

The Life of King Henry the Eighth

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SCENE IV. A Hall in York Place.

Hautboys. A small table under a state for CARDINAL WOLSEY, a longer table for the guests. Then enter ANNE and divers other Ladies and Gentlemen as guests, at one door; at another door, enter GUILDFORD

GUILDFORD

Ladies, a general welcome from his grace
Salutes ye all; this night he dedicates
To fair content and you: none here, he hopes,
In all this noble bevy, has brought with her
One care abroad; he would have all as merry
As, first, good company, good wine, good welcome,
Can make good people. O, my lord, you're tardy:

Enter Chamberlain, SANDS, and LOVELL

The very thought of this fair company
Clapp'd wings to me.

Chamberlain

You are young, Sir Harry Guildford.

SANDS

Sir Thomas Lovell, had the cardinal
But half my lay thoughts in him, some of these
Should find a running banquet ere they rested,
I think would better please 'em: by my life,
They are a sweet society of fair ones.

LOVELL

O, that your lordship were but now confessor
To one or two of these!

SANDS

I would I were;
They should find easy penance.

LOVELL

Faith, how easy?

SANDS

As easy as a down-bed would afford it.

Chamberlain

Sweet ladies, will it please you sit? Sir Harry,
Place you that side; I'll take the charge of this:
His grace is entering. Nay, you must not freeze;
Two women placed together makes cold weather:
My Lord Sands, you are one will keep 'em waking;
Pray, sit between these ladies.

SANDS

By my faith,
And thank your lordship. By your leave, sweet ladies:
If I chance to talk a little wild, forgive me;
I had it from my father.

ANNE

Was he mad, sir?

SANDS

O, very mad, exceeding mad, in love too:
But he would bite none; just as I do now,
He would kiss you twenty with a breath.

Kisses her

Chamberlain

Well said, my lord.
So, now you're fairly seated. Gentlemen,
The penance lies on you, if these fair ladies
Pass away frowning.

SANDS

For my little cure,
Let me alone.

Hautboys. Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY, and takes his state

CARDINAL WOLSEY

You're welcome, my fair guests: that noble lady,
Or gentleman, that is not freely merry,
Is not my friend: this, to confirm my welcome;
And to you all, good health.

SANDS

Your grace is noble:
Let me have such a bowl may hold my thanks,
And save me so much talking.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

My Lord Sands,
I am beholding to you: cheer your neighbours.
Ladies, you are not merry: gentlemen,
Whose fault is this?

SANDS

The red wine first must rise
In their fair cheeks, my lord; then we shall have 'em
Talk us to silence.

ANNE

You are a merry gamester,
My Lord Sands.

SANDS

Yes, if I make my play.
Here's to your ladyship: and pledge it, madam,
For 'tis to such a thing,--

ANNE

You cannot show me.

SANDS

I told your grace they would talk anon.

Drum and trumpet, chambers discharged

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What's that?

Chamberlain

Look out there, some of ye.

Exit Servant

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What warlike voice,
And to what end is this? Nay, ladies, fear not;
By all the laws of war you're privileged.

Re-enter Servant

Chamberlain

How now! what is't?

Servant

A noble troop of strangers;
For so they seem: they've left their barge and landed;
And hither make, as great ambassadors
From foreign princes.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Good lord chamberlain,
Go, give 'em welcome; you can speak the French tongue;
And, pray, receive 'em nobly, and conduct 'em
Into our presence, where this heaven of beauty
Shall shine at full upon them. Some attend him.

Exit Chamberlain, attended. All rise, and tables removed

You have now a broken banquet; but we'll mend it.
A good digestion to you all: and once more
I shower a welcome on ye; welcome all.

Hautboys. Enter KING HENRY VIII and others, as masquers, habited like shepherds, ushered by the Chamberlain. They pass directly before CARDINAL WOLSEY, and gracefully salute him

A noble company! what are their pleasures?

Chamberlain

Because they speak no English, thus they pray'd
To tell your grace, that, having heard by fame
Of this so noble and so fair assembly
This night to meet here, they could do no less
Out of the great respect they bear to beauty,
But leave their flocks; and, under your fair conduct,
Crave leave to view these ladies and entreat
An hour of revels with 'em.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Say, lord chamberlain,
They have done my poor house grace; for which I pay 'em
A thousand thanks, and pray 'em take their pleasures.

They choose Ladies for the dance. KING HENRY VIII chooses ANNE

KING HENRY VIII

The fairest hand I ever touch'd! O beauty,
Till now I never knew thee!

Music. Dance

CARDINAL WOLSEY

My lord!

Chamberlain

Your grace?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Pray, tell 'em thus much from me:
There should be one amongst 'em, by his person,
More worthy this place than myself; to whom,
If I but knew him, with my love and duty
I would surrender it.

Chamberlain

I will, my lord.

Whispers the Masquers

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What say they?

Chamberlain

Such a one, they all confess,
There is indeed; which they would have your grace
Find out, and he will take it.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Let me see, then.
By all your good leaves, gentlemen; here I'll make
My royal choice.

KING HENRY VIII

Ye have found him, cardinal:

Unmasking

You hold a fair assembly, you do well, lord:
You are a churchman, or, I'll tell you, cardinal,
I should judge now unhappily.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I am glad
Your grace is grown so pleasant.

KING HENRY VIII

My lord chamberlain,
Prithee, come hither: what fair lady's that?

Chamberlain

An't please your grace, Sir Thomas Bullen's daughter--
The Viscount Rochford,--one of her highness' women.

KING HENRY VIII

By heaven, she is a dainty one. Sweetheart,
I were unmannerly, to take you out,
And not to kiss you. A health, gentlemen!
Let it go round.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Sir Thomas Lovell, is the banquet ready
I' the privy chamber?

LOVELL

Yes, my lord.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Your grace,
I fear, with dancing is a little heated.

KING HENRY VIII

I fear, too much.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

There's fresher air, my lord,
In the next chamber.

KING HENRY VIII

Lead in your ladies, every one: sweet partner,
I must not yet forsake you: let's be merry:

Good my lord cardinal, I have half a dozen healths
To drink to these fair ladies, and a measure
To lead 'em once again; and then let's dream
Who's best in favour. Let the music knock it.

Exeunt with trumpets

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