

HENRY VIII

A line-by-line translation

Act 1, Prologue


Shakespeare


CHORUS

I come no more to make you laugh: things now,
That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe,
Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow,
5 We now present. Those that can pity, here
May, if they think it well, let fall a tear;
The subject will deserve it. Such as give
Their money out of hope they may believe,
May here find truth too. Those that come to see
10 Only a show or two, and so agree
The play may pass, if they be still and willing,
I'll undertake may see away their shilling
Richly in two short hours. Only they
That come to hear a merry bawdy play,
15 A noise of targets, or to see a fellow
In a long motley coat guarded with yellow,
Will be deceived; for, gentle hearers, know,
To rank our chosen truth with such a show
As fool and fight is, beside forfeiting
20 Our own brains, and the opinion that we bring,
To make that only true we now intend,
Will leave us never an understanding friend.
Therefore, for goodness' sake, and as you are known
The first and happiest hearers of the town,
25 Be sad, as we would make ye: think ye see
The very persons of our noble story
As they were living; think you see them great,
And follow'd with the general throng and sweat
Of thousand friends; then in a moment, see
30 How soon this mightiness meets misery:
And, if you can be merry then, I'll say
A man may weep upon his wedding-day.

Shakescleare Translation

CHORUS

I haven't come to make you laugh anymore. Now we're showing you things that are serious, sad, noble, and full of dignity and sadness: scenes that make you cry. Those who are able to feel pity can cry at this if they want. The subject deserves it. Those who pay money hoping to see something true will find truth here too. Those who have only come to see a play or two to make themselves happy can sit through this play if they want to and if they can sit still. I'll make sure they get a good show lasting two short hours in return for their money. Only those who come to see a funny, dirty play, to hear the noise of shields clashing together, or to see a man in a long fool's coat  with a yellow border will not be satisfied. Because, dear listeners, spoiling the true story we have chosen to tell with a show full of fools and fighting would mean losing all our intelligent friends as well as giving up our own brains and our intention only to show the truth. So, for goodness' sake, you who are known to be the best and happiest theater audience in town, be as sad as we want to make you. Imagine you see the real characters in our noble story as if they were alive. Imagine you see them powerful and followed by a sweaty crowd of a thousand friends. Then see how, all at once, this power runs into disaster. And if you can be happy then, I'll believe a man can weep on the day he gets married.

 The "fellow" in "yellow" in the original text refers to the role of the fool or clown. Fools were distinguished from other characters by the distinctive coats they wore. In Shakespeare's texts, fools, who are usually peasants, jesters, or lower class folk in the service of a king, often speak with more wisdom than the noble characters they serve.

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter NORFOLK at one door; at the other, BUCKINGHAM and ABERGAVENNY


BUCKINGHAM

Good morrow, and well met. How have ye done
Since last we saw in France?

NORFOLK

I thank your grace,
Healthful; and ever since a fresh admirer
5 Of what I saw there.

Shakescleare Translation


NORFOLK enters at one door, BUCKINGHAM  and ABERGAVENNY at the other.

BUCKINGHAM

Good morning, and good to see you. How have you been
since we last met in France?

NORFOLK

Thank you, sir, I've been well. And ever since I've been
thinking admiringly about what I saw there.

 Edward Stafford, the 3rd Earl of Buckingham, becomes a central figure in the play's first act. He is one of many characters who make the king suspicious (whether for true crimes or not) and suffer for it.

BUCKINGHAM

An untimely ague
 Stay'd me a prisoner in my chamber when
 Those suns of glory, those two lights of men,
 Met in the vale of Andren.

NORFOLK

10 'Twillt Guynes and Arde:
 I was then present, saw them salute on horseback;
 Beheld them, when they lighted, how they clung
 In their embracement, as they grew together;
 Which had they, what four throned ones could have
 15 weigh'd
 Such a compounded one?

BUCKINGHAM

All the whole time
 I was my chamber's prisoner.

NORFOLK

Then you lost
 20 The view of earthly glory: men might say,
 Till this time pomp was single, but now married
 To one above itself. Each following day
 Became the next day's master, till the last
 Made former wonders its. To-day the French,
 25 All clinquant, all in gold, like heathen gods,
 Shone down the English; and, to-morrow, they
 Made Britain India: every man that stood
 Show'd like a mine. Their dwarfish pages were
 As cherubins, all guilt: the madams too,
 30 Not used to toil, did almost sweat to bear
 The pride upon them, that their very labour
 Was to them as a painting: now this masch
 Was cried incomparable; and the ensuing night
 Made it a fool and beggar. The two kings,
 35 Equal in lustre, were now best, now worst,
 As presence did present them; him in eye,
 Still him in praise: and, being present both
 'Twas said they saw but one; and no discern
 Durst wag his tongue in censure. When these suns--
 40 For so they phrase 'em--by their heralds challenged
 The noble spirits to arms, they did perform
 Beyond thought's compass; that former fabulous story,
 Being now seen possible enough, got credit,
 That Bevis was believed.

BUCKINGHAM

45 O, you go far.

NORFOLK

As I belong to worship and affect
 In honour honesty, the tract of every thing
 Would by a good discourser lose some life,
 Which action's self was tongue to. All was royal;
 50 To the disposing of it nought rebell'd.
 Order gave each thing view; the office did
 Distinctly his full function.

BUCKINGHAM

Who did guide,
 I mean, who set the body and the limbs
 55 Of this great sport together, as you guess?

BUCKINGHAM

An unfortunate sickness kept me prisoner in my room when
 those two men ² as glorious and bright as suns met in the
 valley of Andren.

NORFOLK

Between Guynes and Arde. I was there and saw them greet
 each other on horseback. I saw them when they got off the
 horses. They held on to each other so hard when they
 hugged that it looked like they were two plants growing
 together. If they had, those two together would have been
 worth more than four kings.

BUCKINGHAM

The whole time I was stuck in my room like a prisoner.

NORFOLK

Then you lost your chance to see glory on earth. It's as if all
 glory has been single in the past, but now it's married to
 glory greater than itself. Every day was better than the one
 before until the last one was full of all the wonders seen
 before. One day the French, all clanking, all dressed in gold
 like heathen gods, shone brighter than the English. The
 next day, the British were dressed so richly that they made
 Britain seem like India. Every man standing up looked like a
 mine because they were covered in gold. Their short pages
 looked like gold-covered cherubs. The ladies, too, not used
 to work, almost sweated to carry the beautiful things they
 wore, and their effort was like makeup: it made them look
 better. One day this display was said to be incomparable,
 but the next night it was made to look like the display of a
 fool and a beggar. Of the two kings, equal in brightness, one
 seemed better, then worse, at any moment. One looked
 better at one time, but the other one was praised more.
 When they were both present, people said they only saw
 one. No onlooker dared criticize anything. When these
 suns, as they were called, had their announcers challenge
 the noblemen to fight, those nobles did better than you can
 imagine. The old legend of Bevis ³ now seemed possible
 and was believed.

BUCKINGHAM

Oh, you're praising them highly.

NORFOLK

I swear by my reputation and love for honesty, the
 description of everything that was done there couldn't do
 justice to it even if it were described by a good talker.
 Things went perfectly. ⁴ Everything was done in good
 order, and the people in charge did their job well.

BUCKINGHAM

Who was in charge? I mean, who was the one to organize
 this sport, like a mind in charge of the parts of a body ⁵ ?

² Buckingham's speech here refers to the Field of the Cloth of Gold, a meeting in France between King Henry VIII of England and King Francis I of France that was intended to promote peace and friendship between the two countries. It was a magnificent display of wealth on both sides.

³ "Bevis" of Hampton was a legendary English hero.

⁴ "All was royal," in the original text, is a complicated metaphor. It means, essentially, that each part of the magnificent display went perfectly and nothing went wrong to ruin the show. The displays were like kings obeyed by their subjects, who didn't rebel against them.

⁵ In this metaphor of the "body", the person in charge of the displays is compared to a mind that guides the body. This metaphor has larger implications for the play. Kings are commonly compared to the "head" of state, the one part who guides the whole. Here, however, Cardinal Wolsey takes over that role. The cardinal, as we will see, constantly

oversteps his authority and influences the king.

NORFOLK

One, certes, that promises no element
In such a business.

BUCKINGHAM

I pray you, who, my lord?

NORFOLK

60 All this was order'd by the good discretion
Of the right reverend Cardinal of York.

BUCKINGHAM

The devil speed him! no man's pie is freed
From his ambitious finger. What had he
To do in these fierce vanities? I wonder
That such a keech can with his very bulk
65 Take up the rays o' the beneficial sun
And keep it from the earth.

NORFOLK

Surely, sir,
There's in him stuff that puts him to these ends;
For, being not propp'd by ancestry, whose grace
70 Chalks successors their way, nor call'd upon
For high feats done to the crown; neither allied
For eminent assistants; but, spider-like,
Out of his self-drawing web, he gives us note,
The force of his own merit makes his way
75 A gift that heaven gives for him, which buys
A place next to the king.

ABERGAVENTNY

I cannot tell
What heaven hath given him,—let some graver eye
Pierce into that; but I can see his pride
80 Peep through each part of him: whence has he that,
If not from hell? the devil is a niggard,
Or has given all before, and he begins
A new hell in himself.

BUCKINGHAM

Why the devil,
85 Upon this French going out, took he upon him,
Without the privy o' the king, to appoint
Who should attend on him? He makes up the file
Of all the gentry; for the most part such
To whom as great a charge as little honour
90 He meant to lay upon: and his own letter,
The honourable board of council out,
Must fetch him in the papers.

ABERGAVENTNY

I do know
Kinsmen of mine, three at the least, that have
95 By this so sickened their estates, that never
They shall abound as formerly.

BUCKINGHAM

O, many
Have broke their backs with laying manors on 'em
For this great journey. What did this vanity
100 But minister communication of
A most poor issue?

NORFOLK

Grievingly I think,
The peace between the French and us not values
The cost that did conclude it.

NORFOLK

Someone you wouldn't expect to have any part in such
business.

BUCKINGHAM

Tell me, who, my lord?

NORFOLK

This was organized wisely by the honorable Cardinal of
York.

BUCKINGHAM

May the devil take good care of him! He's got his ambitious
finger in everyone's pie. What did he have to do with this
foolish fighting? I'm surprised that such a lump of fat can
block the rays of the kind sun with his bulk and keep them
from the earth.

NORFOLK

Surely, sir, there's something in him that makes him want
these things. He doesn't have the help of being from a good
family, which guarantees succession to power, and he isn't
being rewarded for brave deeds done for the king. Nor does
he have powerful allies. But, like a spider, spinning his own
web for himself, he makes us notice him. He clears a path
for himself with his own worth. It's a gift to him from God,
which buys him a place next to the king.

ABERGAVENTNY

I can't tell what God has given him. Let some wiser man
look into that. But I can see his pride showing in every part
of him. Where did he get that, if not from hell? The devil
doesn't like to give anything away, or he's already given
away everything, so the Cardinal begins a new hell inside
himself.

BUCKINGHAM

Why the devil, when this French expedition took place, did
he take it upon himself to decide who would go with the
king without asking him? He made up the list of all the
nobles. Mostly it was those he meant to get a lot of money
out of without giving them credit for it. He sends for the
money by writing a letter, without consulting the king's
honorable councilors.

ABERGAVENTNY

I know relatives of mine, at least three, who because of this
are in so much financial trouble that they'll never get their
finances back to where they were before.

BUCKINGHAM

Oh, many people have broken their backs paying for
mansions for the court to stay in on this great journey. What
did this foolish man do, except help this bad thing happen?

NORFOLK

Sadly, I think the peace between the French and us isn't
worth the money that was paid to make it.

BUCKINGHAM

105 Every man,
After the hideous storm that follow'd, was
A thing inspired; and, not consulting, broke
Into a general prophecy; That this tempest,
Dashing the garment of this peace, aboded
110 The sudden breach on't.

NORFOLK

Which is budded out;
For France hath flaw'd the league, and hath attach'd
Our merchants' goods at Bourdeaux.

ABERGAVENTNY

Is it therefore
115 The ambassador is silenced?

NORFOLK

Marry, is't.

ABERGAVENTNY

A proper title of a peace; and purchased
At a superfluous rate!

BUCKINGHAM

Why, all this business
120 Our reverend cardinal carried.

NORFOLK

Like it your grace,
The state takes notice of the private difference
Betwixt you and the cardinal. I advise you--
And take it from a heart that wishes towards you
125 Honour and plenteous safety--that you read
The cardinal's malice and his potency
Together; to consider further that
What his high hatred would effect wants not
A minister in his power. You know his nature,
130 That he's revengeful, and I know his sword
Hath a sharp edge: it's long and, 't may be said,
It reaches far, and where 'twill not extend,
Thither he darts it. Bosom up my counsel,
You'll find it wholesome. Lo, where comes that rock
135 That I advise your shunning.

Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY, the purse borne before him, certain of the Guard, and two Secretaries with papers. CARDINAL WOLSEY in his passage fixeth his eye on BUCKINGHAM, and BUCKINGHAM on him, both full of disdain

CARDINAL WOLSEY

The Duke of Buckingham's surveyor, ha?
Where's his examination?

FIRST SECRETARY

Here, so please you.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Is he in person ready?

FIRST SECRETARY

140 Ay, please your grace.

BUCKINGHAM

Every man, after the horrible storm ⁸ that followed the peace-making, was a prophet. Without thinking, they broke into a prophecy about general things: that this storm, dashing against the clothes of the people making this peace, meant that it would be broken soon.

⁸ This play is based largely on Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles*, which does mention a terrible storm on June 18th, 1520.

NORFOLK

And the peace *has* been broken. Because France has broken the treaty and has seized our merchants' goods at Bordeaux.

ABERGAVENTNY

Is that why the ambassador has been silenced?

NORFOLK

Yes, it is.

ABERGAVENTNY

So we have just a title deed ⁹ for a peace, and bought at too high a price!

⁹ The "title" or title deed mentioned here is a legal document that proves one's ownership of property.

BUCKINGHAM

The respected cardinal carried out all this business.

NORFOLK

Your grace, the government notices the private quarrel between you and the cardinal. I advise you--this comes from a heart that wishes you honor and safety--to consider both the cardinal's ill-will and his power. Consider furthermore that he has all the minions he needs to do what he wants out of his powerful hatred. You know his vengeful nature and I know his sword has a sharp edge. It's long and they say it reaches far and, where it doesn't reach, he throws it. Remember my advice. You'll find that it's good. See, the rock ¹⁰ I advise you to avoid is coming now.

¹⁰ The "rock" refers to the Cardinal Wolsey, who is being compared to a sharp rock that could damage a ship.

CARDINAL WOLSEY enters with a purse ⁹ carried in front of him, some members of the Guard, and two secretaries carrying papers. Passing by, CARDINAL WOLSEY glares at BUCKINGHAM, and BUCKINGHAM glares back.

⁹ Cardinal Wolsey's "purse" is a very important bag, as it carries the Great Seal of England. This device, which makes an impression in wax, is used to mark the king's official approval on documents. Wolsey's responsibility for the seal symbolizes his role as chancellor (essentially, chief adviser) to the king.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

The Duke of Buckingham's surveyor ¹⁰! Where's his paperwork?

¹⁰ When asking about Buckingham's "surveyor," Wolsey refers to the man who oversees Buckingham's estates, his cousin Charles. Wolsey has been using Buckingham's cousin to get information with which he can incriminate Buckingham.

FIRST SECRETARY

Here, sir.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Is he ready to appear in person?

FIRST SECRETARY

Yes, your grace.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Well, we shall then know more; and Buckingham
Shall lessen this big look.

Exeunt CARDINAL WOLSEY and his Train

BUCKINGHAM

145 This butcher's cur is venom-mouth'd, and I
Have not the power to muzzle him; therefore best
Not wake him in his slumber. A beggar's book
Outworths a noble's blood.

NORFOLK

150 What, are you chafed?
Ask God for temperance; that's the appliance only
Which your disease requires.

BUCKINGHAM

155 I read in's looks
Matter against me; and his eye reviled
Me, as his abject object: at this instant
He bores me with some trick: he's gone to the king;
I'll follow and outstare him.

NORFOLK

160 Stay, my lord,
And let your reason with your choler question
What 'tis you go about: to climb steep hills
Requires slow pace at first: anger is like
A full-hot horse, who being allow'd his way,
Self-mettle tires him. Not a man in England
Can advise me like you: be to yourself
As you would to your friend.

BUCKINGHAM

165 I'll to the king;
And from a mouth of honour quite cry down
This Ipswich fellow's insolence; or proclaim
There's difference in no persons.

NORFOLK

170 Be advised;
Heat not a furnace for your foe so hot
That it do singe yourself: we may outrun,
By violent swiftness, that which we run at,
And lose by over-running. Know you not,
The fire that mounts the liquor til run o'er,
In seeming to augment it wastes it? Be advised:
175 I say again, there is no English soul
More stronger to direct you than yourself,
If with the sap of reason you would quench,
Or but allay, the fire of passion.

BUCKINGHAM

180 Sir,
I am thankful to you; and I'll go along
By your prescription: but this top-proud fellow,
Whom from the flow of gall I name not but
From sincere motions, by intelligence,
And proofs as clear as founts in July when
185 We see each grain of gravel, I do know
To be corrupt and treasonous.

NORFOLK

Say not 'treasonous.'

BUCKINGHAM

190 To the king I'll say't; and make my vouch as strong
As shore of rock. Attend. This holy fox,
Or wolf, or both,-- for he is equal ravenous
As he is subtle, and as prone to mischief

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Well, I'll find out more. Buckingham won't look this
confident soon.

CARDINAL WOLSEY and his followers exit.

BUCKINGHAM

This dog of a butcher's son ¹¹ has a poisonous bite, and I
can't muzzle him. So it's better not to wake him when he's
sleeping. A beggar's pocket book is worth more than the
blood of a nobleman.

NORFOLK

Are you angry? Ask God to make you patient. That's what
you need to be cured of this disease of anger.

BUCKINGHAM

I saw from how he looked at me that he has a grudge
against me. His eye seemed to be disgusted by me, thinking
I was a worthless thing to look at. Right now he's plotting
against me. He's gone to the king. I'll follow and glare at
him.

NORFOLK

Wait, my lord, and think about what you're doing. You have
to go slowly at first when climbing steep hills. Anger is like a
horse eager to run. Allowed to do what he wants, he tires
himself out. Not a single man in England can give me as
good advice as you can. Act the same way toward yourself
as you would to a friend, and give yourself good advice.

BUCKINGHAM

I'll go to the king. I'll use my honorable position to insult
this arrogant man from Ipswich ¹². If I don't succeed, it
shows that people of different classes are equal.

NORFOLK

Think about this. Don't hurt yourself by plotting against
your enemy. By running too quickly towards what you run
toward, you can miss it and lose. Don't you know that a fire
that makes a pot boil over seems to increase its volume but
actually wastes it? Think about this. Again, there is no
English man who could give you better advice than you
could give yourself, if you would just be reasonable and
stop being angry, or at least be less angry.

BUCKINGHAM

Sir, I'm thankful to you, and I'll do what you say. But I know
this arrogant man, whom I despise not because of hot-
headed anger ¹³ but for good reason, to be corrupt and a
traitor. I know this from secret sources, with proof as clear
as streams in July, when you can see every stone at the
bottom.

NORFOLK

Don't say "a traitor."

BUCKINGHAM

I'll say it to the king. And I'll swear it with a promise as
strong as a rock. Listen. This holy man is like a fox, or a wolf,
or both: he is as greedy as he is sly and he's as willing to do
evil as he is able to do it. His mind and his social position

¹¹ Wolsey was the son of a butcher. Buckingham's use of "butcher's cur" as an insult shows that he hates Wolsey partly because he is not from an aristocratic background.

¹² Wolsey is the fellow from "Ipswich." Ipswich is a small town, so this is an insult implying he's a country bumpkin.

¹³ In the original text, Buckingham associates anger with a "flow of gall." In Shakespeare's day, the four humors (black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood) corresponded to four temperaments (melancholic, choleric, phlegmatic, and sanguine). The gall bladder was associated with the "choleric" temperament, which is characterized by anger and is linked to the element of fire.

As able to perform't; his mind and place
 Infecting one another, yea, reciprocally--
 Only to show his pomp as well in France
 195 As here at home, suggests the king our master
 To this last costly treaty, the interview,
 That swallow'd so much treasure, and like a glass
 Did break i' the rinsing.

NORFOLK

Faith, and so it did.

BUCKINGHAM

200 Pray, give me favour, sir. This cunning cardinal
 The articles o' the combination drew
 As himself pleased; and they were ratified
 As he cried 'Thus let be': to as much end
 As give a crutch to the dead: but our count-cardinal
 205 Has done this, and 'tis well; for worthy Wolsey,
 Who cannot err, he did it. Now this follows,--
 Which, as I take it, is a kind of puppy
 To the old dam, treason,--Charles the emperor,
 Under pretence to see the queen his aunt--
 210 For 'twas indeed his colour, but he came
 To whisper Wolsey,--here makes visitation:
 His fears were, that the interview betwixt
 England and France might, through their amity,
 Breed him some prejudice; for from this league
 215 Peep'd harms that menaced him: he privily
 Deals with our cardinal; and, as I trow,--
 Which I do well; for I am sure the emperor
 Paid ere he promised; whereby his suit was granted
 Ere it was ask'd; but when the way was made,
 220 And paved with gold, the emperor thus desired,
 That he would please to alter the king's course,
 And break the foresaid peace. Let the king know,
 As soon he shall by me, that thus the cardinal
 Does buy and sell his honour as he pleases,
 225 And for his own advantage.

NORFOLK

I am sorry
 To hear this of him; and could wish he were
 Something mistaken in't.

BUCKINGHAM

No, not a syllable:
 230 I do pronounce him in that very shape
 He shall appear in proof.

Enter BRANDON, a Sergeant-at-arms before him, and two or three of the Guard

BRANDON

Your office, sergeant; execute it.

SERGEANT

Sir,
 235 My lord the Duke of Buckingham, and Earl
 Of Hereford, Stafford, and Northampton, I
 Arrest thee of high treason, in the name
 Of our most sovereign king.

BUCKINGHAM

Lo, you, my lord,
 240 The net has fall'n upon me! I shall perish
 Under device and practise.

BRANDON

I am sorry
 To see you ta'en from liberty, to look on
 The business present: 'tis his highness' pleasure
 245 You shall to the Tower.

infect each other. He suggested this expensive alliance to the king only so he could show off as much in France as he does here at home. The meeting swallowed so much money, and like a glass it broke as it was being made.

NORFOLK

That's true, it did.

BUCKINGHAM

Listen, sir. This sly cardinal drew up the treaty as he pleased. It was signed when he said "Let it be this way." It's as useful as giving a crutch to a dead person. But our ruler the cardinal did it anyway, and that's good. Because honest Wolsey, who never makes mistakes, did it. Then this happened (which looks a lot like treason, as much as a dog looks like its mother). Charles ¹⁴ the emperor, claiming he wanted to see the queen his aunt ¹⁵ (that was his story, but he came to whisper to Wolsey) visited. He was afraid that the meeting between England and France might do him harm if they became allies. He talked privately to our cardinal. I think (and it's something I do well) that the emperor paid before he agreed to anything. And then his request was granted before he asked. But anyway, when the path had been cleared with bribes, the emperor asked the cardinal to change the king's actions and break this alliance. The king should know, and I'll tell him, that the cardinal buys and sells his honor whenever he wants, for his own advantage.

¹⁴ Charles V was elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1519, at which time he was also ruler of Spain and the Habsburg Netherlands. In 1520 (the year in which this scene is set), the Holy Roman Empire covered much of modern-day central Europe.

¹⁵ Catherine of Aragon (in this play, spelled "Katharine"), Henry VIII's first queen, was Charles V's aunt.

NORFOLK

I am sorry to hear this about him, and I hope there's a mistake in what you say about him.

BUCKINGHAM

No, not at all. I describe him exactly as he is, and I'll prove it.

BRANDON enters following a SERGEANT and two or three members of the Guard.

BRANDON

Do your job, sergeant.

SERGEANT

My lord the Duke of Buckingham, Earl of Hereford, Stafford, and Northampton, sir, I arrest you for high treason in the name of our king.

BUCKINGHAM

See, my lord, I've been caught in his trap! I'll die from his plots.

BRANDON

I'm sorry to see you captured and to see this happen. The king wants you to go to the Tower ¹⁶.

¹⁶ The Tower of London is a palace and fortress that has been used, most famously, as a prison.

BUCKINGHAM

It will help me nothing
To plead mine innocence; for that dye is on me
Which makes my whitest part black. The will of heaven
Be done in this and all things! I obey.
250 O my Lord Abergavenny, fare you well!

BRANDON

Nay, he must bear you company.
[To ABERGAVENNY]
The king is pleased you shall to the Tower, till you
know
255 How he determines further.

ABERGAVENNY

As the duke said,
The will of heaven be done, and the king's pleasure
By me obey'd!

BRANDON

260 Here is a warrant from
The king to attach Lord Montacute; and the bodies
Of the duke's confessor, John de la Car,
One Gilbert Perk, his chancellor--

BUCKINGHAM

So, so;
265 These are the limbs o' the plot: no more, I hope.

BRANDON

A monk o' the Chartreux.

BUCKINGHAM

O, Nicholas Hopkins?

BRANDON

He.

BUCKINGHAM

270 My surveyor is false; the o'er-great cardinal
Hath show'd him gold; my life is spann'd already:
I am the shadow of poor Buckingham,
Whose figure even this instant cloud puts on,
By darkening my clear sun. My lord, farewell.

Exeunt

BUCKINGHAM

It won't help me to say I'm innocent. Even the most
innocent part of me will be made to seem guilty. May God's
will be done in this and all things! I obey. Oh, lord
Abergavenny, goodbye!

BRANDON

No, he must go with you.

[To ABERGAVENNY] The king wants you to go the Tower
until he decides what will happen to you.

ABERGAVENNY

As the duke said, may God's will be done and may I do what
the king wants!

BRANDON

Here is a warrant from the king to arrest Lord Montacute,
the duke's confessor ¹⁷, John de la Car, and a certain
Gilbert Perk, his chancellor ¹⁸ —

¹⁷ In this context, a "confessor" is the private spiritual adviser of a nobleman. More generally, a confessor is a priest who hears a Christian's confession of his or her sins and offers forgiveness as the visible, external sign of God's mercy.

¹⁸ Just as Wolsey is Lord Chancellor to the king, and is therefore his chief adviser, Gilbert Perk is Buckingham's "chancellor" or adviser.

BUCKINGHAM

All right. That's the end of his plot. I hope no more people
will be arrested.

BRANDON

A Chartreux monk.

BUCKINGHAM

Oh no, Nicholas Hopkins ¹⁹ ?

¹⁹ "Nicholas Hopkins" was a monk and spiritual adviser to Buckingham. He is said to have prophesied that Buckingham would ascend to the throne.

BRANDON

That's him.

BUCKINGHAM

My surveyor is a liar. The overly-powerful cardinal gave him
gold. My life is already over. I am the shadow of poor
Buckingham, and even now clouds cover me and darken
the bright sun of my life. Goodbye, my lord.

They exit.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Cornets. Enter KING HENRY VIII, leaning on CARDINAL WOLSEY's shoulder, the Nobles, and LOVELL; CARDINAL WOLSEY places himself under KING HENRY VIII's feet on his right side

KING HENRY VIII

My life itself, and the best heart of it,
Thanks you for this great care: I stood i' the level

Shakescleare Translation

Trumpets sound. KING HENRY VIII enters, leaning on CARDINAL WOLSEY's shoulder. Nobles and LOVELL enter with them. CARDINAL WOLSEY sits below KING HENRY VIII, to his right.

KING HENRY VIII

I thank you with all my heart and my life itself for this great
thing you've done. I was the target of a plot that was about

Of a full-charged confederacy, and give thanks
 To you that choked it. Let be call'd before us
 5 That gentleman of Buckingham's; in person
 I'll hear him his confessions justify;
 And point by point the treasons of his master
 He shall again relate.

A noise within, crying 'Room for the Queen!' Enter QUEEN KATHARINE, ushered by NORFOLK, and SUFFOLK: she kneels. KING HENRY VIII riseth from his state, takes her up, kisses and placeth her by him

QUEEN KATHARINE

Nay, we must longer kneel: I am a suitor.

KING HENRY VIII

10 Arise, and take place by us: half your suit
 Never name to us; you have half our power:
 The other moiety, ere you ask, is given;
 Repeat your will and take it.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Thank your majesty.
 15 That you would love yourself, and in that love
 Not unconsider'd leave your honour, nor
 The dignity of your office, is the point
 Of my petition.

KING HENRY VIII

Lady mine, proceed.

QUEEN KATHARINE

20 I am solicited, not by a few,
 And those of true condition, that your subjects
 Are in great grievance: there have been commissions
 Sent down among 'em, which hath flaw'd the heart
 Of all their loyalties: wherein, although,
 25 My good lord cardinal, they vent reproaches
 Most bitterly on you, as putter on
 Of these exactions, yet the king our master--
 Whose honour heaven shield from soil!--even he
 escapes not
 30 Language unmannerly, yea, such which breaks
 The sides of loyalty, and almost appears
 In loud rebellion.

NORFOLK

Not almost appears,
 It doth appear; for, upon these taxation,
 35 The clothiers all, not able to maintain
 The many to them longing, have put off
 The spinsters, carders, fullers, weavers, who,
 Unfit for other life, compell'd by hunger
 And lack of other means, in desperate manner
 40 Daring the event to the teeth, are all in uproar,
 And danger serves among them!

KING HENRY VIII

Taxation!
 Wherein? and what taxation? My lord cardinal,
 You that are blamed for it alike with us,
 45 Know you of this taxation?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Please you, sir,
 I know but of a single part, in aught
 Pertains to the state; and front but in that file
 Where others tell steps with me.

QUEEN KATHARINE

50 No, my lord,
 You know no more than others; but you frame
 Things that are known alike; which are not wholesome

to be carried out and I thank you for stopping it. Have
 Buckingham's servant called before me. I'll hear him speak
 for himself and he'll tell every detail of his master's treason
 again.

There's a noise inside of people shouting, "Make room for the Queen!" QUEEN KATHARINE enters, accompanied by NORFOLK and SUFFOLK. She kneels. KING HENRY VIII rises from his throne, picks her up, kisses her and sits her next to him.

QUEEN KATHARINE

No, I have to kneel longer. I have a request.

KING HENRY VIII

Get up and sit next to me. Don't tell me half your request,
 since you have half my power. I grant you the other half
 before you ask. Tell me your request and grant it yourself.


QUEEN KATHARINE


Thank you, your majesty. My request is that you love
 yourself and, by doing that, that you not neglect your honor
 or the dignity of your position.

KING HENRY VIII

Go on, my lady.

QUEEN KATHARINE

I am told by many people, important ones, that your
 subjects are unhappy. Taxes  have been imposed on
 them that make them disloyal. So, although, my good lord
 cardinal, they reproach you bitterly for convincing the king
 to order these taxes, not even the king our master--may
 God protect his honor!--escapes their rude criticism. The
 language they use is too strong for loyal subjects and
 almost turns into a loud rebellion.

 The "commissions" or taxes mentioned here were devised by Wolsey to pay for England's war with France. These taxes did not come until 1525, however, making them out of place here. The queen's role in arguing against them was also invented for this play.

NORFOLK

It doesn't almost turn into that, it does. Because of these
 taxes, the makers of clothing can't afford to pay all those
 working for them and have dismissed the spinners, wool-
 combers, wool-cleaners, and weavers who don't have any
 other skills and who have become desperate from hunger
 and poverty. They're in an uproar, daring anyone to resist
 them, and they're putting us in danger!

KING HENRY VIII

Taxes! On what? What taxes? My lord cardinal, you're being
 blamed too. Do you know about these taxes?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Sir, I know only a part of state business, and I am only the
 most important of the many people in charge of this
 business.

QUEEN KATHARINE

No, my lord, you don't know any more than anyone else.
 But you cause things to happen that can be known about.
 These things are bad for those who don't want to know

To those which would not know them, and yet must
 Perforce be their acquaintance. These exactions,
 55 Whereof my sovereign would have note, they are
 Most pestilent to the bearing; and, to bear 'em,
 The back is sacrifice to the load. They say
 They are devised by you; or else you suffer
 Too hard an exclamation.

KING HENRY VIII

60 Still exaction!
 The nature of it? in what kind, let's know,
 Is this exaction?

QUEEN KATHARINE

I am much too venturous
 In tempting of your patience; but am bolden'd
 65 Under your promised pardon. The subjects' grief
 Comes through commissions, which compel from each
 The sixth part of his substance, to be levied
 Without delay; and the pretence for this
 Is named, your wars in France: this makes bold mouths:
 70 Tongues spit their duties out, and cold hearts freeze
 Allegiance in them; their curses now
 Live where their prayers did: and it's come to pass,
 This tractable obedience is a slave
 To each incensed will. I would your highness
 75 Would give it quick consideration, for
 There is no primer business.

KING HENRY VIII

By my life,
 This is against our pleasure.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

And for me,
 80 I have no further gone in this than by
 A single voice; and that not pass'd me but
 By learned approbation of the judges. If I am
 Traduced by ignorant tongues, which neither know
 My faculties nor person, yet will be
 85 The chronicles of my doing, let me say
 'Tis but the fate of place, and the rough brake
 That virtue must go through. We must not stint
 Our necessary actions, in the fear
 To cope malicious censurers; which ever,
 90 As ravenous fishes, do a vessel follow
 That is new-trimm'd, but benefit no further
 Than vainly longing. What we oft do best,
 By sick interpreters, once weak ones, is
 Not ours, or not allow'd; what worst, as oft,
 95 Hitting a grosser quality, is cried up
 For our best act. If we shall stand still,
 In fear our motion will be mock'd or carp'd at,
 We should take root here where we sit, or sit
 State-statues only.

KING HENRY VIII

100 Things done well,
 And with a care, exempt themselves from fear;
 Things done without example, in their issue
 Are to be fear'd. Have you a precedent
 Of this commission? I believe, not any.
 105 We must not rend our subjects from our laws,
 And stick them in our will. Sixth part of each?
 A trembling contribution! Why, we take
 From every tree lop, bark, and part o' the timber;
 And, though we leave it with a root, thus hack'd,
 110 The air will drink the sap. To every county
 Where this is question'd send our letters, with
 Free pardon to each man that has denied
 The force of this commission: pray, look to't;
 I put it to your care.

about them but have to. These taxes my king wants to
 know about are very hard to bear. For the people trying to
 bear them it's like they're laborers breaking their backs to
 carry their loads. They say the taxes were your idea. Or
 perhaps you're being unfairly talked about.

KING HENRY VIII

Taxes again! What is this? Tell me, what are these taxes?

QUEEN KATHARINE

I'm worried about boring you, but I take courage from your
 promise to forgive me. The subjects are suffering from taxes
 that take a sixth of each person's wealth, to be collected
 immediately. The excuse for this is said to be your wars in
 France. That makes people say bold things. People refuse to
 do their duties and no longer feel loyalty. Instead of praying
 for you, they curse you. And now their obedience has been
 overpowered by their anger. I would like you to think about
 this, your highness, because there's nothing more
 important.

KING HENRY VIII


I swear by my life, this is not what I wanted.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

As for me, I haven't been any more responsible for it than a
 single man giving his opinion can be. And I only approved it
 because wise judges agreed it was a good idea. If I have
 been betrayed by ignorant people who don't know me or
 my good qualities but insist on reporting what I do, let me
 say that that's the fate of important people and the rough
 obstacle that virtue has to face. We must do what is
 necessary to stop evil-minded critics. These people are like
 hungry sharks following a newly-loaded ship, who can do
 nothing but wish the boat would sink and provide them
 with food. Weak interpreters say that the good things we do
 are either not our doing or just not true. What's worse, just
 as often, they choose something unpleasant about us and
 say it's our greatest act. If we stand still, fearing that we'll be
 mocked or complained about for moving, we'll grow roots
 where we sit and become silent trees, or just sit like
 powerful statues.

KING HENRY VIII

Things done well and carefully give you nothing to fear. You
 should fear the consequences of things that have never
 been done before. Do you have a precedent for this tax? I
 don't think you have one. We must not break our own laws
 to make our subjects do what we want. A sixth of each one's
 property? That's a terrible contribution! It's like we're
 taking the top, the bark, and part of the stump from every
 tree! And, although we leave each one with a root once
 it's been hacked, the air will dry its sap. Send a letter to
 every county where this tax was taken with a free pardon
 for every man who refused to pay this tax. Do it, I trust you
 to take care of it.

 In referring to "every tree," the king picks up on Wolsey's last metaphor in the previous speech, which compares people to trees. Wolsey argues that they must make decisions despite the fear of criticism, or they'd be no better than strong but silent trees. Henry compares his subjects to trees, who have been cut down and destroyed by the tax.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

115 A word with you.
[To the Secretary]
 Let there be letters writ to every shire,
 Of the king's grace and pardon. The grieved commons
 120 Hardly conceive of me; let it be noised
 That through our intercession this revokement
 And pardon comes: I shall anon advise you
 Further in the proceeding.

Exit Secretary. Enter Surveyor

QUEEN KATHARINE

125 I am sorry that the Duke of Buckingham
 Is run in your displeasure.

KING HENRY VIII

It grieves many:
 The gentleman is learn'd, and a most rare speaker;
 To nature none more bound; his training such,
 That he may furnish and instruct great teachers,
 130 And never seek for aid out of himself. Yet see,
 When these so noble benefits shall prove
 Not well disposed, the mind growing once corrupt,
 They turn to vicious forms, ten times more ugly
 Than ever they were fair. This man so complete,
 135 Who was enroll'd 'mongst wonders, and when we,
 Almost with ravish'd listening, could not find
 His hour of speech a minute; he, my lady,
 Hath into monstrous habits put the graces
 That once were his, and is become as black
 140 As if besmear'd in hell. Sit by us; you shall hear--
 This was his gentleman in trust--of him
 Things to strike honour sad. Bid him recount
 The fore-recited practises; whereof
 We cannot feel too little, hear too much.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

145 Stand forth, and with bold spirit relate what you,
 Most like a careful subject, have collected
 Out of the Duke of Buckingham.

KING HENRY VIII

Speak freely.

SURVEYOR

150 First, it was usual with him, every day
 It would infect his speech, that if the king
 Should without issue die, he'll carry it so
 To make the sceptre his: these very words
 I've heard him utter to his son-in-law,
 Lord Abergavenny; to whom by oath he menaced
 155 Revenge upon the cardinal.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Please your highness, note
 This dangerous conception in this point.
 Not friended by his wish, to your high person
 His will is most malignant; and it stretches
 160 Beyond you, to your friends.

QUEEN KATHARINE

My learn'd lord cardinal,
 Deliver all with charity.

KING HENRY VIII

Speak on:
 How grounded he his title to the crown,
 165 Upon our fail? to this point hast thou heard him
 At any time speak aught?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I would like a word with you.

[To the SECRETARY] Let there be letters written to every
 part of the country announcing the king's kindness and
 pardon. The unhappy commoners think badly of me. Let it
 be said that I asked for this retraction and pardon. Then I
 will tell you what to do next.

The SECRETARY exits. The SURVEYOR enters.

QUEEN KATHARINE

I'm sorry you're unhappy with the Duke of Buckingham.

KING HENRY VIII

Many people are. The gentleman is well-read and a very
 good speaker. No one has better natural qualities. He's
 educated enough to teach great teachers all by himself
 without asking for help. But see, when these noble qualities
 are not well put together in a man and the mind is
 corrupted, they turn into bad qualities, ten times uglier
 than they were beautiful. This perfect man was thought to
 be a wonder of nature. He could make an hour of speaking
 seem like a minute because we were listening in such
 fascination. He, my lady, has put all the energy that once
 made him good into monstrous habits and has become as
 evil as if he had been smeared with hell's ashes. Sit next to
 me and you will hear things that will make an honorable
 person sad. This was his trusted servant. Tell him to repeat
 the things he told us before about Buckingham's actions. I
 can't feel too little or hear too much about them.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Stand up and bravely tell what you observed about the
 Duke of Buckingham, like a good subject should.

KING HENRY VIII

Speak freely.

SURVEYOR

First, it was a habit with him, every day he would infect his
 speech by saying it, that if the king died without an heir, he
 would take power himself. I've heard him say these very
 words to his son-in-law, Lord Abergavenny, and he
 promised him he would take revenge on the cardinal.

CARDINAL WOLSEY


Please, your highness, pay attention to this dangerous idea.
 He means you harm. He wants to do evil to you, and his
 anger stretches beyond you, to your friends.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Wise lord cardinal, speak charitably.

KING HENRY VIII

Go on. How did he justify his claim to the crown when I die?
 Have you heard him say anything about that point at any
 time?

 Remember that Buckingham's surveyor is the man in charge of running his large estate (all the land and property he owns).

SURVEYOR

He was brought to this
By a vain prophecy of Nicholas Hopkins.

KING HENRY VIII

What was that Hopkins?

SURVEYOR

170 Sir, a Chartreux friar,
His confessor, who fed him every minute
With words of sovereignty.

KING HENRY VIII

How know'st thou this?

SURVEYOR

Not long before your highness sped to France,
175 The duke being at the Rose, within the parish
Saint Lawrence Poultney, did of me demand
What was the speech among the Londoners
Concerning the French journey: I replied,
Men fear'd the French would prove perfidious,
180 To the king's danger. Presently the duke
Said, 'twas the fear, indeed; and that he doubted
'Twould prove the verity of certain words
Spoke by a holy monk; 'that oft,' says he,
'Hath sent to me, wishing me to permit
185 John de la Car, my chaplain, a choice hour
To hear from him a matter of some moment:
Whom after under the confession's seal
He solemnly had sworn, that what he spoke
My chaplain to no creature living, but
190 To me, should utter, with demure confidence
This pausingly ensued: neither the king nor's heirs,
Tell you the duke, shall prosper: bid him strive
To gain the love o' the commonalty: the duke
Shall govern England.'

QUEEN KATHARINE

195 If I know you well,
You were the duke's surveyor, and lost your office
On the complaint o' the tenants: take good heed
You charge not in your spleen a noble person
And spoil your nobler soul: I say, take heed;
200 Yes, heartily beseech you.

KING HENRY VIII

Let him on.
Go forward.

SURVEYOR

On my soul, I'll speak but truth.
I told my lord the duke, by the devil's illusions
205 The monk might be deceived; and that 'twas dangerous
for him
To ruminate on this so far, until
It forged him some design, which, being believed,
It was much like to do: he answer'd, 'Tush,
210 It can do me no damage;' adding further,
That, had the king in his last sickness fail'd,
The cardinal's and Sir Thomas Lovell's heads
Should have gone off.

KING HENRY VIII

Ha! what, so rank? Ah ha!
215 There's mischief in this man: canst thou say further?

SURVEYOR

I can, my liege.

KING HENRY VIII

Proceed.


SURVEYOR


He thought of this because of Nicholas Hopkins's
meaningless prophecy.

KING HENRY VIII

Who was Hopkins?

SURVEYOR

A Chartreux friar, sir, his [confessor](#) , who told him every
minute he'd be king.

 Remember that Buckingham's
"confessor" is a priest serving as his
spiritual adviser.

KING HENRY VIII

How do you know this?

SURVEYOR

Not long before you went to France, your Highness, the
duke was at the Rose in the town of Saint Lawrence
Poultney. He asked me what the Londoners were saying
about the French journey. I replied that men were afraid of
the French would be treacherous and harm the king. Then the
duke said that this was indeed what people were afraid of,
and that he thought it would prove the truth of some words
spoken by a holy monk. "This monk often," he said, "has
written to me asking me to allow him to meet with John de
la Car, my priest, for an hour to hear about an important
matter. Under the safety of confession he said that my
priest should repeat what he said to no one except me. He
hesitantly said this: tell the duke that neither the king nor
his heirs will prosper. Tell him to try to gain the people's
affection. The duke will govern England."

QUEEN KATHARINE

If I recognize you, you were the duke's surveyor and lost
your job because of his tenants' complaints. Take care you
don't accuse a noble person out of anger and damn your
soul, which is even nobler. Watch out, I beg you.

KING HENRY VIII

Let him go on. Come forward.

SURVEYOR

I swear on my soul, I'll tell the truth. I told my lord the duke
that the monk might have been deceived by the devil's
tricks and that it was dangerous for him to think about this
so much because it would make him start thinking about a
plot. This was likely to happen if he believed it. He
answered, "Shh, it can't do me any harm." He added that if
the king had died of his last sickness the cardinal's and Sir
Thomas Lovell's heads would have come off.

KING HENRY VIII

What! He said this so openly? Aha! That man is trouble. Can
you say anything more?

SURVEYOR

I can, my king.

KING HENRY VIII

Go on.

SURVEYOR

Being at Greenwich,
After your highness had reproved the duke
220 About Sir William Blomer,--

KING HENRY VIII

I remember
Of such a time: being my sworn servant,
The duke retain'd him his. But on; what hence?

SURVEYOR

'If; quoth he, 'I for this had been committed,
225 As, to the Tower, I thought, I would have play'd
The part my father meant to act upon
The usurper Richard; who, being at Salisbury,
Made suit to come in's presence; which if granted,
As he made semblance of his duty, would
230 Have put his knife to him.'

KING HENRY VIII

A giant traitor!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Now, madam, may his highness live in freedom,
and this man out of prison?

QUEEN KATHARINE

God mend all!

KING HENRY VIII

235 There's something more would out of thee; what say'st?

SURVEYOR

After 'the duke his father;' with 'the knife,'
He stretch'd him, and, with one hand on his dagger,
Another spread on's breast, mounting his eyes
He did discharge a horrible oath; whose tenor
240 Was,--were he evil used, he would outgo
His father by as much as a performance
Does an irresolute purpose.

KING HENRY VIII

There's his period,
To sheathe his knife in us. He is attach'd;
245 Call him to present trial: if he may
Find mercy in the law, 'tis his: if none,
Let him not seek 't of us: by day and night,
He's traitor to the height.

Exeunt

SURVEYOR

At Greenwich, when you had scolded the duke about Sir
William Blomer--

KING HENRY VIII

I remember that. He was my servant and the duke hired
him. But go on, what happened then?

SURVEYOR

He said, "If I had been imprisoned for this in the Tower, as I
thought I might be, I would have done what my father
meant to do to the usurper Richard ⁵. When the king was
at Salisbury my father asked to be brought into his
presence. If this had been allowed, he would have stabbed
him as he pretended to kiss his hand.

⁵ Henry Stafford, the 2nd Duke of Buckingham, led an unsuccessful rebellion against King Richard III. He led this rebellion in the name of Henry Tudor, (who would become Henry VIII), the father of Henry VIII. Ultimately, Stafford was executed for treason.

KING HENRY VIII

What a giant traitor!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Now, ma'am, can the king live safely if this man is not in
jail?

QUEEN KATHARINE

May God make all this better!

KING HENRY VIII

There's something more you want to say. What is it?

SURVEYOR

After he said these things about "the duke his father" and
"the knife," he stretched himself out and, with one hand on
his dagger and another on his chest, he rolled his eyes and
let out a horrible curse. The gist of it was that, if he were
badly treated, he would do so much better than his father:
as if he were going to do what his father only sort of wished
he could do.

KING HENRY VIII

That's what he wants, to stab me. He has been arrested.
Call him to trial at once. If he can find any mercy for himself
in the law, it's his. If not, he won't get any from me. I swear
by day and night, he's the worst of traitors.

They exit.

Act 1, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter Chamberlain and SANDS

CHAMBERLAIN

Is't possible the spells of France should juggle
Men into such strange mysteries?

SANDS

New customs,
Though they be never so ridiculous,
5 Nay, let 'em be unmanly, yet are follow'd.

Shakescleare Translation

Lords CHAMBERLAIN and SANDS enter.

CHAMBERLAIN

Is it possible that France could enchant men to do such
strange things?

SANDS

New fashions are being followed, however ridiculous or
even unmanly they are.

CHAMBERLAIN

As far as I see, all the good our English
Have got by the late voyage is but merely
A fit or two o' the face; but they are shrewd ones;
For when they hold 'em, you would swear directly
10 Their very noses had been counsellors
To Pepin or Clotharius, they keep state so.

SANDS

They have all new legs, and lame ones: one would take
it,
That never saw 'em pace before, the spavin
15 Or springhalt reign'd among 'em.

CHAMBERLAIN

Death! my lord,
Their clothes are after such a pagan cut too,
That, sure, they've worn out Christendom.

Enter LOVELL

CHAMBERLAIN

20 How now!
What news, Sir Thomas Lovell?

LOVELL

Faith, my lord,
I hear of none, but the new proclamation
25 That's clapp'd upon the court-gate.

CHAMBERLAIN

What is't for?

LOVELL

The reformation of our travell'd gallants,
That fill the court with quarrels, talk, and tailors.

CHAMBERLAIN

I'm glad 'tis there: now I would pray our monsieurs
30 To think an English courtier may be wise,
And never see the Louvre.

LOVELL

They must either,
For so run the conditions, leave those remnants
Of fool and feather that they got in France,
35 With all their honourable point of ignorance
Pertaining thereunto, as fights and fireworks,
Abusing better men than they can be,
Out of a foreign wisdom, renouncing clean
The faith they have in tennis, and tall stockings,
40 Short blister'd breeches, and those types of travel,
And understand again like honest men;
Or pack to their old playfellows: there, I take it,
They may, 'cum privilegio,' wear away
The lag end of their lewdness and be laugh'd at.

SANDS

45 'Tis time to give 'em physic, their diseases
Are grown so catching.

CHAMBERLAIN

What a loss our ladies
Will have of these trim vanities!

CHAMBERLAIN

As far as I can see, the only good thing our Englishmen got
from the recent voyage was a few new facial expressions.
But they're good ones. When they put on those expressions,
you would swear their noses had been counsellors to kings
Pepin or Clotharius ¹ because they look so dignified.

¹ Pepin and Clotharius were kings of the Franks between 500 and 800 AD. In choosing these early kings as reference points, Chamberlain may be implying that the new fashions at court are barbaric.

SANDS

They have new ways of walking, and they seem lame. You
would think if you had never seen them walk like that
before that they had leg diseases.

CHAMBERLAIN

For the love of God! My lord, their clothes look like pagan
clothes. They don't look like Christians anymore.

LOVELL enters.

CHAMBERLAIN

Hello! What's the news, Sir Thomas Lovell?

LOVELL

Truly, my lord, I haven't heard about anything except the
new proclamation that's been put up on the gate to the
court.

CHAMBERLAIN

What is it for?

LOVELL

To reform the returned travelers who fill the court with
quarrels, talk, and tailors.

CHAMBERLAIN

I'm glad it's there. I want these courtiers who act French to
think that an English courtier can be wise even if he's never
seen the Louvre ².

² At the time, the "Louvre" mentioned here was a French palace. Modern readers will know it better as the famous art museum housing the Mona Lisa and other treasures.

LOVELL

The proclamation asks that they give up those scraps of
foolish cloth and feathers they got in France along with all
their pointless knowledge, or rather ignorance, about them.
They must also give up fights and fireworks and insulting
better men than they can ever be for not knowing about
foreign things. They must completely renounce their
faithfulness to tennis and tall stockings, short pants that
look like they have blisters on them, and that sort of thing
they picked up from traveling, and act like honest men
again. Or head back to their old playmates in France. There,
as I understand, the proclamation allows them "freely" to
indulge in the rest of their foolishness and be laughed at.

SANDS

It's time to give them medicine ³, as their diseases have
become so contagious.

³ In Sands's metaphor, the Englishmen who are putting on French mannerisms must be cured of foreign "diseases." England must put a stop to this new love for French fashion before it affects (or infects) the whole country.

CHAMBERLAIN

The ladies will miss these neat pointless things!

LOVELL

Ay, marry,

- 50 There will be woe indeed, lords: the sly whoresons
Have got a speeding trick to lay down ladies;
A French song and a fiddle has no fellow.

SANDS

The devil fiddle 'em! I am glad they are going,
For, sure, there's no converting of 'em: now

- 55 An honest country lord, as I am, beaten
A long time out of play, may bring his plainsong
And have an hour of hearing; and, by'r lady,
Held current music too.

CHAMBERLAIN

Well said, Lord Sands;

- 60 Your colt's tooth is not cast yet.

SANDS

No, my lord;
Nor shall not, while I have a stump.

CHAMBERLAIN

Sir Thomas,
Whither were you a-going?

LOVELL

- 65 To the cardinal's:
Your lordship is a guest too.

CHAMBERLAIN

O, 'tis true:
This night he makes a supper, and a great one,
To many lords and ladies; there will be

- 70 The beauty of this kingdom, I'll assure you.

LOVELL

That churchman bears a bounteous mind indeed,
A hand as fruitful as the land that feeds us;
His dewes fall every where.

CHAMBERLAIN

No doubt he's noble;

- 75 He had a black mouth that said other of him.

SANDS

He may, my lord; has wherewithal: in him
Sparing would show a worse sin than ill doctrine:
Men of his way should be most liberal;
They are set here for examples.

CHAMBERLAIN


- 80 True, they are so:
But few now give so great ones. My barge stays;
Your lordship shall along. Come, good Sir Thomas,
We shall be late else; which I would not be,
For I was spoke to, with Sir Henry Guildford
- 85 This night to be comptrollers.


SANDS

I am your lordship's.

Exeunt

LOVELL

Yes, it's true. There will be sadness about that, lords. The clever bastards have figured out a quick trick to make ladies go to bed with them. You can't compete with a French song and a fiddle .

 "Fiddle," here and in Sands's next line, is a double entendre. A fiddle is an instrument, and may also refer to sexual contact.

SANDS

May the devil fiddle them! I am glad they are going because it's impossible to change them. Now an honest country noblemen like me, who couldn't compete, can bring my church songs and be listened to for an hour. And, by the virgin Mary, it will be considered fashionable music too.

CHAMBERLAIN

Well said, Lord Sands. You're still a wild young colt with all its teeth.

SANDS

Yes, my lord, and I'll keep at it while I still have a tooth in my head.

CHAMBERLAIN

Sir Thomas, where were you headed?


LOVELL


To the cardinal's. You're a guest there too.

CHAMBERLAIN

Oh, it's true. Tonight he's having a dinner, a huge one, for many lords and ladies. All the beauties in the kingdom will be there, I assure you.

LOVELL

That churchman  has a generous mind and gives as freely as the land that grows food for us. His gifts go everywhere.

 The "churchman" in question is Cardinal Wolsey.

CHAMBERLAIN

No doubt he's noble. Anyone who says otherwise has an evil mouth.

SANDS

They may, my lord, and probably do. Hoarding would be a worse sin for him than a wrong belief. Men like him should be generous. They are put on this earth as examples to the rest.

CHAMBERLAIN

It's true, they are. But few men now are such great examples. My barge is waiting. You'll come with me. Come, Sir Thomas, or we'll be late. I wouldn't want to be, because I was asked (along with Sir Henry Guildford) to be a master of ceremonies.

SANDS

I'm at your service.

They exit.

Act 1, Scene 4

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
5 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

GUILDFORD

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,
15 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;
20 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:
25 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,
30 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:
35 But he would bite none; just as I do now,
He would kiss you twenty with a breath.

Kisses her

Oboes sound. There's a small table under a canopy for CARDINAL WOLSEY and a longer table for the guests. ANNE and some other Ladies and Gentlemen, his guests, enter at one door. GUILDFORD enters at another.

GUILDFORD

Ladies, the cardinal welcomes all of you. He dedicates tonight to happiness and you. No one here, he hopes, in this troop of nobles, has brought a single sorrow with her. He wants everyone to be as happy as good company, good wine, and a good welcome can make good people. Oh, my lord, you're late.

CHAMBERLAIN, SANDS, and LOVELL enter.


GUILDFORD

The thought of this beautiful company made me hurry.

CHAMBERLAIN

You are young, Sir Harry Guildford.


SANDS

Sir Thomas Lovell, if the cardinal had even half my unreligious thoughts in him, some of these women would have a quick refreshment  before they rested that I think would please them more than this one. I swear by my life, they're a sweet band of beauties.

LOVELL

Oh, if only you were the confessor of one or two of them!

SANDS

I wish I were. I would give them an easy penance .

LOVELL

Really? How easy?

SANDS

As easy as a feather-bed would make it.

CHAMBERLAIN

Sweet ladies, would you sit? Sir Harry, you seat this half of them. I'll be in charge of the other half. The cardinal is entering. No, don't freeze us: two women placed together makes cold weather. My Lord Sands, you'll keep them awake. Please, sit between these ladies.


SANDS

Certainly, and thank you, your lordship. Please, sweet ladies, if I talk a little wildly, forgive me. I inherited it from my father.


ANNE


Was he crazy, sir?


SANDS

Oh, very crazy, extremely crazy, including in love. But he wouldn't bite  anyone. Like I do now, he would give you twenty kisses in one breath.

SANDS kisses ANNE.

 The "running banquet" Sands mentions serves as a sexual innuendo--if Wolsey weren't holy, he'd have slept with several of his female guests before the food was served.

 After confessing your sins, you were given a "penance" such as saying a certain number of prayers to make up for them. Sands means that he would ask the women to perform sexual acts.

 Madmen were considered likely to bite others. This provides an easy (if odd) pick-up line for Sands, moving from mad men biting to lovers kissing.

CHAMBERLAIN

Well said, my lord.

So, now you're fairly seated. Gentlemen,

40 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

45 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.

Drinks

SANDS

Your grace is noble:

50 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,

55 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,

60 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

65 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

70 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?

CHAMBERLAIN

Well said my lord. So, now you're beautifully seated
between two beauties. Gentleman, you'll be punished if
these beautiful ladies leave looking unhappy.

SANDS

As for me, don't worry.

Oboes sound. CARDINAL WOLSEY enters and takes his seat.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

You're welcome, my beautiful guests. Whatever noble lady
or gentleman is not happy is not my friend. I drink to
confirm my welcome. Good health to you all.

WOLSEY drinks.

SANDS

You're noble, your grace. Let me have a cup like that to hold
my thanks and I'll drink it to save so much talking.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

My Lord Sands, thank you. Entertain your neighbors.

Ladies, you are not happy. Gentlemen, whose fault is this?


SANDS


The red wine must first flush their beautiful faces, my lord.
Then they'll talk so much we'll have to be silent.

ANNE

You're a cheerful player, my lord Sands.

SANDS

Yes, if I have something to play. Here's to you, your
ladyship. Drink to it, ma'am, because it's a toast to a [thing](#) 

 A "thing" was a common euphemism for a man's sexual organ in Shakespeare's time. Anne puns on this suggestive meaning in the next line.

ANNE

You can't show me.

SANDS

I told you they would talk soon, your grace.

Drums and trumpets play and cannons go off.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What's that?

CHAMBERLAIN

Some of you go look outside.

A SERVANT exits.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What warlike noise was that, and what was it for? No, don't
be afraid, ladies. The laws of war will protect you.

The SERVANT re-enters.

CHAMBERLAIN

Well? What is it?

SERVANT

75 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,
80 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

CARDINAL WOLSEY

You have now a broken banquet; but we'll mend it.
85 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

CARDINAL WOLSEY

A noble company! what are their pleasures?

CHAMBERLAIN

90 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,
95 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
100 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

105 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,
110 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?

SERVANT

It seems like a noble band of strangers. They've left their barge and come to land. They're heading here as great ambassadors from foreign princes.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Good lord chamberlain, go welcome them. You can speak French. And please treat them well and bring them to us, where beauty as plentiful as in heaven will shine on them. Go with him, some of you.

The CHAMBERLAIN exits with attendants. They all rise and the tables are removed.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Your feast has been broken up, but we'll fix that. I wish all of you good digestion. I welcome you once more: welcome, all.

Oboes sound. KING HENRY VIII and others enter dressed like shepherds, led by the CHAMBERLAIN. They go straight to CARDINAL WOLSEY and bow to him gracefully.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

This is a noble band! What do they want?

CHAMBERLAIN

Because they don't speak English, they asked me to tell you that, having heard rumors of this noble and beautiful crowd meeting here tonight, they had to leave their flocks because of the great respect they have for beauty. They beg you to allow them to see these ladies and they ask for an hour of dancing with them.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Tell them, lord chamberlain, they have done an honor to my house. I give them a thousand thanks in return and ask them to do as they like.

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

KING HENRY VIII

The most beautiful hand I ever touched! Oh, I never knew what beauty was until now!

Music plays and they dance.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

My lord!

CHAMBERLAIN

Yes, your grace?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Please, tell them this from me: one of them should be more worthy of sitting here than me. If I could only recognize him, I would give up this seat to him out of my love and duty.

CHAMBERLAIN

I will, my lord.

CHAMBERLAIN whispers to the dancers.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What do they say?

CHAMBERLAIN

115 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
120 My royal choice.

KING HENRY VIII

Ye have found him, cardinal:

Unmasking

KING HENRY VIII

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

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I am glad
Your grace is grown so pleasant.

KING HENRY VIII

My lord chamberlain,
130 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,
135 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

140 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

145 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
150 Who's best in favour. Let the music knock it.

Exeunt with trumpets

CHAMBERLAIN

They all confess that there is one like that. If you can find
him he will take the seat.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Let me see, then. Allow me, gentlemen. I choose the king
here.

KING HENRY VIII

You found him, cardinal.

KING HENRY VIII removes his disguise.

KING HENRY VIII

You throw a beautiful party. That's a good thing, lord. If you
weren't a churchman, cardinal, I can tell you I would judge
you badly.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I am glad you're making so many jokes, your grace.

KING HENRY VIII

Please, come here, my lord chamberlain. Who's that
beautiful lady?

CHAMBERLAIN

Your grace, that's Sir Thomas Bullen's daughter. He's the
Viscount Rochford. She's one of the queen's ladies in
waiting.

KING HENRY VIII

By God, she's a pretty one. Sweetheart, I would be rude to
dance with you and not kiss you. Drink to her health,
gentlemen! Everyone drink.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Sir Thomas Lovell, is the banquet in the private room
ready?

LOVELL

Yes, my lord.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I'm worried you feel a little hot from dancing, your grace.

KING HENRY VIII

Yes, I'm afraid I feel very hot.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

There's fresher air in the next room, my lord.

KING HENRY VIII

Everyone, lead in your ladies. Dear partner, I won't abandon
you yet. Let's be cheerful. My good lord cardinal, I have half
a dozen toasts to drink to these beautiful ladies, and I have
to dance with them again. And then let's think about whom
I like best. Let the music play.

They exit with trumpets playing.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter two Gentlemen, meeting

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Whither away so fast?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

O, God save ye!
Even to the hall, to hear what shall become
Of the great Duke of Buckingham.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

5 I'll save you
That labour, sir. All's now done, but the ceremony
Of bringing back the prisoner.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Were you there?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes, indeed, was I.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

10 Pray, speak what has happen'd.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

You may guess quickly what.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Is he found guilty?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes, truly is he, and condemn'd upon't.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I am sorry for't.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

15 So are a number more.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

But, pray, how pass'd it?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I'll tell you in a little. The great duke
Came to the bar; where to his accusations
He pleaded still not guilty and alleged
20 Many sharp reasons to defeat the law.
The king's attorney on the contrary
Urged on the examinations, proofs, confessions
Of divers witnesses; which the duke desired
To have brought viva voce to his face:
25 At which appear'd against him his surveyor;
Sir Gilbert Peck his chancellor; and John Car,
Confessor to him; with that devil-monk,
Hopkins, that made this mischief.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

That was he
30 That fed him with his prophecies?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

The same.
All these accused him strongly; which he fain
Would have flung from him, but, indeed, he could not:
And so his peers, upon this evidence,
35 Have found him guilty of high treason. Much

Shakescleare Translation

Two GENTLEMEN enter from opposite directions.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Where are you going so fast?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Oh, hello! To the hall to hear what will happen to the great
Duke of Buckingham.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I'll spare you that effort, sir. It's all over, except for bringing
the prisoner back to jail.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Were you there?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes, I was.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Please tell me what happened.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

You can easily guess.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Was he found guilty?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes, and condemned for it.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I'm sorry about that.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

So are many other people.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

But tell me, how did it happen?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I'll tell you in a few words. The great duke came to court,
where he still pled not guilty to the accusations against him
and made many good arguments to escape the law. But the
king's lawyer brought against him the questioning, proofs,
and confessions of many different witnesses. The duke
asked to have them testify in front of him. So his surveyor
appeared against him along with Sir Gilbert Peck (his
chancellor), John Car (his confessor) and that devilish
monk Hopkins, who caused this trouble.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

He was the one who fed the duke his prophecies?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes. They all accused him strongly. He tried to deny
everything but couldn't. So his peers, seeing this evidence,
found him guilty of high treason. He said a lot that was very
learned to argue for his life. But everything he said was
either pitied (but not listened to) or forgotten.

He spoke, and learnedly, for life; but all
Was either pitied in him or forgotten.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

After all this, how did he bear himself?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

When he was brought again to the bar, to hear
40 His knell rung out, his judgment, he was stirr'd
With such an agony, he sweat extremely,
And something spoke in cholera, ill, and hasty:
But he fell to himself again, and sweetly
In all the rest show'd a most noble patience.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

45 I do not think he fears death.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Sure, he does not:
He never was so womanish; the cause
He may a little grieve at.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Certainly
50 The cardinal is the end of this.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

'Tis likely,
By all conjectures: first, Kildare's attainder,
Then deputy of Ireland; who removed,
Earl Surrey was sent thither, and in haste too,
55 Lest he should help his father.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

That trick of state
Was a deep envious one.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

At his return
No doubt he will requite it. This is noted,
60 And generally, whoever the king favours,
The cardinal instantly will find employment,
And far enough from court too.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

All the commons
Hate him perniciously, and, o' my conscience,
65 Wish him ten fathom deep: this duke as much
They love and dote on; call him bounteous Buckingham,
The mirror of all courtesy;--

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Stay there, sir,
70 And see the noble ruin'd man you speak of.

*Enter BUCKINGHAM from his arraignment; tip-staves before him; the
axe with the edge towards him; halberds on each side: accompanied
with LOVELL, VAUX, SANDS, and common people*

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Let's stand close, and behold him.

BUCKINGHAM

All good people,
You that thus far have come to pity me,
Hear what I say, and then go home and lose me.
75 I have this day received a traitor's judgment,
And by that name must die: yet, heaven bear witness,
And if I have a conscience, let it sink me,
Even as the axe falls, if I be not faithful!
The law I bear no malice for my death;
80

SECOND GENTLEMAN

After all this, how did he act?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

When he was brought back to the stand to hear the
judgement, he was filled with such agony that he sweated a
lot and spoke words angrily, badly, and hastily. But he came
back to himself and showed a noble patience for the rest of
it.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I do not think he fears death.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Surely he doesn't. He was never that womanish. He may be
a little sad about the cause of his death.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Certainly the cardinal is responsible for this.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

It's likely, and everyone thinks so. First, there's the fact that
Kildare was arrested, who was then the deputy of Ireland.
Once he was removed, the Earl of Surry was sent there, and
quickly too, so he couldn't help his father.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

That was a sneaky, jealous trick.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

No doubt he'll take his revenge for it when he returns. It has
been noticed that, in general, the cardinal instantly finds a
job far from court for whomever the king favors.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

All the common people hate him and I swear they want him
dead and buried. They love this duke as much as they hate
the cardinal. They call him generous Buckingham, the best
example of all good qualities--

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Stop there, sir, and look at the noble, ruined man you're
talking about.

*BUCKINGHAM enters from his trial. Staffs are carried in
front of him and an axe with the edge turned towards him
to symbolize his death sentence. Armed guards are on each
side of him. He's accompanied by LOVELL, VAUX, SANDS,
and some common people.*

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Let's get closer and look at him.

BUCKINGHAM

Good people, you who have come here to pity me, listen to
what I say and then go home and forget me. Today I was
sentenced as a traitor, and I must die as one. But, may
heaven bear witness, and may my conscience sink me into
the ground just as the axe is falling if I lie, I am a faithful
subject! I don't blame the law for my death. It did what was
right based on the evidence. But I wish those who
prosecuted me were better Christians. Whatever they are, I

'T has done, upon the premises, but justice:
 But those that sought it I could wish more Christians:
 Be what they will, I heartily forgive 'em:
 Yet let 'em look they glory not in mischief,
 Nor build their evils on the graves of great men;
 85 For then my guiltless blood must cry against 'em.
 For further life in this world I ne'er hope,
 Nor will I sue, although the king have mercies
 More than I dare make faults. You few that loved me,
 And dare be bold to weep for Buckingham,
 90 His noble friends and fellows, whom to leave
 Is only bitter to him, only dying,
 Go with me, like good angels, to my end;
 And, as the long divorce of steel falls on me,
 Make of your prayers one sweet sacrifice,
 95 And lift my soul to heaven. Lead on, o' God's name.

LOVELL

I do beseech your grace, for charity,
 If ever any malice in your heart
 Were hid against me, now to forgive me frankly.

BUCKINGHAM

Sir Thomas Lovell, I as free forgive you
 100 As I would be forgiven: I forgive all;
 There cannot be those numberless offences
 'Gainst me, that I cannot take peace with:
 no black envy
 Shall mark my grave. Commend me to his grace;
 105 And if he speak of Buckingham, pray, tell him
 You met him half in heaven: my vows and prayers
 Yet are the king's; and, till my soul forsake,
 Shall cry for blessings on him: may he live
 Longer than I have time to tell his years!
 110 Ever beloved and loving may his rule be!
 And when old time shall lead him to his end,
 Goodness and he fill up one monument!

LOVELL

To the water side I must conduct your grace;
 Then give my charge up to Sir Nicholas Vaux,
 115 Who undertakes you to your end.

VAUX

Prepare there,
 The duke is coming: see the barge be ready;
 And fit it with such furniture as suits
 The greatness of his person.

BUCKINGHAM

120 Nay, Sir Nicholas,
 Let it alone; my state now will but mock me.
 When I came hither, I was lord high constable
 And Duke of Buckingham; now, poor Edward Bohun:
 Yet I am richer than my base accusers,
 125 That never knew what truth meant: I now seal it;
 And with that blood will make 'em one day groan for't.
 My noble father, Henry of Buckingham,
 Who first raised head against usurping Richard,
 Flying for succor to his servant Banister,
 130 Being distress'd, was by that wretch betray'd,
 And without trial fell; God's peace be with him!
 Henry the Seventh succeeding, truly pitying
 My father's loss, like a most royal prince,
 Restored me to my honours, and, out of ruins,
 135 Made my name once more noble. Now his son,
 Henry the Eighth, life, honour, name and all
 That made me happy at one stroke has taken
 For ever from the world. I had my trial,
 And, must needs say, a noble one; which makes me,
 140 A little happier than my wretched father:
 Yet thus far we are one in fortunes: both
 Fell by our servants, by those men we loved most;
 A most unnatural and faithless service!
 Heaven has an end in all: yet, you that hear me,
 145


gladly forgive them. But let them be sure not to be proud of
 the mischief they do or kill great men to pursue their evil
 goals. Because then my innocent blood will accuse them. I
 don't hope for more life in this world and I won't ask for it,
 although the king is able to forgive more evil deeds than I
 would dare do. You few who loved me and dare to weep for
 Buckingham, his noble friends, the only pain and death he
 feels is having to leave you. Go with me to my death like
 good angels. And, as the blade cuts me in two, offer your
 prayers as a sweet offering to God and lift my soul to
 heaven. Let's go, in God's name.

LOVELL

Please, your grace, as a kindness, forgive me if there was
 ever any resentment against me in your heart.

BUCKINGHAM

Sir Thomas Lovell, I forgive you as freely as I wish to be
 forgiven. I forgive everything. There can't be so many
 crimes against me that I can't forgive them all. No evil
 resentment will be left in me when I die. Give my best to the
 king. If he talks about Buckingham, please, tell him you saw
 him already half in heaven. My prayers are still with the king
 and until I die I will bless him: may he live longer than I have
 time to count his age! May he be always beloved and loving!
 And when it's time for him to die, may he lie in the same
 grave as goodness !

 Presumably, this wish for "goodness" and the king to "fill up one monument" means something like "May he be good for the rest of his life."


LOVELL


I must lead you to the riverbank, your grace, then hand you
 over to Sir Nicholas Vaux, who will lead you to your death.

VAUX

Prepare yourselves, the duke is coming. Make sure the
 barge is ready and fill it with furniture good enough for
 someone that important.

BUCKINGHAM

No, Sir Nicholas, leave it alone. Standing on ceremony will
 only mock me now. When I came here I was lord high
 constable and the Duke of Buckingham. Now, I'm just
 Edward Bohun. But I am better than my low accusers who
 never knew what truth was. I am now showing them. And
 my blood will punish them for this someday. My noble
 father , Henry of Buckingham, who first revolted against
 the usurper Richard, ran for help to his servant Bannister
 when he was in trouble and was betrayed by that wretch
 and died without a trial. May he rest in peace! Henry VII
 succeeded to the throne and pitied the death of my father.
 Like a good king should, he gave me back the titles I had
 lost and made my name noble again. Now his son, Henry
 VIII, takes my life, honor, name, and everything that made
 me happy from this world with one stroke. I had my trial
 and I have to say it was a noble one. That makes me a little
 luckier than my poor father. But we are the same in our
 fortune in this way: we were both brought down by our
 servants, by the men we loved most. Those were unnatural
 and unfaithful servants! God is responsible for everything.
 But you who listen to me, know this for sure since you hear
 it from a dying man. Be sure that you are not too generous
 with your love and your secrets. Because those you make
 your friends and give your hearts to will fall away from you
 like drops of water when they see the smallest misfortune

 Remember that Buckingham's father led an unsuccessful rebellion in the name of Henry VIII's father, and was executed for treason.

This from a dying man receive as certain:
 Where you are liberal of your loves and counsels
 Be sure you be not loose; for those you make friends
 And give your hearts to, when they once perceive
 The least rub in your fortunes, fall away
 150 Like water from ye, never found again
 But where they mean to sink ye. All good people,
 Pray for me! I must now forsake ye: the last hour
 Of my long weary life is come upon me. Farewell:
 And when you would say something that is sad,
 155 Speak how I fell. I have done; and God forgive me!

Exeunt BUCKINGHAM and Train

FIRST GENTLEMAN

O, this is full of pity! Sir, it calls,
 I fear, too many curses on their heads
 That were the authors.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

If the duke be guiltless,
 160 'Tis full of woe: yet I can give you inkling
 Of an ensuing evil, if it fall,
 Greater than this.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Good angels keep it from us!
 What may it be? You do not doubt my faith, sir?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

165 This secret is so weighty, 'twill require
 A strong faith to conceal it.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Let me have it;
 I do not talk much.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I am confident,
 170 You shall, sir: did you not of late days hear
 A buzzing of a separation
 Between the king and Katharine?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes, but it held not:
 For when the king once heard it, out of anger
 175 He sent command to the lord mayor straight
 To stop the rumor, and allay those tongues
 That durst disperse it.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

But that slander, sir,
 Is found a truth now: for it grows again
 180 Fresher than e'er it was; and held for certain
 The king will venture at it. Either the cardinal,
 Or some about him near, have, out of malice
 To the good queen, possess'd him with a scruple
 That will undo her: to confirm this too,
 185 Cardinal Campeius is arrived, and lately;
 As all think, for this business.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

'Tis the cardinal;
 And merely to revenge him on the emperor
 For not bestowing on him, at his asking,
 190 The archbishopric of Toledo, this is purposed.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I think you have hit the mark: but is't not cruel
 That she should feel the smart of this? The cardinal
 Will have his will, and she must fall.

ahead of you. And they will disappear forever, except when
 they come back to drown you. All good people should pray
 for me! I must leave you now. The last hour of my long, tired
 life has arrived. Goodbye. And when you want to hear
 something sad, talk about how I died. I am done. May God
 forgive me!

BUCKINGHAM and his attendants exit.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Oh, this is sad! I'm afraid this will damn the people who did
 it.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

If the duke is innocent, this is really sad. But I can give you a
 hint of a future evil that will be worse than this if it
 happens.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

May good angels protect us from it! What can it be? You
 trust me to keep it secret, don't you sir?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

This secret is so important that it will require great strength
 of character to keep it secret.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Let me hear it. I don't talk much.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I trust you. You will hear it, sir. Did you not recently hear talk
 about a separation between the king and Katharine?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes, but it wasn't true. Because when the king heard about
 it, he was angry and sent an order immediately to the
 mayor to stop the rumor and arrest the people who dared
 to spread it.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

But it turns out that this lie is true now. Because the rumor
 has reappeared stronger than it ever was, and it's believed
 that the king will definitely try to get a separation. Either
 the cardinal or some of his people have, out of malice
 against the good queen, ruined her by sowing some doubt
 in the king. What confirms the truth of this is that Cardinal
 Campeius has recently arrived, and everyone thinks it's
 about this business.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

It's the cardinal. And he's doing this just to get revenge
 against the emperor for not making him archbishop of
 Toledo as he asked.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I think you're right. But isn't it cruel to make her suffer for
 that? The cardinal will get what he wants and she will lose
 power.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

'Tis woful.

195 We are too open here to argue this;
Let's think in private more.

Exeunt

FIRST GENTLEMAN

It is sad. We shouldn't talk about this so openly. Let's consider this more in private.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

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

5 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.'

10 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

15 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

20 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,

25 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,
30 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,

Shakesclore Translation

CHAMBERLAIN enters reading a letter.

CHAMBERLAIN

"My lord, I made sure the horses you sent for were well chosen, trained, and cared for. They were young and good-looking, and of the best breed of the north. When they were ready to send to London, a servant of the cardinal's took them from me by force and with a warrant he had. He said this was the reason: his master had to be served before a subject, if not before the king. We couldn't say anything to that, sir." I am afraid he will be served before the king. Well, let him have them. I think he will have everything.

NORFOLK and SUFFOLK enter and go up to CHAMBERLAIN.

NORFOLK

Hello, my lord chamberlain.

CHAMBERLAIN

Good day to both of you.

SUFFOLK

What is the king doing?

CHAMBERLAIN

I left him alone, thinking sad thoughts and feeling troubled.

NORFOLK

Why?

CHAMBERLAIN

It seems that he's feeling guilty about his marriage to his brother's wife.

SUFFOLK

No, I think he's thinking about another lady.


NORFOLK


It's true. This is the cardinal's doing, the king-cardinal more like. That blind priest does what he wants as if he's fortune's oldest son and heir. The king will find out what he's really like someday.

SUFFOLK

I pray to God he does! Or he'll never understand himself.

NORFOLK

He acts so religiously in everything he does! And so eagerly! Because now he has broken the alliance between us and the emperor , the queen's powerful nephew, he messes with the king's mind and scatters dangerous thoughts, doubts, fears, and despair, and troubles his conscience. All this is about his marriage. And to cure the king of all this he suggests a divorce. That would mean the loss of the woman

 Remember that Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor at the time, was the queen's nephew.

He counsels a divorce; a loss of her
 35 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,
 40 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,
 45 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,
 50 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.
 60 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:
 65 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

70 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

75 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
 80 Is business of estate; in which we come

who hung around his neck like a jewel for twenty years and never lost her brightness. The loss of the woman who loves him as much as angels love good men. The woman who would still bless the king even if the worst disaster happened. Isn't this a religious thing to do?

CHAMBERLAIN

May heaven protect me from advice like that! It's true that this news is everywhere. Everyone is saying this and every good heart weeps for it. Everyone who dares look into this affair see that he wants the king to marry the French king's sister. One day God will open the king's eyes. He hasn't seen this bold, bad man as he really is for so long.

SUFFOLK

And God will free us from slavery to him.

NORFOLK

We need to pray (and to pray strongly) for help, or this proud man will turn us from princes into servants. He does whatever he wants with men's honors.

SUFFOLK

As for me, my lord, I neither love him nor fear him. That's what I say. I'll do the best I can without his help, if the king wishes it. His curse and his blessings affect me equally: they're just breath and I don't believe in them. I always knew what he was like and I still do. So I leave him to the man who made him proud, the Pope.

NORFOLK

Let's go in and distract the king from these sad thoughts that affect him too much with some other business. Will you accompany us, my lord?

CHAMBERLAIN

I can't, I'm sorry. The king has sent me elsewhere. Besides, this isn't a good time to disturb him. Goodbye.

NORFOLK

Thank you, lord chamberlain.

The CHAMBERLAIN exits. KING HENRY VIII opens the curtain to his room and sits reading thoughtfully.

SUFFOLK

He looks so sad! He's definitely feeling very disturbed.

KING HENRY VIII

Who's there?

NORFOLK

I pray to God he isn't angry.

KING HENRY VIII

I said, who's there? How dare you interrupt me when I'm thinking? Who do you think I am, huh?

NORFOLK

A kind king who forgives offenses that weren't intentional. We failed in our duty because of state business and we've come to know what you want to do about it.

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?

85

Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS, with a commission

KING HENRY VIII

Who's there? my good lord cardinal? O my Wolsey,

The quiet of my wounded conscience;

Thou art a cure fit for a king.

90 *[To CARDINAL CAMPEIUS]*

You're welcome,

Most learned reverend sir, into our kingdom:

Use us and it.

95 *[TO CARDINAL WOLSEY]*

My good lord, have great care

I be not found a talker.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Sir, you cannot.

100 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]

105 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,

110 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

115 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,

120 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;

125 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,

130 You are so noble. To your highness' hand

I tender my commission; by whose virtue,

KING HENRY VIII

You're too bold. Go away. I'll let you know what time you

can come talk about business. Does this seem like a time

for unholy business?

CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS enter with a written document.

KING HENRY VIII

Who's there? The cardinal? Oh my dear Wolsey, you heal my

wounded conscience. You're a cure good enough for a king.

[To CARDINAL CAMPEIUS] You're welcome, wise respected sir, to my kingdom. Do what you like with it and with me.

[TO CARDINAL WOLSEY] My good lord, make sure I don't talk too much.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

You couldn't possibly, sir. I wish you would just give us an

hour of private conversation, your grace.

KING HENRY VIII

[To NORFOLK and SUFFOLK] I'm busy; go away.

NORFOLK

[So only SUFFOLK can hear] Surely this priest doesn't have

any pride in him?

SUFFOLK

[So only NORFOLK can hear] None to speak of. I wouldn't be

like him in return for all his power. This can't go on.

NORFOLK

[So only SUFFOLK can hear] If it does, I'll attack him.

SUFFOLK

[So only NORFOLK can hear] So will I.

NORFOLK and SUFFOLK exit.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

You have shown greater wisdom than all other princes in

telling your doubts to the spokesperson of all Christianity.

Who can be angry now, or envious? The Spanish, who are

her relatives and loyal to her, must confess if they are good

people that the trial is fair and noble. All the clerks, I mean

the learned ones, in Christian kingdoms can speak wisely

about this. Rome, with its good judgement, invited by you,

has sent one man to speak for it to us, this good man, this

fair and learned priest, Cardinal Campeius. I introduce him

to you once more, your highness.

KING HENRY VIII

And once more I welcome him with a hug and thank the

cardinals for their affection to me. They have sent me just

the kind of man I hoped for.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

You deserve the love of all strangers, your grace, because

you are so noble. I give my warrant to you, your highness. In

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

135 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:
140 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

145 *[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
150 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

155 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

160 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

165 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:
170 I will have none so near else. Learn this, brother,
We live not to be grip'd by meaner persons.

it the court of Rome makes me, their servant, and you, my
lord Cardinal of York, impartial judges in this matter.

KING HENRY VIII

Two equally virtuous men. The queen will be told what
you've come for immediately. Where's Gardiner?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I know you've always loved her so much that you won't
deny her what even a less important woman has the right
to ask for: scholars allowed to argue freely on her side.

KING HENRY VIII

Yes, God forbid, and she'll have the best ones. I'll reward
the one who does best. Cardinal, please call Gardiner, my
new secretary. I like him.

*CARDINAL WOLSEY exits. CARDINAL WOLSEY re-enters, with
GARDINER.*

CARDINAL WOLSEY

[So only GARDINER can hear] Shake my hand. I wish you
well. You work for the king now.

GARDINER

[So only CARDINAL WOLSEY can hear] But I'll always do as
you command, your grace. You helped me rise in power.

KING HENRY VIII

Come here, Gardiner.

They walk and whisper together.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

My Lord of York, didn't a certain Doctor Pace do this man's
job before him?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Yes, he did.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Wasn't he thought to be a learned man?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Yes, absolutely.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Believe me, then, there's a bad rumor being spread about
you, lord cardinal.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What! About me?

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

They're not afraid to say you envied him and you were
afraid he would rise in power because he was virtuous, so
you kept him away from the king. This made him so sad
that he went crazy and died.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

May he rest in peace! That's all my Christian duty to him:
saying that. As for living slanderers, there are places they
can be punished. He was a fool, because he insisted on
being virtuous. That good man does what I say when I give
him commands. I have no one else as faithful. Learn this,
brother: we don't need less important people meddling
with us.

KING HENRY VIII

Deliver this with modesty to the queen.

Exit GARDINER

KING HENRY VIII

The most convenient place that I can think of
 175 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!
 180 O, 'tis a tender place; and I must leave her.

Exeunt

KING HENRY VIII

Tell the queen kindly about this.

GARDINER exits.

KING HENRY VIII

The best place I can think of to hear the case is Black-Friars.
 You will meet about this important business there. Have it
 prepared, my dear Wolsey. Oh, my lord, wouldn't a man
 who had a choice about it be sad to leave such a sweet
 wife? But my conscience, my conscience! My conscience is
 disturbed about this and I must leave her.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter ANNE and an Old Lady

ANNE

Not for that neither: here's the pang that pinches:
 His highness having lived so long with her, and she
 So good a lady that no tongue could ever
 Pronounce dishonour of her; by my life,
 5 She never knew harm-doing: O, now, after
 So many courses of the sun enthroned,
 Still growing in a majesty and pomp, the which
 To leave a thousand-fold more bitter than
 'Tis sweet at first to acquire,--after this process,
 10 To give her the avaunt! it is a pity
 Would move a monster.

OLD LADY

Hearts of most hard temper
 Melt and lament for her.

ANNE

O, God's will! much better
 15 She ne'er had known pomp: though't be temporal,
 Yet, if that quarrel, fortune, do divorce
 It from the bearer, 'tis a sufferance panging
 As soul and body's severing.

OLD LADY

Alas, poor lady!
 20 She's a stranger now again.

ANNE

So much the more
 Must pity drop upon her. Verily,
 I swear, 'tis better to be lowly born,
 And range with humble livers in content,
 25 Than to be perk'd up in a glistening grief,
 And wear a golden sorrow.

OLD LADY

Our content
 Is our best having.

ANNE

By my troth and maidenhead,
 30 I would not be a queen.

Shakescleare Translation

ANNE and an OLD LADY enter.

ANNE

No, that's not it. This is what bothers me: the king has lived
 with her for so long and she's such a good wife that no one
 could ever speak badly of her. I swear she's never hurt
 anyone. Oh, now she's shared the king's throne for so long
 and grown so powerful and majestic that it will be a
 thousand times more sad for him to leave her than it was
 delightful for him to get her at first. Kicking her out after all
 this time! Even a monster would pity her.

OLD LADY

Even the hardest hearts melt and are sad for her.

ANNE

Oh, I wish she had never been in power. Power is just a
 temporary worldly good, but being separated from it by
 bad fortune hurts as badly as death.

OLD LADY

Poor woman! Now she's a stranger in this country again.

ANNE

So much the more reason to pity her. I swear it's better to
 be low-born and wander around happily with other humble
 people than to be dressed up in glittering costumes but be
 sad, as if you were wearing sadness made of gold.

OLD LADY

Happiness is our most important possession.

ANNE

I swear by my faithfulness and virginity I wouldn't want to
 be a queen.

OLD LADY

Beshrew me, I would,
 And venture maidenhead for't; and so would you,
 For all this spice of your hypocrisy:
 You, that have so fair parts of woman on you,
 35 Have too a woman's heart; which ever yet
 Affected eminence, wealth, sovereignty;
 Which, to say sooth, are blessings; and which gifts,
 Saving your mincing, the capacity
 Of your soft cheveril conscience would receive,
 40 If you might please to stretch it.

ANNE

Nay, good troth.

OLD LADY

Yes, troth, and troth; you would not be a queen?

ANNE

No, not for all the riches under heaven.

OLD LADY

'Tis strange: a three-pence bow'd would hire me,
 45 Old as I am, to queen it: but, I pray you,
 What think you of a duchess? have you limbs
 To bear that load of title?

ANNE

No, in truth.

OLD LADY

Then you are weakly made: pluck off a little;
 50 I would not be a young count in your way,
 For more than blushing comes to: if your back
 Cannot vouchsafe this burthen, 'tis too weak
 Ever to get a boy.

ANNE

How you do talk!
 55 I swear again, I would not be a queen
 For all the world.

OLD LADY

In faith, for little England
 You'd venture an emballing: I myself
 Would for Carnarvonshire, although there long'd
 60 No more to the crown but that. Lo, who comes here?

Enter Chamberlain

CHAMBERLAIN

Good morrow, ladies. What were't worth to know
 The secret of your conference?

ANNE

My good lord,
 Not your demand; it values not your asking:
 65 Our mistress' sorrows we were pitting.


CHAMBERLAIN


It was a gentle business, and becoming
 The action of good women: there is hope
 All will be well.

ANNE

Now, I pray God, amen!

OLD LADY

Damn me, I would, and I would give my virginity to become
 one. And so would you, even though you're being a
 hypocrite about it. You have all the attractive parts a
 woman should have including a woman's heart, which
 always wants high status, wealth, and power. And those
 things really are blessings. You would be able to fit all those
 gifts in your soft conscience if you were willing to stretch it
 out like a [kid-skin glove](#) .

 *The Old Lady suggests that Anne ought to "stretch" her sense of what is right as one stretches a leather glove, thereby making it possible for her to accept gifts of power and wealth while remaining virtuous.*

ANNE

Goodness, no.

OLD LADY

Goodness yes, and say yes. You don't want to be a queen?

ANNE

No, not for all the wealth in the world.

OLD LADY


It's strange. I could be hired to be a queen with a three-
 penny coin, old as I am. But what do you think of being a
 duchess? Would you be strong enough to bear that title?

ANNE

Really, no.

OLD LADY

Then you're weak. Come on. I wouldn't want to be a young
 count going after you: he wouldn't get any more than
 blushing from you. If your back can't bear this burden of a
 title it's too weak for you to lie on it to conceive a boy [👶](#).


 *The bawdy pun that makes up the Old Lady's speech doubles as foreshadowing. The Old Lady suggests that if Anne can't even bear or "vouchsafe" to become a duchess, she won't be able to conceive and bear a boy-child. Henry would later execute Anne after she failed to produce a male heir.*

ANNE

You say such terrible things! I promise again, I wouldn't
 agree to be queen for everything in the world.

OLD LADY

For little England, you'd dare to bear an emballing [👶](#). I
 would just for Carnarvonshire, even if the king didn't own
 anything more than that.

 *The Old Lady is full of bawdy puns. An "emballing" is the formal installation of a king or queen with the ball or orb that symbolizes royalty. Here, it also refers to the male sexual organ.*

CHAMBERLAIN enters.

CHAMBERLAIN

Good morning, ladies. What would I have to give you to
 hear what you were talking about?

ANNE

My good lord, don't even give us your question. It's not
 worth asking about. We were feeling sorry for our mistress.

CHAMBERLAIN

That was kind, and the right thing for good women to do.
 There's hope that everything will be fine.

ANNE

I hope so!

CHAMBERLAIN

70 You bear a gentle mind, and heavenly blessings
Follow such creatures. That you may, fair lady,
Perceive I speak sincerely, and high note's
Ta'en of your many virtues, the king's majesty
Commends his good opinion of you, and
75 Does purpose honour to you no less flowing
Than Marchioness of Pembroke: to which title
A thousand pound a year, annual support,
Out of his grace he adds.

ANNE

I do not know
80 What kind of my obedience I should tender;
More than my all is nothing: nor my prayers
Are not words duly hallow'd, nor my wishes
More worth than empty vanities; yet prayers and wishes
Are all I can return. Beseech your lordship,
85 Vouchsafe to speak my thanks and my obedience,
As from a blushing handmaid, to his highness;
Whose health and royalty I pray for.

CHAMBERLAIN

Lady,
I shall not fail to approve the fair conceit
90 The king hath of you.
I have perused her well;
Beauty and honour in her are so mingled
That they have caught the king: and who knows yet
But from this lady may proceed a gem
95 To lighten all this isle? I'll to the king,
And say I spoke with you.

*Exit Chamberlain***ANNE**

My honour'd lord.

OLD LADY

Why, this it is; see, see!
I have been begging sixteen years in court,
100 Am yet a courtier beggarly, nor could
Come pat betwixt too early and too late
For any suit of pounds; and you, O fate!
A very fresh-fish here--fie, fie, fie upon
This compell'd fortune!--have your mouth fill'd up
105 Before you open it.

ANNE

This is strange to me.

OLD LADY

How tastes it? is it bitter? forty pence, no.
There was a lady once, 'tis an old story,
That would not be a queen, that would she not,
110 For all the mud in Egypt: have you heard it?

ANNE

Come, you are pleasant.

OLD LADY

With your theme, I could
O'ermount the lark. The Marchioness of Pembroke!
A thousand pounds a year for pure respect!
115 No other obligation! By my life,
That promises moe thousands: honour's train
Is longer than his foreskirt. By this time
I know your back will bear a duchess: say,
Are you not stronger than you were?

ANNE

120 Good lady,
Make yourself mirth with your particular fancy,

CHAMBERLAIN

You have a good mind. God blesses people like you. So that you know I'm speaking sincerely, beautiful lady, when I say that important people notice your virtue, the king says he thinks highly of you and wants to do you the honor of making you Marchioness ⁴ of Pembroke. In addition to this title he kindly adds a thousand pounds a year as annual support.

⁴ A "marchioness," counterpart to the male title of marquis, ranks below a duchess and above a countess. It is, in other words, a very high rank in the British peerage, and quite the honor for Anne.

ANNE

I don't know how to show my gratefulness. Even giving him more than all I have would count for nothing. It's not that my prayers aren't holy words and my wishes are pointless, but prayers and wishes are all I can give him in return. Please, your lordship, tell the king that my thankfulness and obedience are as great as if I were just a blushing servant. I pray for his health and royalty.

CHAMBERLAIN

Lady, I will confirm the king's good opinion of you.

[To himself] I have examined her carefully. She has so much beauty and honor that she has captured the king's heart. Who knows, maybe this lady will have a child like a gem ⁵ that will brighten this whole island.

⁵ The "child" like a "gem" that Anne would bear is Queen Elizabeth, sometimes called "Gloriana" to symbolize how her greatness shone throughout the kingdom.

[To Anne] I'll go to the king and say I spoke to you.

*CHAMBERLAIN exits.***ANNE**

Goodbye, my lord.

OLD LADY

See? See? This is it! I have been begging in court for sixteen years and I'm still a poor courtier and have never been in the right place at the right time to be given money. But you, oh this is fate! You're new here--damn, damn this fortune forced on you!--your mouth is filled with fortune before you even open it.

ANNE

This is strange to me.

OLD LADY

How does it taste? Does it taste bad? I bet forty cents it doesn't. There was once a lady, it's an old story, who didn't want to be a queen, she didn't, for all the mud in Egypt ⁶. Have you heard it?

⁶ The "mud in Egypt," enriched by the Nile river, is the source of the country's wealth.

ANNE

Come on, you're joking.

OLD LADY

With your gifts, I could rise higher in court than a lark rises in the sky. The Marchioness of Pembroke! A thousand pounds a year just because he respects you! No other obligations! By my life, that promises more thousands. Honor is like a dress with a longer back than front: more follows than came before this. By this time I know you will be able to bear the title of duchess. Tell me, aren't you already stronger than you were?

ANNE

My good lady, make yourself laugh with the things you imagine and leave me out of it. I'd rather die than feel

And leave me out on't. Would I had no being,
If this salute my blood a jot: it faints me,
To think what follows.

125 The queen is comfortless, and we forgetful
In our long absence: pray, do not deliver
What here you've heard to her.

OLD LADY

What do you think me?

Exeunt

excited about this. I'm scared to think about what will happen next. The queen is in despair and we are neglecting her by being gone so long. Please don't tell her what you heard here.

OLD LADY

What kind of person do you think I am?

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Trumpets, sennet, and cornets. Enter two Vergers, with short silver wands; next them, two Scribes, in the habit of doctors; after them, CANTERBURY alone; after him, LINCOLN, Ely, Rochester, and Saint Asaph; next them, with some small distance, follows a Gentleman bearing the purse, with the great seal, and a cardinal's hat; then two Priests, bearing each a silver cross; then a Gentleman-usher bare-headed, accompanied with a Sergeant-at-arms bearing a silver mace; then two Gentlemen bearing two great silver pillars; after them, side by side, CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS; two Noblemen with the sword and mace. KING HENRY VIII takes place under the cloth of state; CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS sit under him as judges. QUEEN KATHARINE takes place some distance from KING HENRY VIII. The Bishops place themselves on each side the court, in manner of a consistory; below them, the Scribes. The Lords sit next the Bishops. The rest of the Attendants stand in convenient order about the stage

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Whilst our commission from Rome is read,
Let silence be commanded.

KING HENRY VIII

What's the need?
It hath already publicly been read,
5 And on all sides the authority allow'd;
You may, then, spare that time.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Be't so. Proceed.

SCRIBE

Say, Henry King of England, come into the court.

CRIER

Henry King of England, & c.

KING HENRY VIII

10 Here.

SCRIBE

Say, Katharine Queen of England, come into the court.

CRIER

Katharine Queen of England, & c.

QUEEN KATHARINE makes no answer, rises out of her chair, goes about the court, comes to KING HENRY VIII, and kneels at his feet; then speaks

Shakescleare Translation

Different trumpet sounds are heard. Two vergers (church officials) enter carrying short silver wands. Next to them enter two scribes dressed like doctors. Following them, CANTERBURY enters alone. After him, LINCOLN, Ely, Rochester, and Saint Asaph enter. After them, following at a short distance, enters a gentleman carrying the cardinal's purse with the Great Seal and a cardinal's hat. Then enter two priests, each carrying a silver cross. Then an usher enters bareheaded, with a sergeant-at-arms carrying a silver staff. Then two gentlemen enter carrying two large silver sticks. After them enter CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS side by side. Two noblemen enter with a sword and staff. KING HENRY VIII sits under a canopy. CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS sit below him as judges. QUEEN KATHARINE sits at some distance from KING HENRY VIII. The bishops sit at either side of the court as though they are at a church council. The scribes sit below them. The lords sit next to the bishops. The rest of the attendants are arranged around the stage.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Silence while our warrant from Rome is being read.

KING HENRY VIII

Why? It has already been read publicly and its authority has been accepted by everyone. So don't waste that time.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Very well. Go on.

SCRIBE

Say, Henry King of England, come into the court.

CRIER

Henry King of England, come into the court.

KING HENRY VIII

Here.

SCRIBE

Say, Katharine Queen of England, come into the court.

CRIER

Katharine Queen of England, come into the court.

QUEEN KATHARINE doesn't answer but rises from her chair, goes around the court, comes to KING HENRY VIII, and kneels at his feet, then speaks.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Sir, I desire you do me right and justice;
 15 And to bestow your pity on me: for
 I am a most poor woman, and a stranger,
 Born out of your dominions; having here
 No judge indifferent, nor no more assurance
 Of equal friendship and proceeding. Alas, sir,
 20 In what have I offended you? what cause
 Hath my behavior given to your displeasure,
 That thus you should proceed to put me off,
 And take your good grace from me? Heaven witness,
 I have been to you a true and humble wife,
 25 At all times to your will conformable;
 Ever in fear to kindle your dislike,
 Yea, subject to your countenance, glad or sorry
 As I saw it inclined: when was the hour
 I ever contradicted your desire,
 30 Or made it not mine too? Or which of your friends
 Have I not strove to love, although I knew
 He were mine enemy? what friend of mine
 That had to him derived your anger, did I
 Continue in my liking? nay, gave notice
 35 He was from thence discharged. Sir, call to mind
 That I have been your wife, in this obedience,
 Upward of twenty years, and have been blest
 With many children by you: if, in the course
 And process of this time, you can report,
 40 And prove it too, against mine honour aught,
 My bond to wedlock, or my love and duty,
 Against your sacred person, in God's name,
 Turn me away; and let the foul'st contempt
 Shut door upon me, and so give me up
 45 To the sharp'st kind of justice. Please you sir,
 The king, your father, was reputed for
 A prince most prudent, of an excellent
 And unmatched wit and judgment: Ferdinand,
 My father, king of Spain, was reckon'd one
 50 The wisest prince that there had reign'd by many
 A year before: it is not to be question'd
 That they had gather'd a wise council to them
 Of every realm, that did debate this business,
 Who deem'd our marriage lawful: wherefore I humbly
 55 Beseech you, sir, to spare me, till I may
 Be by my friends in Spain advised; whose counsel
 I will implore: if not, i' the name of God,
 Your pleasure be fulfill'd!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

You have here, lady,
 60 And of your choice, these reverend fathers; men
 Of singular integrity and learning,
 Yea, the elect o' the land, who are assembled
 To plead your cause: it shall be therefore bootless
 That longer you desire the court; as well
 65 For your own quiet, as to rectify
 What is unsettled in the king.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

His grace
 Hath spoken well and justly: therefore, madam,
 It's fit this royal session do proceed;
 70 And that, without delay, their arguments
 Be now produced and heard.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Lord cardinal,
 To you I speak.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Your pleasure, madam?

QUEEN KATHARINE

75 Sir,
 I am about to weep; but, thinking that
 We are a queen, or long have dream'd so, certain

QUEEN KATHARINE

Sir, I ask you to do what is right and just by me and to pity
 me. I am a very miserable woman and a stranger born
 outside your land. I have no unbiased judge here and no
 guarantee of fair treatment. Sir, how have I offended you?
 What cause has my behavior given you to be angry and to
 divorce me and take away your kindness from me? May
 heaven be my witness, I have been a faithful and humble
 wife to you and have always done what you wanted. I have
 always been afraid of making you dislike me and have been
 guided by your appearance: I have been happy or sad
 according to how happy or sad you seemed. When have I
 ever refused anything you desired or not also desired it for
 you? Or which of your friends have I not tried to love even if
 I knew he was my enemy? What friend of mine who had
 made you angry did I continue to like? No, I always had him
 sent away. Sir, remember I have been your wife, obedient to
 you in this way, for more than twenty years and have been
 blessed in becoming pregnant with many of your children.
 If, in the course of all this time, you can report and prove
 anything against my honor, my faithfulness in marriage, or
 my love and duty to you, in God's name, send me away.
 Hate me, shut your door to me, and give me up to the law's
 punishment. Please sir, the king your father was known as a
 very wise king, of excellent and unequalled intelligence and
 judgement. Ferdinand, my father, king of Spain, was
 thought to be one of the wisest princes to have ruled Spain
 for many years. Undoubtedly they gathered wise advisers
 from every country to debate this business and they
 thought it would be legal for us to marry. So I humbly ask
 you, sir, to wait until I can be advised by my friends in
 Spain. I will beg for their advice. If not, in the name of God, I
 hope you will do what gives you pleasure!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Lady, you have your choice of these wise scholars here.
 They're men of unmatched honesty and learning. They're
 the best in the country, assembled to argue the case for
 you. So it won't help you to keep asking the court for this; it
 won't help you either by making you feel better or solving
 the problem worrying the king.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

The cardinal has spoken the truth well. So, ma'am, this
 royal trial should go on. With no more delay, let the
 arguments be made and heard.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Lord cardinal, I speak to you.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What would you like, ma'am?

QUEEN KATHARINE

Sir, I'm about to cry. But, considering that I am a queen, or
 at least have thought I was for a long time (certainly I am

The daughter of a king, my drops of tears
I'll turn to sparks of fire.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

80 Be patient yet.

QUEEN KATHARINE

I will, when you are humble; nay, before,
Or God will punish me. I do believe,
Induced by potent circumstances, that
You are mine enemy, and make my challenge
85 You shall not be my judge: for it is you
Have blown this coal betwixt my lord and me;
Which God's dew quenches! Therefore I say again,
I utterly abhor, yea, from my soul
Refuse you for my judge; whom, yet once more,
90 I hold my most malicious foe, and think not
At all a friend to truth.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I do profess
You speak not like yourself; who ever yet
Have stood to charity, and display'd the effects
95 Of disposition gentle, and of wisdom
O'ertopping woman's power. Madam, you do me wrong:
I have no spleen against you; nor injustice
For you or any: how far I have proceeded,
Or how far further shall, is warranted
100 By a commission from the consistory,
Yea, the whole consistory of Rome. You charge me
That I have blown this coal: I do deny it:
The king is present: if it be known to him
That I gainsay my deed, how may he wound,
105 And worthily, my falsehood! yea, as much
As you have done my truth. If he know
That I am free of your report, he knows
I am not of your wrong. Therefore in him
It lies to cure me: and the cure is, to
110 Remove these thoughts from you: the which before
His highness shall speak in, I do beseech
You, gracious madam, to unthink your speaking
And to say so no more.

QUEEN KATHARINE

My lord, my lord,
115 I am a simple woman, much too weak
To oppose your cunning. You're meek and
humble-mouth'd;
You sign your place and calling, in full seeming,
With meekness and humility; but your heart
120 Is cramm'd with arrogance, spleen, and pride.
You have, by fortune and his highness' favours,
Gone slightly o'er low steps and now are mounted
Where powers are your retainers, and your words,
Domestics to you, serve your will as't please
125 Yourself pronounce their office. I must tell you,
You tender more your person's honour than
Your high profession spiritual: that again
I do refuse you for my judge; and here,
Before you all, appeal unto the pope,
130 To bring my whole cause 'fore his holiness,
And to be judged by him.

She curtsies to KING HENRY VIII, and offers to depart

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

The queen is obstinate,
Stubborn to justice, apt to accuse it, and
Disdainful to be tried by't: 'tis not well.
135 She's going away.

KING HENRY VIII

Call her again.


the daughter of a king), I'll turn my teardrops into fiery
sparks.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Be patient.

QUEEN KATHARINE

I will, when you are humble. No, before that, or God will
punish me because that will never happen. I have strong
reasons to believe you're my enemy, and I say you will not
be my judge. You are the one who started this trouble
between my husband and me, which I hope God will put an
end to ! So I say again, I hate, yes, I absolutely refuse you
as my judge. Again, I think you are my worst enemy and not
at all truthful.

 The extended metaphor in the original text (involving "sparks," a "coal," and "dew") is that Katharine's trial is a fire that Wolsey has started, and God will have to put it out with his mercy, which she imagines as dew.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I think you don't sound like yourself. You've always been
kind and good-natured and seemed wiser than other
women. Ma'am, you're treating me badly. I don't have any
anger towards you and I don't want to treat you or anyone
unjustly. What I've done and will do is allowed by a warrant
from the holy council, the whole holy council, of Rome. You
accuse me of starting this trouble. I deny it. The king is here.
If he knows that I'm lying about what I did, he can rightly
punish me for my lie! Yes, he can punish me as much for
lying as you have punished me for being true to him. If he
knows that I am innocent of what you say, he knows you
have been unfair to me. So it's up to him to help me. That
help is, to stop you from believing this about me. Before he
says anything about this, I beg you, ma'am, to change your
mind and not say what you said again.

QUEEN KATHARINE

My lord, my lord, I am a simple woman, much too weak to
fight your cleverness. You're quiet and speak humbly, you
talk about your position and your job in public quietly and
humbly. But your heart is stuffed with arrogance, anger, and
pride. You have by fortune and with the help of powerful
people risen quickly from the lower class and now you are
in a high enough position that kings are your servants and
your words, which are also your servants, do whatever you
wish them to do. I must tell you, you care more about your
own honor than your important religious position. Again, I
say I refuse you as my judge. And here, before all of you, I
appeal to the Pope. I'll bring my whole case to him and be
judged by him.

She curtsies to KING HENRY VIII and starts to leave.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

The queen is stubborn and refuses justice. She's quick to
accuse it and unwilling to be judged by it. This is bad. She's
going away.

KING HENRY VIII

Call her again.

CRIER

Katharine Queen of England, come into the court.

GRIFFITH

Madam, you are call'd back.

QUEEN KATHARINE

140 What need you note it? pray you, keep your way:
When you are call'd, return. Now, the Lord help,
They vex me past my patience! Pray you, pass on:
I will not tarry; no, nor ever more
Upon this business my appearance make
In any of their courts.

Exeunt QUEEN KATHARINE and her Attendants

KING HENRY VIII

145 Go thy ways, Kate:
That man i' the world who shall report he has
A better wife, let him in nought be trusted,
For speaking false in that: thou art, alone,
If thy rare qualities, sweet gentleness,
150 Thy meekness saint-like, wife-like government,
Obeying in commanding, and thy parts
Sovereign and pious else, could speak thee out,
The queen of earthly queens: she's noble born;
And, like her true nobility, she has
155 Carried herself towards me.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Most gracious sir,
In humblest manner I require your highness,
That it shall please you to declare, in hearing
Of all these ears,-- for where I am robb'd and bound,
160 There must I be unloosed, although not there
At once and fully satisfied,-- whether ever I
Did broach this business to your highness; or
Laid any scruple in your way, which might
Induce you to the question on't? or ever
165 Have to you, but with thanks to God for such
A royal lady, spake one the least word that might
Be to the prejudice of her present state,
Or touch of her good person?

KING HENRY VIII

My lord cardinal,
170 I do excuse you; yea, upon mine honour,
I free you from't. You are not to be taught
That you have many enemies, that know not
Why they are so, but, like to village-curs,
Bark when their fellows do: by some of these
175 The queen is put in anger. You're excused:
But will you be more justified? You ever
Have wish'd the sleeping of this business; never
desired
It to be stirr'd; but oft have hinder'd, oft,
180 The passages made toward it: on my honour,
I speak my good lord cardinal to this point,
And thus far clear him. Now, what moved me to't,
I will be bold with time and your attention:
Then mark the inducement. Thus it came; give heed to't:
185 My conscience first received a tenderness,
Scruple, and prick, on certain speeches utter'd
By the Bishop of Bayonne, then French ambassador;
Who had been hither sent on the debating
A marriage 'twixt the Duke of Orleans and
190 Our daughter Mary: i' the progress of this business,
Ere a determinate resolution, he,
I mean the bishop, did require a respite;
Wherein he might the king his lord advertise
Whether our daughter were legitimate,
195 Respecting this our marriage with the dowager,
Sometimes our brother's wife. This respite shook
The bosom of my conscience, enter'd me,
Yea, with a splitting power, and made to tremble

CRIER

Katharine Queen of England, come into the court.

GRIFFITH

Ma'am, you are being called back.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Why do you have to point it out? Please, go away. Come back when you're called. Now, God help me, they're making me lose my patience! Please, go away. I won't stay. No, nor will I appear in any of their courts anymore about this business.

QUEEN KATHARINE and her attendants exit.

KING HENRY VIII


Go away, Kate. Don't trust anyone in the whole world who says he has a better wife, because he's lying about that. You alone would be declared the queen of earthly queens if your rare good qualities, sweet gentleness, saint-like patience, wife-like actions, obedience, and your other royal and holy qualities, could speak for you. She comes from a noble family and she has always acted towards me with true nobility.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Dear sir, I humbly ask you to declare in front of everyone whether I first spoke of this business to you or put any doubt in your way that would make you think about it. It is as though I have been robbed and tied up by being accused of this and I have to be untied, even if not here at once, and repaid for it. Or have I ever spoken the smallest word to you that led you to question your marriage? Or have I ever said something that could hurt her or her character, without always also thanking God for giving you such a royal wife?

KING HENRY VIII

My lord cardinal, I say you're innocent. Yes, I swear by my honor you're innocent of this. You don't need to be told you have many enemies who don't know why they're your enemies but, like village dogs, bark when the others do. The queen has been made angry by some of these. You're innocent. But do you want me to go on making excuses for you? You always wanted this business put to rest, never wanted it started, but have often slowed it down. On my honor, I'll say that for the good cardinal and clear him of the accusations. Now, I'll be so bold as to ask for your time and attention to tell you what made me want to do this. So listen to how this started. It came about like this. Listen. I had my first doubt because of some things the Bishop of Bayonne, then the French ambassador, said, who had been sent here to talk about a marriage between the Duke of Orleans and our daughter Mary. During this business, before a decision was made, he, I mean the bishop, asked for a pause. He wanted to let the king his master find out whether my daughter was legitimate, given my marriage to the woman who was once my brother's wife. This pause shook me, entered into my conscience, yes, it almost split me in two and made my heart tremble. This thought forced its way into my conscience in such a way that many amazed considerations pushed and forced their way in along with it. First, I thought God wasn't happy with me. He had commanded nature that, if a male child was conceived in my wife's womb by me, the womb would not give life to him but instead would be his grave. Her male children either died where they were conceived or shortly after they were born. So I thought this was a punishment against me and

 Katharine was married to Henry VIII's older brother Arthur for five months, before his untimely death. Pope Julius II gave Katharine and Henry a dispensation in order to marry, on the assumption that the marriage of Katharine and Arthur was never consummated (they never had sex).

200 The region of my breast; which forced such way,
That many mazed considerings did throng
And press'd in with this caution. First, methought
I stood not in the smile of heaven; who had
Commanded nature, that my lady's womb,
If it conceived a male child by me, should
205 Do no more offices of life to't than
The grave does to the dead; for her male issue
Or died where they were made, or shortly after
This world had air'd them: hence I took a thought,
This was a judgment on me; that my kingdom,
210 Well worthy the best heir o' the world, should not
Be gladdened in't by me: then follows, that
I weigh'd the danger which my realms stood in
By this my issue's fail; and that gave to me
Many a groaning throe. Thus hulling in
215 The wild sea of my conscience, I did steer
Toward this remedy, whereupon we are
Now present here together: that's to say,
I meant to rectify my conscience,--which
I then did feel full sick, and yet not well,--
220 By all the reverend fathers of the land
And doctors learn'd: first I began in private
With you, my Lord of Lincoln; you remember
How under my oppression I did reek,
When I first moved you.

LINCOLN

225 Very well, my liege.

KING HENRY VIII

I have spoke long: be pleased yourself to say
How far you satisfied me.

LINCOLN

So please your highness,
The question did at first so stagger me,
230 Bearing a state of mighty moment in't
And consequence of dread, that I committed
The daring'st counsel which I had to doubt;
And did entreat your highness to this course
Which you are running here.

KING HENRY VIII

235 I then moved you,
My Lord of Canterbury; and got your leave
To make this present summons: unsolicited
I left no reverend person in this court;
But by particular consent proceeded
240 Under your hands and seals: therefore, go on:
For no dislike i' the world against the person
Of the good queen, but the sharp thorny points
Of my alleged reasons, drive this forward:
Prove but our marriage lawful, by my life
245 And kingly dignity, we are contented
To wear our mortal state to come with her,
Katharine our queen, before the primest creature
That's paragon'd o' the world.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

So please your highness,
250 The queen being absent, 'tis a needful fitness
That we adjourn this court till further day:
Meanwhile must be an earnest motion
Made to the queen, to call back her appeal
She intends unto his holiness.

KING HENRY VIII

255 *[Aside]* I may perceive
These cardinals trifle with me: I abhor
This dilatory sloth and tricks of Rome.
My learn'd and well-beloved servant, Cranmer,
Prithee, return: with thy approach, I know,
260 My comfort comes along. Break up the court:
I say, set on.

that my kingdom, which deserves the best heir in the world,
would not get one from me to make it happy. Then I
considered the danger my kingdom was in because I didn't
have a child. And that made me groan and suffer. So,
thrown around in my conscience like a ship in a storm, I
came up with this way to fix things that we are all engaged
in today. That is, I wanted all the holy churchmen and
learned academics in the country to cure my conscience,
which felt sick then and isn't better yet. I began by speaking
privately with you, my Lord of Lincoln. You remember how
upset I was when I first spoke to you.

LINCOLN

Very clearly, my king.

KING HENRY VIII

I have spoken for a long time. Please tell me what you have
done to satisfy my conscience.

LINCOLN

Your highness, the matter was so important and had such
terrible consequences that it amazed me at first. I worried I
was advising you too boldly. I begged you to go about
settling the matter in the way you are now.

KING HENRY VIII

I then convinced you, my Lord of Canterbury, and got your
approval for summoning these people here. I talked to
every wise person in this courthouse. But particularly I put
myself in your hands and did what you advised. So,
continue. It was not because I disliked my good queen but
because of the terrible reasons I just told you that this is
happening. Just prove our marriage to be legal and I swear
by my life and my dignity as king that I will be happy to stay
with her, Katharine my queen, for the rest of my life, sooner
than marry even the best woman in the world.


CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Your highness, since the queen is absent it's necessary and
right to adjourn this trial. Meanwhile someone should be
sent to talk honestly to the queen to convince her not to
appeal to the Pope.

KING HENRY VIII

[To himself] I can see that these cardinals are playing with
me. I hate the delaying laziness and tricks of Rome. Please
come back, my learned and beloved servant Cranmer. When
you come back, I know that my happiness will too.

[To the court] The court is dismissed. I said, go.

 Thomas Cranmer was instrumental in building the case for the annulment of Henry VIII and Katharine's marriage, and would later become Archbishop of Canterbury

(the most senior bishop in the Church of England).

Exeunt in manner as they entered

They exit in the same way they entered.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter QUEEN KATHARINE and her Women, as at work

QUEEN KATHARINE

Take thy lute, wench: my soul grows sad with troubles;
Sing, and disperse 'em, if thou canst: leave working.

QUEEN KATHARINE

[singing]

5 Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain tops that freeze,
Bow themselves when he did sing:
To his music plants and flowers
Ever sprung; as sun and showers
10 There had made a lasting spring.
Every thing that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art,
15 Killing care and grief of heart
Fall asleep, or hearing, die.

Enter a Gentleman

QUEEN KATHARINE

How now!

GENTLEMAN

An't please your grace, the two great cardinals
Wait in the presence.

QUEEN KATHARINE

20 Would they speak with me?

GENTLEMAN

They will'd me say so, madam.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Pray their graces
To come near.

Exit Gentleman

QUEEN KATHARINE

25 What can be their business
With me, a poor weak woman, fall'n from favour?
I do not like their coming. Now I think on't,
They should be good men; their affairs as righteous:
But all hoods make not monks.

Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

CARDINAL WOLSEY

30 Peace to your highness!

Shakesclare Translation

QUEEN KATHARINE and her women enter and appear to sew.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Play your lute, girl. My soul is sad. Sing and send them away
if you can. Stop sewing.

QUEEN KATHARINE

[singing]

Orpheus made trees
And the freezing mountain tops
Bow when he sang.
His music made plants and flowers
Grow as if sun and rain
Had created an eternal Spring there.
Everything that heard him play,
Even the waves of the sea,
Hung their heads then lay down next to him.
Beautiful music makes
Murderous sadness and heartache
Fall asleep when they hear it or die.

A GENTLEMAN enters.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Hello!

GENTLEMAN

Your grace, the two important cardinals are waiting in your
reception room.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Do they want to speak to me?

GENTLEMAN

They asked me to say they do, madam.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Ask them to come near.

The GENTLEMAN exits.

QUEEN KATHARINE

What can their business be with me, a poor weak woman
out of favor with the king? I don't like them coming here.
Now I think about it, they should be good men and their
business should be good, too, but appearances are
deceiving and just wearing a monk's habit doesn't make
you holy.

CARDINAL WOLSEY and CARDINAL CAMPEIUS enter.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Hello, your highness!

QUEEN KATHARINE

Your graces find me here part of a housewife,
I would be all, against the worst may happen.
What are your pleasures with me, reverend lords?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

35 May it please you noble madam, to withdraw
Into your private chamber, we shall give you
The full cause of our coming.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Speak it here:
There's nothing I have done yet, o' my conscience,
Deserves a corner: would all other women
40 Could speak this with as free a soul as I do!
My lords, I care not, so much I am happy
Above a number, if my actions
Were tried by every tongue, every eye saw 'em,
Envy and base opinion set against 'em,
45 I know my life so even. If your business
Seek me out, and that way I am wife in,
Out with it boldly: truth loves open dealing.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Tanta est erga te mentis integritas, regina
serenissima,--

QUEEN KATHARINE

50 O, good my lord, no Latin;
I am not such a truant since my coming,
As not to know the language I have lived in:
A strange tongue makes my cause more strange,
suspicious;
55 Pray, speak in English: here are some will thank you,
If you speak truth, for their poor mistress' sake;
Believe me, she has had much wrong: lord cardinal,
The willing'st sin I ever yet committed
May be absolved in English.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

60 Noble lady,
I am sorry my integrity should breed,
And service to his majesty and you,
So deep suspicion, where all faith was meant.
We come not by the way of accusation,
65 To taint that honour every good tongue blesses,
Nor to betray you any way to sorrow,
You have too much, good lady; but to know
How you stand minded in the weighty difference
Between the king and you; and to deliver,
70 Like free and honest men, our just opinions
And comforts to your cause.


CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Most honour'd madam,
My Lord of York, out of his noble nature,
Zeal and obedience he still bore your grace,
75 Forgetting, like a good man your late censure
Both of his truth and him, which was too far,
Offers, as I do, in a sign of peace,
His service and his counsel.

QUEEN KATHARINE

[*Aside*] To betray me.--
80 My lords, I thank you both for your good will;

QUEEN KATHARINE

You can see that I'm a part of a housewife. I want to be a
whole one , whatever happens. What do you want from
me, wise lords?


CARDINAL WOLSEY

Please, ma'am, if we can go into your private room, we will
tell you the whole reason we came.


QUEEN KATHARINE

Say it here. I haven't done anything yet that has to be
whispered about in a corner. I wish all other women could
say that as truly as I can! My lords, I don't care if everyone
talks about and sees my actions or if those actions are
attacked by envious and disapproving people, because I'm
so much luckier than most people in knowing my life is
virtuous. If you have business to do with me and my
marriage, say it boldly. Truth should be spoken openly.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Your conduct is so honorable, most serene queen-- 

QUEEN KATHARINE

My good lord, don't speak Latin. I haven't been so lazy since
coming here that I don't know the language of the country I
have been living in. Speaking in a foreign language makes
my cause seem more strange and suspicious. Please, speak
English. There are some people here who will thank you for
their mistress's sake if you tell the truth. Believe me, she
has been treated very badly. Lord cardinal, even the worst
sin I have ever committed can be forgiven  in English.

CARDINAL WOLSEY


Noble lady, I am sorry you are so suspicious about my
honesty and my service of your majesty and you, when I
meant to serve you faithfully. We don't come to accuse you
or taint your honor, which every good person blesses, or to
make you sad in any way since you are already too sad,
good lady. We just want to know your thoughts in the great
quarrel between you and the king and to tell you like open
and honest men should our true opinions, and comfort
you.


CARDINAL CAMPEIUS


Honored lady, because of his noble character and the
obedience he still wants to show you, my Lord of York has
forgotten your recent criticism of his honesty and him,
which went too far. He and I offer you his service and advice
as a peace offering.

QUEEN KATHARINE

[*To herself*] To betray me.--

 Presumably, in wishing to be a
whole "housewife," the queen means
that she is separated from her
husband and so is not a complete
wife.

 Cardinal Wolsey speaks these
words in Latin, perhaps to feign
reverence for the queen's virtue, but
certainly to show that he is more
learned and powerful than she is.
Using a language other than English
also draws attention to her status as a
foreigner. Though she is Queen of
England, she was born in Spain.

 In saying that her worst sin can be
"absolved in English," the queen
refers to the status of Latin as a
religious language. She has
committed no sins bad enough to
need to speak of them in the language
of the Church in order to be absolved
of them.

Ye speak like honest men; pray God, ye prove so!
 But how to make ye suddenly an answer,
 In such a point of weight, so near mine honour,
 More near my life, I fear,--with my weak wit,
 85 And to such men of gravity and learning,
 In truth, I know not. I was set at work
 Among my maids: full little, God knows, looking
 Either for such men or such business.
 For her sake that I have been,--for I feel
 90 The last fit of my greatness,-- good your graces,
 Let me have time and counsel for my cause:
 Alas, I am a woman, friendless, hopeless!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Madam, you wrong the king's love with these fears:
 Your hopes and friends are infinite.

QUEEN KATHARINE

95 In England
 But little for my profit: can you think, lords,
 That any Englishman dare give me counsel?
 Or be a known friend, 'gainst his highness' pleasure,
 Though he be grown so desperate to be honest,
 100 And live a subject? Nay, forsooth, my friends,
 They that must weigh out my afflictions,
 They that my trust must grow to, live not here:
 They are, as all my other comforts, far hence
 In mine own country, lords.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

105 I would your grace
 Would leave your griefs, and take my counsel.

QUEEN KATHARINE

How, sir?

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Put your main cause into the king's protection;
 He's loving and most gracious: 'twill be much
 110 Both for your honour better and your cause;
 For if the trial of the law o'ertake ye,
 You'll part away disgraced.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

He tells you rightly.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Ye tell me what ye wish for both,--my ruin:
 115 Is this your Christian counsel? out upon ye!
 Heaven is above all yet; there sits a judge
 That no king can corrupt.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Your rage mistakes us.

QUEEN KATHARINE

The more shame for ye: holy men I thought ye,
 120 Upon my soul, two reverend cardinal virtues;
 But cardinal sins and hollow hearts I fear ye:
 Mend 'em, for shame, my lords. Is this your comfort?
 The cordial that ye bring a wretched lady,
 A woman lost among ye, laugh'd at, scorn'd?
 125 I will not wish ye half my miseries;
 I have more charity: but say, I warn'd ye;
 Take heed, for heaven's sake, take heed, lest at once
 The burthen of my sorrows fall upon ye.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

130 Madam, this is a mere distraction;
 You turn the good we offer into envy.

[To the CARDINALS] My lords, I thank both of you for your kindness. You speak like honest men. I pray to God you turn out to be honest men! But I don't know how to answer you immediately about such an important matter that threatens my honor--and my life even more, I'm afraid--since my mind is weak and you are such serious and learned men. I was sewing with my maids and didn't expect such men or such business, God knows. Your graces, for the sake of the woman I have been--because I feel my power dying--let me have time and a lawyer on my side. I am a friendless and hopeless woman!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Ma'am, you're being unfair to the king's love with this fear. You have infinite hopes and friends.

QUEEN KATHARINE

The ones in England won't help me. Can you imagine any Englishman daring to give me advice, my lords? Or be known to be my friend and side with me against the king, even if he is desperate to do the right thing, and continue living here as a subject? No, the friends who will understand my suffering and whom I have to trust don't live here. They are, like all my other comforts, far away from here, in my own country, lords.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

I wish you would stop being sad and take my advice.

QUEEN KATHARINE

How, sir?

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Let the king take care of this business for you. He's loving and very generous. It will be much better both for your honor and your case. Because if you go to trial over this, you'll go away disgraced.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

He's telling you the truth.

QUEEN KATHARINE

You tell me to do what will get you what you both want--for me to be destroyed. Is this your Christian advice? Get out! God is still in charge. He is a judge no king can corrupt.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS


Your anger makes you misjudge us.

QUEEN KATHARINE

You should be all the more ashamed. I thought you were holy men, I swear, as if you were two wise virtues instead of men. But I fear that you two cardinals are actually deadly sins and have cruel hearts. Fix your hearts, my lords. You should be ashamed. Is this how you're trying to comfort me? Is this the help you bring to a poor lady lost in this country, laughed at, and hated? I won't wish that you suffer half of what I suffer. I am too kind for that. But I have warned you. Be careful, for heaven's sake be careful, or all of my suffering will fall on you at once.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Ma'am, you're talking nonsense. You're turning our good intentions towards you into bad ones.

 The cardinals--Wolsey in particular--is compared to many things in this play. The constant metaphors highlight how slippery his nature is--how difficult it is to outsmart him or figure out what he's really thinking.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Ye turn me into nothing; woe upon ye
 And all such false professors! would you have me--
 If you have any justice, any pity;
 If ye be any thing but churchmen's habits--
 135 Put my sick cause into his hands that hates me?
 Alas, has banish'd me his bed already,
 His love, too long ago! I am old, my lords,
 And all the fellowship I hold now with him
 Is only my obedience. What can happen
 140 To me above this wretchedness? all your studies
 Make me a curse like this.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Your fears are worse.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Have I lived thus long--let me speak myself,
 Since virtue finds no friends--a wife, a true one?
 145 A woman, I dare say without vain-glory,
 Never yet branded with suspicion?
 Have I with all my full affections
 Still met the king? loved him next heaven?
 obey'd him?
 150 Been, out of fondness, superstitious to him?
 Almost forgot my prayers to content him?
 And am I thus rewarded? 'tis not well, lords.
 Bring me a constant woman to her husband,
 One that ne'er dream'd a joy beyond his pleasure;
 155 And to that woman, when she has done most,
 Yet will I add an honour, a great patience.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Madam, you wander from the good we aim at.

QUEEN KATHARINE

My lord, I dare not make myself so guilty,
 To give up willingly that noble title
 160 Your master wed me to: nothing but death
 Shall e'er divorce my dignities.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Pray, hear me.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Would I had never trod this English earth,
 Or felt the flatteries that grow upon it!
 165 Ye have angels' faces, but heaven knows your hearts.
 What will become of me now, wretched lady!
 I am the most unhappy woman living.
 Alas, poor wenches, where are now your fortunes!
 Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,
 170 No friend, no hope; no kindred weep for me;
 Almost no grave allow'd me: like the lily,
 That once was mistress of the field and flourish'd,
 I'll hang my head and perish.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

If your grace
 175 Could but be brought to know our ends are honest,
 You'd feel more comfort: why should we, good lady,
 Upon what cause, wrong you? alas, our places,
 The way of our profession is against it:
 We are to cure such sorrows, not to sow 'em.
 180 For goodness' sake, consider what you do;
 How you may hurt yourself, ay, utterly
 Grow from the king's acquaintance, by this carriage.
 The hearts of princes kiss obedience,
 So much they love it; but to stubborn spirits
 185 They swell, and grow as terrible as storms.
 I know you have a gentle, noble temper,
 A soul as even as a calm: pray, think us
 Those we profess, peace-makers, friends, and servants.

QUEEN KATHARINE

You're turning me, a queen, into nothing. Damn you and all lying tricksters! If you have any justice or pity or are anything more than the clothes of churchmen, do you want me to put my cause into the hands of someone who hates me? He already banished me from his bed and his love all too long ago! I am old, my lords, and the only bond I have to him is my obedience. What more can happen to me that is worse than this suffering? You're scheming to make me suffer like this.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Your fears are worse than the reality.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Haven't I lived this long--let me speak for myself, since a virtuous person can't find any friends to speak for her--as a wife, and an honest one? As a woman, I can say without bragging, who has never been suspected of anything? Haven't I always loved the king completely, second only to God? And obeyed him? Haven't I been so fond of him he almost became my god and I almost forgot to pray because I was focusing on making him happy? And am I rewarded with this? This is not good, lords. Bring me a woman true to her husband, one whose only joy was to make him happy, and compared to that woman who has done everything she could, I have one more quality, which is that I have had enormous patience.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Ma'am, you're getting distracted from the good things we're offering you.

QUEEN KATHARINE

My lord, I wouldn't dare to commit the sin of willingly giving up the noble title I gained when your master married me. Nothing but death will ever divorce me from my dignity and power.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Please listen to me.

QUEEN KATHARINE

I wish I had never set foot on this English land or been flattered by the people in it! You have angels' faces, but heaven knows what you're really like. What will become of poor me? I am the unhappiest woman alive.

[To her attendants] Poor girls, where are your fortunes now? You're shipwrecked in this country where there's no pity, no friend to us, and no hope. No family members cry for me. There's barely a grave allowed for me. Like a lily that once flourished as the queen of a field, I'll hang my head and die.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

If you could just be convinced that we mean well you wouldn't feel as bad. Why would we treat you badly, good lady? Our positions and our profession prevent that. We're supposed to cure suffering like this, not cause it. For goodness' sake, think about what you're doing. You could hurt yourself, in fact you could cause the king to cut himself off from you completely, if you keep acting this way. Kings love obedience so much they kiss obedient people, but they grow as violent as storms towards stubborn ones. I know you have a gentle, noble personality and a calm, reasonable mind. Please, consider us to be what we claim to be: peace-makers, your friends, and your servants.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS

Madam, you'll find it so. You wrong your virtues
 190 With these weak women's fears: a noble spirit,
 As yours was put into you, ever casts
 Such doubts, as false coin, from it. The king loves
 you;
 Beware you lose it not: for us, if you please
 195 To trust us in your business, we are ready
 To use our utmost studies in your service.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Do what ye will, my lords: and, pray, forgive me,
 If I have used myself unmannerly;
 You know I am a woman, lacking wit
 200 To make a seemly answer to such persons.
 Pray, do my service to his majesty:
 He has my heart yet; and shall have my prayers
 While I shall have my life. Come, reverend fathers,
 Bestow your counsels on me: she now begs,
 205 That little thought, when she set footing here,
 She should have bought her dignities so dear.

*Exeunt***CARDINAL CAMPEIUS**

Ma'am, you'll find that we are those things. You're betraying
 your virtues by being afraid like a weak woman. A noble
 mind like the one you have throws out suspicions like this
 as if they were fake coins. The king loves you. Be careful not
 to lose his love. As for us, if you will trust us with your
 business, we are ready to work as hard as we can to help
 you.

QUEEN KATHARINE

Do what you want, my lords. Please forgive me if I have
 been rude. You know I am a woman and don't have the
 brains to answer such people as you politely. Please, send
 my best to the king. I still love him and will pray for him for
 the rest of my life. Come, wise priests, give me your advice.
 Now I'm begging. When I set foot in this country, I didn't
 know I would pay such a price for the honors done to me.

They exit.

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

*Enter NORFOLK, SUFFOLK, SURREY, and Chamberlain***NORFOLK**

If you will now unite in your complaints,
 And force them with a constancy, the cardinal
 Cannot stand under them: if you omit
 The offer of this time, I cannot promise
 5 But that you shall sustain moe new disgraces,
 With these you bear already.

SURREY

I am joyful
 To meet the least occasion that may give me
 Remembrance of my father-in-law, the duke,
 10 To be revenged on him.

SUFFOLK

Which of the peers
 Have unctem'd gone by him, or at least
 Strangely neglected? when did he regard
 The stamp of nobleness in any person
 15 Out of himself?

CHAMBERLAIN

My lords, you speak your pleasures:
 What he deserves of you and me I know;
 What we can do to him, though now the time
 Gives way to us, I much fear. If you cannot
 20 Bar his access to the king, never attempt
 Any thing on him; for he hath a witchcraft
 Over the king in's tongue.

NORFOLK

O, fear him not;
 His spell in that is out: the king hath found
 25 Matter against him that for ever mars
 The honey of his language. No, he's settled,
 Not to come off, in his displeasure.

SURREY

Sir,
 I should be glad to hear such news as this
 30

Shakesclore Translation

*NORFOLK, SUFFOLK, SURREY, and CHAMBERLAIN enter.***NORFOLK**

If you all make your complaints together and stick to them,
 the cardinal can't resist them. If you fail to take this
 opportunity, I can't promise you'll be safe from suffering
 more disgrace than you already have.

SURREY

I am happy to have the smallest opportunity to be
 reminded to take revenge for the death of my father-in-law,
 the duke.

SUFFOLK

What noble hasn't been criticized by him, or at least
 ignored? When did he have any consideration for a noble
 other than himself?

CHAMBERLAIN

My lords, you say what you want. I know what he deserves
 from you and me. I am afraid we can't do anything to him,
 even with this opportunity. If you can't stop him getting to
 the king, don't try anything against him, because he can
 charm the king when he speaks.

NORFOLK

Oh, don't be afraid of that. He doesn't have that power
 anymore. The king has found out something against him
 that will stop his words from ever being convincing. No, the
 king's firm in his anger and will not let it go.

SURREY

Sir, I wish I could hear news this good every hour.

Once every hour.

NORFOLK

Believe it, this is true:
In the divorce his contrary proceedings
Are all unfolded wherein he appears
As I would wish mine enemy.

SURREY

35 How came
His practises to light?

SUFFOLK

Most strangely.

SURREY

O, how, how?

SUFFOLK

40 The cardinal's letters to the pope miscarried,
And came to the eye o' the king: wherein was read,
How that the cardinal did entreat his holiness
To stay the judgment o' the divorce; for if
It did take place, 'I do,' quoth he, 'perceive
My king is tangled in affection to
45 A creature of the queen's, Lady Anne Bullen.'

SURREY

Has the king this?

SUFFOLK

Believe it.

SURREY

Will this work?

CHAMBERLAIN

50 The king in this perceives him, how he coasts
And hedges his own way. But in this point
All his tricks founder, and he brings his physic
After his patient's death: the king already
Hath married the fair lady.

SURREY

Would he had!

SUFFOLK

55 May you be happy in your wish, my lord
For, I profess, you have it.

SURREY

Now, all my joy
Trace the conjunction!

SUFFOLK

My amen to't!

NORFOLK

60 All men's!

SUFFOLK

There's order given for her coronation:
Marry, this is yet but young, and may be left
To some ears unrecounted. But, my lords,
She is a gallant creature, and complete
65 In mind and feature: I persuade me, from her
Will fall some blessing to this land, which shall
In it be memorised.

SURREY

But, will the king
Digest this letter of the cardinal's?

70

NORFOLK

Believe me, this is true. His plots against the divorce
procedures were revealed and he comes off as badly as I
could wish my enemy to.

SURREY

How were his plots revealed?

SUFFOLK

Very strangely.

SURREY

How? How?

SUFFOLK

The cardinal's letters to the pope went astray and were
seen by the king. In them the cardinal begged the Pope to
put off his judgement on the divorce. If it took place, he said
"I see that my king's affections have been caught by the
queen's servant, Lady Anne Bullen."

SURREY

Does the king have this letter?

SUFFOLK

Yes.

SURREY

Will this work?

CHAMBERLAIN

The king sees his true nature in this, how he changes his
allegiances and works for himself. But in this case his plots
have failed and he is too late to make a difference, like a
doctor who brings medicine after a patient's death: the king
has already married the beautiful lady.

SURREY

I wish he had!

SUFFOLK

I hope you're happy with your wish, my lord, because it's
been granted.

SURREY

I wish them the best in their marriage!

SUFFOLK

Amen!

NORFOLK

All men say amen!

SUFFOLK

Her coronation has been arranged. This is still recent and
shouldn't be spoken to everyone. But my lords, she's a
good person with all the best qualities of mind and body.
I'm sure she'll bless this land with something good 📖
which will go down in history.

📖 The "blessing" that will fall from
Anne is her daughter Elizabeth.

SURREY

But will the king let the cardinal get away with his letter?
God forbid!

The Lord forbid!

NORFOLK

Marry, amen!

SUFFOLK

No, no;
There be moe wasps that buzz about his nose
Will make this sting the sooner. Cardinal Campeius
75 Is stol'n away to Rome; hath ta'en no leave;
Has left the cause o' the king unhandled; and
Is posted, as the agent of our cardinal,
To second all his plot. I do assure you
The king cried Ha! at this.

CHAMBERLAIN

80 Now, God incense him,
And let him cry Ha! louder!

NORFOLK

But, my lord,
When returns Cranmer?

SUFFOLK

He is return'd in his opinions; which
85 Have satisfied the king for his divorce,
Together with all famous colleges
Almost in Christendom: shortly, I believe,
His second marriage shall be publish'd, and
Her coronation. Katharine no more
90 Shall be call'd queen, but princess dowager
And widow to Prince Arthur.

NORFOLK

This same Cranmer's
A worthy fellow, and hath ta'en much pain
In the king's business.

SUFFOLK

95 He has; and we shall see him
For it an archbishop.

NORFOLK

So I hear.

SUFFOLK

'Tis so.
The cardinal!

100

Enter CARDINAL WOLSEY and CROMWELL

NORFOLK

Observe, observe, he's moody.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

The packet, Cromwell.
Gave't you the king?

CROMWELL

To his own hand, in's bedchamber.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

105 Look'd he o' the inside of the paper?

NORFOLK

Amen!

SUFFOLK

No, no. There are more irritating things going on that will
make him even angrier. Cardinal Campeius has run away to
Rome without saying goodbye and has left the king's
business unmanaged. He's been sent as the cardinal's
agent to carry out his plot. I assure you the king was
annoyed and cried out "Ha!" when that happened.

CHAMBERLAIN

May God make him angry and have him cry "Ha!" louder.

NORFOLK

But my lord, when does Cranmer come back?

SUFFOLK

It's as if he has returned because he has sent back his
arguments which convinced the king and almost all the
famous academics in Christian countries that this divorce
should happen. I think his second marriage will be
announced soon as well as her coronation. Katharine will
be called princess dowager and Prince Arthur's widow, not
queen.

NORFOLK

That Cranmer's a good man and has worked hard to do the
king's business.

SUFFOLK

He has, and he'll be made an archbishop for it.


NORFOLK

So I hear.

SUFFOLK

It's true. The cardinal!

CARDINAL WOLSEY and CROMWELL enter.

 Thomas Cromwell served as an adviser to Cardinal Wolsey, and his reputation managed to survive Wolsey's downfall. He became chief minister to King Henry VIII in 1532, but was later declared a traitor and was executed in 1540.

NORFOLK

Watch, watch, he's upset.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

The letters, Cromwell. Did you give them to the king?

CROMWELL

I handed them to him myself, in his bedroom.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Did he look inside?

CROMWELL

Presently
He did unseal them: and the first he view'd,
He did it with a serious mind; a heed
Was in his countenance. You he bade
110 Attend him here this morning.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Is he ready
To come abroad?

CROMWELL

I think, by this he is.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Leave me awhile.

115

Exit CROMWELL

[Aside]

It shall be to the Duchess of Alencon,
The French king's sister: he shall marry her.
Anne Bullen! No; I'll no Anne Bullens for him;
120 There's more in't than fair visage. Bullen!
No, we'll no Bullens. Speedily I wish
To hear from Rome. The Marchioness of Pembroke!

NORFOLK

He's discontented.

SUFFOLK

May be, he hears the king
125 Does whet his anger to him.

SURREY

Sharp enough,
Lord, for thy justice!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

[Aside] The late queen's gentlewoman,
a knight's daughter,
130 To be her mistress' mistress! the queen's queen!
This candle burns not clear: 'tis I must snuff it;
Then out it goes. What though I know her virtuous
And well deserving? yet I know her for
A spleeny Lutheran; and not wholesome to
135 Our cause, that she should lie i' the bosom of
Our hard-ruled king. Again, there is sprung up
An heretic, an arch one, Cranmer; one
Hath crawl'd into the favour of the king,
And is his oracle.

NORFOLK

140 He is vex'd at something.

SURREY

I would 'twere something that would fret the string,
The master-cord on's heart!

CROMWELL

He opened them immediately. He looked at the first
seriously and you could tell he was paying attention. He
asked you to come see him here this morning.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Is he ready to come here?

CROMWELL

I think by this time he is.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Leave me here for a while.

CROMWELL exits.

[To himself] It will be the Duchess of Alencon, the French
King's sister. He will marry her. Anne Bullen! No, I won't let
him have any Anne Bullens. He'll get nothing more from
that except a beautiful face. Bullen! No, we won't have any
Bullens. I hope I'll hear from Rome soon. He's made her
Marchioness of Pembroke!

NORFOLK

He's unhappy.

SUFFOLK


Maybe he's heard that the king is angry at him.


SURREY

I hope he's angry enough to punish him properly!

CARDINAL WOLSEY

[To himself] The last queen's lady in waiting, a knight's
daughter, becoming her mistress's mistress! The queen's
queen! This is like a candle that's not burning properly. I'll
have to be the one to put it out. So out it goes. So what if I
know she's virtuous and deserving? I still know she's an
irritable Lutheran and it would not be good for me if she
were at the side of the king, who's already difficult to order
around. Again, a heretic has sprung up, a terrible one,
Cranmer. He's crawled into the king's favor and is telling
his fortune for him.


 Martin Luther was one of the most important Protestant reformers, who famously nailed his "95 Theses" of question and debate against the Catholic Church to the door of Wittenberg Castle Church in 1517. Wolsey's speech here implies that his advice for the king has brought about religious divisions he did not intend.


 Remember that Thomas Cranmer built the case for Henry's annulment from Katharine, and that he would become Archbishop of Canterbury. This made him the senior bishop in the new Church of England, the church created in part because Henry could not obtain the divorce he sought within the bounds of the Catholic Church.

NORFOLK

He's annoyed at something.

SURREY

I wish it were something bad enough to break his heart !

 The "heart" is imagined as having strings, including a "master-cord" or main string that would break under the influence of unpleasant emotions. Fretting has both the modern meaning of being worried and upset about something as well as the meaning of wearing something away by rubbing, which is why the cardinal's emotion is imagined as

wearing away the string that makes his heart work.

Enter KING HENRY VIII, reading of a schedule, and LOVELL

SUFFOLK

The king, the king!

KING HENRY VIII

145 What piles of wealth hath he accumulated
To his own portion! and what expense by the hour
Seems to flow from him! How, i' the name of thrift,
Does he rake this together! Now, my lords,
Saw you the cardinal?

NORFOLK

150 My lord, we have
Stood here observing him: some strange commotion
Is in his brain: he bites his lip, and starts;
Stops on a sudden, looks upon the ground,
Then lays his finger on his temple, straight
155 Springs out into fast gait; then stops again,
Strikes his breast hard, and anon he casts
His eye against the moon: in most strange postures
We have seen him set himself.

KING HENRY VIII

It may well be;
160 There is a mutiny in's mind. This morning
Papers of state he sent me to peruse,
As I required: and wot you what I found
There,—on my conscience, put unwittingly?
Forsooth, an inventory, thus importing;
165 The several parcels of his plate, his treasure,
Rich stuffs, and ornaments of household; which
I find at such proud rate, that it out-speaks
Possession of a subject.

NORFOLK

It's heaven's will:
170 Some spirit put this paper in the packet,
To bless your eye withal.

KING HENRY VIII

If we did think
His contemplation were above the earth,
And fix'd on spiritual object, he should still
175 Dwell in his musings: but I am afraid
His thinkings are below the moon, not worth
His serious considering.

*KING HENRY VIII takes his seat; whispers LOVELL, who goes to
CARDINAL WOLSEY*

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Heaven forgive me!
Ever God bless your highness!

KING HENRY VIII

180 Good my lord,
You are full of heavenly stuff, and bear the inventory
Of your best graces in your mind; the which
You were now running o'er: you have scarce time
To steal from spiritual leisure a brief span
185 To keep your earthly audit: sure, in that
I deem you an ill husband, and am glad
To have you therein my companion.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Sir,
For holy offices I have a time; a time
190 To think upon the part of business which
I bear i' the state; and nature does require

KING HENRY VIII, reading a paper, and LOVELL enter.

SUFFOLK

The king, the king!

KING HENRY VIII

He's piled up so much wealth for himself! And he seems to
spend so much money every hour! How on earth does he
collect all this wealth, in the name of economy? My lords,
have you seen the cardinal?

NORFOLK

My lord, we have been standing here watching him. There's
something upsetting him. He bites his lips and jumps, stops
suddenly, looks at the ground, then puts his finger to his
forehead and starts walking quickly. Then he stops again,
hits his chest hard, and looks up at the moon. We have seen
him put himself into very strange positions.

KING HENRY VIII

It may well be. His mind is rebelling. This morning he sent
me state documents to look at, as I asked. And do you know
what I found there—left there accidentally, I bet? An
inventory that went like this: a list of his silver plates, his
treasure, rich fabrics, and household ornaments. They're so
expensive that no subject can possess such wealth.

NORFOLK

It's God's will. Some angel put this paper among the others
so you would see it.

KING HENRY VIII

If I thought he were thinking about something above the
earth, contemplating something holy, I would let him think.
But I am afraid he's thinking about earthly things that aren't
worth serious consideration.

*KING HENRY VIII sits and whispers to LOVELL, who goes to
CARDINAL WOLSEY.*

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Heaven forgive me! May God bless you forever, your
highness!

KING HENRY VIII

My lord, you're full of heavenly treasure and carry the
inventory of your best qualities in your mind. You were
reading that over just now. You barely have time to steal a
short break from your spiritual thoughts to take care of
earthly business. I think you're bad at managing your affairs
but I'm glad you're my companion.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Sir, I have a time for holy ceremonies, a time to think about
the state business I do, and nature requires me, her weak
son, to take some time to take care of my body in the same
way she requires that of all my fellow men.

Her times of preservation, which perforce
I, her frail son, amongst my brethren mortal,
Must give my tendence to.

KING HENRY VIII

195 You have said well.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

And ever may your highness yoke together,
As I will lend you cause, my doing well
With my well saying!

KING HENRY VIII

'Tis well said again;
200 And 'tis a kind of good deed to say well:
And yet words are no deeds. My father loved you:
He said he did; and with his deed did crown
His word upon you. Since I had my office,
I have kept you next my heart; have not alone
205 Employ'd you where high profits might come home,
But pared my present havings, to bestow
My bounties upon you.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

[Aside] What should this mean?

SURREY

[Aside] The Lord increase this business!

KING HENRY VIII

210 Have I not made you,
The prime man of the state? I pray you, tell me,
If what I now pronounce you have found true:
And, if you may confess it, say withal,
If you are bound to us or no. What say you?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

215 My sovereign, I confess your royal graces,
Shower'd on me daily, have been more than could
My studied purposes requite; which went
Beyond all man's endeavours: my endeavours
Have ever come too short of my desires,
220 Yet filed with my abilities: mine own ends
Have been mine so that evermore they pointed
To the good of your most sacred person and
The profit of the state. For your great graces
Heap'd upon me, poor undeserver, I
225 Can nothing render but allegiant thanks,
My prayers to heaven for you, my loyalty,
Which ever has and ever shall be growing,
Till death, that winter, kill it.

KING HENRY VIII

Fairly answer'd;
230 A loyal and obedient subject is
Therein illustrated: the honour of it
Does pay the act of it; as, 't' the contrary,
The foulness is the punishment. I presume
That, as my hand has open'd bounty to you,
235 My heart dropp'd love, my power rain'd honour, more
On you than any; so your hand and heart,
Your brain, and every function of your power,
Should, notwithstanding that your bond of duty,
As 'twere in love's particular, be more
240 To me, your friend, than any.


CARDINAL WOLSEY


I do profess
That for your highness' good I ever labour'd
More than mine own; that am, have, and will be--
245 Though all the world should crack their duty to you,
And throw it from their soul; though perils did
Abound, as thick as thought could make 'em, and

KING HENRY VIII

You have spoken well.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I will give you good reason, your highness, for always
associating  my speaking well with my acting well!

 In saying that he "yokes" (in the original text) or links his "doing well" and saying well, Wolsey means that he doesn't make empty promises. He acts as well as he speaks.

KING HENRY VIII

That's well said again. And it's a kind of good action to
speak well, but words aren't actions. My father loved you.
He said he did. And by his action of giving you a cardinal's
crown, he showed that he spoke the truth. Since I inherited
the throne I have confided in you. I have not just employed
you in important business that would be profitable, but
parted with some of my own money to give you gifts.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

[To himself] What does this mean?


SURREY


[To himself] May God bless this!

KING HENRY VIII

Haven't I made you the most important man in the
country? Please, tell me if you think what I say now isn't
true. And if you can confess it, tell me whether you owe me
or not. What do you say?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

My king, I confess the royal gifts you gave me every day
have been more than I could ever pay back, although I tried
harder than anyone. I have done everything I could to pay
you back, but less than I wish I could. I have wanted
everything I wanted  only for your good and the good of
the country. I can only give you loyal thanks, my prayers for
you, and my loyalty which is always growing and always
will until death kills it like winter kills plants, in return for
the great gifts you've heaped on me, which I don't deserve.

 Wolsey's gift for language is starting to unravel. His metaphors are intricate throughout the play, but here he's just repeating and confusing himself.

KING HENRY VIII

Well answered. You've showed how a loyal and obedient
subject would answer. The honor of the response repays
the effort that went into it just as evil is its own punishment.
I presume that because I have given you more gifts, loved
you more, and given you more power and honor than
anyone else, your hand, heart, brain, and all your actions
should be more loyal to me than anyone else's. Not
because it is your duty, but because you love me.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I swear that I have always worked for your good, your
highness, more than my own. That will be true even if the
whole world abandons their duty to you completely or if as
many dangers surround us as it's possible to imagine, and
more horrible than one could imagine. Still my obedience,
like a rock standing against a pushing river, would stand in

Appear in forms more horrid,— yet my duty,
As doth a rock against the chiding flood,
Should the approach of this wild river break,
250 And stand unshaken yours.

KING HENRY VIII

'Tis nobly spoken:
Take notice, lords, he has a loyal breast,
For you have seen him open't. Read o'er this;

Giving him papers

KING HENRY VIII

255 And after, this: and then to breakfast with
What appetite you have.

*Exit KING HENRY VIII, frowning upon CARDINAL WOLSEY: the Nobles
throng after him, smiling and whispering*

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What should this mean?
What sudden anger's this? how have I reaped it?
260 He parted frowning from me, as if ruin
Leap'd from his eyes: so looks the chafed lion
Upon the daring huntsman that has gall'd him;
Then makes him nothing. I must read this paper;
I fear, the story of his anger. 'Tis so;
265 This paper has undone me: 'tis the account
Of all that world of wealth I have drawn together
For mine own ends; indeed, to gain the popedom,
And fee my friends in Rome. O negligence!
Fit for a fool to fall by: what cross devil
270 Made me put this main secret in the packet
I sent the king? Is there no way to cure this?
No new device to beat this from his brains?
I know 'twill stir him strongly; yet I know
A way, if it take right, in spite of fortune
275 Will bring me off again. What's this? 'To the Pope!
The letter, as I live, with all the business
I writ to's holiness. Nay then, farewell!
I have touch'd the highest point of all my greatness;
And, from that full meridian of my glory,
280 I haste now to my setting: I shall fall
Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
And no man see me more.

*Re-enter to CARDINAL WOLSEY, NORFOLK and SUFFOLK, SURREY, and
the Chamberlain*

NORFOLK

Hear the king's pleasure, cardinal: who commands you
To render up the great seal presently
285 Into our hands; and to confine yourself
To Asher House, my Lord of Winchester's,
Till you hear further from his highness.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Stay:
Where's your commission, lords? words cannot carry
290 Authority so weighty.

SUFFOLK

Who dare cross 'em,
Bearing the king's will from his mouth expressly?


CARDINAL WOLSEY

Till I find more than will or words to do it,
I mean your malice, know, officious lords,
295 I dare and must deny it. Now I feel
Of what coarse metal ye are moulded, envy:
How eagerly ye follow my disgraces,
As if it fed ye! and how sleek and wanton

the way of this wild river of dangers and remain firmly
obedient to you.

KING HENRY VIII

That's nobly spoken. Notice, lords, he has a loyal heart.
You've heard him show [show](#) it. Read this.

 To open your "breast" or heart means to speak the truth and reveal everything. Henry is being ironic, as in fact Wolsey's words are lies that do not reveal anything about his heart.

KING HENRY VIII gives WOLSEY the letters.

KING HENRY VIII

And read this afterwards. Then go to breakfast with
whatever appetite you have left.

*KING HENRY VIII exits, frowning at CARDINAL WOLSEY. The
nobles rush after him, smiling and whispering.*

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What does this mean? Why is he suddenly angry? How have
I deserved it? He left me frowning as if he wanted to destroy
me with his eyes. An angry lion looks like that at a bold
hunter that stabbed him. Then he kills him. I must read this
paper. I'm afraid it will tell me why he's angry. It does. This
paper has ruined me. It's the list of all the huge wealth I
have piled up for my plots, to become Pope and pay my
friends in Rome. What carelessness! I'm a fool who
deserves to be destroyed by this. What damned devil made
me put the most important secret I have in the package I
sent to the king? Is there no cure to this? No new plot to
make him forget it? I know he'll be angry, but I know a way-
if it works--to get out of this. What's this? It says "To the
Pope!" I swear, it's the letter I wrote to the Pope about all
this business. No, then it's over! I have reached the highest
point of my power and will now quickly descend from that
glorious point. I will fall like a bright star in the evening and
will not be seen again.

*NORFOLK and SUFFOLK, SURREY, and the CHAMBERLAIN
re-enter and go to CARDINAL WOLSEY.*

NORFOLK

Listen to what the king says, cardinal. He commands you to
give us the great seal at once and to shut yourself in Asher
House, the Lord of Winchester's house, until you hear more
from him.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Wait: where's your warrant, lords? You don't have the
authority to tell me to do something like this.

SUFFOLK

Who would dare to disobey us, since we're telling you what
the king wants straight from his mouth?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Until I find more reason than words or wants, by which I
mean your ill will to me, busybody lords, I dare and must
refuse to obey. Now I see what rough stuff you're made of:
envy. You're as eager about my disgrace as if it were food
for you! You are so delighted and quick to do anything that
can ruin me! Go on and do your envious deeds, evil men.

Ye appear in every thing may bring my ruin!
 300 Follow your envious courses, men of malice;
 You have Christian warrant for 'em, and, no doubt,
 In time will find their fit rewards. That seal,
 You ask with such a violence, the king,
 Mine and your master, with his own hand gave me;
 305 Bade me enjoy it, with the place and honours,
 During my life; and, to confirm his goodness,
 Tied it by letters-patents: now, who'll take it?

SURREY

The king, that gave it.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

It must be himself, then.

SURREY

310 Thou art a proud traitor, priest.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Proud lord, thou liest:
 Within these forty hours Surrey durst better
 Have burnt that tongue than said so.

SURREY

Thy ambition,
 315 Thou scarlet sin, robb'd this bewailing land
 Of noble Buckingham, my father-in-law:
 The heads of all thy brother cardinals,
 With thee and all thy best parts bound together,
 Weigh'd not a hair of his. Plague of your policy!
 320 You sent me deputy for Ireland;
 Far from his succor, from the king, from all
 That might have mercy on the fault thou gavest him;
 Whilst your great goodness, out of holy pity,
 Absolved him with an axe.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

325 This, and all else
 This talking lord can lay upon my credit,
 I answer is most false. The duke by law
 Found his deserts: how innocent I was
 From any private malice in his end,
 330 His noble jury and foul cause can witness.
 If I loved many words, lord, I should tell you
 You have as little honesty as honour,
 That in the way of loyalty and truth
 Toward the king, my ever royal master,
 335 Dare mate a sounder man than Surrey can be,
 And all that love his follies.

SURREY

By my soul,
 Your long coat, priest, protects you; thou
 shouldst feel
 340 My sword i' the life-blood of thee else. My lords,
 Can ye endure to hear this arrogance?
 And from this fellow? if we live thus tamely,
 To be thus jaded by a piece of scarlet,
 Farewell nobility; let his grace go forward,
 345 And dare us with his cap like larks.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

All goodness
 Is poison to thy stomach.

You have a right to do them and no doubt you'll be
 punished for them someday. That seal you ask me for so
 violently was handed to me personally by the king, who is
 your master and mine. He told me to enjoy it as long as I
 live, along with the position and honors that went with it.
 To confirm this good deed, he wrote up official documents.
 Now, who still wants to take it away?

SURREY

The king, who gave it to you.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

He'll have to do it himself, then.

SURREY

You're an arrogant traitor, priest.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Arrogant lord, you're lying. Within forty hours you'll wish
 you'd burned your tongue rather than say that.

SURREY

Your ambition, your horrible sin, robbed this sad land of
 noble Buckingham, my father-in-law. The heads of all your
 cardinal friends along with you and all your best
 possessions all bound together aren't worth a hair on his
 head. Damn your plots! You sent me as a representative to
 Ireland. I was too far away to help him, far from the king
 and from everyone who might have mercy on him for what
 you accused him of. In your great goodness, out of holy
 pity, you forgave him--with an axe.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I answer that this and everything else this babbling lord
 says I did is false. The duke was punished by the law. How
 innocent I was of having a secret grudge against him is
 obvious if you look at the noble jury that judged him and
 his terrible crime. If I loved to talk, lord, I would tell you that
 you have as little honesty as honor and that in my loyalty
 and honest to the king, my always-royal master, I'm a better
 man than Surrey and everyone who loves his foolishness
 can be.

SURREY

I swear by my soul that your cardinal's robe protects you,
 priest. Otherwise you would feel my sword kill you now. My
 lords, can you bear to hear this arrogance? From this
 fellow? If we can stand here meekly being insulted like this
 by a churchman, our nobility is gone. Let him go on and
 wave his hat at us as if we were birds he was trying to catch.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

All goodness is poison to you.

SURREY

Yes, that goodness
Of gleaning all the land's wealth into one,
350 Into your own hands, cardinal, by extortion;
The goodness of your intercepted packets
You writ to the pope against the king: your goodness,
Since you provoke me, shall be most notorious.
My Lord of Norfolk, as you are truly noble,
355 As you respect the common good, the state
Of our despised nobility, our issues,
Who, if he live, will scarce be gentlemen,
Produce the grand sum of his sins, the articles
Collected from his life. I'll startle you
360 Worse than the scaring bell, when the brown wench
Lay kissing in your arms, lord cardinal.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

How much, methinks, I could despise this man,
But that I am bound in charity against it!

NORFOLK

Those articles, my lord, are in the king's hand:
365 But, thus much, they are foul ones.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

So much fairer
And spotless shall mine innocence arise,
When the king knows my truth.

SURREY

This cannot save you:
370 I thank my memory, I yet remember
Some of these articles; and out they shall.
Now, if you can blush and cry 'guilty,' cardinal,
You'll show a little honesty.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Speak on, sir;
375 I dare your worst objections: if I blush,
It is to see a nobleman want manners.

SURREY

I had rather want those than my head. Have at you!
First, that, without the king's assent or knowledge,
You wrought to be a legate; by which power
380 You maim'd the jurisdiction of all bishops.

NORFOLK

Then, that in all you writ to Rome, or else
To foreign princes, 'Ego et Rex meus'
Was still inscribed; in which you brought the king
To be your servant.

SUFFOLK

385 Then that, without the knowledge
Either of king or council, when you went
Ambassador to the emperor, you made bold
To carry into Flanders the great seal.

SURREY

Item, you sent a large commission
390 To Gregory de Cassado, to conclude,
Without the king's will or the state's allowance,
A league between his highness and Ferrara.

SUFFOLK


That, out of mere ambition, you have caused
Your holy hat to be stamp'd on the king's coin.

SURREY

395 Then that you have sent innumerable substance--
By what means got, I leave to your own conscience--
To furnish Rome, and to prepare the ways

SURREY

Yes, the goodness of taking all the country's wealth for
yourself, cardinal, by force. The goodness of those letters
you wrote to the Pope against the king. Since you're
provoking me, everyone will find out about your
"goodness." My Lord of Norfolk, if you're really noble and
love the common good and our insulted nobility and our
children who will barely be gentleman, let alone noblemen,
if he stays alive, bring out the list of his sins, the
observations about his life. I'll startle you worse than a bell
ringing when you're holding and kissing the [brown girl](#),
lord cardinal.

 Wolsey's sexual escapades were well known. Despite the fact that Catholic priests make a vow of chastity, Wolsey had a mistress called "Mistress Lark" with whom he had at least two children.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I could hate this man so much, I think, if it weren't wrong to
hate anyone!

NORFOLK

The king has that list, my lord. But I'll say this much, his sins
are terrible.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

My innocence then will seem so much more beautiful and
guiltless when the king finds out how honest I am.

SURREY

This can't save you. I remember some of the things on the
list and I'll say what they are. Now, if you can blush and say
you're guilty, cardinal, you'll seem a little honest.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Go on and speak, sir. I can face your worst accusations. If I
blush it's because I see a nobleman with no manners.

SURREY

I'd rather be without manners than without a head. Take
this! First, without the king's agreement or knowledge, you
made yourself an ambassador to the Pope. By doing this
you stole power from all bishops.

NORFOLK

Then, that in all the letters you wrote to Rome or to foreign
prince, "*I and my king*" was always written. So you
represented the king as your servant.

SUFFOLK

Then, without the king's or council's knowledge, when you
went to the emperor as an ambassador you dared to carry
the great seal into Flanders.

SURREY

Then, you sent a large amount of money to Gregory to
Cassado to make an alliance between the king and Ferrara
without the king's or country's agreement.

SUFFOLK

Then, out of simple ambition, you had your cardinal's hat
stamped on coins.

SURREY

Then, that you sent countless wealth--how you got it is
between you and your conscience--to Rome for their use
and to pay for honors for yourself, which was bad for the

You have for dignities; to the mere undoing
Of all the kingdom. Many more there are;
400 Which, since they are of you, and odious,
I will not taint my mouth with.

CHAMBERLAIN

O my lord,
Press not a falling man too far! 'tis virtue:
His faults lie open to the laws; let them,
405 Not you, correct him. My heart weeps to see him
So little of his great self.

SURREY

I forgive him.

SUFFOLK

Lord cardinal, the king's further pleasure is,
Because all those things you have done of late,
410 By your power legatine, within this kingdom,
Fall into the compass of a praemunire,
That therefore such a writ be sued against you;
To forfeit all your goods, lands, tenements,
Chattels, and whatsoever, and to be
415 Out of the king's protection. This is my charge.

NORFOLK

And so we'll leave you to your meditations
How to live better. For your stubborn answer
About the giving back the great seal to us,
The king shall know it, and, no doubt, shall thank you.
420 So fare you well, my little good lord cardinal.

Exeunt all but CARDINAL WOLSEY

CARDINAL WOLSEY

So farewell to the little good you bear me.
Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness!
This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow blossoms,
425 And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a-ripening, nips his root,
And then he falls, as I do. I have ventured,
430 Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
This many summers in a sea of glory,
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
At length broke under me and now has left me,
Weary and old with service, to the mercy
435 Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye:
I feel my heart new open'd. O, how wretched
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!
There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,
440 That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,
More pangs and fears than wars or women have:
And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,
Never to hope again.

Enter CROMWELL, and stands amazed

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Why, how now, Cromwell!

445

CROMWELL

I have no power to speak, sir.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What, amazed
At my misfortunes? can thy spirit wonder
A great man should decline? Nay, an you weep,
450 I am fall'n indeed.

kingdom. There are many more items on the list which,
since they are about you and disgusting, I will not
contaminate my mouth with.

CHAMBERLAIN

My lord, don't kick a man when he's down! It's not virtuous.
His faults will be judged by the laws. Let them punish him
instead of doing it yourself. My heart weeps to see him
diminished like this.

SURREY

I forgive him.

SUFFOLK

Lord cardinal, because the things you've done lately with
your power as a papal deputy in this kingdom fall under the
crime of *praemunire*, the king also wants to sue you for
all your goods, lands, holdings, moveable property, and
anything else, and to throw you out of his protection. I was
told to tell you this.

NORFOLK

So we'll leave you to your thoughts about how to live better.
As for your stubborn answer about giving the great seal
back to us, the king will know it and no doubt will thank
you. So goodbye, *not* good lord cardinal.

All except CARDINAL WOLSEY exit.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

So goodbye to your feelings about me, which are not good.
Goodbye! Goodbye to all my power! This is what it is to be
human. One day a man is full of hope, like a plant
producing its first tender leaves. The next day he blossoms
and is covered with honor. On the third day a frost, a
murderous frost, comes and when the confident man thinks
that his greatness is certainly ripening, the frost kills his
root and he falls, like I do. Like little boys swimming on
inflatable toys, I have dared to swim for many summers in a
sea of glory, far beyond my depth. My blown-up pride
finally broke under me and now has left me, tired by public
service and old, to the mercy of a rough stream that will
drown me. I hate you, pointless ceremony and worldly
glory. My heart feels newly opened. How miserable a poor
man is who depends on the favors of kings! More suffering
and fear than you get from wars or women lies between the
smile we wish for, I mean a kind expression on a king's face,
and destruction. And when a man like that falls, he falls like
Lucifer, with no hope left.

CROMWELL enters and stands looking amazed.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Well hello, Cromwell!

CROMWELL

I don't know what to say, sir.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

What, are you amazed at my bad luck? Are you surprised a
great man can fall? Well, if you're crying I must really have
fallen.

¹⁰ The statute of "praemunire" forbids saying or acting as though the pope and his representatives have more power over the kingdom than the king. Wolsey's dealings with the pope behind the king's back threaten the king's sole authority.

CROMWELL

How does your grace?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Why, well;

Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell.

I know myself now; and I feel within me

455 A peace above all earthly dignities,

A still and quiet conscience. The king has cured me,

I humbly thank his grace; and from these shoulders,

These ruin'd pillars, out of pity, taken

A load would sink a navy, too much honour:

460 O, 'tis a burthen, Cromwell, 'tis a burthen

Too heavy for a man that hopes for heaven!

CROMWELL

I am glad your grace has made that right use of it.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I hope I have: I am able now, methinks,

Out of a fortitude of soul I feel,

465 To endure more miseries and greater far

Than my weak-hearted enemies dare offer.

What news abroad?

CROMWELL

The heaviest and the worst

Is your displeasure with the king.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

470 God bless him!

CROMWELL

The next is, that Sir Thomas More is chosen

Lord chancellor in your place.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

That's somewhat sudden:

But he's a learned man. May he continue

475 Long in his highness' favour, and do justice

For truth's sake and his conscience; that his bones,

When he has run his course and sleeps in blessings,

May have a tomb of orphans' tears wept on em! What

more?

CROMWELL

480 That Cranmer is return'd with welcome,

Install'd lord archbishop of Canterbury.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

That's news indeed.

CROMWELL

Last, that the Lady Anne,

Whom the king hath in secrecy long married,

485 This day was view'd in open as his queen,

Going to chapel; and the voice is now

Only about her coronation.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

There was the weight that pull'd me down. O Cromwell,

The king has gone beyond me: all my glories

490 In that one woman I have lost for ever:

No sun shall ever usher forth mine honours,

Or gild again the noble troops that waited

Upon my smiles. Go, get thee from me, Cromwell;

CROMWELL

How are you?

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Well, actually. I've never been so truly happy, my dear

Cromwell. Now I know myself and I feel inside me a peace

greater than all earthly honors, a calm and satisfied

conscience. The king has cured me and I thank him. Out of

pity, he's taken a weight off these shoulders, these broken

pillars, that would sink a navy ¹¹: too much honor. Oh, it's

a burden, Cromwell, it's a burden too heavy for a man who

hopes to go to heaven.

CROMWELL

I am glad you've made good use of it, your grace.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I hope I have. I think I am able now, because of how strong

my soul feels, to bear more and greater suffering by far than

my cowardly enemies dare cause me. What news is there?

CROMWELL

The saddest and worst is the king's anger at you.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

God bless him!

CROMWELL

The next is that Sir Thomas More ¹² has been chosen as

lord chancellor to replace you.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

That's very sudden, but he's a learned man. I hope he stays

in the king's favor for a long time and does his job well for

the sake of truth and his conscience. And I hope that when

he has died and gone to heaven, orphans will cry over his

body because he has been so kind to them! What else?

CROMWELL

Cranmer has returned and his welcome is that he has been

made archbishop of Canterbury.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Well, that's news.

CROMWELL

Finally, the Lady Anne, whom the king married secretly long

ago, was today openly presented as his queen when they

went to church together. Now the only thing anyone talks

about is her coronation.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

That was what destroyed me. Oh, Cromwell, the king has

moved on from me. I lost all my glories because of that one

woman. No sun will rise on a day that brings me honor or

shine on the noble crowds that depended on me. Go, get

away from me, Cromwell. I'm a poor, ruined man, unworthy

to be your lord and master. Go to the king, may he be

¹¹ Remember that, in the first conversation between the king and Wolsey, the cardinal compared himself to an unsinkable ship followed by hungry, powerless fish. Now, his ship is sinking.

¹² This scene compresses and alters the historical chronology of events, but the point is that "Sir Thomas More" became Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor. More was executed for his refusal to take the Oath of Supremacy, which names the English monarch as the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. More remained faithful to his Catholic faith, and did not support the king's divorce and remarriage.

I am a poor fall'n man, unworthy now
 495 To be thy lord and master: seek the king;
 That sun, I pray, may never set! I have told him
 What and how true thou art: he will advance thee;
 Some little memory of me will stir him--
 I know his noble nature--not to let
 500 Thy hopeful service perish too: good Cromwell,
 Neglect him not; make use now, and provide
 For thine own future safety.

CROMWELL

O my lord,
 Must I, then, leave you? must I needs forego
 505 So good, so noble and so true a master?
 Bear witness, all that have not hearts of iron,
 With what a sorrow Cromwell leaves his lord.
 The king shall have my service: but my prayers
 For ever and for ever shall be yours.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear
 In all my miseries; but thou hast forced me,
 Out of thy honest truth, to play the woman.
 Let's dry our eyes: and thus far hear me, Cromwell;
 And, when I am forgotten, as I shall be,
 515 And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention
 Of me more must be heard of, say, I taught thee,
 Say, Wolsey, that once trod the ways of glory,
 And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour,
 Found thee a way, out of his wreck, to rise in;
 520 A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.
 Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me.
 Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition:
 By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then,
 The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?
 525 Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate thee;
 Corruption wins not more than honesty.
 Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
 To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear not:
 Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
 530 Thy God's, and truth's; then if thou fall'st,
 O Cromwell,
 Thou fall'st a blessed martyr! Serve the king;
 And,--prithce, lead me in:
 There take an inventory of all I have,
 To the last penny; 'tis the king's: my robe,
 And my integrity to heaven, is all
 I dare now call mine own. O Cromwell, Cromwell!
 Had I but served my God with half the zeal
 I served my king, he would not in mine age
 540 Have left me naked to mine enemies.

CROMWELL

Good sir, have patience.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

So I have. Farewell
 The hopes of court! my hopes in heaven do dwell.

Exeunt

powerful forever! I have told him about your qualities and how honest you are. He will promote you. Some small memory of me will keep him from letting you suffer for doing your duty--I know his noble character. Good Cromwell, be good to him. Go on, take care of yourself and consider your own safety.

CROMWELL

My lord, do I have to leave you? Do I have to abandon such a good, noble, and honest master? Those of you who aren't hard-hearted, bear witness to how sadly Cromwell leaves his master. I'll serve the king but I'll pray for you for ever and ever.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

Cromwell, I didn't think I would cry despite all my suffering. But you've forced me to act like a woman and cry because of your honest faithfulness. Let's dry our eyes. And listen to me, Cromwell. When I have been forgotten, as I will be, and lie in my cold marble tomb, where no one will mention me again, say I taught you. Say, Wolsey, who was once powerful and explored all the depths and shallow places in the sea of honor, found you a way to rise when he was shipwrecked. A secure and safe way, even though your master couldn't take it too. Just consider my fall and what ruined me. Cromwell, I tell you, don't be ambitious. That's the sin that made the angels fall. So, how can a man, made in the image of God, hope to get anything by it? Love yourself less than everyone else, love those who hate you. Corruption doesn't get you any more than honesty. Always be ready to impose peace, to silence critical voices. Be just and don't be afraid. Let the only goal you work toward be the good of your country, your God, and truth. Then if you fall, Cromwell, you'll fall as a blessed saint! Serve the king and--please, take me inside. There make a list of everything I have, down to the last penny. It belongs to the king. My robe and my trust in heaven are all I can call mine now. Oh, Cromwell, Cromwell! If I had only served my God with half the eagerness I served my king, he would not have left me defenseless against my enemies in my old age.

CROMWELL

Be calm, sir.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

I am. Goodbye, the hopes I had in court. My hopes now live in heaven.

They exit.

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter two Gentlemen, meeting one another

FIRST GENTLEMAN

You're well met once again.

Shakescleare Translation

Two GENTLEMEN enter, meeting.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Hello, again.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

So are you.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

You come to take your stand here, and behold
The Lady Anne pass from her coronation?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

5 'Tis all my business. At our last encounter,
The Duke of Buckingham came from his trial.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

'Tis very true: but that time offer'd sorrow;
This, general joy.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

10 'Tis well: the citizens,
I am sure, have shown at full their royal minds--
As, let 'em have their rights, they are ever forward--
In celebration of this day with shows,
Pageants and sights of honour.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Never greater,
15 Nor, I'll assure you, better taken, sir.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

May I be bold to ask at what that contains,
That paper in your hand?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes; 'tis the list
Of those that claim their offices this day
20 By custom of the coronation.
The Duke of Suffolk is the first, and claims
To be high-steward; next, the Duke of Norfolk,
He to be earl marshal: you may read the rest.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I thank you, sir: had I not known those customs,
25 I should have been beholding to your paper.
But, I beseech you, what's become of Katharine,
The princess dowager? how goes her business?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

That I can tell you too. The Archbishop
Of Canterbury, accompanied with other
30 Learned and reverend fathers of his order,
Held a late court at Dunstable, six miles off
From Amptill where the princess lay; to which
She was often cited by them, but appear'd not:
And, to be short, for not appearance and
35 The king's late scruple, by the main assent
Of all these learned men she was divorced,
And the late marriage made of none effect
Since which she was removed to Kimbolton,
Where she remains now sick.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

40 Alas, good lady!

Trumpets

SECOND GENTLEMAN

The trumpets sound: stand close, the queen is coming.

Hautboys

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Hello.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

You've come to stand here and watch Lady Anne pass
through on her way back from her coronation?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

That's exactly it. When we last met, the Duke of
Buckingham was coming from his trial.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

That's true. That was a sad occasion, and this is one filled
with joy.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

It's a good occasion. The citizens have shown their royal
feelings about it--to be fair, they're always quick to show
their emotions--by celebrating this day with plays, parades,
and other festivities.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

There was never a greater celebration, nor, I'm sure, a
better reason for one.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Could I be so bold as to ask what that paper you're holding
says?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes. It's the list of those who are getting titles today, as is
usual on a coronation. The Duke of Suffolk is the first. He
wants to be high-steward. Then is the Duke of Norfolk, who
wants to be earl marshal. You can read the rest.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Thank you, sir. If I hadn't known about these customs I
would have been very grateful to see the paper. But tell me,
what's become of Katharine, the princess dowager? How is
she?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I can tell you that too. The Archbishop of Canterbury and
other learned, wise fathers of that religion held a court at
Dunstable, six miles away from Amptill where the princess
was staying. She was often called up by them but didn't
appear. In short, because she didn't appear and because of
the king's recent doubts, these learned men agreed that
she should be divorced and the marriage was ended. Since
then she moved to Kimbolton, where she still is, and is sick.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Poor, good lady!

Trumpets sound.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

The trumpets are sounding. Get closer, the queen is
coming.

Oboes sound.

THE ORDER OF THE CORONATION

1. A lively flourish of Trumpets.
2. Then, two Judges.
3. Lord Chancellor, with the purse and mace before him.
4. Choristers, singing.
5. Mayor of London, bearing the mace. Then Garter, in his coat of arms, and on his head a gilt copper crown.
6. Marquess Dorset, bearing a sceptre of gold, on his head a demi-coronal of gold. With
7. SUFFOLK, in his robe of estate, his coronet on his head, bearing a long white wand, as high-steward. With him, NORFOLK, with the rod of marshalship, a coronet on his head. Collars of SS.
8. A canopy borne by four of the Cinque-ports; under it, QUEEN ANNE in her robe; in her hair richly adorned with pearl, crowned. On each side her, the Bishops of London and Winchester.
9. The old Duchess of Norfolk, in a coronal of gold, wrought with flowers, bearing QUEEN ANNE's train.
10. Certain Ladies or Countesses, with plain circlets of gold without flowers.

Music. They pass over the stage in order and state.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

A royal train, believe me. These I know:
45 Who's that that bears the sceptre?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Marquess Dorset:
And that the Earl of Surrey, with the rod.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

A bold brave gentleman. That should be
The Duke of Suffolk?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

50 'Tis the same: high-steward.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

And that my Lord of Norfolk?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

[Looking on QUEEN ANNE] Heaven bless thee!
Thou hast the sweetest face I ever look'd on.
55 Sir, as I have a soul, she is an angel;
Our king has all the Indies in his arms,
And more and richer, when he strains that lady:
I cannot blame his conscience.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

They that bear
60 The cloth of honour over her, are four barons
Of the Cinque-ports.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Those men are happy; and so are all are near her.
I take it, she that carries up the train
Is that old noble lady, Duchess of Norfolk.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

65 It is; and all the rest are countesses.

THE ORDER OF APPEARANCE IN THE CORONATION:

1. Trumpets are played.
2. Two judges enter.
3. The Lord Chancellor enters, carrying the ceremonial purse and staff in front of him.
4. A choir enters, singing.
5. The Mayor of London enters, carrying the ceremonial staff. Then Garter, wearing his coat of arms with a copper, gold-covered crown on his head.
6. Marquess Dorset enters carrying a golden scepter with a golden crown on his head. SURREY enters with him carrying a silver stick with a dove on it and wearing an earl's crown and a collar with S's on it.
7. SUFFOLK enters dressed as high-steward, wearing his official robe and a crown on his head and carrying a long white staff. NORFOLK enters with him carrying the marshal's staff with a crown on his head. They wear collars with S's on them.
8. A canopy is carried by four officers of the Cinque-ports. QUEEN ANNE is under it in her ceremonial robe. Her hair is decorated with pearls and she wears a crown. The Bishops of London and Winchester enter on either side of her.
9. The old Duchess of Norfolk wearing a golden crown shaped into flowers carries the train of QUEEN ANNE's dress.
10. Certain ladies or countesses enter wearing plain golden circlets without flowers.

Music plays. They pass over the stage in the order described.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

This is a royal-looking procession, believe me. I know these people, but who's that carrying the scepter?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Marquess Dorset. And that's the Earl of Surrey with the staff.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

He's a brave, daring man. So that'll be the Duke of Suffolk next?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Exactly. He's high-steward.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

And that's the Lord of Norfolk?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Yes.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

[Looking at QUEEN ANNE] God bless you! You have the sweetest face I've ever seen. Sir, I swear on my soul that she's an angel. When our king hugs that lady he's holding something more precious than all of India. I can't blame him for his doubts about his former marriage.

FIRST GENTLEMAN


Those who carry the canopy over her are four barons, officers of the Cinque-ports.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Those men are lucky, and so is everyone near her. I assume the woman carrying her train is the old, noble Duchess of Norfolk.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

She is, and the others are countesses.

 The "collar" mentioned is an ornamental gold chain with links in the form of the letter "S." It may be worn by those with the rank of "esquire" (knight) upward.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Their coronets say so. These are stars indeed;
And sometimes falling ones.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

No more of that.

Exit procession, and then a great flourish of trumpets. Enter a third Gentleman.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

70 God save you, sir! where have you been broiling?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Among the crowd i' the Abbey; where a finger
Could not be wedged in more: I am stifled
With the mere rankness of their joy.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

You saw

75 The ceremony?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

That I did.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

How was it?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Well worth the seeing.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Good sir, speak it to us.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

80 As well as I am able. The rich stream
Of lords and ladies, having brought the queen
To a prepared place in the choir, fell off
A distance from her; while her grace sat down
To rest awhile, some half an hour or so,
85 In a rich chair of state, opposing freely
The beauty of her person to the people.
Believe me, sir, she is the goodliest woman
That ever lay by man: which when the people
Had the full view of, such a noise arose
90 As the shrouds make at sea in a stiff tempest,
As loud, and to as many tunes: hats, cloaks--
Doublets, I think,--flew up; and had their faces
Been loose, this day they had been lost. Such joy
I never saw before. Great-bellied women,
95 That had not half a week to go, like rams
In the old time of war, would shake the press,
And make 'em reel before 'em. No man living
Could say 'This is my wife' there; all were woven
So strangely in one piece.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

100 But, what follow'd?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

At length her grace rose, and with modest paces
Came to the altar; where she kneel'd, and saint-like
Cast her fair eyes to heaven and pray'd devoutly.
Then rose again and bow'd her to the people:
105 When by the Archbishop of Canterbury
She had all the royal makings of a queen;
As holy oil, Edward Confessor's crown,
The rod, and bird of peace, and all such emblems
Laid nobly on her: which perform'd, the choir,
110 With all the choicest music of the kingdom,
Together sung 'Te Deum.' So she parted,
And with the same full state paced back again
To York-place, where the feast is held.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I can tell from their crowns. They look like stars--sometimes
falling stars.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Shh, that's enough.

The parade exits and trumpets sound loudly. A THIRD GENTLEMAN enters.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Hello, sir! What crowd have you been in?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

The crowd in the Abbey. You couldn't have wedged in even
one more finger. I feel suffocated by their disgusting
happiness.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

You saw the coronation?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

I did.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

How was it?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Well worth seeing.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Tell us about it, good sir.

THIRD GENTLEMAN


I will tell you as well as I can. The expensively dressed
procession of lords and ladies brought the queen to a place
prepared in the choir of the cathedral and separated from
her. She sat down to rest a while, a half an hour or so, in a
beautiful throne, openly showing her beauty to the people.
Believe me, sir, she's the most beautiful woman a man ever
slept with. When the people saw her clearly, they made a
noise as loud as the sails on a ship in a bad storm, and
made up of as many different tunes. They threw up their
hats, cloaks, and even shirts I think. If their faces had been
loose, they would have thrown and lost them today. I never
saw such happiness before. Hugely pregnant women who
had less than a week before labor shook the crowd and
knocked them over like those battering rams that used to
be used in war. No man alive could have identified his wife
there because all the people were so woven together.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

But what happened next?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Finally the queen rose and walked modestly to the altar.
She knelt there and, like a saint, turned her eyes to
heaven and prayed piously. Then she got up again and
bowed to the people. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury
put on her all the things that make you a queen, like holy
oil, Edward the Confessor's crown, the staff and bird that
symbolize peace, and all the other symbols. When this was
done, the choir, which was made up of the best singers in
the kingdom, sang "Te Deum." She left and walked back
to York-place where the feast is with the same dignified
walk.

 The "Te Deum" is a hymn of thanksgiving to God for a special blessing. Its lyrics begin, "We praise thee, O Lord."

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Sir,
115 You must no more call it York-place, that's past;
For, since the cardinal fell, that title's lost:
'Tis now the king's, and call'd Whitehall.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

I know it;
But 'tis so lately alter'd, that the old name
120 Is fresh about me.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

What two reverend bishops
Were those that went on each side of the queen?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Stokesly and Gardiner; the one of Winchester,
Newly preferr'd from the king's secretary,
125 The other, London.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

He of Winchester
Is held no great good lover of the archbishop's,
The virtuous Cranmer.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

All the land knows that:
130 However, yet there is no great breach; when it comes,
Cranmer will find a friend will not shrink from him.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Who may that be, I pray you?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Thomas Cromwell;
A man in much esteem with the king, and truly
135 A worthy friend. The king has made him master
O' the jewel house,
And one, already, of the privy council.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

He will deserve more.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Yes, without all doubt.
140 Come, gentlemen, ye shall go my way, which
Is to the court, and there ye shall be my guests:
Something I can command. As I walk thither,
I'll tell ye more.

BOTH

You may command us, sir.
145

Exeunt

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Sir, you shouldn't call it York-place anymore. That's its old name. Since the cardinal fell from power, it hasn't been called that. Now it belongs to the king and is called Whitehall.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

I know. But the name was changed so recently that I still think of it by its old name.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Who were the two respectable bishops walking on either side of the queen?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Stokesly and Gardiner. The first is bishop of Winchester, recently promoted from his job as the king's secretary. The other is bishop of London.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

The bishop of Winchester is believed to dislike the archbishop, virtuous Cranmer.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Everyone knows that. But there hasn't been a big fight yet. When it comes, Cranmer will find a friend who won't abandon him.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Really? Who's that?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Thomas Cromwell, a man the king thinks very highly of and a very good friend. The king has put him in charge of the treasury and he's already one of his private advisers.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

He will deserve further promotions.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Yes, definitely. Come on, gentleman, you'll go with me to the court and be my guests there. I have some authority there. As we walk there I'll tell you more.

BOTH

We'll do as you say, sir.

They exit.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter KATHARINE, Dowager, sick; led between GRIFFITH, her gentleman usher, and PATIENCE, her woman

GRIFFITH

How does your grace?

Shakesclare Translation

KATHARINE the Dowager Princess enters, sick. She's supported by GRIFFITH, her manservant, and PATIENCE, her maid.

GRIFFITH

How are you, your grace?

KATHARINE

O Griffith, sick to death!
My legs, like loaden branches, bow to the earth,
Willing to leave their burthen. Reach a chair:
5 So; now, methinks, I feel a little ease.
Didst thou not tell me, Griffith, as thou led'st me,
That the great child of honour, Cardinal Wolsey,
Was dead?

GRIFFITH

Yes, madam; but I think your grace,
10 Out of the pain you suffer'd, gave no ear to't.

KATHARINE

Prithee, good Griffith, tell me how he died:
If well, he stepp'd before me, happily
For my example.

GRIFFITH

Well, the voice goes, madam:
15 For after the stout Earl Northumberland
Arrested him at York, and brought him forward,
As a man sorely tainted, to his answer,
He fell sick suddenly, and grew so ill
He could not sit his mule.

KATHARINE

20 Alas, poor man!

GRIFFITH

At last, with easy roads, he came to Leicester,
Lodged in the abbey; where the reverend abbot,
With all his convent, honourably received him;
To whom he gave these words, 'O, father abbot,
25 An old man, broken with the storms of state,
Is come to lay his weary bones among ye;
Give him a little earth for charity!'
So went to bed; where eagerly his sickness
Pursued him still: and, three nights after this,
30 About the hour of eight, which he himself
Foretold should be his last, full of repentance,
Continual meditations, tears, and sorrows,
He gave his honours to the world again,
His blessed part to heaven, and slept in peace.

KATHARINE

35 So may he rest; his faults lie gently on him!
Yet thus far, Griffith, give me leave to speak him,
And yet with charity. He was a man
Of an unbounded stomach, ever ranking
Himself with princes; one that, by suggestion,
40 Tied all the kingdom: simony was fair-play;
His own opinion was his law: i' the presence
He would say untruths; and be ever double
Both in his words and meaning: he was never,
But where he meant to ruin, pitiful:
45 His promises were, as he then was, mighty;
But his performance, as he is now, nothing:
Of his own body he was ill, and gave
The clergy in example.

GRIFFITH

Noble madam,
50 Men's evil manners live in brass; their virtues
We write in water. May it please your highness
To hear me speak his good now?

KATHARINE

Yes, good Griffith;
I were malicious else.

GRIFFITH

55 This cardinal,
Though from an humble stock, undoubtedly

KATHARINE

Oh, Griffith, I'm terminally ill! My legs are like branches
weighed down by something and bow to the earth, trying to
put down the weight they carry. Get me a chair. Ahh, now, I
think, I feel a little better. Didn't you tell me, Griffith, as you
led me, that that honorable man, Cardinal Wolsey, was
dead?

GRIFFITH

Yes, ma'am. But I think you were in too much pain to listen.

KATHARINE

Please, good Griffith, tell me how he died. If he died well,
I'm lucky in that he's given me an example to follow.

GRIFFITH

They say he did die well, ma'am. After the brave Earl of
Northumberland arrested him at York and brought him to
court to answer for the terrible crimes he was accused of,
he suddenly got sick and became so unwell he couldn't
even sit up on his donkey.

KATHARINE

Poor man!

GRIFFITH

At last, he took easy roads to Leicester and stayed in the
abbey. The respected abbot and all the monks received him
honorably there. He said to the abbot, "Oh, father abbot, an
old man injured by the uproars of politics has come to die
among you. Be kind enough to give him a grave!" So he
went to bed, where his sickness eagerly attacked him. Three
nights later, around eight, which was the time he had
foretold he would die, full of repentance, continual
meditation, tears, and sadness, he gave back his honors to
the world and his soul to heaven and slept peacefully.

KATHARINE

May he rest in peace and not be punished harshly for his
faults! Let me say just this about him, Griffith, but I'll speak
it kindly. He was a man with boundless appetites, always
thinking he was equal to kings. He ruled the kingdom with
his words. He was fine with buying and selling public
offices. His own opinion was the law for him. He would lie
to the king and was always ambiguous in what he said. He
never pitied anyone except when he meant to destroy
them. He promised great things and he was great, but he
did nothing and he is nothing now. He treated his own body
badly and was a bad example to churchmen.

GRIFFITH

Noble lady, men's bad qualities are remembered as if they
were engraved in metal, but their virtues are forgotten as
quickly as if they were written on water. May I say good
things about him now?

KATHARINE

Yes, good Griffith, it would be cruel of me to refuse.

GRIFFITH

This cardinal, although he came from a humble family, was
undoubtedly meant to win great honor from the day he was

Was fashion'd to much honour from his cradle.
 He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one;
 Exceeding wise, fair-spoken, and persuading:
 60 Lofty and sour to them that loved him not;
 But to those men that sought him sweet as summer.
 And though he were unsatisfied in getting,
 Which was a sin, yet in bestowing, madam,
 He was most princely: ever witness for him
 65 Those twins of learning that he raised in you,
 Ipswich and Oxford! one of which fell with him,
 Unwilling to outlive the good that did it;
 The other, though unfinished'd, yet so famous,
 So excellent in art, and still so rising,
 70 That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue.
 His overthrow heap'd happiness upon him;
 For then, and not till then, he felt himself,
 And found the blessedness of being little:
 And, to add greater honours to his age
 75 Than man could give him, he died fearing God.

KATHARINE

After my death I wish no other herald,
 No other speaker of my living actions,
 To keep mine honour from corruption,
 But such an honest chronicler as Griffith.
 80 Whom I most hated living, thou hast made me,
 With thy religious truth and modesty,
 Now in his ashes honour: peace be with him!
 Patience, be near me still; and set me lower:
 I have not long to trouble thee. Good Griffith,
 85 Cause the musicians play me that sad note
 I named my knell, whilst I sit meditating
 On that celestial harmony I go to.

Sad and solemn music

GRIFFITH

She is asleep: good wench, let's sit down quiet,
 For fear we wake her: softly, gentle Patience.

90

The vision. Enter, solemnly tripping one after another, six personages, clad in white robes, wearing on their heads garlands of bays, and golden vizards on their faces; branches of bays or palm in their hands. They first congee unto her, then dance; and, at certain changes, the first two hold a spare garland over her head; at which the other four make reverent curtsies; then the two that held the garland deliver the same to the other next two, who observe the same order in their changes, and holding the garland over her head: which done, they deliver the same garland to the last two, who likewise observe the same order: at which, as it were by inspiration, she makes in her sleep signs of rejoicing, and holdeth up her hands to heaven: and so in their dancing vanish, carrying the garland with them. The music continues.

KATHARINE

Spirits of peace, where are ye? are ye all gone,
 And leave me here in wretchedness behind ye?

GRIFFITH

Madam, we are here.

KATHARINE

It is not you I call for:
 95 Saw ye none enter since I slept?

GRIFFITH

None, madam.

KATHARINE

No? Saw you not, even now, a blessed troop
 Invite me to a banquet; whose bright faces
 Cast thousand beams upon me, like the sun?
 100 They promised me eternal happiness;
 And brought me garlands, Griffith, which I feel

born. He was a scholar, and an excellent one. He was very wise, well-spoken, and persuasive. He was proud and bitter towards those who hated him, but to those who wanted to be his friends he was as sweet as summer. And although he was never content with what he had, which was a sin, he was as generous in giving gifts as a king. Consider those two colleges he started in Ipswich and Oxford! One of them fell along with him, unwilling to outlive its benefactor. The other one, although not yet finished, is still so famous, so learned, and still getting better, that he will always be praised in Christian countries. His loss of power was a good thing for him, because it was not until then that he understood himself and found the joy in being unimportant. And it gave him greater honor in his old age than any man could give him that he died thinking of God.


KATHARINE

After my death I don't want anyone to talk about my actions when I was alive to praise me except an honest historian like Griffith. With your religious truth and modesty, you have made me honor the man I hated most when he was alive now that he is dead. May he rest in peace! Patience, stay near me and lower my chair. I won't bother you long. Good Griffith, have the musicians play me that sad song I called my funeral music, while I sit thinking about heaven, where I am going.

Sad music plays.

GRIFFITH

She's asleep. Dear girl, let's sit down quietly, or we'll wake her. Quietly, dear Patience.

The vision : six characters enter solemnly in a line, wearing white robes, bay-leaf crowns on their heads, and golden masks over their faces. They hold bay or palm branches in their hands. They gather around the queen and then dance. At certain points in the dance, the first two hold another crown over her head, to which the other four solemnly bow. Then the two who held the crown hand it to the next two, who do the same thing and hold it over her head. When this is done, they give the crown to the last two, who also do the same thing. Then, as if she felt divine inspiration, Katharine seems happy in her sleep and raises her hands to heaven. Then they vanish while dancing, carrying the crown with them. The music continues.

KATHARINE

Peaceful spirits, where are you? Have you all gone and left me miserable behind you?

GRIFFITH

Ma'am, we're here.

KATHARINE


I wasn't calling for you. Didn't you see anyone come in here while I was asleep?

GRIFFITH

No one, ma'am.

KATHARINE

No? Didn't you see a holy band of angels--whose bright faces cast a thousand beams on me as if they were the sun--invite me to a feast just now? They promised me eternal happiness and brought me crowns, Griffith, that I think I'm not yet worthy enough to wear. I will, though.

 The colors and imagery in Katharine's dream have been interpreted in various ways, with most scholars pointing to the Bible as a source text. In chapter seven of the Book of Revelation, for example, those who serve God wear white robes and carry palms in their hands. Katharine finds a sense of peace from this dream, imagining a heavenly reward that is greater than any gifts or honors given to an earthly queen.

I am not worthy yet to wear: I shall, assuredly.

GRIFFITH

I am most joyful, madam, such good dreams
Possess your fancy.

KATHARINE

105 Bid the music leave,
They are harsh and heavy to me.

Music ceases

PATIENCE

Do you note
How much her grace is alter'd on the sudden?
110 How long her face is drawn? how pale she looks,
And of an earthy cold? Mark her eyes!

GRIFFITH

She is going, wench: pray, pray.

PATIENCE

Heaven comfort her!

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

115 An't like your grace,--

KATHARINE

You are a saucy fellow:
Deserve we no more reverence?

GRIFFITH

You are to blame,
Knowing she will not lose her wonted greatness,
120 To use so rude behavior; go to, kneel.

MESSENGER

I humbly do entreat your highness' pardon;
My haste made me unmannerly. There is staying
A gentleman, sent from the king, to see you.

KATHARINE

125 Admit him entrance, Griffith: but this fellow
Let me ne'er see again.

Exeunt GRIFFITH and Messenger. Re-enter GRIFFITH, with CAPUCIUS

KATHARINE

If my sight fail not,
You should be lord ambassador from the emperor,
My royal nephew, and your name Capucius.

130

CAPUCIUS

Madam, the same; your servant.

KATHARINE

O, my lord,
The times and titles now are alter'd strangely
With me since first you knew me. But, I pray you,
135 What is your pleasure with me?

CAPUCIUS

Noble lady,
First mine own service to your grace; the next,
The king's request that I would visit you;
Who grieves much for your weakness, and by me
140 Sends you his princely commendations,
And heartily entreats you take good comfort.

GRIFFITH

I am very happy, ma'am, that you've had such good
dreams.

KATHARINE

Have the music stop. It sounds harsh and slow to me.

The music stops.

PATIENCE

Do you see how different she suddenly looks? How drawn
her face seems? How pale she looks, and cold as earth?
Look at her eyes!

GRIFFITH

She's dying, girl. Pray, pray.

PATIENCE

God help her!


A MESSENGER enters.

MESSENGER

Your grace--

KATHARINE

You're a rude fellow. Don't I deserve more politeness ?

 Katharine rebukes the messenger here because he greeted her too informally and failed to kneel.

GRIFFITH

You should know she won't let you treat her so rudely, since
she's used to being powerful. Go on, kneel.

MESSENGER

I beg your pardon, your highness. I was in a hurry and that
made me rude. A gentleman sent from the king is waiting to
see you.

KATHARINE

Let him in, Griffith, but let me never see this fellow again.

*GRIFFITH and the MESSENGER exit. GRIFFITH re-enters with
CAPUCIUS.*

KATHARINE

If I'm not going blind, you're the ambassador to the
emperor, my royal nephew, and your name is Capucius.

CAPUCIUS

That's right, ma'am. At your service.

KATHARINE

Oh, my lord, things have gone strangely since we first met,
and I have a different title. But please tell me what you
want from me.

CAPUCIUS

Noble lady, first, I wanted to see you on my own behalf.
Second, the king asked me to visit you. He's very sad about
your illness and sends you his best wishes through me and
asks you to get better.

KATHARINE

O my good lord, that comfort comes too late;
 'Tis like a pardon after execution:
 That gentle physis, given in time, had cured me;
 145 But now I am past an comforts here, but prayers.
 How does his highness?

CAPUCIUS

Madam, in good health.

KATHARINE

So may he ever do! and ever flourish,
 When I shal I dwell with worms, and my poor name
 150 Banish'd the kingdom! Patience, is that letter,
 I caused you write, yet sent away?

PATIENCE

No, madam.

Giving it to KATHARINE

KATHARINE

Sir, I most humbly pray you to deliver
 155 This to my lord the king.

CAPUCIUS

Most willing, madam.

KATHARINE

In which I have commended to his goodness
 The model of our chaste loves, his young daughter;
 The dews of heaven fall thick in blessings on her!
 160 Beseeching him to give her virtuous breeding--
 She is young, and of a noble modest nature,
 I hope she will deserve well,--and a little
 To love her for her mother's sake, that loved him,
 Heaven knows how dearly. My next poor petition
 165 Is, that his noble grace would have some pity
 Upon my wretched women, that so long
 Have follow'd both my fortunes faithfully:
 Of which there is not one, I dare avow,
 And now I should not lie, but will deserve
 170 For virtue and true beauty of the soul,
 For honesty and decent carriage,
 A right good husband, let him be a noble
 And, sure, those men are happy that shall have 'em.
 The last is, for my men; they are the poorest,
 175 But poverty could never draw 'em from me;
 That they may have their wages duly paid 'em,
 And something over to remember me by:
 If heaven had pleased to have given me longer life
 And able means, we had not parted thus.
 180 These are the whole contents: and, good my lord,
 By that you love the dearest in this world,
 As you wish Christian peace to souls departed,
 Stand these poor people's friend, and urge the king
 To do me this last right.

CAPUCIUS

185 By heaven, I will,
 Or let me lose the fashion of a man!

KATHARINE

I thank you, honest lord. Remember me
 In all humility unto his highness:
 Say his long trouble now is passing
 190 Out of this world; tell him, in death I bless'd him,
 For so I will. Mine eyes grow dim. Farewell,
 My lord. Griffith, farewell. Nay, Patience,
 You must not leave me yet: I must to bed;
 Call in more women. When I am dead, good wench,
 195 Let me be used with honour: strew me over
 With maiden flowers, that all the world may know
 I was a chaste wife to my grave: embalm me,

KATHARINE

Oh, my good lord, it's too late to get better. That's like being
 pardoned after your execution. The sweet medicine of
 hearing from the king would have cured me if I'd gotten it in
 time. But now I am past all cures on earth except prayers.
 How is the king?

CAPUCIUS

He's in good health, ma'am.

KATHARINE

I hope he always is! And that he's always well when I am
 dead and living with the worms and no one speaks my
 name anymore in this country! Patience, did you send that
 letter I had you write yet?

PATIENCE

No, ma'am.

She gives it to KATHARINE.

KATHARINE

Sir, I ask you humbly to give this to the king.

CAPUCIUS

Willingly, ma'am.

KATHARINE

In it I asked him to treat [his young daughter](#) ³ well, who
 was created by our virtuous love. May heaven rain blessings
 on her! I ask him to raise her well--she is young and of a
 noble modest character, so I hope she will turn out well--
 and to love her a little for her mother's sake, who loved him
 so much. My next small request is that he'll take a little pity
 on my poor maids who have stuck by me for so long. There
 is not a single one, I swear, and I can't lie now that I'm
 dying, who doesn't deserve an excellent husband, a noble,
 for her virtue and true inner beauty and for honesty and
 decency. Certainly, the men who get them will be lucky. The
 last request is for my men. They are the poorest, but they
 never abandoned me despite their poverty. I ask that their
 wages be paid, and a little more be given to them to
 remember me by. If God had wished to give me a longer life
 and more money, I would not have parted with them like
 this. That's all that's in the letter. And, my good lord, if you
 love the best people in this world and wish Christian souls
 to rest in peace, be a friend to these poor people and
 encourage the king to do this last duty for me.

CAPUCIUS

I will, by God, or let me not be called a man anymore!

KATHARINE

Thank you, honest lord. Remind the king of me humbly. Tell
 him the trouble he's had for so long is passing away. Tell
 him I blessed him when I died, and I will do that. Death is
 clouding my eyes and making me blind. Goodbye, my lord.
 Griffith, goodbye. No, Patience, don't leave me yet. I have to
 go to bed. Call the other maids. When I am dead, dear girl,
 have me be treated honorably. Sprinkle flowers that
 symbolize virtue over me so the whole world knows I was a
 good wife up to the day I died. Embalm me, then put me in
 my coffin. Although I'm not a queen anymore, bury me like

³ The daughter of Katharine and Henry was named Mary, and she was Queen of England from 1553 until her death in 1558.

200 Then lay me forth: although unqueen'd, yet like
A queen, and daughter to a king, inter me.
I can no more.

Exeunt, leading KATHARINE

a queen and the daughter to a king. I can't say anything else.

They exit, supporting KATHARINE.

Act 5, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter GARDINER, Bishop of Winchester, a Page with a torch before him, met by LOVELL

GARDINER

It's one o'clock, boy, is't not?

BOY

It hath struck.

GARDINER

5 These should be hours for necessities,
Not for delights; times to repair our nature
With comforting repose, and not for us
To waste these times. Good hour of night, Sir Thomas!
Whither so late?

LOVELL

Came you from the king, my lord?

GARDINER

10 I did, Sir Thomas: and left him at primero
With the Duke of Suffolk.

LOVELL

I must to him too,
Before he go to bed. I'll take my leave.

GARDINER

15 Not yet, Sir Thomas Lovell. What's the matter?
It seems you are in haste: an if there be
No great offence belongs to't, give your friend
Some touch of your late business: affairs, that walk,
As they say spirits do, at midnight, have
In them a wilder nature than the business
That seeks dispatch by day.

LOVELL

20 My lord, I love you;
And durst commend a secret to your ear
Much weightier than this work. The queen's in labour,
They say, in great extremity; and fear'd
She'll with the labour end.

GARDINER

25 The fruit she goes with
I pray for heartily, that it may find
Good time, and live: but for the stock, Sir Thomas,
I wish it grubb'd up now.

LOVELL

30 Methinks I could
Cry the amen; and yet my conscience says
She's a good creature, and, sweet lady, does
Deserve our better wishes.

Shakescleare Translation

GARDINER, Bishop of Winchester, enters with a page (a boy servant) in front of him holding a torch. He's met by LOVELL.

GARDINER

It's one o'clock, isn't it, boy?

BOY

Yes, the clock struck one.

GARDINER

This is not a time for fun but for necessities. It's a time when we should be sleeping to repair our bodies, not wasting time. Good evening, Sir Thomas! Where are you going so late?

LOVELL

Did you come from the king, my lord?

GARDINER

I did, Sir Thomas. I left him playing cards with the Duke of Suffolk.

LOVELL

I must go to him, too, before he goes to bed. Goodbye.

GARDINER


Wait, Sir Thomas Lovell. What's the matter? You seem to be in a hurry. If there's no harm in it, give me an idea of what you're doing so late. Business that arises at midnight like ghosts is more urgent than the business done by day.

LOVELL

My lord, I love you and I will dare to tell you an important secret. The queen's in labor and they say she's in great danger. It's feared that she'll die in childbirth.

GARDINER

I pray that the child she's pregnant with survives. As for her, Sir Thomas, I hope she dies now.

 In the original text, the child (Elizabeth) is referred to as "fruit" on a plant ("stock"). Gardiner wants the plant (Anne) "grubbed up" or pulled up by the roots. He does not look kindly on Anne or the religious changes her marriage to Henry was partially responsible for.

LOVELL

I think I could say amen to that. But my conscience tells me she's a good person and deserves our best wishes for her, the sweet lady.

GARDINER

But, sir, sir,
Hear me, Sir Thomas: you're a gentleman
35 Of mine own way; I know you wise, religious;
And, let me tell you, it will ne'er be well,
'Twill not, Sir Thomas Lovell, take't of me,
Till Cranmer, Cromwell, her two hands, and she,
Sleep in their graves.

LOVELL

40 Now, sir, you speak of two
The most remark'd i' the kingdom. As for Cromwell,
Beside that of the jewel house, is made master
O' the rolls, and the king's secretary; further, sir,
Stands in the gap and trade of moe preferments,
45 With which the time will load him. The archbishop
Is the king's hand and tongue; and who dare speak
One syllable against him?

GARDINER

Yes, yes, Sir Thomas,
There are that dare; and I myself have ventured
50 To speak my mind of him: and indeed this day,
Sir, I may tell it you, I think I have
Incensed the lords o' the council, that he is,
For so I know he is, they know he is,
A most arch heretic, a pestilence
55 That does infect the land: with which they moved
Have broken with the king; who hath so far
Given ear to our complaint, of his great grace
And princely care foreseeing those fell mischiefs
Our reasons laid before him, hath commanded
60 To-morrow morning to the council-board
He be convented. He's a rank weed, Sir Thomas,
And we must root him out. From your affairs
I hinder you too long: good night, Sir Thomas.

LOVELL

Many good nights, my lord: I rest your servant.

65

Exeunt GARDINER and Page

Enter KING HENRY VIII and SUFFOLK

KING HENRY VIII

Charles, I will play no more tonight;
My mind's not on't; you are too hard for me.

SUFFOLK

Sir, I did never win of you before.

KING HENRY VIII

But little, Charles;
70 Nor shall not, when my fancy's on my play.
Now, Lovell, from the queen what is the news?

LOVELL

I could not personally deliver to her
What you commanded me, but by her woman
I sent your message; who return'd her thanks
75 In the great'st humbleness, and desired your highness
Most heartily to pray for her.

KING HENRY VIII

What say'st thou, ha?
To pray for her? what, is she crying out?

LOVELL

So said her woman; and that her sufferance made
80 Almost each pang a death.

KING HENRY VIII

Alas, good lady!

GARDINER

But sir, sir, listen to me, Sir Thomas. You're a gentleman like
me. I know you're wise and religious. Let me tell you, things
will never be all right, they won't, Sir Thomas Lovell,
believe me, until Cranmer and Cromwell, her two servants,
and she are dead and buried.

LOVELL

Sir, you're talking about two of the most respected men in
the country. As for Cromwell, he's now in charge of court
records in addition to the treasury, and the king's secretary.
And, sir, there are more promotions coming to him soon.
The archbishop is the king's right hand man and speaks for
him, so who dares say a single word against him?

GARDINER

Yes, yes, Sir Thomas, some people dare. I myself have dared
to speak my mind about him. In fact today, sir, I can tell you,
I think I convinced the king's counselors that he is, as I
know he is and they know he is, a terrible heretic and a
disease that has infected the country. They, convinced
about this, have spoken with the king. He has listened to
our complaint enough to understand what we have said
about the disasters in store. Out of fairness and care for the
country, he has commanded that man to appear at the
counsel meeting tomorrow morning. That man's a
disgusting weed, Sir Thomas, and we have to dig him out.
I'm keeping you too long from your business. Good night,
Sir Thomas.

LOVELL

Good night, my lord. I am still at your service.

GARDINER and his page exit.

KING HENRY VIII and SUFFOLK enter.

KING HENRY VIII

Charles, I won't play any more tonight. My mind isn't on it.
You're too good at it.

SUFFOLK

Sir, I've never won against you before.

KING HENRY VIII

You only won a little money, Charles, and won't when my
mind is on playing cards. Now, Lovell, what's the news from
the queen?

LOVELL

I couldn't personally deliver the message you gave to her,
but I sent it to her through her maid. She thanked you as
humbly as possible and asked you to pray for her.

KING HENRY VIII

What? What did you say? To pray for her? Is she screaming?

LOVELL

That's what her maid said. And that she suffered so much at
every contraction that she almost died.

KING HENRY VIII

Poor lady!

SUFFOLK

God safely quit her of her burthen, and
With gentle travail, to the gladding of
Your highness with an heir!

KING HENRY VIII

85 'Tis midnight, Charles;
Prithce, to bed; and in thy prayers remember
The estate of my poor queen. Leave me alone;
For I must think of that which company
Would not be friendly to.

SUFFOLK

90 I wish your highness
A quiet night; and my good mistress will
Remember in my prayers.

KING HENRY VIII

Charles, good night.

Exit SUFFOLK

Enter DENNY

KING HENRY VIII

95 Well, sir, what follows?

DENNY

Sir, I have brought my lord the archbishop,
As you commanded me.

KING HENRY VIII

Ha! Canterbury?

DENNY

100 Ay, my good lord.

KING HENRY VIII

'Tis true: where is he, Denny?

DENNY

He attends your highness' pleasure.

Exit DENNY

LOVELL

105 *[Aside]* This is about that which the bishop spake:
I am happily come hither.

Re-enter DENNY, with CRANMER

KING HENRY VIII

Avoid the gallery.

LOVELL seems to stay

KING HENRY VIII

110 Ha! I have said. Be gone. What!

Exeunt LOVELL and DENNY

CRANMER

[Aside]
I am fearful: wherefore frowns he thus?
'Tis his aspect of terror. All's not well.

KING HENRY VIII

115 How now, my lord! you desire to know
Wherefore I sent for you.

SUFFOLK

May God deliver the child safely, with an easy labor, and
make you happy by giving you an heir!

KING HENRY VIII

It's midnight, Charles. Please go to bed, and pray for my
poor queen's health. Leave me alone. I have to think about
things and need to be alone.

SUFFOLK

I hope you have a peaceful night and I will pray for my good
queen.

KING HENRY VIII

Charles, goodnight.

SUFFOLK exits.

DENNY enters.

KING HENRY VIII

Well, sir, what is it?

DENNY

Sir, I have brought the archbishop as you asked.

KING HENRY VIII

What, the archbishop of Canterbury?

DENNY

Yes, my lord.

KING HENRY VIII

It's true, I asked to see him. Where is he, Denny?

DENNY

He's waiting for you, your highness.

DENNY exits.

LOVELL

[To himself] This is about the business the bishop told me
about. I came here at a good time.

DENNY re-enters with CRANMER.

KING HENRY VIII

Empty the room.

LOVELL seems to want to stay.

KING HENRY VIII

I told you what to do. Get out!

LOVELL and DENNY exit.

CRANMER

[To himself] I am afraid. Why does he frown like that? That's
how he looks when he's angry. Something is wrong.

KING HENRY VIII

Hello, my lord! You want to know why I sent for you.

CRANMER

[Kneeling] It is my duty
To attend your highness' pleasure.

KING HENRY VIII

Pray you, arise,
My good and gracious Lord of Canterbury.
120 Come, you and I must walk a turn together;
I have news to tell you: come, come, give me your hand.
Ah, my good lord, I grieve at what I speak,
And am right sorry to repeat what follows
I have, and most unwillingly, of late
125 Heard many grievous, I do say, my lord,
Grievous complaints of you; which, being consider'd,
Have moved us and our council, that you shall
This morning come before us; where, I know,
You cannot with such freedom purge yourself,
130 But that, till further trial in those charges
Which will require your answer, you must take
Your patience to you, and be well contented
To make your house our Tower: you a brother of us,
It fits we thus proceed, or else no witness
135 Would come against you.

CRANMER

[Kneeling]
I humbly thank your highness;
And am right glad to catch this good occasion
Most throughly to be winnow'd, where my chaff
140 And corn shall fly asunder: for, I know,
There's none stands under more calumnious tongues
Than I myself, poor man.

KING HENRY VIII

Stand up, good Canterbury:
Thy truth and thy integrity is rooted
145 In us, thy friend: give me thy hand, stand up:
Prithee, let's walk. Now, by my holiday.
What manner of man are you? My lord, I look'd
You would have given me your petition, that
I should have ta'en some pains to bring together
150 Yourself and your accusers; and to have heard you,
Without indurance, further.

CRANMER

Most dread liege,
The good I stand on is my truth and honesty:
If they shall fail, I, with mine enemies,
155 Will triumph o'er my person; which I weigh not,
Being of those virtues vacant. I fear nothing
What can be said against me.

KING HENRY VIII

Know you not
How your state stands i' the world, with the whole
160 world?
Your enemies are many, and not small; their practises
Must bear the same proportion; and not ever
The justice and the truth o' the question carries
The due o' the verdict with it: at what ease
165 Might corrupt minds procure knaves as corrupt
To swear against you? such things have been done.
You are potently opposed; and with a malice
Of as great size. Ween you of better luck,
I mean, in perjured witness, than your master,
170 Whose minister you are, whiles here he lived
Upon this naughty earth? Go to, go to;
You take a precipice for no leap of danger,
And woo your own destruction.

CRANMER

God and your majesty
175 Protect mine innocence, or I fall into
The trap is laid for me!

CRANMER

[Kneeling] It's my duty to do as you wish.

KING HENRY VIII

Please, get up, my good lord of Canterbury. Come on, we
have to walk a little. I have news to tell you. Come on, come
on, give me your hand. My good lord, I'm sad to have to say
this and I'm sorry to tell you the following: I have, very
unwillingly, lately heard many terrible, I must say, terrible
complaints about you. Hearing these complaints made me
and my council call you before us this morning.
Unfortunately, because it'll take time to clear your name,
you'll have to wait for your trial patiently in the Tower. Since
you're like my brother, it's right to proceed like this.
Otherwise no witness would dare to appear against you.

CRANMER

[Kneeling] I thank you humbly, your highness. I'm very
happy to have this opportunity to be investigated ²
thoroughly and judged. I know that no one is more lied
about than I am, poor me.

² Being "winnow'd" (in the original text) is a process after the harvest of grain that separates the grain (the desirable part) from the chaff (the inedible husk).

KING HENRY VIII

Stand up, good Canterbury. I am convinced of your
faithfulness and honesty. Give me your hand, stand up.
Please, let's walk. Now, by the virgin Mary, what kind of
man are you? My lord, I thought you would ask me to bring
your accusers to you, and that I'd hear you defend yourself.

CRANMER

Most powerful king, I stand by my truth and honesty. If they
fail me, I will dislike myself as much as my enemies do. I
don't care about my body except because of the virtue in it.
I'm not afraid of anything that can be said against me.

KING HENRY VIII

Don't you know what people think about you, what
everyone thinks? You have a lot of enemies, and important
ones. You should worry about their plotting. It's not always
justice and truth that wins in a lawsuit. Think how easily
bad people could find criminals as bad as they are to tell
lies against you in court. Such things have happened. You
have powerful and evil enemies. Do you think you'll have
better luck, I mean luck in avoiding lying witnesses, than
me, the master you serve while I'm alive on this evil earth?
Really, it's like you think jumping off a cliff isn't dangerous.
You're risking destruction.

CRANMER

May God and you protect me in my innocence, or I'll fall into
the trap that's been set for me!

KING HENRY VIII

Be of good cheer;
 They shall no more prevail than we give way to.
 Keep comfort to you; and this morning see
 180 You do appear before them: if they shall chance,
 In charging you with matters, to commit you,
 The best persuasions to the contrary
 Fail not to use, and with what vehemency
 The occasion shall instruct you: if entreaties
 185 Will render you no remedy, this ring
 Deliver them, and your appeal to us
 There make before them. Look, the good man weeps!
 He's honest, on mine honour. God's blest mother!
 I swear he is true-hearted; and a soul
 190 None better in my kingdom. Get you gone,
 And do as I have bid you.

Exit CRANMER

KING HENRY VIII

He has strangled
 His language in his tears.

Enter the OLD LADY; enter LOVELL, following her

GENTLEMAN

195 *[Within]* Come back: what mean you?

OLD LADY

I'll not come back; the tidings that I bring
 Will make my boldness manners. Now, good angels
 Fly o'er thy royal head, and shade thy person
 Under their blessed wings!

KING HENRY VIII

200 Now, by thy looks
 I guess thy message. Is the queen deliver'd?
 Say, ay; and of a boy.

OLD LADY

Ay, ay, my liege;
 And of a lovely boy: the God of heaven
 205 Both now and ever bless her! 'tis a girl,
 Promises boys hereafter. Sir, your queen
 Desires your visitation, and to be
 Acquainted with this stranger 'tis as like you
 As cherry is to cherry.

KING HENRY VIII

210 Lovell!

LOVELL

Sir?

KING HENRY VIII

Give her an hundred marks. I'll to the queen.

Exit

OLD LADY

An hundred marks! By this light, I'll ha' more.
 215 An ordinary groom is for such payment.
 I will have more, or scold it out of him.
 Said I for this, the girl was like to him?
 I will have more, or else unsay't; and now,
 While it is hot, I'll put it to the issue.

Exeunt

KING HENRY VIII

Don't worry. They won't do anything I don't let them do.
 Take heart and appear before them this morning. If in the
 course of accusing you they sentence you, make sure to
 argue as hard as you can against it, with whatever force the
 occasion demands. If arguing doesn't help, give them this
 ring and appeal to me in front of them. Look, the good man
 is crying! I swear he must be honest. By God's blessed
 mother! I swear he's good-hearted, and there's no better
 man in my kingdom. Go on and do as I told you.

CRANMER exits.

KING HENRY VIII

He can't talk through his tears.

An OLD LADY enters, with LOVELL following her.

GENTLEMAN

[Inside] Come back: what are you doing?

OLD LADY

I won't come back. The news I bring will make my rudeness
 seem like good manners. May good angels fly over your
 royal head and shade you with their holy wings!

KING HENRY VIII

I can guess what you'll say from looking at you. Has the
 queen given birth? Say yes, and to a boy.

OLD LADY

Yes, yes, my king. And to a beautiful boy: may God bless her
 now and forever! It's a girl, who guarantees boys will be
 born later. Sir, your queen wants you to visit her so you can
 meet this stranger who looks as much like you as a cherry
 looks like a cherry.

KING HENRY VIII

Lovell!

LOVELL

Sir?

KING HENRY VIII

Pay her a hundred [marks](#)³. I'll go see the queen.

³ A "mark" is a coin valued at about two-thirds of a British pound.

HENRY VIII exits.

OLD LADY

A hundred marks! I swear I'll get more. That's what you pay
 an ordinary groom for taking care of your horse. I'll get
 more or keep scolding him till I get it. Did I say the girl
 looked like him for this? I'll have more or I'll take that back.
 Now, I'll ask for more while there's still a chance.

They exit.

Act 5, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Before the council-chamber. Poursuivants, pages, etc., attending.

Enter CRANMER

CRANMER

I hope I am not too late; and yet the gentleman,
That was sent to me from the council, pray'd me
To make great haste. All fast? what means this? Ho!
Who waits there? Sure, you know me?

Enter Keeper

KEEPER

5 Yes, my lord;
But yet I cannot help you.

CRANMER

Why?

Enter DOCTOR BUTTS

KEEPER

Your grace must wait till you be call'd for.

CRANMER

10 So.

DOCTOR BUTTS

[Aside] This is a piece of malice. I am glad
I came this way so happily: the king
Shall understand it presently.

Exit

CRANMER

15 *[Aside]* 'Tis Butts,
The king's physician: as he pass'd along,
How earnestly he cast his eyes upon me!
Pray heaven, he sound not my disgrace! For certain,
This is of purpose laid by some that hate me--
20 God turn their hearts! I never sought their malice--
To quench mine honour: they would shame to make me
Wait else at door, a fellow-counsellor,
'Mong boys, grooms, and lackeys. But their pleasures
Must be fulfill'd, and I attend with patience.

Enter KING HENRY VIII and DOCTOR BUTTS at a window above

DOCTOR BUTTS

25 I'll show your grace the strangest sight--

KING HENRY VIII

What's that, Butts?

DOCTOR BUTTS

I think your highness saw this many a day.

KING HENRY VIII

Body o' me, where is it?

DOCTOR BUTTS

30 There, my lord:
The high promotion of his grace of Canterbury;
Who holds his state at door, 'mongst pursuivants,

Shakescleare Translation

In front of the council-chamber, various servants are waiting.

CRANMER enters.

CRANMER

I hope I'm not too late. But the gentleman sent to me by the council asked me to hurry. Locked? What does this mean? Hello? Who's waiting there? Don't you recognize me?

The KEEPER enters.

KEEPER

Yes, my lord, but I can't help you.

CRANMER

Why?

DOCTOR BUTTS enters.

KEEPER

You have to wait until you're called.

CRANMER

All right.

DOCTOR BUTTS

[To himself] This is some evil scheme. I'm glad I happened to come this way. The king will hear about this at once.

DOCTOR BUTTS exits.

CRANMER

[To himself] That was Butts, the king's physician. He looked at me so earnestly as he passed! I pray he doesn't spread the word about my disgrace! This must have been done on purpose by some people who hate me--may God change their minds! I never wanted to make enemies of them. They must want to dishonor me, or they would be ashamed to make me wait at the door, a council-member like them, among all sorts of servants. But I have to do what they want, and I'm waiting patiently.

KING HENRY VIII and DOCTOR BUTTS enter at a window above.

DOCTOR BUTTS

I'll show you the strangest sight--

KING HENRY VIII

What's that, Butts?

DOCTOR BUTTS

I think you've seen in many days.

KING HENRY VIII

Goodness, where?

DOCTOR BUTTS

There, my lord. The good treatment of the archbishop of Canterbury, who's waiting at the door among petitioners and servants.

Pages, and footboys.

KING HENRY VIII

Ha! 'tis he, indeed:

Is this the honour they do one another?

- 35 'Tis well there's one above 'em yet. I had thought
They had parted so much honesty among 'em
At least, good manners, as not thus to suffer
A man of his place, and so near our favour,
To dance attendance on their lordships' pleasures,
40 And at the door too, like a post with packets.
By holy Mary, Butts, there's knavery:
Let 'em alone, and draw the curtain close:
We shall hear more anon.

Exeunt

KING HENRY VIII

What? Yes, it's him. Is this the way they treat each other? It's good there's still someone more important than them. I thought they had enough honesty between them, or at least good manners, not to make a man of his importance and good standing with me wait for their attention, and at the door, too, as if he were a postman delivering packages. But, by holy Mary, Butts, this is vicious. Leave them alone and let's close the curtain. We'll hear more soon.

They exit.

Act 5, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter Chancellor; places himself at the upper end of the table on the left hand; a seat being left void above him, as for CRANMER's seat.

SUFFOLK, NORFOLK, SURREY, Chamberlain, GARDINER, seat themselves in order on each side. CROMWELL at lower end, as secretary. Keeper at the door

CHANCELLOR

Speak to the business, master-secretary:
Why are we met in council?

CROMWELL

Please your honours,
The chief cause concerns his grace of Canterbury.

GARDINER

- 5 Has he had knowledge of it?

CROMWELL

Yes.

NORFOLK

Who waits there?

KEEPER

Without, my noble lords?

GARDINER

Yes.

KEEPER

- 10 My lord archbishop;
And has done half an hour, to know your pleasures.

CHANCELLOR

Let him come in.

KEEPER

Your grace may enter now.

CRANMER enters and approaches the council-table

CHANCELLOR

- 15 My good lord archbishop, I'm very sorry
To sit here at this present, and behold
That chair stand empty: but we all are men,
In our own natures frail, and capable

Shakescleare Translation

The CHANCELLOR enters and sits at the upper end of the table on the left side. A seat is left empty next to him for CRANMER. SUFFOLK, NORFOLK, SURREY, CHAMBERLAIN, GARDINER, sit in that order on either side of him. CROMWELL sits at the lower end as the secretary. The KEEPER is at the door.

CHANCELLOR

Tell us about this business, secretary. Why has the council met?

CROMWELL

Your honors, the main reason is the archbishop of Canterbury.

GARDINER

Does he know about it?

CROMWELL

Yes.

NORFOLK

Who's waiting there?

KEEPER

Outside, my noble lords?

GARDINER

Yes.

KEEPER

The archbishop. He's waited half an hour to hear what you want.

CHANCELLOR

Let him in.

KEEPER

You can enter now, your grace.

CRANMER enters and approaches the council-table.

CHANCELLOR

My lord archbishop, I'm very sorry to sit here now and see that chair remain empty. But we are all men with weak natures and our bodies can have power over us. There aren't many angels. It's this weakness, as well as a lack of

Of our flesh; few are angels: out of which frailty
 20 And want of wisdom, you, that best should teach us,
 Have misdemean'd yourself, and not a little,
 Toward the king first, then his laws, in filling
 The whole realm, by your teaching and your chaplains,
 For so we are inform'd, with new opinions,
 25 Divers and dangerous; which are heresies,
 And, not reform'd, may prove pernicious.

GARDINER

Which reformation must be sudden too,
 My noble lords; for those that tame wild horses
 Pace 'em not in their hands to make 'em gentle,
 30 But stop their mouths with stubborn bits, and spur 'em,
 Till they obey the manage. If we suffer,
 Out of our easiness and childish pity
 To one man's honour, this contagious sickness,
 Farewell all physic: and what follows then?
 35 Commotions, uproars, with a general taint
 Of the whole state: as, of late days, our neighbours,
 The upper Germany, can dearly witness,
 Yet freshly pitied in our memories.

CRANMER

My good lords, hitherto, in all the progress
 40 Both of my life and office, I have labour'd,
 And with no little study, that my teaching
 And the strong course of my authority
 Might go one way, and safely; and the end
 Was ever, to do well: nor is there living,
 45 I speak it with a single heart, my lords,
 A man that more detests, more stirs against,
 Both in his private conscience and his place,
 Defacers of a public peace, than I do.
 Pray heaven, the king may never find a heart
 50 With less allegiance in it! Men that make
 Envy and crooked malice nourishment
 Dare bite the best. I do beseech your lordships,
 That, in this case of justice, my accusers,
 Be what they will, may stand forth face to face,
 55 And freely urge against me.

SUFFOLK

Nay, my lord,
 That cannot be: you are a counsellor,
 And, by that virtue, no man dare accuse you.

GARDINER

My lord, because we have business of more moment,
 60 We will be short with you. 'Tis his highness' pleasure,
 And our consent, for better trial of you,
 From hence you be committed to the Tower;
 Where, being but a private man again,
 You shall know many dare accuse you boldly,
 65 More than, I fear, you are provided for.

CRANMER

Ah, my good Lord of Winchester, I thank you;
 You are always my good friend; if your will pass,
 I shall both find your lordship judge and juror,
 You are so merciful: I see your end;
 70 'Tis my undoing: love and meekness, lord,
 Become a churchman better than ambition:
 Win straying souls with modesty again,
 Cast none away. That I shall clear myself,
 Lay all the weight ye can upon my patience,
 75 I make as little doubt, as you do conscience
 In doing daily wrongs. I could say more,
 But reverence to your calling makes me modest.

wisdom, that made you act badly, very badly, towards the king and his laws--you, who should provide a good example for us all. We've been told you've filled the whole country, by teaching and appointing priests who agree with you, with new opinions that are different and dangerous. They're heresies and if they're not stopped they might be bad for the country.

GARDINER

They have to be stopped at once, my noble lords. People who tame wild horses don't lead them in their hands to tame them but they put hard bits in their mouths and spur them until they obey commands. If we allow this contagious sickness to go on without stopping it because we're too forgiving and childishly pity one man, medicine won't be able to help us. What then? Riots, uproar, complete destruction of the whole country. Lately our neighbor, northern Germany, has shown us what happens when heresy takes over, and we're still pitying their recent disaster.

CRANMER

My good lords, so far, in both my daily life and my job, I have worked and studied hard to make my teaching and my power lead safely to one thing. This goal was always to do the right thing. There is no one alive, and I say this honestly my lords, who hates or works harder to stop people who cause public disruptions, either in his private thoughts or his public office, than I do. I pray to God the king will always be surrounded by people as loyal as I am to him! Men whose lives are full of envy and evil resentment dare to attack even the best people. I beg you, my lords, to bring my accusers (whoever they are) face to face with me to accuse me in this trial.

SUFFOLK


No, my lord, that can't happen. You're a councilor and because of that no one dares to accuse you.


GARDINER

My lord, we'll hurry this along because we have more important business. The king wishes and we agree that you should be imprisoned in the Tower. Then you'll be just a private citizen again and you'll find out who dares to accuse you. It'll be more people, I'm afraid, than you're ready to face.

CRANMER

Ah, thank you, my good lord of Winchester. You have always been my good friend. If you do what you want, you're so merciful that you will act as both judge and jury to me. I see your goal: it's to destroy me. Love and humility are more fitting for a churchman than ambition, lord. Win back sinners by being modest: don't banish them. I have less doubt that I will clear my name, whatever you make me suffer in the meantime, than you have any doubts about whether you should be doing evil things every day. I could say more, but respect for your job makes me modest.

 Gardiner refers to two pieces of equipment for training horses. "Bits" are metal bars in horses' mouths connected to the reins, and "spurs" are sharp metal pieces worn on the foot to dig into the horse's side.

 Gardiner, in mentioning the "commotions" in "upper Germany" (in the original text), alludes to revolts linked to the Protestant sect of Lutheranism. The 1524 Peasants' Revolt in Saxony was supported by the Protestant clergy.

GARDINER

My lord, my lord, you are a sectary,
That's the plain truth: your painted gloss discovers,
80 To men that understand you, words and weakness.

CROMWELL

My Lord of Winchester, you are a little,
By your good favour, too sharp; men so noble,
However faulty, yet should find respect
For what they have been: 'tis a cruelty
85 To load a falling man.

GARDINER

Good master secretary,
I cry your honour mercy; you may, worst
Of all this table, say so.

CROMWELL

Why, my lord?

GARDINER

90 Do not I know you for a favourer
Of this new sect? ye are not sound.

CROMWELL

Not sound?

GARDINER

Not sound, I say.

CROMWELL

Would you were half so honest!
95 Men's prayers then would seek you, not their fears.

GARDINER

I shall remember this bold language.

CROMWELL

Do.
Remember your bold life too.

CHANCELLOR

This is too much;
100 Forbear, for shame, my lords.

GARDINER

I have done.

CROMWELL

And I.

CHANCELLOR

Then thus for you, my lord: it stands agreed,
I take it, by all voices, that forthwith
105 You be convey'd to the Tower a prisoner;
There to remain till the king's further pleasure
Be known unto us: are you all agreed, lords?

ALL

We are.


CRANMER


Is there no other way of mercy,
110 But I must needs to the Tower, my lords?

GARDINER

What other
Would you expect? you are strangely troublesome.

GARDINER

My lord, my lord, you're a heretic . That's the simple truth. Men who understand you can see there's nothing under your false appearance but words and weakness.

 In the original text, Gardiner calls Cranmer a "sectary"--one who supports a group that has separated itself from the established church. Gardiner supported Henry VIII's division from the pope, but rejected other matters of Protestant doctrine supported by Cranmer.

CROMWELL

My Lord of Winchester, excuse me but you're a little too rude. Noble men, whatever their faults, should be respected for what they once were. It's cruel to kick a man when he's down.

GARDINER

Secretary, I'm sorry. You have the least right of anyone here to say that.

CROMWELL

Why, my lord?

GARDINER

Don't I know you're a follower of this new religion? You are not trustworthy.

CROMWELL

Not trustworthy?

GARDINER

Not trustworthy, that's what I said.

CROMWELL

I wish you were half as honest as I am trustworthy! Then men would pray for you, not fear you.

GARDINER

I'll remember this arrogant language.

CROMWELL

Do. Remember your arrogant life too.

CHANCELLOR

This is too much. Stop this--you should be ashamed of yourselves, my lords.

GARDINER

I'm done.

CROMWELL

So am I.

CHANCELLOR

So as for you, my lord, I take it we've all agreed that you'll be taken immediately to the Tower as a prisoner. You'll stay there as a prisoner until we know what the king wants. Have you all agreed, lords?

ALL

We have.

CRANMER

Is there no other way? Do I have to go to the Tower, my lords?

GARDINER

What other way do you expect? You're unusually annoying. Let's have some guards in here.

Let some o' the guard be ready there.

Enter Guard

CRANMER

115 For me?
Must I go like a traitor thither?

GARDINER

Receive him,
And see him safe i' the Tower.

CRANMER

Stay, good my lords,
120 I have a little yet to say. Look there, my lords;
By virtue of that ring, I take my cause
Out of the gripes of cruel men, and give it
To a most noble judge, the king my master.

CHAMBERLAIN

This is the king's ring.

SURREY

125 'Tis no counterfeit.

SUFFOLK

'Tis the right ring, by heaven: I told ye all,
When ye first put this dangerous stone a-rolling,
'Twould fall upon ourselves.

NORFOLK

Do you think, my lords,
130 The king will suffer but the little finger
Of this man to be vex'd?

CHANCELLOR

'Tis now too certain:
How much more is his life in value with him?
Would I were fairly out on't!

CROMWELL

135 My mind gave me,
In seeking tales and informations
Against this man, whose honesty the devil
And his disciples only envy at,
Ye blew the fire that burns ye: now have at ye!

Enter KING, frowning on them; takes his seat

GARDINER

140 Dread sovereign, how much are we bound to heaven
In daily thanks, that gave us such a prince;
Not only good and wise, but most religious:
One that, in all obedience, makes the church
The chief aim of his honour; and, to strengthen
145 That holy duty, out of dear respect,
His royal self in judgment comes to hear
The cause betwixt her and this great offender.

KING HENRY VIII

You were ever good at sudden commendations,
Bishop of Winchester. But know, I come not
150 To hear such flattery now, and in my presence;
They are too thin and bare to hide offences.
To me you cannot reach, you play the spaniel,
And think with wagging of your tongue to win me;
But, whatsoe'er thou takest me for, I'm sure
155 Thou hast a cruel nature and a bloody.
[To CRANMER]
Good man, sit down. Now let me see the proudest
He, that dares most, but wag his finger at thee:
160 By all that's holy, he had better starve
Than but once think this place becomes thee not.

A guard enters.

CRANMER

For me? Must I be led there like a traitor?

GARDINER

Take him and put him safely in the Tower.

CRANMER

Wait, my good lords, I still have a few things to say. Look
here, my lords. By the power of this ring, I take my cause
out of the hands of cruel men and give it to a noble judge,
the king my master.

CHAMBERLAIN

This is the king's ring.

SURREY

It's not a fake.

SUFFOLK

That's the ring, by heaven. I told you when you started this
dangerous business that it would backfire on us.

NORFOLK

My lords, do you think the king will allow even this man's
little finger to get hurt?

CHANCELLOR

Now it's all too clear. His life is worth so much more to the
king than his little finger! I wish I had nothing to do with
this!

CROMWELL

I was already worried, looking for stories and information
against this man who's so honest that the devil and his
minions can only envy him, not hurt him. You're the reason
I'm in trouble now, damn you!

The KING enters, frowning at them, and sits.

GARDINER

Powerful king, we're so grateful every day to God for giving
us a king like you! You're not just good and wise, but very
religious. You're someone who obediently works for the
good of the church. And, to strengthen that holy tie
between the king and the church, you come yourself as a
judge to hear the case between it and this terrible criminal.

KING HENRY VIII

You were always good at sudden flattery, Bishop of
Winchester. But I haven't come to be flattered to my face
like that now. That flattery is too thin and bare to hide
crimes behind. You can't reach me like that. You act like a
dog and think wagging your tongue will win me over. But,
whatever you take me for, I'm sure you have a cruel and
bloody nature.

[To CRANMER] Sit down, you good man. Now let me just see
a man arrogant enough even just to wag his finger at you.
By everything that's holy, he would be better off starving to
death than even thinking once that you don't deserve to sit
here.

SURREY

May it please your grace,--

KING HENRY VIII

No, sir, it does not please me.

I had thought I had had men of some understanding

165 And wisdom of my council; but I find none.

Was it discretion, lords, to let this man,

This good man,--few of you deserve that title,--

This honest man, wait like a lousy footboy

At chamber--door? and one as great as you are?

170 Why, what a shame was this! Did my commission

Bid ye so far forget yourselves? I gave ye

Power as he was a counsellor to try him,

Not as a groom: there's some of ye, I see,

More out of malice than integrity,

175 Would try him to the utmost, had ye mean;

Which ye shall never have while I live.

CHANCELLOR

Thus far,

My most dread sovereign, may it like your grace

To let my tongue excuse all. What was purposed

180 Concerning his imprisonment, was rather,

If there be faith in men, meant for his trial,

And fair purgation to the world, than malice,

I'm sure, in me.

KING HENRY VIII

Well, well, my lords, respect him;

185 Take him, and use him well, he's worthy of it.

I will say thus much for him, if a prince

May be beholding to a subject, I

Am, for his love and service, so to him.

Make me no more ado, but all embrace him:

190 Be friends, for shame, my lords! My Lord of

Canterbury,

I have a suit which you must not deny me;

That is, a fair young maid that yet wants baptism,

You must be godfather, and answer for her.

CRANMER

195 The greatest monarch now alive may glory

In such an honour: how may I deserve it

That am a poor and humble subject to you?

KING HENRY VIII

Come, come, my lord, you'd spare your spoons: you

shall have two noble partners with you; the old

200 Duchess of Norfolk, and Lady Marquess Dorset: will

these please you?

Once more, my Lord of Winchester, I charge you,

Embrace and love this man.

GARDINER

With a true heart

205 And brother-love I do it.

CRANMER

And let heaven

Witness, how dear I hold this confirmation.

KING HENRY VIII

Good man, those joyful tears show thy true heart:

The common voice, I see, is verified

210 Of thee, which says thus, "Do my Lord of Canterbury

A shrewd turn, and he is your friend for ever!"

Come, lords, we trifle time away; I long

To have this young one made a Christian.

As I have made ye one, lords, one remain;

215 So I grow stronger, you more honour gain.

Exeunt

SURREY

Please, your grace--

KING HENRY VIII

No, sir, it does not please me. I thought I had men of some

intelligence and wisdom on my council, but I can't see any.

Was it wise, lords, to let this man, this good man--few of you

deserve that title--this honest man, wait like a lice-covered

servant at the door? A man as important as you are? What a

shameful thing to do! Did I give you permission to do

something so unworthy of you? I gave you power to try his

case as a councilor, not a servant. There are some of you, I

see, who would give him the death penalty if you could,

more out of resentment than honesty. You will never be

able to do that while I am alive.

CHANCELLOR

My extremely powerful king, please let me tell you our

excuses. We meant to imprison him more, I swear, because

we needed to try him and show that we had done so fairly,

than out of resentment--at least on my part, I'm sure.

KING HENRY VIII

All right, my lords, respect him. Take him and treat him

well--he deserves it. I will say this much for him: if a prince

can owe anything to a subject, I owe him for his love and


service to me. Don't make any more fuss, but hug him, all of

you. Be friends, my lords, honestly! My Lord of Canterbury, I

have a request you can't deny. That is, there's a [beautiful](#)

[young girl](#) who still needs to be baptized. You must be

her godfather in the ceremony.

 The "fair young maid" is the newborn Princess Elizabeth.

CRANMER

The greatest king alive would be proud of this honor. How

can I deserve it, when I am just a poor, humble, subject of

yours?

KING HENRY VIII

Come, come, my lord, you just don't want to pay for a gift.

There will be two other nobles as godparents too: the old

Duchess of Norfolk and Lady Marquess Dorset. Do they

sound good to you? Once more, my Lord of Winchester, I

command you to hug and love this man.

GARDINER

I do it with an honest heart and brotherly love.

CRANMER

Let God be my witness that I am very happy about this

confirmation of friendship.

KING HENRY VIII

Good man, your happy tears show your honesty. I see that

everyone is right in saying about you, "Do a favor for my

Lord of Canterbury and he will be your friend forever."

Come on, lords, we're wasting time. I can't wait for this

young one to be made a Christian. Now that I've united all

of you, lords, stay that way. That'll make me stronger and

you more honorable.

They exit.

Act 5, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Noise and tumult within. Enter Porter and his Man

PORTER

You'll leave your noise anon, ye rascals: do you take the court for Paris-garden? ye rude slaves, leave your gaping.

VOice from inside

5 Good master porter, I belong to the larder.

PORTER

10 Belong to the gallows, and be hanged, ye rogue! is this a place to roar in? Fetch me a dozen crab-tree staves, and strong ones: these are but switches to 'em. I'll scratch your heads: you must be seeing christenings? do you look for ale and cakes here, you rude rascals?

MAN

15 Pray, sir, be patient: 'tis as much impossible-- Unless we sweep 'em from the door with cannons-- To scatter 'em, as 'tis to make 'em sleep On May-day morning; which will never be: We may as well push against Powle's, as stir em.

PORTER

How got they in, and be hang'd?

MAN

20 Alas, I know not; how gets the tide in? As much as one sound cudgel of four foot-- You see the poor remainder--could distribute, I made no spare, sir.

PORTER

You did nothing, sir.

MAN

25 I am not Samson, nor Sir Guy, nor Colbrand, To mow 'em down before me: but if I spared any That had a head to hit, either young or old, He or she, cuckold or cuckold-maker, Let me ne'er hope to see a chine again And that I would not for a cow, God save her!

Within

Do you hear, master porter?

PORTER

30 I shall be with you presently, good master puppy. Keep the door close, sirrah.

MAN

What would you have me do?

PORTER

35 What should you do, but knock 'em down by the dozens? Is this Moorfields to muster in? or have we some strange Indian with the great tool come to court, the women so besiege us? Bless me, what a fry of fornication is at door! On my Christian conscience, this one christening will beget a

Shakescleare Translation

There are loud noises inside. The PORTER and his SERVANT enter.

PORTER

Stop this noise now, you jerks. Do you think the court is a public amusement park? You rude slaves, shut your mouths.

voice from inside

Mister porter, I work in the kitchen.

PORTER

Work in a noose and be hanged, you rogue! Is this somewhere to roar? Get me a dozen wooden poles, and strong ones. These ones are just twigs compared to those. I'll scratch your heads. You insist on seeing baptisms? Do you expect beer and cake here, you rude jerks?

MAN

Please sir, calm down. It's impossible--unless we blast them away from the door with cannons--to make them go away, as impossible as making them sleep on May-day morning. That will never happen. We might as well be pushing against St. Paul's cathedral, they'll be just as hard to move.

PORTER

How did they get in, damn you?

MAN

I don't know. How does the tide get in? I didn't spare my four-foot long staff in hitting them. You see what's left of it.

PORTER

You did nothing, sir.

MAN

I'm not a hero like Samson or Sir Guy or Colbrand. I couldn't mow them down in front of me. I didn't refrain from hitting anyone's head, young or old, man or woman, anyone with an unfaithful wife or anyone cheating with someone else's wife. If I did, let me never see meat again, and I wouldn't make that bargain in exchange for a cow, God bless it!

From inside

Are you listening, mister porter?

PORTER

I'll be with you soon, mister dog. Keep the door closed, you.

MAN

What do you want me to do?

PORTER

What would you do except knock them down by the dozens? Is this a public field to meet in? Or do we have some strange Indian with a huge tool visiting court to make the women attack us like this? Bless me, what a fornicating mob is at the door! On my Christian conscience, this one

"May-day," May 1st, is a spring festival and public holiday. It is celebrated with singing and dancing around the may pole (a pole adorned with flowers, to which ribbons are attached for the dancers to hold).

"Samson" is a biblical figure, while "Sir Guy" and "Colbrand" are from popular legend. Each was known for his strength.

thousand; here will be father, godfather, and all together.

MAN

40 The spoons will be the bigger, sir. There is a fellow somewhat near the door, he should be a brazier by his face, for, o' my conscience, twenty of the dog-days now reign in's nose; all that stand about him are under the line, they need no other penance: that fire-drake did I hit three times on
45 the head, and three times was his nose discharged against me; he stands there, like a mortar-piece, to blow us. There was a haberdasher's wife of small wit near him, that railed upon me till her pinked porringer fell off her head, for kindling such a combustion in the state. I missed the meteor once, and hit that woman; who cried out 'Clubs!' when I might see from far some forty truncheoners draw to her succor, which were the hope o' the Strand, where
50 she was quartered. They fell on; I made good my place: at length they came to the broom-staff to me; I defied 'em still: when suddenly a file of boys behind 'em, loose shot, delivered such a shower of pebbles, that I was fain to draw mine honour in, and let 'em win the work: the devil was amongst
60 'em, I think, surely.

PORTER

These are the youths that thunder at a playhouse, and fight for bitten apples; that no audience, but the tribulation of Tower-hill, or the limbs of
65 Limehouse, their dear brothers, are able to endure. I have some of 'em in Limbo Patrum, and there they are like to dance these three days; besides the running banquet of two beadles that is to come.

Enter Chamberlain

CHAMBERLAIN

Mercy o' me, what a multitude are here!
70 They grow still too; from all parts they are coming, As if we kept a fair here! Where are these porters, These lazy knaves? Ye have made a fine hand, fellows: There's a trim rabble let in: are all these Your faithful friends o' the suburbs? We shall have
75 Great store of room, no doubt, left for the ladies, When they pass back from the christening.

PORTER

An't please your honour,
We are but men; and what so many may do,
80 Not being torn a-pieces, we have done: An army cannot rule 'em.

CHAMBERLAIN

As I live,
If the king blame me for't, I'll lay ye all By the heels, and suddenly; and on your heads
85 Clap round fines for neglect: ye are lazy knaves; And here ye lie baiting of bombards, when Ye should do service. Hark! the trumpets sound; They're come already from the christening; Go, break among the press, and find a way out
90 To let the troop pass fairly; or I'll find A Marshalsea shall hold ye play these two months.

PORTER



Make way there for the princess.


MAN


You great fellow,
Stand close up, or I'll make your head ache.

baptism will cause a thousand more. Here are the future fathers and godfathers all gathered together.


MAN


The presents will be all the bigger, sir. There's a fellow kind of near the door. I think he's a smith  from his face, because his face looks as hot as the dog days of summer. Everyone standing around him is in the southern hemisphere. They don't need to burn in hell because they're already in it. I hit that dragon three times on the head and three times his nose was discharged at me. He stands there like a bomb ready to blow us up. There was a dumb clothes-seller's wife near him who shouted at me until her hat, which looked like a decorated bowl, fell off her head, for starting such a fire in the country. I missed the meteor-like man once and hit that woman. She cried out "clubs!" and I could see about forty people with clubs run to help her. They were the best hope in the Strand , where she was. They attacked. I defended myself. Finally they were hitting me and I kept defying them. Suddenly, a group of boys behind them threw such a number of pebbles that I had to let them win the battle. The devil was fighting with them, for sure.

 A "brazier" or smith is someone who works with metal, which requires the use of fire to make the material malleable. The puns in this speech stem from different qualities of fire (its heat, its association with dragons, etc.)

 "The Strand" was (and is) a popular street in London, located near the modern-day Trafalgar Square.

PORTER

Those are the boys who make such noise at a play and fight for bitten apples. No audience except the worst ones at Tower-hill or the similar ones at Limehouse  can stand them. I have some of them locked up and they'll stay there for three days. And the noise will be worse when the officials meant to keep the peace arrive.

 "Tower-hill" and "Limehouse" were rough neighborhoods. Tower Hill was the area where public executions were held, and Limehouse was a dockyard area.

CHAMBERLAIN enters.

CHAMBERLAIN

Lord, what a crowd is here! It's still growing, too. They're coming from everywhere as if this were a fair! Where are those porters, those lazy good-for-nothings? You've done well, fellows. You've let in a nice crowd. Are these all your good friends from town? No doubt we'll have plenty of room left for the ladies when they come back from the baptism.

PORTER

Your honor, we're only human. And we've done what two men can do without being torn to pieces. An army couldn't stop them.

CHAMBERLAIN

I swear if the king blames me for it, I'll knock you over immediately. And I'll fine you for neglecting your jobs. You're lazy good-for-nothings. You lie here drinking when you should be working. Listen! The trumpets are sounding. They've already come from the baptism. Go on, make a break in the crowd to let them pass. Or I'll find a jail to hold you for two months.

PORTER

Make room for the princess.

MAN

You big fellow, make room or I'll make your head ache.

PORTER

95 You i' the camlet, get up o' the rail;
I'll peck you o'er the pales else.

Exeunt

PORTER

You in the camel-hair cloth, get on the fence or I'll throw you over it.

They exit.

Act 5, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Enter trumpets, sounding; then two Aldermen, Lord Mayor, GARTER, CRANMER, NORFOLK with his marshal's staff, SUFFOLK, two Noblemen bearing great standing-bowls for the christening-gifts; then four Noblemen bearing a canopy, under which the Duchess of Norfolk, godmother, bearing the child richly habited in a mantle, & c., train borne by a Lady; then follows the Marchioness Dorset, the other godmother, and Ladies. The troop pass once about the stage, and GARTER speaks

GARTER

Heaven, from thy endless goodness, send prosperous life, long, and ever happy, to the high and mighty princess of England, Elizabeth!

Flourish. Enter KING HENRY VIII and Guard

CRANMER

5 *[Kneeling]* And to your royal grace, and the good queen, My noble partners, and myself, thus pray:
All comfort, joy, in this most gracious lady,
Heaven ever laid up to make parents happy,
May hourly fall upon ye!

KING HENRY VIII

10 Thank you, good lord archbishop:
What is her name?

CRANMER

Elizabeth.

KING HENRY VIII

Stand up, lord.

KING HENRY VIII kisses the child

KING HENRY VIII

15 With this kiss take my blessing: God protect thee!
Into whose hand I give thy life.

CRANMER

Amen.

KING HENRY VIII

20 My noble gossips, ye have been too prodigal:
I thank ye heartily; so shall this lady,
When she has so much English.

Shakescleare Translation

Trumpet players enter. Then two aldermen, the Lord Mayor, GARTER, CRANMER, NORFOLK with his marshal's staff, SUFFOLK, two noblemen carrying large bowls on stands for the baptism gifts. Then four noblemen enter carrying a canopy, under which the Duchess of Norfolk, the godmother, carrying the child beautifully dressed in a cloak and other things. Her train is carried by a Lady. Then the Marchioness Dorset, the other godmother, follows with Ladies. They pass once around the stage and GARTER speaks.

GARTER

From your endless supply of goodness, God, send a lucky, long, and happy life to the powerful princess of England, Elizabeth!

Trumpets sound. KING HENRY VIII and a guard enter.

CRANMER

[Kneeling] Your grace, you, the good queen, my noble fellow-godparents, and I pray in this way: may heaven give you all the comfort and joy in this princess that ever made parents happy every hour!

KING HENRY VIII

Thank you, lord archbishop. What is her name?

CRANMER

Elizabeth.

KING HENRY VIII

Stand up, lord.

KING HENRY VIII kisses the child.

KING HENRY VIII

Take my blessing with this kiss. May God protect you! I trust him to keep you safe.

CRANMER

Amen.

KING HENRY VIII

My noble friends, you have been too generous. Thank you very much. This girl will thank you too when she learns enough English.

CRANMER

Let me speak, sir,
 For heaven now bids me; and the words I utter
 Let none think flattery, for they'll find 'em truth.
 25 This royal infant--heaven still move about her!--
 Though in her cradle, yet now promises
 Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,
 Which time shall bring to ripeness: she shall be--
 But few now living can behold that goodness--
 30 A pattern to all princes living with her,
 And all that shall succeed: Saba was never
 More covetous of wisdom and fair virtue
 Than this pure soul shall be: all princely graces,
 That mould up such a mighty piece as this is,
 35 With all the virtues that attend the good,
 Shall still be doubled on her: truth shall nurse her,
 Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her:
 She shall be loved and fear'd: her own shall bless her;
 Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn,
 40 And hang their heads with sorrow: good grows with her:
 In her days every man shall eat in safety,
 Under his own vine, what he plants; and sing
 The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours:
 God shall be truly known; and those about her
 45 From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,
 And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.
 Nor shall this peace sleep with her: but as when
 The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,
 Her ashes new create another heir,
 50 As great in admiration as herself;
 So shall she leave her blessedness to one,
 When heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness,
 Who from the sacred ashes of her honour
 Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was,
 55 And so stand fix'd: peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,
 That were the servants to this chosen infant,
 Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him:
 Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
 His honour and the greatness of his name
 60 Shall be, and make new nations: he shall flourish,
 And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
 To all the plains about him: our children's children
 Shall see this, and bless heaven.

KING HENRY VIII

Thou speakest wonders.

CRANMER



65 She shall be, to the happiness of England,
 An aged princess; many days shall see her,
 And yet no day without a deed to crown it.
 Would I had known no more! but she must die,
 She must, the saints must have her; yet a virgin,
 70 A most unspotted lily shall she pass
 To the ground, and all the world shall mourn her.


KING HENRY VIII


O lord archbishop,
 Thou hast made me now a man! never, before
 This happy child, did I get any thing:
 75 This oracle of comfort has so pleased me,
 That when I am in heaven I shall desire
 To see what this child does, and praise my Maker.
 I thank ye all. To you, my good lord mayor,
 And your good brethren, I am much beholding;
 80 I have received much honour by your presence,
 And ye shall find me thankful. Lead the way, lords:
 Ye must all see the queen, and she must thank ye,
 She will be sick else. This day, no man think
 Has business at his house; for all shall stay:
 85 This little one shall make it holiday.

Exeunt

CRANMER

Let me speak, sir, because now God tells me to. I hope no one thinks that the words I say are flattery, because they'll find them to be true. This royal child--may God be with her always!--although still a baby, promises to bring a thousand, thousand blessings to this country in time. She will be--few alive now will live to see this goodness--an example for all the kings alive then, and all to come. This pure soul will have as much wisdom and virtue as the queen of Sheba wished for. She'll have double all the royal qualities that go into making someone as powerful as this along with all the virtues that good people have. Truth will raise her, holy and religious thoughts will advise her always, she will be loved and feared, her family and friends will bless her, her enemies will shake in fear like a field of beaten corn and hang their heads in sorrow. Goodness will grow as she grows. In her life everyone will eat what he plants safely in his own field and sing the happy songs of peace to all his neighbors. God will be truly understood and those around her will learn how to be honorable from her and will be great because of that, not because they come from good families. Nor will this peace die with her. But like when that amazing bird, the virgin phoenix  dies, a new heir  as amazing as she was will be born from her ashes. So someone will inherit her blessings who will rise like a star from the holy ashes of her honor and stay firmly in the sky when heaven calls her from this dark cloud, the earth. Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror, which served this chosen baby, will belong to him and grow on him like a vine. Wherever the bright sun shines, his honor and the greatness of his name will be found and will create new countries. He will grow and, like a tree on a mountain, reach his branches over all the plains around him. Our children's children will see this and bless God.

 The "phoenix" is a mythical bird that is reborn from its own ashes.

 The new "heir" mentioned here is James I of England (also known as James VI of Scotland), who became king when Elizabeth died childless. This section is meant as a compliment to James, who reigned when this play was first performed.

KING HENRY VIII

You say amazing things.

CRANMER

She will live to be an old queen and make England happy. She will live many days and do a great deed on every one. I wish I knew nothing more! But she must die, she must, the saints must have her. Still a virgin, a pure flower, she will fall to the ground and the whole world will miss her.

KING HENRY VIII

Oh, lord archbishop, now you've made me a man! It's like I never made anything before I conceived this happy child. This comforting prophecy has pleased me so much that when I am in heaven I will want to see what this child does, and praise God. I thank you all. I am very thankful to you, my good lord mayor, and your good companions. You have done me a lot of honor in being here and I will repay you. Lead the way, lords. You must all see the queen and she must thank you or she will be sick. Today, no one should think he has to go home. Everyone will stay. It's a holiday because of this little one.

They exit.

Act 5, Epilogue

Shakespeare

KING HENRY VIII

'Tis ten to one this play can never please
All that are here: some come to take their ease,
And sleep an act or two; but those, we fear,
We have frighted with our trumpets; so, 'tis clear,
5 They'll say 'tis naught: others, to hear the city
Abused extremely, and to cry 'That's witty!'
Which we have not done neither: that, I fear,
All the expected good we're like to hear
For this play at this time, is only in
10 The merciful construction of good women;
For such a one we show'd 'em: if they smile,
And say 'twill do, I know, within a while
All the best men are ours; for 'tis ill hap,
If they hold when their ladies bid 'em clap.

Shakescleare Translation

KING HENRY VIII

It's almost certain that this play can't please everyone here. Some have come to relax and sleep for an act or two. But I'm afraid we've frightened those people with our trumpets. So of course they'll say the play's worthless. Others came to hear the city insulted and to cry out, "That's witty!" and we haven't done that either. So I fear the only good we'll hear about this play for now is from good women who like it because we've showed them a good woman. If they smile and say it'll do, I know that all the best men will be on our side. Because it won't do them any good not to clap when their wives tell them to.

How to Cite

To cite this Shakescleare translation:

MLA

Doyle, Clio. "Henry VIII: A Shakescleare Translation." LitCharts. LitCharts LLC, 19 May 2017. Web. 14 Sep 2017.

Chicago Manual

Doyle, Clio. "Henry VIII: A Shakescleare Translation." LitCharts LLC, May 19, 2017. Retrieved September 14, 2017.
<http://www.litcharts.com/lit/henry-viii>.