

Henry VIII abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 1

Confidence

Situation: Archbishop of Canterbury Cranmer knows something is not quite right, saying of the king “wherefore frowns he thus? All’s not well.” The king soon enters and says to him “I have of late heard many grievous complaints of you, which have moved us and our Council that you shall this morning come before us.”

CRANMER: The good I stand on is my truth and honesty. I fear nothing what can be said against me.

KING: Know you not how your state stands i’ th’ world?

King to Cranmer

Your enemies and their plots are many
And not small, and justice and truth carry
Often the wrong verdict in a dispute.
Corrupt minds might easily, as has been
Done, procure knaves as corrupt to refute
You, for you are potently opposed in
Support in proportion to their malice.
Do you expect better luck upon this
Wicked earth than your master received when
He here lived? This grave morning see you do
Appear before them. If they charge you, then
Fail not to use the best persuasion to
The contrary. If your replies render
You no remedy, this ring deliver.

The King gives him a ring.

KING ASIDE: Look, the good man weeps! He’s honest, on mine honor! God’s blest mother, I swear he is truehearted, and a soul none better in my kingdom.

KING: Get you gone, and do as I have bid you.

Cranmer exits.

KING: He has strangled his language in his tears.