

Henry VIII abbreviated

Act 3, Scene 2

Counsel

Situation: Having quickly fallen from grace, Cardinal Wolsey learns from his servant Cromwell that “Sir Thomas More is chosen Lord Chancellor in your place” and that “Cranmer is installed as Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.” He also learns that Lady Anne “this day was viewed in open as his queen.”

WOLSEY: O Cromwell, the King has gone beyond me. All my glories in that one woman I have lost forever. Go, get thee from me, Cromwell. Seek the king; that sun, I pray, may never set! I have told him what and how true thou art. Make use now, and provide for thine own future safety.

Cromwell weeps.

CROMWELL: Must I then leave you? Must I forgo so good, so noble, and so true a master? The King shall have my service, but my prayers forever and forever shall be yours.

Wolsey weeps.

WOLSEY: Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear in all my miseries, but thou hast forced me. Let's dry our eyes. Cromwell, when I am forgotten say I taught thee; say Wolsey, that once trod the ways of glory and measured the depths of honor, found thee a way though thy master missed it.

Wolsey to Cromwell

**Cromwell, hear me: fling away ambition.
How can man, since angels fell by that sin,
Hope to win by it? Cherish hearts that hate
Thee; love thyself last. Honor's better taught
Than deceit; carry gentle peace and wait
To silence searing tongues. Be true; fear not.
Let the just goals you seek be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's; then a proud country sees
Thee a blessed martyr, if thy fall'st.
O Cromwell, count all I have as I laugh;
My cleric's robe being all I dar'st
Call my own. If I had served my God with half
The zeal I served my king, I'd not have sown
This self-destruction, exposed and alone.**

CROMWELL: Good sir, have patience.

WOLSEY: So I have. Farewell. My hopes in heaven do dwell.