### Novels by Suzanne Crowley A Complete Bibliography



The Stolen One Tr 978-0-06-123200-8 • \$17.99 (\$23.99) Lb 978-0-06-123201-5 • \$18.89 (\$24.89)

Set in Elizabethan England, this sensual novel drips with intrigue, period detail, and drama, and it will resonate with anyone who has ever longed to find his or her place in the world.



The Very Ordered Existence of Merilee Marvelous

Tr 978-0-06-123197-1 • \$16.99 (\$19.99) Lb 978-0-06-123198-8 • \$17.89 (\$20.89) Pb 978-0-06-123199-5 • \$7.99 (\$9.99)

★ "One of the finest works in children's literature to be published this year." -KLIATT (starred review)

- ★ "Rich writing and multilayered plot and characters are the highlights of this special book." -School Library Journal (starred review)
- Book Sense #3 Top Children's Pick
- IRA Notable Children's Book
- KLIATT Best of the Year Editors' Choice
- Texas State Reading Association Children's Literature Honor Book
- Bank Street Best Children's Books of the Year



## About the Author

Suzanne Crowley is a well-known miniature artist whose work has been featured on the covers of American and international magazines. Her debut novel, The Very Ordered Existence of Merilee Marvelous, received three starred reviews, was an IRA Notable Children's Book, and was selected as the Book Sense #3 Top Children's Pick for Fall 2007. Suzanne Crowley was born in a small town in Texas and currently lives in the Dallas-Fort Worth area with her family. You can visit her online at www.suzannecrowley.com.



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Guide prepared by Linda Z. Hamilton, Ph.D., Leawood, Kansas.

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The Stolen One By Suzanne Crowley

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## About the Book

In this romantic adventure story set in Elizabethan England, sixteen-year-old Kat Bab searches for her place in the world and the truth of her parentage. After spurning the marriage proposal of her childhood friend, Christian, and burying the woman who raised her, Kat sets off for London, accompanied by her deaf sister, Anna. An accomplished embroiderer, Kat joins the court of Queen Elizabeth I, where she encounters jealousy and suspicion and is pursued romantically by two dubious "gentlemen." Aided by her foster mother's journal and Anna's knowledge, Kat unravels the connections between herself, her adopted family, and the royal Tudors—and she discovers what is really important in life, returning to her true love.

# Discussion Questions

- 1. Describe Kat and Anna's relationship. Are they really sisters? What clues in the story help you figure out their parentage? How are Kat and Anna alike, and how are they different? Does Kat, as Grace once warned, break her sister's heart? Explain.
- 2. Kat frequently cites Grace's sayings. As you read, write down these sayings and consider them in the contexts of the novel and of life. Is Grace wise? Should Kat have listened to Grace's advice? If she had, how might the story have changed?
- 3. Kat says of Grace, "If she had truly loved me, she would have told me the truth" (p. 68). Do you think Kat is right? Why or why not? Why does Grace treat Kat better than Anna? How does this favoritism affect Anna?
- 4. Do you believe that Grace is a good person? Is she responsible for the deaths of Katherine Parr, Agnes, Jane the fool, and Emma Townsend's husband? Why does Grace fear that her body might be unearthed after death and her hands stolen?
- 5. Why does Kat decide to flee to London? Why does she take Anna with her?
- 6. Laundress Anne Twiste says of Anna, "I think she has more will than you know" (p. 238). Do you agree with this statement? Support your answer by finding examples in the novel of either Anna's strong will or her weakness.

- 7. Why do both Grace and Queen Elizabeth call Kat "Spirit"? What does the nickname mean? Is it a compliment or criticism? If you were to choose a descriptive nickname for yourself, what would it be?
- 8. What are the connections between Kat and Queen Elizabeth throughout their lifetimes? Do you admire Queen Elizabeth as she is depicted in *The Stolen One?* Do you trust her? Would you like to have been in her court? Explain.
- 9. Make a list of the references to the color red in the novel. Do the same for the motif of the wolf. Discuss the multiple meanings of these words and images, as well as their significance. Why do you think Anna adds a wolf to the gown Kat is embroidering for the queen? Why does Kat attach emerald eyes to it?
- 10. Why was it necessary for a woman to be married in Elizabethan England? Did women have other options? If so, what were they? If not, why not?
- 11. Research the historical roles of Little People in the royal courts of Europe. How are Jane and Ipollyta related? Why are they often labeled "fools" in the story?
- 12. Why does Anna keep Grace's journal a secret from Kat? Why do you think Anna eventually leaves the journal for her sister to find? Do you think Anna knows Kat's story even before they leave Gloucester?
- 13. Who or what does the book's title, *The Stolen One*, refer to? What things are literally or figuratively stolen over the course of the novel? Why do you think Kat buries Grace's journal and her mother's necklace at the end of the story?
- 14. The plot of *The Stolen One* revolves around secrets. Are secrets generally good or bad? Do you think that they cause more troubles than they solve? Is honesty always the best policy? Or should some secrets remain buried?

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# Extension Activities

- 1. Historical Interpretation. Compare and contrast author Suzanne Crowley's depiction of a specific historical figure, such as Queen Elizabeth I, Katherine Parr, or Thomas Seymour, with how he or she is portrayed in a film or miniseries about the Tudor monarchy. Possible films and miniseries include *Elizabeth*, starring Cate Blanchett; *Elizabeth R*, starring Glenda Jackson; *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, starring Chris Larkin and Andy Rashleigh; or *Young Bess*, starring Jean Simmons. How does watching an actor play the part of the historical figure differ from reading about him or her?
- 2. **Opulent Wardrobes.** The fashion for embroidered and bejeweled clothing reached its zenith during the Elizabethan era. Research the various articles of clothing worn by men and women during this period. Make a list of fabrics mentioned in *The Stolen One* and visit a fabric store to see and feel these materials up close. Also familiarize yourself with the embroidery stitches mentioned in the novel. After searching online for step-by-step instructions, try executing some of these stitches. What is couching and blackwork? Does your family have any embroidered clothing or table linens?
- 3. City vs. Country, Rich vs. Poor. Life in the countryside and life in London differed greatly in Tudor England. Based on your reading of *The Stolen One*, discuss the differences between the two locales in terms of sights, sounds, smells, wealth, occupations, foods, health, freedoms, and desirability. Are there any similarities between country life and life in London? How do the various social strata figure into the picture? Why did the royal court have so many residences and why did it continually move among them? Would you like to have lived in Elizabethan England? Why or why not?
- 4. Music to Your Ears. Kat hears the music of traveling minstrels while living in Gloucester and is introduced to Elizabethan court music and dramatic plays while in London. Listen to several Elizabethan songs, such as "Greensleeves," "Heigh Ho Holiday," "Now Is the Month of Maying," or "Nutmegs and Ginger." Then research the music, dance, and other forms of entertainment popular in the Elizabethan court. What types of music were performed and what instruments were used? Who were the minstrels? What are ballads? What are masques?

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