

### ***Jane Seymour 1533***

Today there will be a great feast and celebrations, for the King has finally married his beloved, Anne Boleyn. I must say I despise the woman, but it is my duty to serve her at court and I intend to do so. How I miss Queen Catherine, she was a good woman, a good catholic and a saintly Queen. The King has lain her aside for a witch! My brother, Thomas says it must be so for she has six fingers which is surely the mark of a witch. He is just as bad as any man though, he flirts with her along with the others. Nobody seems to care what plain Jane Seymour thinks, anyway. That woman is now Queen and I must lay aside my affections for Queen Catherine, who is now rotting in captivity at Kimbolton castle. Now, I and every person in England must swear obedience in oath to Anne Boleyn as the true Queen of England and King Henry as "The supreme head of the Church of England". The bible shall now be in English! The thought of it! Latin is the true language of religion and I wish to remain Catholic, of course I will swear obedience but I worry of Queen Catherine's safety for she will never agree to it. Many have already suffered the death sentence for not swearing. What will happen to our true Queen? I understand the King must have an heir, but Queen Catherine had a daughter, Princess Mary and why can a woman not rule? Catherine's own mother, Isabella of Castile ruled and was a great Queen of Spain. Although, now the Princess has been illegitimatised and now ordered to be known as Lady Mary and she is no longer the King's heir.

I simply do not understand how a man could be married to a good woman for over twenty years and lose all signs of affection for her and then lay her aside for a witch? I walked into the Queen's rooms and already she was causing an uproar. She screeched and screamed at us all, she certainly was not as calm and composed as Queen Catherine had been. Her Boleyn relations are all here, her sister, whom the King formerly loved, before Anne snatched him, Anne's sister-in-law, Lady Rochford was also in attendance, the list goes on!

"And who are you? Yes, you the plain one." Anne screeched at me.

We had known each other for years serving Queen Catherine, how could the witch not recognise me? It was probably one of her petty games, she tried to disrespect me. What she thinks I do not realise is that she is of a lower standing than I, for she is just the daughter of a lowly knight, Sir Thomas Boleyn and her Mother may be Elizabeth Howard, but woman count for nothing in this world.

"I am Lady Jane Seymour, Madam and I have come to serve you at court."

"Oh, are you?" Anne mocked me as others giggled around her somewhat irritating me. The woman made me sick to the stomach. The way she flaunts her French hood just irritates me. I ignore her rude comeback and continue to serve her as is comely of, a court woman.

Later on, Lady Elizabeth Holland, or as we call her 'Bess' approached me with a sympathetic look on her face.

"She's terrible, isn't she? It is not only you, Jane, Anne is horrible to us all." Bess says sympathetically.

"Thank you, Bess, I just hate the way she tries to make everything French and elegant." I smiled,

"You do know she is not even from France? Her real family name isn't even the 'elegant' Boleyn name her name is Bullen but they changed it to sound more French and elegant, do not believe her claims." Bess said.

"How do you know this, may I ask?" I smiled but somewhat surprised.

"I heard it from the serving maids in the kitchens of course." Bess smirked

"Serving maids gossip? For shame! Bess, I thought higher of you." I laughed, although in truth I did not think higher of her, for everyone knows she is mistress to the Duke of Norfolk, who also has a wife! Alas, she means no harm but she does not understand how his wife must feel, I wish to spare her the shame of her deed. After all she regarded me with significant information about Queen Anne.

We were going to dine then, and be in attendance of the King!

"Greeting fair lady, whom is it I have the pleasure of meeting?"

I turn around and I am shocked to see it is the King of England, the King of England approaching me, Jane Seymour!

"Your Grace," I bow, "the pleasure is all mine, it is Lady Jane Seymour you meet."

I try to ignore the fact that the King has met me numerous times before when I was serving Queen Catherine, I am delighted to be noticed by such a great man!

Anne was heading our way so I started to turn and walk away, but she hits me hard, slapping me across my face! How dare that woman do so? A Queen must not ever act so, Queen Catherine never would have dreamed of doing that.

"How dare you? Seymour woman! You should not approach my husband like that! Leave our presence! We cannot bear the sight of you!" Anne screeches so almost the whole court can hear.

The King attempts to calm her but her face is as red as the King's hair. I walk away disgracefully in silence, embarrassed at her words to me. She should know, first, her husband approached me and second, it was simply an act of pass the time! It is not as if she did not treat Queen Catherine a lot worse! Bertha my new serving maid, comes and undresses me for I am tired and all I wish to do is sleep.

I wake up to the court buzzing, the Queen is with child and it is suspected to be a boy. All the physicians say so and the Queen has eaten much asparagus, this should guarantee a son. Oh, how I do hate that Anne shall be triumphant and her monster child will be King after King Henry dies- God forbid and long live the King. The King seems to overlook all for Anne, he even forgets she was betrothed to Henry Percy, without the King's permission-treason. Henry Percy however, was also already betrothed to Mary Talbot at the time and eventually married unhappily. Elizabeth Holland approaches me once more today, but avoids me when in sight of the Queen.

"Good day, Lady Jane, I apologise for earlier having avoided your presence. It is as Queen Anne is roaring with anger, I beg of you do not take offence."

"Good day to you too, Lady Elizabeth, there is no need to apologise I am getting rather used to it." I said stoutly.

"May I just add, the Queen was so ungracious yesterday slapping you so hard, and in public! I was so shocked to see it, I am sure most of the court was. It is simply as she is jealous of you because the King favours you, he said you did nothing to offend and he is the one in the wrong." Bess informed me.

“God be praised, for if the King is not angered at me there is no matter to worry of, for his position is highest in the Kingdom, higher than Anne could ever be. Thank you, Bess, I am called to attend upon the Queen now.” I pulled a face.

In truth, I was afraid for the woman had the power to do much harm to me and I do fear for myself. I told my brothers, Edward and Thomas and Edward said he hates Anne but Thomas said he found her charming, despite his earlier opinion.

Her baby will be born soon enough now, she has gone into her confinement chamber. The King however continues to pursue me, I do not object for he is a kind and handsome man and to have the King of England in your power is an admirable position. On the other hand, he remains devoted to Anne for he is so desperate for a son to succeed him. I secretly pray she shall stillborn, miscarriage or perhaps a girl. I know it is wrong but I cannot help the urge for Anne to die down. I should never bestow this wish on any woman but I have.

*Two weeks later:*

God be praised, the Queen has had a baby girl, on September 7<sup>th</sup> in this year of 1533 a princess was born, Princess Elizabeth. I somewhat weary towards the child but I cannot blame the poor baby for its mother’s actions. Nowadays, I do find myself warming up to Anne, she is not so terrible after all, and I do owe my loyalty to her as the King’s wife. Although, I find myself flirting with the King I still manage to find a warm spot in my heart for his wife, it is shocking I know! However, now the Queen has had her child she is a kinder woman she smiles more and complains less. The Princess Elizabeth has bestowed upon us a new Queen Anne, God be praised! The King however acts seemingly calm but I see the sadness in his eyes and Anne in despair at his disappointment. The King has forgiven Anne for the birth of a girl, but if she does not have a son next time I fear it will mean a divorce for Anne. When I heard of what Anne commanded next, I felt somewhat light-headed with shock, Anne has ordered Princess Mary to wait on Elizabeth like a serving maid! It is completely outrageous, Anne should not expect that of Mary! She is nothing but a commoner herself. I am prepared to obey and please Anne, as is my duty to the Queen but my feeling towards her are still somewhat mixed. Her little baby, Princess Elizabeth is very fine and a good baby. The King however still pursues me, even after the birth of his child! Of course, I play along for fear of displeasing the King if not doing so but somehow I still feel guilty deep down. I must pray to God for his forgiveness for my deeds to honour the King and his Queen.

*1534*

I do apologise for not writing so long, courtly affairs have been running smoothly. I went on summer progress with the Queen, however her kindness changes slightly and she begins to grow weary of me. The Queen is not yet with child again, but I expect she will be soon. The Princess Elizabeth is thriving and in perfect health. The King has also made an official new act of succession, stating the Princess Elizabeth is his heir after any sons Anne will have. The Princess Mary, which now is against the law for me to say, continues to be treated harshly, she has now finally given in and betrayed her mother. She has sworn obedience to the Church of England and the King with Anne Boleyn as Queen. However, she cannot be blamed for she was under threat of death and it is what Catherine would have wished her to do. Catherine on the other hand, is in poor health and forbidden to see her daughter, she has not sworn the oath herself; as if she is not Henry’s wife, she is not his subject and therefore is not bound to obey him. I am glad Queen Catherine has escaped the oath but I feel sorrow for her loss of communication with her daughter.

*Jane continued to serve Anne for years and in 1535 events began to change her life.*

Oh diary, things have changed over the years. Queen Anne has grown harsher towards me in public but remains my friend in private.

"Jane I wish to play cards later; will you join me?" The Queen asks me later, I agreed but little would I know what was in store for me.

"Jane, I know." Anne says simply with a disappointed look on her face. What is she talking of? Is it the King? In these past few weeks, I have been getting closer to the King and he has declared his love for me. But who am I to deny the King and he is so kind!

"I beg your pardon your majesty, what is it you speak of?" I whisper,

"You and the King." Anne says frowning.

"He declared his love for you yesterday, did he not?" she asked, I felt the vomit rising in my mouth and my face turning red and I face the ground.

"Yes, your majesty it is true, I beg your forgiveness, your majesty I cannot help the King's actions." I cry.

"No silly, it is not you I am angry with! Do you think I have not met the King? His dalliances are everlasting, he does as he pleases flirting with whomever he wishes." Anne says in a cold manner, hinting she is angry at me. But who could blame her? If I were Queen, God forgive me it is treason to think so, I would be upset.

Two days later, it is announced the Queen is with child! I have distressed her whilst she is in her state! But I cannot stop, the King pursues me and I do not know what I can do. Today, Anne caught me sitting on his lap and I saw her face fall and she simply walked away with the coldest expression you can imagine. But then later, she started screaming at me and the King, her state is distressing her and she is angry. I must pray for her child as a good catholic woman

*Jane served Anne for a few more months until events began to unfold.*

Not long ago now on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1536, a saint died, Queen Catherine. The court celebrated the Queen's death! But I secretly mourned her. I do grieve for Lady Mary also, for she already lost her Father's love and now her mother is gone, an angel in heaven. The horror she must be feeling at her Mother's death is dreadful, especially knowing her Father was celebrating the loss of a saint. Anyway, today on 29<sup>th</sup> January 1536, Queen Catherine had a small funeral, certainly not fit for a Queen. But, Anne has failed the King, she miscarried her baby today and although I believe it is because of her sins against Queen Catherine. She claims it was at the shock of seeing me flirting and sitting on the King's lap, how could she? Anne is still cold to me but I respect her as Queen and remember her kindness that was years ago. The King is growing impatient with Anne and I do fear what this means for England? Surely, he will not divorce again? In truth, I wish him to divorce so I can become Queen, it is sinful thoughts, God forgive me but it cannot be helped. The King talks of marriage to me and divorcing Anne.

*May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1536*

Anne was arrested today on charges of treason, witchcraft and adultery/incest. The King has gone too far! He told me he will release her soon and send her to some dreary castle. But he sent her to the Tower of London! He accuses her of plotting to kill him, of being a witch (for she has as a sixth finger, which Elizabeth Holland and my brother tell me is surely a mark of witchcraft) he also accuses

her of committing adultery with 5 other men, **including her own brother**, making it incestuous! These are accusations that if found guilty of are high treason and punishable by death!

May 19<sup>th</sup>, 1536

The King has done something terrible! The Queen whom I was bound to obey was beheaded today! By a French swordsman! Of course, I must pretend I agree she is wrong or risk worse. I do not watch her execution but I can feel a gut feeling and know it is done, they tell me she was brave. The poor woman lost everything her husband, her daughter, her dignity, pride and even her life. And it's all my fault. Queen Anne is no more and the Princess Elizabeth is now a half orphan and has been made illegitimate and known as the Lady Elizabeth. The King has offered me his hand and marriage and I had no choice but to accept. I never knew this day would come and I am filled with grief at my once enemy. I run to my room knowing that it is all my fault, if it weren't for me Anne would be here now. She was Anne Boleyn and was the most beautiful, admirable and witty woman at court. It is shocking how things can change so much in a short period of time. Alas diary, now I am Queen and there is no need for me to write in you as I did in the past. I fear this will be my last diary entry forever. Who knows what the future holds? I am Jane Seymour, Queen of England and the third wife to King Henry VIII.

*Jane was the truest wife a man could have. Shortly after she became Queen she gave birth to the long-awaited heir, Prince Edward. She showed favour upon the Lady Mary who had been wronged greatly. Only sweet Jane could have felt such grief at her enemy's death, she was the most loyal woman you could ever meet. Anne Boleyn was a monstrous woman but Jane still felt grief at her death. You may have thought Anne's death would bring her pleasure, I know I did. Her enemy was defeated she was Queen. Alas, Jane is dead, she died not long after the birth of Prince Edward. She died in securing this country's future. She was the most wonderful woman and a great wife of the King, trust me I know. After all these years, I have been married three times and I near my time to leave this world. I sometimes wonder was Jane correct? Did Anne Boleyn really deserve to die? I find myself wondering if dear Jane was always right, her wishes suffered my expectations. It is Jane's son who will be King, when I die and I shall be buried next to her. Jane's boy, our boy, King of England.*

By Emma Gladwin