

EMBARGO: NEWS FOR RELEASE ON 17 NOVEMBER

Cityread London announces *Prophecy* by S. J. Parris as its 2017 book

It was announced today, on the 458th anniversary of the ascension of Elizabeth I that *Prophecy* by S. J. Parris (HarperCollins) has been chosen as the focus of Cityread London's 2017 campaign. The title will be the centre of a month-long celebration of reading in the capital, starting on 30 March and running throughout April, which aims to engage London's residents, workers and visitors with reading for pleasure, focused around the shared reading experience of a single book.

Prophecy is a gripping Elizabethan spy thriller, focused on the plot against Elizabeth to put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne. Set in 1583 its protagonist is the real life shadowy Giordano Bruno, an Italian "monk, scientist, philosopher, and magician" and excommunicated heretic

Taking Parris's novel and the rich Elizabeth world she creates as a starting point, a programme of events will take place across all 33 London boroughs as well as in Slough and Reading in libraries, bookshops, museums and other venues, including a tour by S. J. Parris.

Cityread 2017 will also include a specially produced Quick Reads title aimed at engaging Londoners who struggle with reading.

The Sunday Times number one bestseller *Conspiracy* by S. J. Parris will be published in paperback in January 2017.

S. J. Parris said:

"I'm thrilled that *Prophecy* has been chosen for this fantastic event that celebrates books and brings readers together from all over London. From the Elizabethan world to the present, London has always been a city that has weathered great change and upheaval with courage, and I hope this glimpse into our turbulent history through Bruno's adventures will resonate with readers today."

Andy Ryan, Director of Cityread London said:

"*Prophecy* is such a perfect Cityread book, we're excited about traveling further back into London's history than in any previous Cityread festivals. SJ Parris makes Elizabethan London spring from the page and, taking the novel as a starting point, we're looking forward to working with libraries, museums and a raft of other partners to explore this fascinating period in our city's history."

For Cityread London enquiries please contact Julia Kingsford at Kingsford Campbell on julia@kingsfordcampbell.com or 07411 957113

For enquiries about S. J. Parris please contact Ann Bissell at HarperCollins on Ann.Bissell@harpercollins.co.uk or 020 8307 4319

About Cityread London:

Cityread London is a registered charity that promotes the key ideas of reading for pleasure, engaging new library users, enhancing the experience of existing readers, and encouraging people to explore and celebrate London's culture, landscape and history. Cityread London represents culture for all, with all London library services developing a programme of reading, activities and events using a variety of formats including ebooks, audiobooks, large print, and in translation where possible, aimed at encouraging readers at all levels. Founded in 2012 it has featured: *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens (Penguin), 2012; *A Week in December* by Sebastian Faulks (Vintage), 2013; *My Dear I Wanted to Tell You* by Louisa Young (Borough Press), 2014; *Rivers of London* by Ben Aaronovitch (Gollancz) 2015; *Ten Days* by Gillian Slovo (Canongate) 2016.

Further details of all Cityread London activity can be found at the website: www.cityread.london and at Facebook/CityreadLondon

About *Prophecy*

Autumn, 1583. Under Elizabeth's rule, loyalty is bought with blood. An astrological phenomenon heralds the dawn of a new age and Queen Elizabeth's throne is in peril. As Mary Stuart's supporters scheme to usurp the rightful monarch, a young maid of honour is murdered, occult symbols carved into her flesh. The Queen's spymaster, Francis Walsingham, calls on maverick agent Giordano Bruno to infiltrate the plotters and secure the evidence that will condemn them to death. Bruno is cunning, but so are his enemies. His identity could be exposed at any moment. The proof he seeks is within his grasp. But the young woman's murder could point to an even more sinister truth.

About S. J. Parris

S. J. Parris is the pseudonym of Stephanie Merritt. It was as a student at Cambridge researching a paper that Stephanie first became fascinated by the rich history of Tudor England and Renaissance Europe. Since then, her interest has grown and led her to create the critically acclaimed and bestselling series of historical thrillers featuring heretic and spy Giordano Bruno. Stephanie has worked as a critic and feature writer for a variety of newspapers and magazines as well as radio and television. She currently writes for the Observer and the Guardian and lives in Surrey with her son.

'Impossible to resist ... Parris creates a convincing sense of the past, woven with so much intrigue that the head fairly spins' *Daily Telegraph*

'Parris writes with confident ease of Tudor London... The dialogue balances nicely on a tightrope of period phrases and cut-to-the-chase colloquialisms.' *The Times*

'It has everything – intrigue, mystery and excellent history' *Kate Mosse*

About HarperCollins

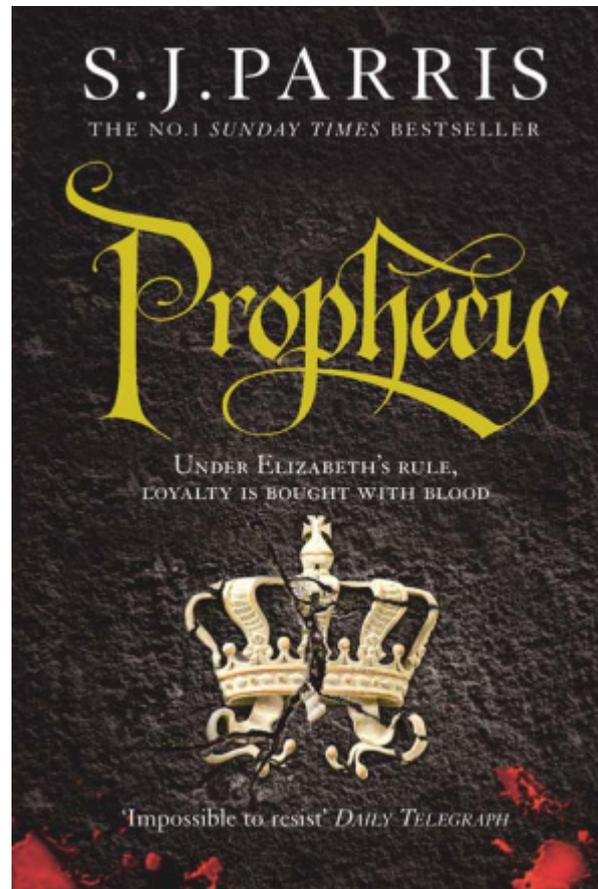
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IMAGES

Images of S. J. Parris and other titles in the series are available on request



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