about the young, unmarried Queen and her Master of the Horse, Robin Dudley. Dudley's wife Amy is said to be dying (amid rumors of poisoning) at Cumnor Place, some miles away. Her death, of course, would free Dudley to marry the Queen--an unpopular idea in many high places. Meanwhile, Ursula has acquired a suitor of her own--the wealthy Frenchman Matthew de la Roche--but when Dudley asks her to move to Cumnor Place, to comfort Amy (and perhaps to stop the rumors), she readily agrees. The handsome salary will help to pay Bridget, her own maid Fran Dale, and newly rehired John Wilton. Ursula finds Cumnor Place a strange household where steward Forster rules with tightfisted authority, and she comes to believe that there is a plot on Amy's life. Events prove her right, but other plots are also afoot, one of them setting Ursula on a slippery path of self-denial and discovery. The pseudonymous Buckley, a British author who's written other nonmystery fiction, maintains high suspense throughout a lively debut that's filled with vivid characters, religious conflict, subplots, and power plays. Ursula is the essence of iron cloaked in velvet--a heroine to reckon with. -- *Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

#### Review

"Ursula is the essence of iron cloaked in velvet -- a heroine to be reckoned with." -- *Kirkus Reviews*

Fiona Buckley introduces steely-nerved handmaiden Ursula Blanchard in this first thrilling adventure in a "sixteenth-century mystery series as complicated and charming as an Elizabethan knot garden." -- *The Tampa Tribune*

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### Eula Johnson:

In this 21st century, people become competitive in each way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of typically the crowded place and notice by simply surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a publication your ability to survive boost then having chance to stand than other is high. In

your case who want to start reading a new book, we give you that To Shield the Queen book as beginning and daily reading publication. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

**Rosalind Bowlin:**

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**John Moreno:**

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**Tammy Carver:**

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