

Say, `Katherine, Queen of England, come into the court'.

CRIER

Katherine, Queen of England, come into the court. 10
*The Queen makes no answer, but rises out of her
chair, goes about the court, comes to the King, and
kneels at his feet. Then she speaks*

QUEEN KATHERINE

Sir, I desire you do me right and justice,
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 15
Of equal friendship and proceeding. Alas, sir,
In what have I offended you? What cause
Hath my behaviour given to your displeasure
That thus you should proceed to put me off,
And take your good grace from me? Heaven witness 20
I have been to you a true and humble wife,
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 25
I ever contradicted your desire,
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 30
Continue in my liking? Nay, gave notice
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 blessed
With many children by you. If, in the course 35
And process of this time, you can report±±
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 40
Shut door upon me, and so give me up
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 judgement. Ferdinand 45
My father, King of Spain, was reckoned one
The wisest prince that there had reigned by many
A year before. It is not to be questioned
That they had gathered a wise council to them
Of every realm, that did debate this business, 50
Who deemed our marriage lawful. Wherefore I humbly
Beseech you, sir, to spare me till I may
Be by my friends in Spain advised, whose counsel
I will implore. If not, i'th' name of God,
Your pleasure be fulfilled.

CARDINAL WOLSEY You have here, lady, 55
And of your choice, these reverend fathers, men
Of singular integrity and learning,
Yea, the elect o'th' land, who are assembled
To plead your cause. It shall be therefore bootless
That longer you desire the court, as well 60
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,
And that without delay their arguments 65
Be now produced and heard.

QUEEN KATHERINE (*to Wolsey*) Lord Cardinal,
To you I speak.

CARDINAL WOLSEY Your pleasure, madam.

QUEEN KATHERINE Sir,
I am about to weep, but thinking that
We are a queen, or long have dreamed so, certain
The daughter of a king, my drops of tears 70
I'll turn to sparks of fire.

CARDINAL WOLSEY Be patient yet.

QUEEN KATHERINE
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 75
You shall not be my judge. For it is you

Have blown this coal betwixt my lord and me,
Which God's dew quench. Therefore I say again,
I utterly abhor, yea, from my soul,
Refuse you for my judge, whom yet once more
I hold my most malicious foe, and think not
At all a friend to truth.

80

CARDINAL WOLSEY I do profess
You speak not like yourself, who ever yet
Have stood to charity, and displayed th'effects
Of disposition gentle and of wisdom 85
O'er-topping 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
By a commission from the consistory, 90
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,
And worthily, my falsehood±±yea, as much 95
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
Remove these thoughts from you. The which before 100
His highness shall speak in, I do beseech
You, gracious madam, to unthink your speaking,
And to say so no more.

QUEEN KATHERINE My lord, my lord±±
I am a simple woman, much too weak
T'oppose your cunning. You're meek and humble-
mouthed; 105
You sign your place and calling, in full seeming,
With meekness and humility±±but your heart
Is crammed with arrogance, spleen, and pride.
You have by fortune and his highness' favours
Gone slightly o'er low steps, and now are mounted 110
Where powers are your retainers, and your words,
Domestics to you, serve your will as't please
Yourself pronounce their office. I must tell you,

You tender more your person's honour than
Your high profession spiritual, that again 115
I do refuse you for my judge, and here,
Before you all, appeal unto the Pope,
To bring my whole cause 'fore his holiness,
And to be judged by him.

She curtsies to the King and begins to depart

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS The Queen is obstinate,
Stubborn to justice, apt to accuse it, and 120
Disdainful to be tried by't. 'Tis not well.
She's going away.

KING HENRY *(to the Crier)* Call her again.

CRIER

Katherine, Queen of England, come into the court.

GRIFFITH *(to the Queen)* Madam, you are called back.

QUEEN KATHERINE

What need you note it? Pray you keep your way. 125
When *you* are called, 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 Katherine and her attendants

KING HENRY Go thy ways, Kate. 130

That man i'th' world who shall report he has
A better wife, let him in naught be trusted
For speaking false in that. Thou art alone±±
If thy rare qualities, sweet gentleness,
Thy meekness saint-like, wife-like government, 135
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
Carried herself towards me.

CARDINAL WOLSEY Most gracious sir, 140

In humblest manner I require your highness
That it shall please you to declare in hearing
Of all these ears±±for where I am robbed and bound,
There must I be unloosed, although not there
At once and fully satisfied±±whether ever I 145

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
Have to you, but with thanks to God for such
A royal lady, spake one the least word that might 150
Be to the prejudice of her present state,
Or touch of her good person?

KING HENRY

My lord Cardinal,

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 155
Why they are so, but, like to village curs,
Bark when their fellows do. By some of these
The Queen is put in anger. You're excused.
But will you be more justified? You ever
Have wished the sleeping of this business, never desired 160
It to be stirred, but oft have hindered, oft,
The passages made toward it. On my honour
I speak my good lord Card'nal to this point,
And thus far clear him. Now, what moved me to't,
I will be bold with time and your attention. 165
Then mark th'inducement. Thus it came±±give heed to't.
My conscience first received a tenderness,
Scruple, and prick, on certain speeches uttered
By th' Bishop of Bayonne, then French Ambassador,
Who had been hither sent on the debating 170
A marriage 'twixt the Duke of OrleÂans and
Our daughter Mary. I'th' 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 175
Whether our daughter were legitimate,
Respecting this our marriage with the dowager,
Sometimes our brother's wife. This respite shook
The bosom of my conscience, entered me,
Yea, with a spitting power, and made to tremble 180
The region of my breast; which forced such way
That many mazed considerings did throng
And prest 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
 Do no more offices of life to't than
 The grave does yield to th' dead. For her male issue
 Or died where they were made, or shortly after
 This world had aired them. Hence I took a thought 190
 This was a judgement on me that my kingdom,
 Well worthy the best heir o'th' world, should not
 Be gladdened in't by me. Then follows that
 I weighed the danger which my realms stood in
 By this my issue's fail, and that gave to me 195
 Many a groaning throe. Thus hulling in
 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 200
 I then did feel full sick, and yet not well,
 By all the reverend fathers of the land
 And doctors learned. First I began in private
 With you, my lord of Lincoln. You remember
 How under my oppression I did reek 205
 When I first moved you.

LINCOLN Very well, my liege.

KING HENRY

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,
 Bearing a state of mighty moment in't 210
 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 *(to Canterbury)* I then moved you,
 My lord of Canterbury, and got your leave 215
 To make this present summons. Unsolicited
 I left no reverend person in this court,
 But by particular consent proceeded
 Under your hands and seals. Therefore, go on,
 For no dislike i'th' world against the person 220

Of the good Queen, but the sharp thorny points
Of my allegiance reasons, drives this forward.
Prove but our marriage lawful, by my life
And kingly dignity, we are contented
To wear our mortal state to come with her, 225
Katherine, our queen, before the primest creature
That's paragoned o'th' world.

CARDINAL CAMPEIUS So please your highness,
The Queen being absent, 'tis a needful fitness
That we adjourn this court till further day.
Meanwhile must be an earnest motion 230
Made to the Queen to call back her appeal
She intends unto his holiness.

KING HENRY (*aside*) I may perceive
These cardinals trifle with me. I abhor
This dilatory sloth and tricks of Rome.
My learned and well-beloved servant, Cranmer, 235
Prithee return. With thy approach I know
My comfort comes along. (*Aloud*) Break up the court.
I say, set on.

Exeunt in manner as they entered