So YOU think *YOU'VE* got it BAD?

A Kid's Life in TUDOR ENGLAND



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So YOU think YOU'VE got it BAD?

A Kid's Life in TUDOR ENGLAND



Chae Strathie • Marisa Morea

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Hello there! My name is Chae, and I am the author of this book. Yes, every word you are reading came out of my brilliant noggin.

• • •

As you go through these pages, you're going to be whisked back hundreds of years in time – all the way to Tudor England! Together, we're going to explore what life was like for children (and adults) in the time of Henry VIII, Good Queen Bess and William Shakespeare.

Whether you're curious about clothes or would love to learn about life at sea, you'll end up with a brain **stuffed** full of unbelievably fascinating and hilarious facts. You might even realise that growing up in the 21st century isn't too bad after all . . .

Think you've got it bad as a kid today? Let's see how you feel at the end of this book!

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The Home

Is there anything worse than having to get out of a nice cosy bed to go to school in the morning?

Being slowly squashed by a giant marrow? **Easy-peasy**.

Being shot out of a cannon into a swimming pool filled with **cow dung**? No problem.

Being furiously nibbled by a gang of **hungry squirrels**? Tuck in, guys!



It's just **awful** when your stupid alarm clock squawks directly into your earpipe at 8am or your parents scream your name from the bottom of the stairs for the 17th time. **How unreasonable**!

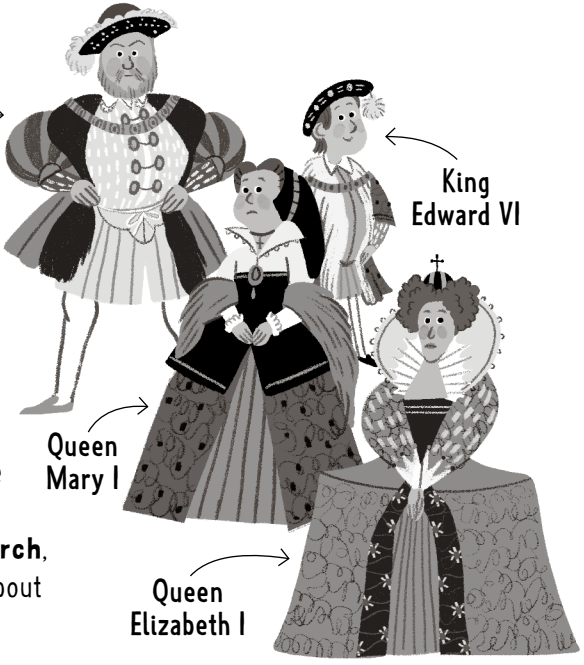
But whoa there, pardner. While all that might sound unbelievably horrible to you, you should consider yourself very lucky you weren't a kid in Tudor times.

Before we get to that, let's hit the pause button for a mo. What, or who, exactly were the Tudors??



Well, strap in, young dudes. Here's a quick **fact blast** to expand your **nogginbox**.

The Tudors were a family that ruled over England between 1485 and 1603. Henry Tudor became the first Tudor king, King Henry VII, after knocking Richard III off his perch at the Battle of Bosworth to end the brutal Wars of the Roses (a series of civil wars fought over who should be king of England).



One of the most famous English kings of all time, Henry VIII, came next, followed by Edward VI and Mary I, before the whole Tudor show came to a close after the 45-year reign of another **celebrity monarch**, Queen Elizabeth I. More about those guys later . . .

Now, where were we? Oh yes, getting dragged out of bed at ridiculous o'clock.

First things first – you would not have been woken by an alarm clock. You would most likely have been dragged out of dreamland by a cockerel doing his annoyingly loud crowing thing. Hey, bird! **Cock-a-doodle-don't**, please!



This would be especially true if you lived in the countryside, as most of the population did in the late 15th and 16th centuries, but even in towns there was more space than today, and many people kept animals, so the early morning **feathered screech** would be a common sound.

Also, there would be no waiting around for a decent hour to roll out of beddy-byes. Everyone – kids included – rose at the **crack of dawn**. That meant around 4am in the summer months!

Luckily in the depths of winter it didn't get light until closer to 6am, although the downside was it was **freezing cold** and there was no central heating, so not much to be cheerful about on that front.



Depending on what kind of house you lived in, you might not have been that fussy about staying in bed anyway. Wooden bedsteads with simple sacking bases were available, but families who couldn't afford that option had to sleep **on the floor**, either on sacking mattresses or on reeds that were laid down to form a sort of thick mat.

It sounds **uncomfortable** but was definitely better than just stretching out on the **bare ground**.

Mind you, a famous Dutch scholar called Erasmus visited England at the time and let's just say he **wasn't a big fan** of the whole reed situation.

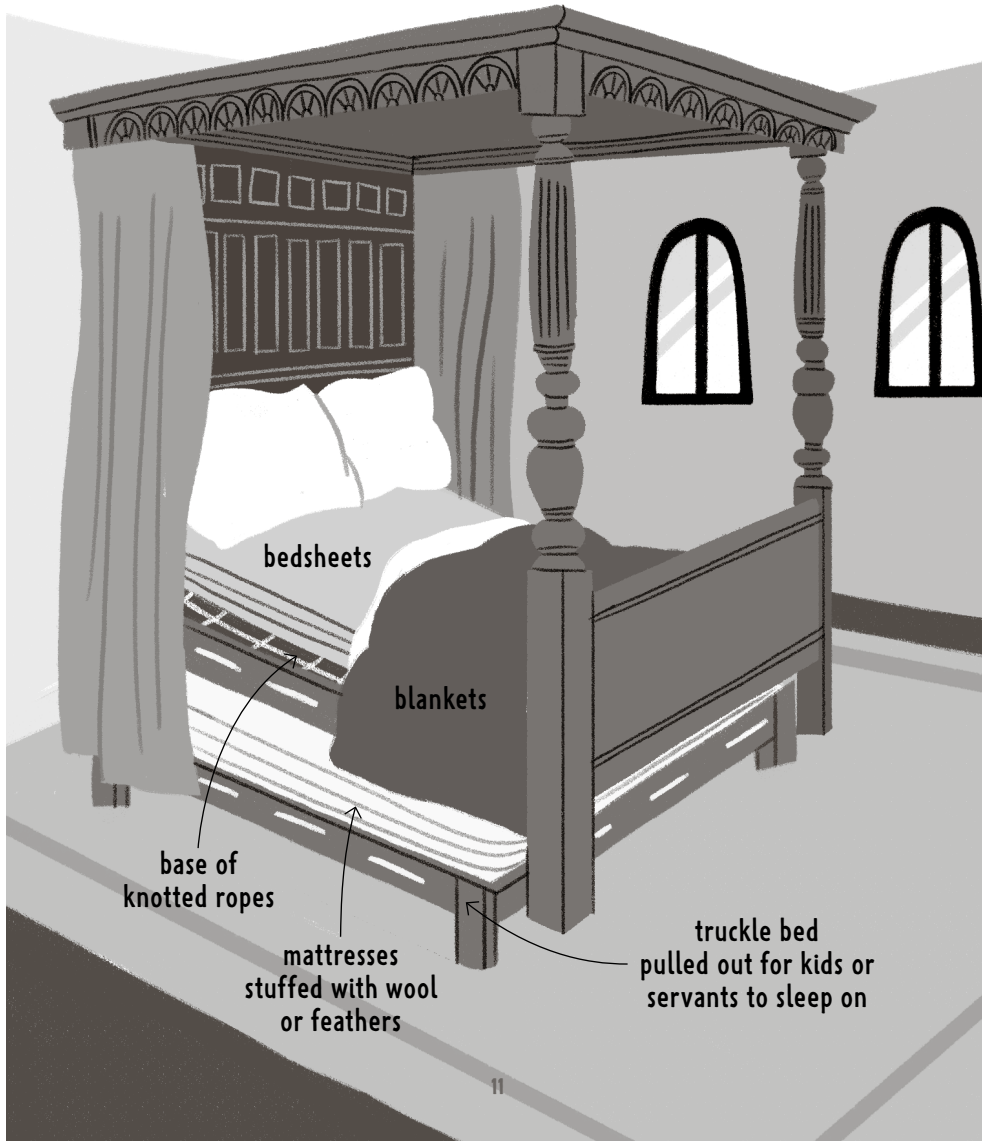
> He wrote that the reeds were sometimes changed but the bottom layer could remain for up to 20 years, holding **vomit and spit** from dogs and men, spilt beer, **fish remains** and other filth **not to be named**.



Wow! Why don't you say what you **really** think, Erasmus?

Perhaps he had a grudge against the English, because another source, from 1513, suggests people laid new rushes down on their floor every eight to ten days. Phew! **Much less stinky**!

More fortunate types had mattresses made of straw or hay on a raised wooden platform (hay was **softer** and **smelled better**) and if you were **really** lucky you slept in a wooden four poster bed with a roof and thick curtains round it.



If you did have a 'proper' bed, something that might have been kept underneath it was the toilet – and when we say toilet we mean a **chamber pot**. Most people used a chamber pot to go in at night as most Tudor homes didn't have actual toilets.



At least you didn't have to walk far!



Royals and aristocrats used **posh potties** called close stools, which were basically chamber pots inside a comfortable box with a hole in the top and a lid to keep the **stink** in.

How fancy!

That's a fact!

An early flushable toilet was created in 1596 by Sir John Harington, godson of Queen Elizabeth I.

In the Tudor period many homes were very basic and consisted of only one room, often shared by many people.

There was usually an open hearth in the middle of the room for cooking, heat and light.



There were very few chimneys around, so the smoke had to escape through gaps in the thatched roof, which meant that homes would be very **dark and smoky**.