



0. Wolf Hall - Story Preface

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William Powell Frith (1819–1909), who lived long after Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn were both dead, created this painting, entitled “King Henry and Anne Boleyn Deer Shooting in Windsor Forest.” His artistic interpretation depicts Henry and Anne during their happy times. Image online via Wikimedia Commons. Public Domain.

...absence from you grieves me sorely...

Henry VIII
July 1527 Letter to Anne Boleyn
Maintained by the Vatican Library

It's 1527, and the King is upset. He doesn't have a male heir, but he thinks he has a plan to get one.

To make that happen, he'll have to disrupt longstanding traditions in his country. However ... he's the King, and what the King wants, the King gets.

At least ... that's how Henry VIII sees the world.

Upsetting many people, to get his way, Henry's plan ultimately fails because his new Queen has a daughter, not a son. He's no better-off than he was with his first wife, the now-demoted Queen who also gave him a daughter.

So after lots of intrigue, accusations, thinly veiled (and openly outrageous) lies and other such schemes, Henry finds himself in the barn at Wolf Hall (Wulf Hall), where he's about to celebrate his third marriage.

But ... let's not get too far ahead of the story, before we go *there*.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Wolf-Hall>

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Henry VIII in 1520

Henry VIII is best-known for his six wives (and how he treated them). But Dr. David Starkey, one of Britain's historians, remind us that Henry's most-important legacy is not his personal life:

Henry is not only England's best-known king - with his wives, his girth and his bloodthirstiness - he is also our most important single ruler.



When he came to the throne, Henry was the pious prince who ruled an England at the heart of Catholic Europe.

When he died, he was the great schismatic, who had created a national church and an insular, xenophobic politics that shaped the development of England for the next 500 years.

In this image, depicting a portrait by an unknown artist, we see Henry VIII as he appeared circa 1520, when he was around 29 or 30 years old.

At this stage in his life, he was married to Catherine of Aragon and had been on the throne for about eleven years.

His two living children, at the time, were Princess Mary (then around 3 or 4 years old who would later become Queen Mary I) and Henry FitzRoy (an illegitimate son, then still an infant, whose invented last name means "Son of the King").

Click on the image for a better view.

Image online via Wikimedia Commons. The original portait is maintained at the National Portrait Gallery.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Henry-VIII-in-1520>



Wolf Hall

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