

Henry VIII abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 1

Honor

Situation: Buckingham is brought before the king and his court. The court convenes in the morning after Cardinal Wolsey's extravagant masquerade dinner party the evening before. It was during this dinner party that the disguised-as-a-shepherd Henry VIII had met, danced with and fallen for the beautiful and young Anne Bullen, the queen's lady-in-waiting. Buckingham eloquently defends himself.

SECOND GENTLEMAN: Certainly the Cardinal is the root cause of this.

FIRST GENTLEMAN: 'Tis likely.

SECOND GENTLEMAN: All the commons hate him perniciously and 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, and see the noble ruined man you speak of.

Buckingham to All, No. 1

All good people, prithee hear what I say;
Then leave and forget me. I have this day
Received a traitor's judgment and must die;
Yet let God and His heaven bear witness:
Destroy my conscience and my soul, if I
Be not true. The law I bear no malice
For my death, but do pray those few who willed
It seek neither glory in harm nor build
Their evil on the graves of great men, for
Then my guiltless blood cries against them. You
Who love me, who dare to weep, who show more
Mercy than fear, whom to leave is course to
Me only, 'tis my death, go with me, then,
To the end, and lift my soul to heaven.

LOVELL: O 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 forgive you as I would be forgiven. I forgive you. Commend me to his Grace. And if he speak of Buckingham, pray tell him you met him half in heaven; ever beloved and loving may his rule be.