

# The Life of King Henry the Eighth

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## SCENE II. An ante-chamber in the palace.

*Enter Chamberlain, reading a letter*

### Chamberlain

'My lord, the horses your lordship sent for, with all the care I had, I saw well chosen, ridden, and furnished. They were young and handsome, and of the best breed in the north. When they were ready to set out for London, a man of my lord cardinal's, by commission and main power, took 'em from me; with this reason: His master would be served before a subject, if not before the king; which stopped our mouths, sir.'

I fear he will indeed: well, let him have them:

He will have all, I think.

*Enter, to Chamberlain, NORFOLK and SUFFOLK*

### NORFOLK

Well met, my lord chamberlain.

### Chamberlain

Good day to both your graces.

### SUFFOLK

How is the king employ'd?

### Chamberlain

I left him private,  
Full of sad thoughts and troubles.

### NORFOLK

What's the cause?

### Chamberlain

It seems the marriage with his brother's wife  
Has crept too near his conscience.

### SUFFOLK

No, his conscience  
Has crept too near another lady.

## **NORFOLK**

'Tis so:  
This is the cardinal's doing, the king-cardinal:  
That blind priest, like the eldest son of fortune,  
Turns what he list. The king will know him one day.

## **SUFFOLK**

Pray God he do! he'll never know himself else.

## **NORFOLK**

How holily he works in all his business!  
And with what zeal! for, now he has crack'd the league  
Between us and the emperor, the queen's great nephew,  
He dives into the king's soul, and there scatters  
Dangers, doubts, wringing of the conscience,  
Fears, and despairs; and all these for his marriage:  
And out of all these to restore the king,  
He counsels a divorce; a loss of her  
That, like a jewel, has hung twenty years  
About his neck, yet never lost her lustre;  
Of her that loves him with that excellence  
That angels love good men with; even of her  
That, when the greatest stroke of fortune falls,  
Will bless the king: and is not this course pious?

## **Chamberlain**

Heaven keep me from such counsel! 'Tis most true  
These news are every where; every tongue speaks 'em,  
And every true heart weeps for't: all that dare  
Look into these affairs see this main end,  
The French king's sister. Heaven will one day open  
The king's eyes, that so long have slept upon  
This bold bad man.

## **SUFFOLK**

And free us from his slavery.

## **NORFOLK**

We had need pray,  
And heartily, for our deliverance;  
Or this imperious man will work us all  
From princes into pages: all men's honours  
Lie like one lump before him, to be fashion'd  
Into what pitch he please.

## **SUFFOLK**

For me, my lords,  
I love him not, nor fear him; there's my creed:  
As I am made without him, so I'll stand,  
If the king please; his curses and his blessings  
Touch me alike, they're breath I not believe in.  
I knew him, and I know him; so I leave him  
To him that made him proud, the pope.

## **NORFOLK**

Let's in;  
And with some other business put the king  
From these sad thoughts, that work too much upon him:  
My lord, you'll bear us company?

## **Chamberlain**

Excuse me;  
The king has sent me elsewhere: besides,  
You'll find a most unfit time to disturb him:  
Health to your lordships.

## **NORFOLK**

Thanks, my good lord chamberlain.

*Exit Chamberlain; and KING HENRY VIII draws the curtain, and sits reading pensively*

## **SUFFOLK**

How sad he looks! sure, he is much afflicted.

## **KING HENRY VIII**

Who's there, ha?

## **NORFOLK**

Pray God he be not angry.

## **KING HENRY VIII**

Who's there, I say? How dare you thrust yourselves  
Into my private meditations?  
Who am I? ha?

## **NORFOLK**

A gracious king that pardons all offences  
Malice ne'er meant: our breach of duty this way

Is business of estate; in which we come  
To know your royal pleasure.

## **KING HENRY VIII**

Ye are too bold:  
Go to; I'll make ye know your times of business:  
Is this an hour for temporal affairs, ha?

*Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS, with a commission*

Who's there? my good lord cardinal? O my Wolsey,  
The quiet of my wounded conscience;  
Thou art a cure fit for a king.

*To CARDINAL CAMPEIUS*

You're welcome,  
Most learned reverend sir, into our kingdom:  
Use us and it.

*To CARDINAL WOLSEY*

My good lord, have great care  
I be not found a talker.

## **CARDINAL WOLSEY**

Sir, you cannot.  
I would your grace would give us but an hour  
Of private conference.

## **KING HENRY VIII**

[To NORFOLK and SUFFOLK]  
We are busy; go.

## **NORFOLK**

[Aside to SUFFOLK]  
This priest has no pride in him?

## **SUFFOLK**

[Aside to NORFOLK] Not to speak of:  
I would not be so sick though for his place:  
But this cannot continue.

## **NORFOLK**

[Aside to SUFFOLK] If it do,  
I'll venture one have-at-him.

**SUFFOLK**

[Aside to NORFOLK] I another.

*Exeunt NORFOLK and SUFFOLK*

**CARDINAL WOLSEY**

Your grace has given a precedent of wisdom  
Above all princes, in committing freely  
Your scruple to the voice of Christendom:  
Who can be angry now? what envy reach you?  
The Spaniard, tied blood and favour to her,  
Must now confess, if they have any goodness,  
The trial just and noble. All the clerks,  
I mean the learned ones, in Christian kingdoms  
Have their free voices: Rome, the nurse of judgment,  
Invited by your noble self, hath sent  
One general tongue unto us, this good man,  
This just and learned priest, Cardinal Campeius;  
Whom once more I present unto your highness.

**KING HENRY VIII**

And once more in mine arms I bid him welcome,  
And thank the holy conclave for their loves:  
They have sent me such a man I would have wish'd for.

**CARDINAL CAMPEIUS**

Your grace must needs deserve all strangers' loves,  
You are so noble. To your highness' hand  
I tender my commission; by whose virtue,  
The court of Rome commanding, you, my lord  
Cardinal of York, are join'd with me their servant  
In the impartial judging of this business.

**KING HENRY VIII**

Two equal men. The queen shall be acquainted  
Forthwith for what you come. Where's Gardiner?

**CARDINAL WOLSEY**

I know your majesty has always loved her  
So dear in heart, not to deny her that  
A woman of less place might ask by law:  
Scholars allow'd freely to argue for her.

**KING HENRY VIII**

Ay, and the best she shall have; and my favour  
To him that does best: God forbid else. Cardinal,

Prithee, call Gardiner to me, my new secretary:  
I find him a fit fellow.

*Exit CARDINAL WOLSEY*

*Re-enter CARDINAL WOLSEY, with GARDINER*

**CARDINAL WOLSEY**

[Aside to GARDINER] Give me your hand much joy and  
favour to you;  
You are the king's now.

**GARDINER**

[Aside to CARDINAL WOLSEY]  
But to be commanded  
For ever by your grace, whose hand has raised me.

**KING HENRY VIII**

Come hither, Gardiner.

*Walks and whispers*

**CARDINAL CAMPEIUS**

My Lord of York, was not one Doctor Pace  
In this man's place before him?

**CARDINAL WOLSEY**

Yes, he was.

**CARDINAL CAMPEIUS**

Was he not held a learned man?

**CARDINAL WOLSEY**

Yes, surely.

**CARDINAL CAMPEIUS**

Believe me, there's an ill opinion spread then  
Even of yourself, lord cardinal.

**CARDINAL WOLSEY**

How! of me?

**CARDINAL CAMPEIUS**

They will not stick to say you envied him,  
And fearing he would rise, he was so virtuous,  
Kept him a foreign man still; which so grieved him,  
That he ran mad and died.

## **CARDINAL WOLSEY**

Heaven's peace be with him!  
That's Christian care enough: for living murmurers  
There's places of rebuke. He was a fool;  
For he would needs be virtuous: that good fellow,  
If I command him, follows my appointment:  
I will have none so near else. Learn this, brother,  
We live not to be grip'd by meaner persons.

## **KING HENRY VIII**

Deliver this with modesty to the queen.

*Exit GARDINER*

The most convenient place that I can think of  
For such receipt of learning is Black-Friars;  
There ye shall meet about this weighty business.  
My Wolsey, see it furnish'd. O, my lord,  
Would it not grieve an able man to leave  
So sweet a bedfellow? But, conscience, conscience!  
O, 'tis a tender place; and I must leave her.

*Exeunt*

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