

0. THE CASE of the BLACK PEARLS - Story Preface

1. ENGAGED, MARRIED and WIDOWED

2. DEATHS of RIZZIO and DARNLEY

3. BAD JUDGMENT and ABDICATION

4. ESCAPE from LOCH LEVEN

5. "SAFELY KEPT and GUARDED"

6. IMPACT of the BABINGTON PLOT

7. MARY DEFENDS HERSELF

8. "FOR the CAUSE of the TRUE RELIGION"

9. EYEWITNESS REPORTS a BEHEADING

10. THE CASE of the BLACK PEARLS

11. MORE BACKGROUND on MARY

Long known for her legendary beauty and love of jewelry, Mary went to the execution block at age 44, looking her best.

After the beheading, her executioner, holding on to Mary's auburn hair, raised the severed head for all to see. Something unexpected then happened. Mary's head slipped away and rolled onto the floor. It was the head of a woman with short gray hair. The executioner was left holding Mary's auburn wig.

The Queen of Scots was now stripped of her life, as she had once been stripped of her most valuable possessions. The case of the black pearls - a set of six long strands - is one example.

Known as the "Hanoverian Pearls," they were once a gift which Pope Clement VII had given to his niece, Catherine di Medici, when she married King Henry II of France. When the Queen of Scots married their son, the Dauphin Francis, the six strands of black pearls became Mary's. They were a wedding present from her husband (via her mother-in-law).

We can see Mary wearing a single strand of the Hanoverian pearls in one of her teen-aged portraits. Later, after she was forced to abdicate, she lost her prized possession when Lord Moray (her half-brother and Regent of her son) took the pearls (and many other valuables).

Protesting this loss, to Catherine di Medici and Elizabeth I, did little good for Mary. Both women wanted the pearls. Elizabeth bid the higher price, and Mary's pearls thereafter belonged to another Queen.

Two years after Mary's beheading, Elizabeth chose to wear the Queen of Scots' pearls in her official "Armada portrait" of 1588. What once was Mary's was now proudly displayed around Elizabeth's neck.

Although she never knew it, England's Queen would ultimately share something else with Scotland's Queen. Their tombs, at Westminster Abbey, are nearly side-by-side (on opposite aisles in the Henry VII Chapel). Although she refused to ever meet her cousin in life, Elizabeth is sharing space with Mary in death.

To Mary, if she knew, that fact alone could be the ultimate irony of her life-long struggle with the Tudors.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-CASE-of-the-BLACK-PEARLS-Mary-Queen-of-Scots)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-CASE-of-the-BLACK-PEARLS-Mary-Queen-of-Scots>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-CASE-of-the-BLACK-PEARLS-Mary-Queen-of-Scots)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-CASE-of-the-BLACK-PEARLS-Mary-Queen-of-Scots>



Mary, Queen of Scots - Bust

Bust, described above, after William and Cornelius Cure. Original maintained at the National Portrait Gallery in London.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mary-Queen-of-Scots-Bust>



Mary Queen of Scots Wearing Black Pearls

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mary-Queen-of-Scots-Wearing-Black-Pearls>



Elizabeth I - Armada Portrait

Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I, c. 1588, described above. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Elizabeth-I-Armada-Portrait>



Queen Elizabeth I - Tomb at Westminster Abbey

Image online courtesy, the britishmuseum.org website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Queen-Elizabeth-I-Tomb-at-Westminster-Abbey>



Mary, Queen of Scots - Burial Site at Westminster Abbey

Image online courtesy, elizabethfiles.com website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mary-Queen-of-Scots-Burial-Site-at-Westminster-Abbey>