

The Boleyn Inheritance Study Guide

The Boleyn Inheritance by Philippa Gregory

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Plot Summary

Philippa Gregory's historical fiction novel surrounds the lives of three women, who have, in one way or another, been affected by the Boleyn "inheritance," which is not always positive. Jane Boleyn, Anne, who is the Duchess of Cleves and young Katherine Howard are the three narrators of their individual entries in this story, which weave together and sew up a particular time in history, which is Philippa Gregory's specialty.

This particular story focuses on the short reign of Anne of Cleves, who travels from Cleves to marry King Henry by an arranged contract. Henry made the decision to marry Anne based on a portrait of her painted by Hans Holbien. Anne was not beautiful, but the area of Cleves, at that time, was an important link that King Henry felt he needed to secure in order to protect England from neighboring European countries. Shortly after Anne arrived and became situated in this new country, it became clear that Cleves was less important, since talks with France had begun to take place. Because of this, and because the Duke of Norfolk is encouraging his fourteen-year-old niece to seduce the King, Anne is never crowned Queen.

When Anne first arrived in England, a bad-smelling, obese man, who was secretly the king in disguise, forced a kiss on her mouth to greet her. Anne was so repulsed by him, she shoved him backward and spit at him. His ego crushed, this incident set the tone for the King's dislike of Anne, and, consequently, their marriage was never consummated.http://www.bookrags.com/eic/book_format/guideFrame.php?guide=literature&bid=9085&status=E#

The entire novel consists of narratives by the three women. The fact that each character is strategically placed allows the reader to know what is going on in court, what is going on in the Queen's bedroom and the king's mind, and what is taking place in England in general. This is a fascinating tale of a slice of time that is difficult to imagine; a time when the country's primary leader had perhaps lost his mind through illness and absolute power, and a time when women were used merely for pawns and producing children, and a mere rumor of witchcraft could send a woman to her death.



July, 1539 Pgs 1-13

July, 1539 Pgs 1-13 Summary

Jane Boleyn, widow of the late George Boleyn, is bored with the flat fields and marshes and stench of plague. She had been in the court of Anne Boleyn and went everywhere with the vivacious Anne and Anne's brother, George, when they were alive. Jane is now living a frugal new life in a village far from London but she is hoping her luck will change, and that the Duke of Norfolk will summon her back to court soon.

Anne, Duchess of Cleves, is posing for a portrait in borrowed jewels. She is hoping the king will choose her over her sister for his queen. Cleves is a well-placed keyhole that is sought by the French, Spanish, Austrians, the Pope and King Henry of England. Anne's father favored her, and her mother and brother think she is foolish, but she thinks she would be a good Queen of England.

Katherine is at Norfolk house looking over her possessions. She counts her jewelry, gowns and ribbons on her fourteenth birthday. She is nobly born, but not of a rich family, except for her grandmother, the duchess. She thinks she is passionately in love with Francis Dereham and meets him secretly at night. Katherine feels she is a woman ready for love; she has learned about sex in the maids' chambers and knows about men. She has a large dowry, thanks to Katherine Howard, her grandmother.

July, 1539 Pgs 1-13 Analysis

Jane is a sad, young woman who misses the beauty and sophistication of living at court; her boredom is reflected in the comparison to where she is presently, in the flat fields, marshes and heat, to where she has been in the past, which is beautiful, sophisticated and luxurious. She obviously attained a certain stature as a woman at court, since she rode and lived with Anne Boleyn, who has now been executed. Apparently, the execution is connected to Jane's banishment from court. She feels that life owes her a better living; she is the sole survivor of an "unlucky" family, and her inheritance is that of scandal. She believes her inheritance will be the invitation to return to court.

Anne is focused on making a good marriage and resents her brother's control over her. She is quite superstitious about her father's madness and the stigma that would attach itself to her if the secret ever got out. She senses her potential for being queen, based on the important area where she lives and the fact that the king has requested her painting. She is desperate to win this contest and feels she would be a good, sensible and conservative queen. We learn she has been abused by her brother and deeply misses her father. She also carries some shame over her father's treatment, over which she had no control.

Katherine is fourteen and every bit the teenager - silly and short-sighted. She trusts her friends with a secret that could have huge consequences for her in that time—losing



one's virginity in those days spelled automatic marriage or a total lack of status. She is running on hormones at this time and resents the mourning period for the queen, and the fact that, because the queen is dead, she cannot be in court. What is the point of being pretty if one has to waste away in Lambeth, away from the social atmosphere of court. Katherine feels she is perfect.



November 1539 Pgs. 17- 38

November 1539 Pgs. 17- 38 Summary

Anne has learned she will be Queen of England. This union may help the Protestant movement by allying Germany and England against France and perhaps the rest of Europe. Her brother has a flaring, emotional reaction to the thought of Anne having physical relations with the King, and is afraid Anne is prone to lust, and, of course, this is what Henry will be interested in.

Katherine and Francis Derehem have had physical relations and reassure themselves that this act is their "wedding." She is only fourteen, but Francis has taken this seriously.

Jane Boleyn is now back in the queen's rooms, where she feels she was bred to be. The others at court have, perhaps, judged her because she was the lynch pin in the deaths of the queen and the queen's brother, Jane's own husband, George. Jane dreads meeting Catherine Carey, Mary Boleyn's daughter. Mary hates Jane for her part in getting her siblings beheaded by King Henry, but Jane knows that Henry is unstoppable. The king has declared Elizabeth, the Boleyn princess, illegitimate and left her in poverty.

November 1539 Pgs. 17- 38 Analysis

It seems that Anne's brother is too concerned about her sleeping with the King, and he looks at her with some kind of need that has not yet been described. Anne's sister, Amelia, is jealous and petty, and Anne's mother is controlled by this ogre of a son.

Katherine Howard is a very naive, inexperienced girl, who, although she thinks she wants to be married to Francis Derehem, is obviously playing with fire, since she does not have the maturity to understand the pact they have made. He plans to openly announce their marriage when he returns from Ireland, but Katherine is thinking of the color of her gown, choosing the color that the King likes best. She is clearly not ready for this commitment, and this short chapter lets us know she is quite frivolous and very emotionally immature.

Jane Boleyn begins to reveal her arrogant and covert nature in this section. She does not look kindly on the good fortune of others and only refers to Anne Boleyn kindly now because Anne is dead, partly due to Jane's own testimony. She knows that if her attitude toward the king is obedient and if she sees him as God, she will rise in court, where she feels she belongs. She resents Catherine Carey's assignment to court, because Catherine's mother, Mary, knows the truth about Jane's complicity in the beheading of Anne and her brother George. She is sure the new Queen Anne will not have the influence Anne Boleyn had, and, since Uncle Howard has requested it, she will serve as a Howard spy in the court in the interest of keeping the Howards powerful. Interestingly, she admits that she, too, was in love with King Henry when Anne Boleyn

was alive. She wants the best for herself, but she saw what happened to Anne Boleyn and has totally succumbed to the direction of her uncle Howard. It is interesting to note in this narration, that Jane is quite honest about her part in the ruination of King Henry, as people lied and taught him to be suspicious.



Pages 39 - 49

Pages 39 - 49 Summary

Young Katherine is wondering what she'll get for Christmas; she is a self-indulgent child whose parents are gone, and she is afraid of dying a spinster in service to her grandmother. An invitation to be a maid-in-waiting for the new queen gives Katherine the ways and means to reject Francis, but he is not happy, since he considers them married.

Anne is en route to London to take assume her crown. She is overwhelmed by the ostentatious Calais castle, with all its accouterments, servants and finely-dressed noblemen. Lord Lisle wishes her courage as she is cheered by the crowds. They embark on the King's ship with much flourish, but Anne is exhausted and closes herself in to pray. Jane Boleyn is at her service, but Anne is confused, thinking if she is a Boleyn she should be in exile.

Jane is sure Anne will not please the king; she is like an innocent child, unaware of how to behave. Jane will teach her the proper skills, feeling she is the best teacher because she saw all the drama with Anne and her husband, George.

Pages 39 - 49 Analysis

Katherine's shallow materialistic ways are typical of a very indulged child, but she fears no one cares for her. She does not ponder what she will give for Christmas, but what she might get. Her grandmother has already suggested her behavior might be sluttish, but Katherine is manipulative far beyond her years. She sees the invitation at court as a way to get out of the marriage relationship she has promised and sealed with Francis. She has a cold side to her that will most likely emerge again if necessary.

Poor Anne is a frumpy young woman. She becomes aware of how dowdy she is when she sees all the finery on the English ladies and is terrified of all the attention. Her cold sweating signifies terror; in part, her fear is due to the fact that she does not speak or understand English or English ways. She is not prepared for the exhausting pomp and ceremony required of a Queen, and the contrast between her old life and this new emerging one is deep, but she musters her strength to meet this challenge. She is desperate now for some time to herself. Her meeting with Jane Boleyn forebodes trouble, since the Boleyns have not been the most scrupulous characters in the past.

Jane Boleyn, lost in her selfishness, had already judged this new queen before she knows her. She plans to try to mold her, and feels power over her due to Anne's awkwardness at court. Jane decides to try to keep Anne safe, but Jane is not trustworthy.



Pages 50 - 71

Pages 50 - 71 Summary

Katherine has been working on her royal poise, expecting a visit from her uncle Howard. He assesses Katherine and finds her quite grown up and a typical Howard girl; Katherine has known about sex and seduction since she was small, but is not particularly educated. He appoints Katherine as a maid-in-waiting to the new Queen.

Ann feels a new energy about starting her life as a Queen. She spends her first night in England being served and waited upon in a regimental way, then her ladies prepare her for a rainy trip to the abbey at Canterbury for prayer.

Anne learns from Lord Lisle that Cromwell, the King's adviser, has been protecting some Lutherans who do not view Henry's rule as the same as God's. Cromwell's son has called Lisle a covert papist. Anne realizes that she, too, may be a heretic, but her brother has arranged with the king that she will help build an alliance with her brother and "his league of Protestant dukes." Cromwell could be charged with heresy for sheltering the Lutherans.

Jane meets Catherine Carey, the Queen's new maid-in-waiting, who is also Jane's niece. Catherine is cool to Jane and gives her a letter from her mother, Mary Boleyn Stafford, which informs Jane that Catherine is to answer to no one but the king, uncle Howard and herself. Mary feels Jane was no friend to Anne Boleyn and her brother, and young Catherine will treat Jane with the respect she deserves, which is little.

Pages 50 - 71 Analysis

Katherine pretends to be terrified of her uncle's warning, but her promise seems like an act, since she is thrilled to be going to court, regardless of her duty to her family. Katherine has been exposed to sexual activity from an early age, including others in her "dormitory." Not having parents may have led her to such proclivities, but she also may have the same genes as Ann Boleyn's, with her flirtatious ways and covert ambition. At this age, she is already on the edge of promiscuity, given the culture during this period of history.

Anne is frightened and, by all outward appearances, is too weak to be a queen, but she is resolved to do what is necessary to escape her horrible life in Calais. She is being subjected to an exhausting journey, with every facet being new to her, from the wealth and finery to the ship ride and the English language. She is obviously a more wholesome and simple person than the nobility she is meeting, and, although that may be a cause for concern, she has been chosen Queen and is treated with deference. She needs some alone time to adjust to the shock. Anne enjoys the anticipation and is beginning to grasp the wealth and power of England.



Jane Boleyn knows too much to speak out against the Queen at this time, but her decision to become the Queen's best friend does not ring true, either. She is now bound to the Howards in the same way her sister-in-law, Anne Boylen, was, but she lacks Anne's cunning. She tries to convince herself that she is a better person than she really is and cannot admit to herself that she played a hand in Anne's and George's death to save her own skin.



Pages 72 - 81

Pages 72 - 81 Summary

Katherine is not totally pleased with the number or quality of her new possessions and is disappointed that the young Queen seems quiet and shy. She is critical of Anne about her dress, her mannerisms, her way of speaking and the fact that she is not a merry or silly Queen.

Jane is politically astute and points out that Cromwell chose Anne, fearing the king would choose a papist over a reformer. The ladies do not necessarily approve of Anne for this position, but the King needs to marry her to keep Cromwell's treaty intact and keep England from being vulnerable to France and Spain. During a bull baiting event, a cloaked and hooded old man approaches Anne, saying he brings greetings from the King of England. When he kisses Anne on the mouth, she pushes him away, rubs her lips off and spits his saliva from her mouth, cursing him. The stranger is the King in disguise. Katherine thinks someone should have warned Anne and watches the entire episode of utter rejection between Anne and Henry. For a moment, Katherine feels Anne Boleyn with her and steps in to save the vanity of this revolting man.

Pages 72 - 81 Analysis

Katherine, as usual, is wishing she had more in the way of jewels and finery. All her expectations about court have fallen a little flat, including her wardrobe, which is not as fancy as she'd like. She loves to dance and sing and party and is afraid that court life is going to be boring with this new Queen. However, she sees her opportunity and takes it, not only helping the King to save face but adding some balance to a situation that is out of control and getting worse.

The bull baiting is certainly not the only disgusting event for this day. The King's attempt to play a little trick on his new Queen has backfired, and his ego is forever shattered. Somehow, since he was a young, handsome King, his people have retained their image of him or at least to his face they have. This is the first time anyone has dared allow him to really see himself and he is hurt by it. Of course, Anne is going to be dreadfully regretful over this, and we can already see Katherine laying the groundwork to capture the King's heart. It is interesting to note Jane's change in perception of the smelly old man when she realizes it is King Henry.

Without even needing to think the matter through, Katherine is sly as a fox when she pays the King a great compliment by pretending not to recognize him. When she invokes Anne's unseen help with her flirtation, the author reminds us that Anne Boleyn was a conniving, beautiful seductress who got what she wanted at any cost, but who paid the ultimate price. It appears as though Katherine may be following in her footsteps. Referring to the new queen, if only to herself, as stupid, simple, childlike and

a quacking duckling, she is mentally taking the upper hand over her. She wants music and dancing and, as we see in her chapter in this section, she gets what she wants.



Pages 82 - 95

Pages 82 - 95 Summary

The women are concerned over the dangerous situation that will arise if Henry does not marry Anne. Jane sends word to Howard that the King is trying to declare the marriage contract invalid. It is clear that if Cromwell's carefully-arranged match fails, he will go down and perhaps the Duke of Norfolk, or Uncle Howard, will replace him. Jane astutely realizes that Anne's brother has sent her to England "without the one piece of paper that would secure her marriage."

Queen Anne is traveling and suffering embarrassment over her treatment of the King. Anne realizes that everyone around Henry has been pretending for him for years with this foolish game. Anne receives gifts of sables from the King, and Katherine received a gold brooch.

Howard is pleased about Henry's interest in Katherine. He implies that Katherine must put herself within the King's sight and be attractive to him to get presents and her uncle's approval. He tells her Lady Rochford (Jane Boleyn) will help her get the King to fall in love with her.

Anne is in love with England and happy she will be queen. She notes that the Seymours could get too much power, since Henry's only legitimate son is one of them. When she sees the King he looks like a god, and the palace at Greenwich is not a fort, but is beautifully built for a country at peace.

Pages 82 - 95 Analysis

Katherine is flirting with the king, calling him a handsome stranger. The author wants us to know that she is headed for trouble, and we are informed through Lady Browne, the maids' supervisor, that things are not looking good for the royal marriage between Henry and Anne. Once again, reference is made to the fact that all at court are actors playing their own roles for their own advancement. The fact that the men who arranged this marriage must fear for their lives is ridiculous, but Henry is all-powerful and has a bad temper.

It is ironic that Anne seems to be the one who is odd in this group of characters at court, when she is actually the only one who is not, thus far, devious or frivolous. She has a good head on her shoulders, and her response to Henry, although it might have damaged her future with him, was not inappropriate. Also, she has been trained that a sober, somber air is the proper way to show dignity as a royal. Unfortunately, she is naive about the subtle and cruel games these people play. Her decision to entrust Katherine Howard may lead to disaster for her.



Katherine is truly terrified of her uncle's reason for visiting her. She has inadvertently, just by being herself, done exactly what her uncle wants her to do, which is to begin the seduction of a King, whose ego is stronger than his good sense, and whose reputation for having his wives and mistresses put to death is well-known.



Pages 96 - 111

Pages 96 - 111 Summary

Dressed in satin and her new sables, Anne meets Henry in the great hall for dinner; she is beginning to know people but wonders about the coldness of Cromwell and Lord Lisle.

Katherine seems appalled at how old the people are in this court.. She recalls that her grandmother makes reference to the late Anne Bolyen as a reminder to naughty girls like her. She remembers when her cousin, Anne, was queen, and the family betrothals were weaving the Howards with the Tudors. But she also remembers when Anne became disgraced, and she wondered at the time if her uncle Howard were evil.

Pages 96 - 111 Analysis

Anne is blossoming in her new, anticipated role as Queen. She is discovering goodness in herself, which makes her want to mend relationships and be a good leader; she is also feeling the weight of ownership that she is being offered over the land and its people. The harsh trip is over, and strength of mind and spirit has flooded into her, making her full of hope and goodwill. She does not realize that Cromwell, Lord Southampton and Lord Lisle are disturbed because Henry is planning some way to avoid marrying her. It is ironic that she thinks she is making friends here.

Katherine is having her way about the dancing and music in court. She is innately gifted with the ability to lower her eyes at the right time, smile at the right time and act enchanting when necessary. The King is a sucker for this behavior and is already showing signs of being very attracted to her, especially since she helped him save face during the spitting incident with Anne. Katherine is not an innocent child, by far, but she is still naive about the depth to which the Howard family will sink to gain power.

Jane Boleyn, who apparently really was in love with George Boleyn, finds that she would like to warn Anne not to marry this man, whose "malice toward women who cross him is fatal." She, like those Howard women before her, dutifully reports to Uncle Howard what is going on at court. She seems to care for Anne and is concerned that she will meet the same fate as the king's other wives and mistresses.



Pages 102 - 115

Pages 102 - 115 Summary

Katherine realizes that her new suitors are much superior to Francis Dereham. She feels the King's stares and knows her uncle is watching her every move. Katherine pretends to truly enjoy the king's favorite music and makes sure the King notices this.

The King wants Jane to elicit a false confession from Anne that she was formerly betrothed in Cleves by a contract for which she brought no termination papers. This would make the king unable, in good conscience, to marry her. Uncle Howard wants her to get Anne to say this was true, and says the king would be grateful and would hold them both in high favor. Jane asks if Anne could be accused of treason, an accusation that ends in beheading. But England needs Cleves to brace itself against Spain and France, so there will be no treason charge. There is no choice but to confess to an earlier marriage, or the king will have to marry her whether he likes it or not, which he does not.

Jane tells Anne that Anne must tell them it was not her responsibility to bring her annulment papers with her, but was her brother's. Surprisingly, Anne says that there really is a document and there was an earlier betrothal arranged by her late father and that she has seen the annulment herself. Anne's brother is careless about her safety, but she knows the document is in the records room at Cleves. Jane tells Anne that this is Anne's chance to escape if she does not want to marry the King, but Anne wants to make her life here.

Pages 102 - 115 Analysis

Young Katherine is not terribly bright, but she is precocious when it comes to men and somehow seems to know how to charm them with her innocence, in spite of the fact she is only fourteen. She has reviewed the history she knows from Anne Boleyn's reign, but still does not seem to connect the dots that show she is heading toward the same end as Anne. Henry already put aside one aging, less beautiful wife for a beautiful young girl, and her fate was dismal. Still, Katherine is caught up in the moment and her childish glee is partly what makes her so attractive.

Jane Boleyn turns out to be, perhaps, not so bad as she has seemed. She is concerned for Anne and, although she is dedicated to furthering the family interests, is not wanting to see Anne come to a bad end. She does what she promised her uncle she would do, but does so reluctantly. It is only by sheer coincidence that Anne really did have a canceled betrothal contract. It is interesting to question why such an important document was not sent to the king in advance. Anne's brother, who has never liked Anne, is not protecting her interests, nor that of Cleves with his carelessness.



Anne is blossoming into her true self and is enjoying it. She is learning how to be with and communicate with her ladies and is excited to do good work as a Queen. When she hears that the missing documents are a problem, she becomes concerned because at this point she is enthused about her new role. She has gone through a major adjustment and is prepared to take on her royal duties. Philippa Gregory allows us to see another side of Jane Boleyn, who, although ruthless in her loyalty to her family, and now George's family, she does not want to see Anne get into a bad situation.



Pages 116 -

Pages 116 - Summary

Anne is now Queen of England, sitting at the right hand of Henry. Count Overstein is agitated about the missing betrothal release document and seems perturbed at Anne's brother. If the document is not produced in three months, the Cleves men will be held as hostages with an uncertain future. The King and Queen go to the marriage chamber. The new Queen is undressed to her underwear in front of the whole court, and the two go to bed.

Pages 116 - Analysis

Katherine, thinking only of herself as always, takes this wedding lightly that is so wrapped in turmoil and secrets. The solemn ceremony is tainted by the knowledge of Henry's dishonest dealings with his past wives and his decisions to have two of them beheaded.

Anne is taking her new position in stride and seems, from her own writing, to be quite mature and queenly in her acceptance of her fate and her opportunities. She is learning quickly to always appear happy when Henry is looking at her, even after hearing of the threat against her countrymen over her brother's carelessness. She is a good sport about going to bed with someone who smells as bad as Henry.

Jane is very knowledgeable about the turns marriage can take. Her uncle is married but does not live with his wife; Henry Percy is married but will always be in love with Anne Boleyn; Henry's marriage record is abominable, and Jane lost her own husband through circumstances she could not control. She feels empathy for Anne and what she is facing as King Henry's new wife.

Pages 126 - 143

Pages 126 - 143 Summary

The court has moved to Whitehall Palace for a week long wedding celebration. Whitehall is huge and complex with openings and passageways of which Anne knows nothing. London is noisy; the King's parliament is down the street at Westchester; the Tower of London is just down the river. The King's only heir, little Prince Edward, is to visit. He is learning to talk and Anne spends time with him in his nursery. Lady Elizabeth, Anne Boleyn's daughter, is considered a bastard and not allowed in court. Anne still hopes to give Henry a second son. Katherine of Aragon's daughter, Mary, is now allowed to court; Mary is not healthy and is avoiding a betrothal planned by her father. Anne plans to talk to Henry about settling Mary's position, since no one has been an advocate for her. Mary is a papist, but Anne wants to be her friend, as well as a good Queen.

Pages 126 - 143 Analysis

Whitehall palace is another ostentatious shock for Anne. Jane is still haunted by her memories of her husband, George and his sister, Anne, as she goes through the same motions now as she did with them when they were alive. She is a tormented person; she asks God for forgiveness but has not forgiven herself for not trying to defend Anne and George. The initials embroidered on the curtains that adorn the queen's box seat are spooky with all the initials of past queens who have died.

Anne is finding her maternal nature and wants badly to be a mother to little Edward, whose mother is dead. He is served on bended knee by servants of all kinds and has an entire household, but he has no mother, and Anne desperately wants to fill that gap. She is also very caring about Henry's other children, who are in differing states of approval and acceptance by Henry. Philippa Gregory gives us the sense that Henry's constant changing makes for a nervous and unsettled court, as people are always afraid of falling from favor.



Pages 144 -158

Pages 144 -158 Summary

Katherine is preparing to take part in a tableau of the ocean, with the king disguised as a sea knight. Anne is feeling quite queenly in her royal box. She is now dressed more fashionably, giving out favors to knights as other queens have done. The tableau, including the King dressed as a knight from Jerusalem, is before her, yards of fabric representing the ocean and the young ladies as mermaids or sirens. Katherine has let her costume fall from her shoulder; Anne plans to discuss modesty with her. Anne is extremely happy; she feels she can make a difference here and provide some stability to the nervous court who is used to tiptoeing around Henry. Handsome Thomas Culpepper gets knocked off his horse first, honored to fall in Anne's service.

Pages 144 -158 Analysis

A huge event with such care taken to make sure everything is beautiful is unlike anything we do today. Yards of fabric and colors and the most extravagant clothing and jewels gives us an idea of how royalty lived in medieval times. Ironically, the poor crowd in among the rich to watch the celebration. There is a wide separation between the rich and poor in this culture. Katherine is consistently flirtatious, especially when the King can see her. In this area, she does everything right, including blushing on cue.



Pages 159 - 176

Pages 159 - 176 Summary

Jane informs the duke that Anne wants to be Queen and will not go willingly and tells him about her maternal instincts toward the King's children. Anne does not try to arouse the King because of her strict background and is still a virgin. The alliance with Cleves is no longer as crucial, since France may side with England against Spain. Moreover, it may be better to have an empty throne than have Anne as Queen, so that Henry could marry a French princess if he chose. The King wants Katherine Howard; Anne has to go.

The court moves to Hampton, transporting all of the finery in a caravan of wagons. She is allowed to ride with Henry and Katherine. Katherine and Henry flirt openly, him talking to her like a granddaughter.

Pages 159 - 176 Analysis

The covert operation that is run by the Duke of Norfolk could be compared to a spy novel. He makes sure there are people planted in the groups closest to the Queen and King, who will report to him regularly, which allows him to scheme and manipulate in advance to his own family's benefit. Anne is learning now that the King's impotence might be cured by her more intimate involvement with him, but she chooses not to help him in that regard because Anne is too wholesome. Although that is what Henry wants, he is, as always, more attracted to young, flirtatious, pretty girls. Anne wants to look more modern but still is concerned about humiliating her mother, who lives far away.

On the procession to Hampton, the King places himself between his wife and his prospective new lover, who has been all but placed in front of him by the Duke of Norfolk. This repeating pattern of Henry's is tiresome; he marries a woman, loses interest, gets rid of her and marries the next one.

Gregory does a great job of describing the rich English countryside, where the peasants are full and happy and healthy. If it were not for the corrupt nature of the court, this would be an ideal setting and a beautiful place to be. Because of Jane's discussion with the Duke, we know that something is about to happen to Anne concerning her marriage to Henry.

Anne is feeling the pressure of not having intimacy with the King, not caring for the advice given to her by Katherine Howard. She asks Thomas Cromwell what to do, but he helps her understand that the King does not desire her. She is crushed but stands strong and alert and keeps smiling. The King apparently cannot forgive her for humiliating him before his court. Once again, as she was in Cleves, Anne feels she is an object of disgust. She recalls what cruelty Henry has dealt to other wives who did not please him and wonders what he will do to her.



Knowing that Henry may disapprove, Anne asks Jane to write invitations to Princess Mary and Lady Elizabeth, the King's daughters, to come to court at Easter to meet with her. When Jane agrees to do so, Anne retracts the idea and decides to ask the King first. Jane is aware that Anne led her into giving her some bad advice; Anne is very astute.



Pages 177 - 201

Pages 177 - 201 Summary

Jane, haunted by ghosts of George and Anne, hurries to meet the Duke to tell him that Anne has not been intimate with the king yet, because he is impotent. Jane remembers Norfolk asking her if she were jealous of Anne Boleyn, and that she would save George's life if she spoke against Anne.

The King is looking for a way to annul his marriage to Anne and the Duke is trying to cook up some trouble, even suggesting perhaps Jane is at fault. Jane says maybe Anne's brother would defend her if she is accused, but the Duke thinks not, and says Anne's brother has now secured a friendship with France.

Pages 177 - 201 Analysis

Jane is lost in melancholy in Hampton court, feeling remorse for the past. She seems obsessed with the memories of George and Anne and rehashes the past continually in her mind. She may not be altogether well, mentally, as she finds herself chasing ghosts through the castle. The tone of this section makes it feel as though she is living in a dream state and is therefore shocked when her evil uncle suggests that they will play the same game with this Queen, framing her somehow for deeds she did not do. But Jane remains subservient to her uncle, who is perhaps the only reason she lived through the earlier debacle.

It is interesting to note that the fear of witchcraft was so intense during these times that Jane is almost afraid to discuss it. It represented a very final end and could be applied to anyone who wasn't wanted, incurring a quick sentence of execution. Fear was rampant in those days (as it is at times in these days), and a witch was something with which no one knew how to deal, except to make to kill the person just in case it was true. It also proved to be a handy device for the King, whose impotence was a source of shame.

Fickle young Katherine is attracted to Tom Culpepper, as she has been to many young men. She cannot conceive of the danger her silly flirtations could cause. Giving up flirtation for Lent is a ridiculous notion, since one is expected to give up something that is very difficult to overcome. She is a very shallow young woman. Anne, on the other hand, is thoughtful and hopeful. Her desperation in turning to Cromwell for sexual advice is sad, and it is a hard blow to learn the King's sexual problem is due to his not being attracted to her. But her practical mind also knows that this is not just humiliation, but also fear over what he might do to her, given his track record of spousal executions.

Anne's decision to invite the King's daughters is unnerving because his temper is known to be so volatile, and she has undertaken to test her limits with him. Her time is limited as Queen, but she is not aware of it. She has angered Henry, as Jane predicted, with

this show of freedom and autonomy, but in the end her feelings prevail. She is a good woman who wants to be a role model for his children.



Pages 202 - 225

Pages 202 - 225 Summary

A special ambassador arrives at Hampton court bearing messages from Anne's mother and brother. Her brother writes that she has failed in their attempt to keep England and France from becoming allies and implores her to keep a good conscience now that she is wealthy. The ambassador has not brought the document that annulled her pre-contract, and Anne feels he is simply trying to humiliate her. She asks the ambassador to write her brother to request it sent; without it they could be found guilty and suspicious.

Katherine is summoned away by the Duke of Norfolk and Lady Rochford, who admonish her that she must win the King's heart, not just his lust, so that he will want to marry her. They want her to entice him and then pull back. She is a bit nervous because of Anne Boleyn's fate, but agrees she can do this. The king now has eyes only for Katherine as they all travel back to London.

Cromwell will be appointed Earl of Essex, which does not set well with Norfolk, who feels the King is rewarding Cromwell for bringing Anne to him. Jane swears they still have not consummated the marriage, and the Duke cannot figure out how Cromwell, with so much going against him, gets an earldom. He is enraged with Jane for not knowing what's going on, and cruelly threatens her, raging out of the room.

Pages 202 - 225 Analysis

It is not clear why Anne continues to be treated so shabbily by her brother. This new ambassador is of no help to her and does not even speak English. The fact that he does not have the all-important document that will secure her position is curious, and, despite her feeling more settled and queenly by this time, Anne still feels hurt and left out of her own immediate family's lives. Her mother and brother are still scolding her like a child, and she is not being shown any respect by them, as the family dynamic has always been.

The little girls seem to like their new stepmother, and the King is kind toward them. Anne's desire to be their friend is paying off for her, and this seems like a good visit for them with her and their father.

The Duke of Norfolk is now getting agitated, as Katherine's flirtations do not seem to be leading the King in the direction the Duke has hoped. The Duke is a despicable man, whose use for women goes only as far as what they can do to elevate his own status.



Pages 226 - 241

Pages 226 - 241 Summary

Henry tells Katherine he is not really married to Anne because of her papers and calls Anne a promise breaker. He promises her a present if she will be an honest girl as he fondles her, so she says she likes him, and he kisses her fully on the mouth. Katherine is given two estates of convicted murderers; she now owns two houses, land and money.

Princess Mary tells Anne that she probably won't be crowned until she tells Henry she is pregnant. Anne realizes that no one will warn her if Henry wants to get rid of her.

The King is coming to the Queen's chambers to dine; Katherine Howard is covered with jewels and a beautiful new gown, which she realizes are from Henry. Anne gets a moment alone with Katherine, who tells her that her family orders her regarding what to do, and she cannot refuse them. Anne asks Katherine what will become of her if Henry chooses Katherine as his wife, and Katherine does not know if Anne will be sent to the Tower.

Anne knows there will be no coronation; she knows Henry is in love with Katherine, and he will divorce, shame or execute her. The Duke tells Jane he is taking Katherine from court at the King's request, so that he can get rid of Anne. He wants no gossip attached to Katherine; Henry now considers Anne a "false queen" because she was pre-contracted.

The requested document finally arrives from Cleves, validating Anne's marriage to Henry, but her ambassador will not be seen by anyone in the king's privy council. Now Lord Lisle has been arrested on unknown charges; his wife has disappeared. Katherine says Thomas Cromwell has been arrested for treason, for conspiring with Lord Lisle and the Papists to cast a spell on the King to destroy him.

The arrests continue and Anne is withdrawn; the King's impotency has to be explained away by witchcraft, and they are accusing Cromwell of trying to take the throne. Many wish for the old ways again and the King fears this; he pardoned a large uprising of men who protested the reform, called for a parley, but when they disbanded, he had them killed and hanged seventy of their monks. One can now be executed under a Bill of Attainder - no trial required. Princess Mary tells Anne she should get away before Henry comes for her.

Pages 226 - 241 Analysis

Young Katherine is a born actress and is playing her coquettish part beautifully, even telling the King he smells good when we know his leg is rotting and his teeth are rotten. She is a good girl and does as she is told, not because she really expects Henry to



marry her, but because she is so vain, she knows she will continue to gain riches and attention at court. Henry is already working out how he is going to portray the annulment. Realizing the coronation is not going to take place, Anne is beginning to see that she may not really get to be a Queen. It is slowly dawning on Anne that her fate may be sealed by this vicious, sick King.

Things are not looking up for Anne, as she sees the possibility of her coronation dimming every day. May Day is particularly stressful because it is on this day the King usually makes sweeping changes. Anne is not quite terrified as of yet but is starting to become uncomfortable, given her knowledge of the King's past actions against his wives. Princess Mary, being close to Anne's age, is a good friend to her and helps her understand the ruthlessness of her father.

Anne now clearly sees that Henry is favoring Katherine, as Katherine is covered in jewels and new gowns. This is a sign to her that her time is going to end soon, and, although she is not sure what that will look like, her intuition tells her it is close. With Princess Mary's departure and accusations against Lord Lisle and his wife, Anne is finally facing that she may soon be in the Tower.



Pages 242 - 263

Pages 242 - 263 Summary

Anne's ambassador from Cleves is ignored by the court. He sends a letter to Anne's brother saying Anne fears for her life.

Everyone in Westminster Palace is afraid; Anne is imprisoned in her own home. Jane asks to be able to serve young Katherine, who needs advice if she is to be Queen, but the Duke feels that all Katherine needs is to be obedient; Henry wants a pet. The Duke wants Jane to testify that Anne has sworn she is a virgin, but Jane wants only to be her friend, not "her assassin." The Duke tells Jane that she will sign a prepared statement, and when it's over she will be Katherine's lady-in-waiting.

Pages 242 - 263 Analysis

Anne's wonderful hopes for her adopted country are being dashed as she realizes that she may not become Queen and may not even escape with her life, even though her brother has finally sent the documents from Germany. Henry is unscrupulous and ruthless, and there is no way to know what accusation he will make against her, but if he wants her gone, she will be gone. And little Katherine Howard, although not innocent in some ways, is being used as a pawn by her uncle. The King cannot be altogether bright if he does not realize what game they are playing. He is fat and smells bad, yet this beautiful little girl flirts and tells him he smells good - it would take an idiot to believe that she cares for him.

Thomas Cromwell, who has just been given an earldom, is, ironically, now arrested for treason, for aiding the Lutherans and conspiring in witchcraft, perhaps only because he was the one who brought Anne to England. It is as if the entire country is cowering in the corner, waiting for Henry to decide on his next false accusation. This clearly must be one of the most absurd political periods in English history. When the King becomes agitated, he picks out all those who may or may not be the reason for his agitation and has them killed.

Anne cares for young Katherine Howard, even though she is the reason Anne is being displaced. Anne is now learning the true nature of her husband and is afraid. We learned earlier that Anne's people had no idea how the King had managed the reform until they traveled through England and saw the devastation of churches and abbeys. Anne has walked into a bad situation and the odds are against her living through it.



Pages 257 - 274

Pages 257 - 274 Summary

Katherine will be marrying a man who has buried three wives; she may be the fourth, but cannot be troubled with it. Her grandmother feels she will bring wealth and status to the family. Katherine does care for Anne, but believes that she was wrong to come to England when she knew she was contracted to marry another man.

Every one of Anne's allies is in the Tower and she expects to be next. She feels they will torture Lisle and Cromwell into speaking against her, and she will die as well.

Imprisoned in her own rooms and waiting for a death sentence, Anne prays; Dr. Harst is unable to get her out of England. She regrets losing herself in her effort to please this King and vows that if she lives through this, she will be true to herself. She waits with dread and finally receives a letter from Henry saying he fears they are not legally married, and, as it was during Anne Boleyn's last days, he wants an inquiry. Anne is in disbelief that she could die so young so that Henry can marry Katherine.

Pages 257 - 274 Analysis

Young Katherine is delighted to be anticipating being in the spotlight and having beautiful clothing and jewelry. She has vague sympathies for others but is primarily interested in her own impressive self. She thinks she is the most beautiful girl and that others believe this as well. This is a shallow, very immature girl who can see no further than what's in her mirror. She has no realization that she is in the middle of the hubbub at court, and that people are going to be executed indirectly because of her. She is gullible enough to believe that Anne made a terrible mistake about her pre-contract and feels Anne was naughty to come to England without the right papers.

Jane is in the same position she was in with Anne Boleyn; she will be made to testify against someone who is innocent and will be responsible for their execution. We know from this chapter that she did think Anne Boleyn was innocent, although that had not been clear until now. She will be forced to sign her name to a lie to commit unspeakable treachery because of the Duke of Norfolk and his power. Obviously, if she does not cooperate she will be next.

Poor Anne has done nothing to deserve this terrible fear and angst. The reader is hoping, at this point, that she will escape Henry's wrath, but there is no telling whether her ambassador's plan to have horses and money available is going to work. Having sealed her off with no mail, horses or boats allowed in or out of London, the King wreaks his terror on the people who serve him. It is not enough to simply hang people for crimes they did not commit, but this King makes sure that everyone is in mortal fear for their lives before he makes his decisions.



Pages 275 - 292

Pages 275 - 292 Summary

Anne writes her agreement with the findings of the inquiry; she is at her lowest point. She is at beautiful Richmond Palace, which the King will give to her as part of the settlement, as well as the castle Hever, which once belonged to Anne Boleyn. She is bitter that they will all be friends; she cannot go home to her brother with the shame of having lost her position, so she will stay here on the King's generosity.

It took five days for the King to get rid of Anne so that he can marry young Katherine. Katherine is overwhelmed and not even sure if she is happy about being his "rose without a thorn." His marriage to Anne is annulled by the "voice of God," who apparently was making Henry impotent with Anne. Anne's letter to her brother is rewritten for the King's approval; her brother has left her unprotected and is a bad relative. Anne does not envy Katherine, but fears for her fate as Henry's wife, wondering who will befriend her when the same thing happens to her.

Pages 275 - 292 Analysis

The truth is that Jane thinks of George and Anne Boleyn's deaths constantly, and although she does not speak of it, the part she played in their deaths is on her mind throughout the novel. All of the secrecy surrounding the anticipated outcome of the King's latest rage is masterfully set by the author; the reader has no idea whether Anne will be beheaded, sent home, or how she will meet her final fate at this point in the story (unless, of course, the reader paid attention in history classes).

King Henry is the ultimate bully; everyone is afraid to disagree with him for fear he might have them executed. Anne is a honest, good young woman who never did anything unseemly, and the offer he has made her is much better than what he offered his earlier wives. Still, she feels her life is ruined because he has set her aside. Her shame is deep, even though she knows she did nothing wrong. Forcing herself to sign a false statement in order to save her life is a miserable compromise for her, but at least, so far, she is alive and the King even asks her to be a sister figure to him. Her humiliation is indescribable.

Katherine Howard is not blindly walking into this situation, but she knows now she has no choice. Her flirtation and her love of nice things has brought her right to the Queen's throne in a very short time. She is somehow insulated from her fear and her own knowledge of the King's dastardly whims; she realizes she could end up on the scaffold, but tries her best to appear happy about her upcoming marriage because she has no choice. These are dark days in England.

Katherine's new French word, "voila," is significant to the story because the king changes marriages like pulling a rabbit from a hat - the implication is akin to "abra-

cadabra," in English. Katherine feels as though she will be something of a granddaughter figure to the king.



Pages 293 - 314

Pages 293 - 314 Summary

Katherine and Henry are married before a bishop; the King did not dress up, and Katherine had no crown. He has given her jewels, but Katherine is disappointed over the lack of pomp and formality. At her wedding breakfast, the conversation was about the beheading of Thomas Cromwell. As the group talks politics, she feels like a well-behaved granddaughter.

The King's marriage is not public knowledge. Katherine is clearly a silly child without the ability to be a real Queen, but the King does not want an intelligent or moral wife; just one he can impregnate.

The King visits Anne for dinner at Richmond; she is afraid he is going to admit he made a mistake. She likes her new life and being in control of her own activities, a single woman with income. He gives her the news that he is married as if she will be crushed by this, but she feels safe with this news.

Katherine feels sad that, at fifteen, she is to spend her life seducing an old man who smells bad, with bad breath and gas. Jane meets Katherine in her rooms after she has lain with the king, and serves her mead and cakes, assuring her that when she is pregnant, she will be free of this, and, after having a couple of children, she can take her own pleasures as she pleases.

Pages 293 - 314 Analysis

Jane, as always, says that she never thinks about George and Anne Boleyn's deaths and the role she played, but she clearly thinks of them constantly and tells herself that truth is a luxury. Henry is obviously somewhat embarrassed about putting aside four wives, and the marriage to Anne of Cleves only lasted a matter of months, so the wedding to Katherine Howard is very low-key, much to her dismay. She is clear about the exchange of her body for riches and status and makes no excuses for herself. She does not allow herself to feel guilty or to worry about her future, as long as the wealth keeps pouring her way. She is useless politically as a queen.

King Henry was quite insane and used the occasions of his various weddings to cleanse the court of anyone who Henry even imagined speaking against him. Why he lets Anne of Cleves live is a mystery, but this author implies that, perhaps Anne had too much strong support for having been married to her for such a short time, and perhaps in the back of his mind, Henry did not want to alienate Cleves altogether. It is almost comical how Henry expects Anne to be devastated, when all she really wants is to be single and is glad to not have to endure his presence.



Little Katherine is honest about her feelings of disgust for Henry, but also honest in saying that she must appear blissfully happy in order to get the material things she wants and to be the center of attention as "Queen." It is hard to disagree that she has earned her status, since she has to put up with this stinking man every night. At only fifteen, he is trying to get her pregnant. It is ironic that the people of this time, royalty in particular, felt that their culture was civilized.



Pages 315 - 327

Pages 315 - 327 Summary

The king has taken Katherine boating, hunting, shooting and all sorts of other entertainment. But, it may have caught up with him, as he is sick with a fever.

The King refuses to see Katherine. She is afraid he is tired of her and wonders if he dies, whether she will keep the jewels, and whether she would still be queen. Katherine admits to Culpepper, to whom she is very attracted, that she wanted to be Queen before she knew what it would mean. She secretly agrees to walk with Culpepper in the garden the following day.

Anne's brother writes, angrily summoning her home. He has not been a good brother and even now his letter has been copied and shown to the King. They are wondering now whether her brother will get Rome to go to war against England and Henry because of what Henry has done to Anne. She assures them this will not happen, and that she can not control her brother, since he does not take her advice. Anne tells the Duke of Norfolk there is trouble between her and her brother, not of her choosing. He has never done anything for Anne and he would not go to war for her sake, but could use her as an excuse.

Lady Margaret Douglas, the King's niece, is in trouble for her affair with Katherine's brother; Henry is preparing to have her arrested because he perceives a threat. He has already killed her former husband and does not want a Tudor marrying a Howard who is on the privy council and could possibly move even closer to the throne. While Henry was ill, the two did not conceal their affair. Jane feels she should have warned Margaret. She asks Norfolk if the king might forgive him; death always comes after a Tudor-Howard marriage. She suddenly realizes that Norfolk planned this in order to further the Howards' standing and felt it was worth the risk of Thomas' life, as well as the life or the imprisonment of the King's niece.

Pages 315 - 327 Analysis

Katherine, having been raised without a mother, comes to this point in her life with a very loose, somewhat wild background, especially for those days. She knows all about every adult matter but not enough to keep her friends in line. Life in her chamber is one big party. and, although the king is very indulgent, she is surely headed for trouble. Jane may be in trouble, as well, for not keeping things proper and for the relationship between Katherine's brother and Lady Margaret Douglas, who has been in a convent for a few years after her husband was executed.

The King cannot keep up the pace of having a young, new bride. He is trying to live as he did with Ann Boleyn, but his body is giving out on him and he is finally ill. Anne of Cleves, as usual, is so straightforward and honest, that she does not try to cover for her



brother and tells the truth about her relationship with him. Anne, at least for now, has a good thing going. She is in charge of her own life and feels like a whole woman for the first time. She is extremely lucky to have been spared under this insane ruler, and her relationship with her brother is not worth anything to her, since he has never cared for or about her. In Katherine's secret meeting with Culpepper, plans to ask that her brother be allowed to marry Margaret, this meeting foreshadows disaster for Katherine.

Jane is beginning to realize that the Duke of Norfolk will go to any lengths to continue to gain a foothold on the throne. Putting Lady Margaret together with Katherine Howard's brother is a risky move for everyone involved. The King could very well assume that Katherine married him to get a better handle on his throne. He is terribly paranoid and probably, by today's standards, quite schizophrenic. But he is in charge and has all the power. He is about to undertake his predictable executions of anyone who might be sympathetic to anyone but him.



Pages 328 - 353

Pages 328 - 353 Summary

Katherine arrives in the garden for her secret meeting with Thomas Culpepper. Culpepper says he is so in love with her, he can never marry anyone else. Jane warns Katherine that if she is going to ask the King to let Margaret and Thomas marry, she needs to be careful because Henry may think it is too high a match for another Howard. The King wants to see Katherine. The King knows about Margaret and the Howard boy. He is disappointed in Margaret and will punish her, and the lovers will face his displeasure. Jane warns Katherine that it is dangerous to condone or admit to knowing of their affair. Jane thinks the King will behead Katherine's brother, and Katherine must never speak to her brother again, or the king will think they are plotting to supplant him with Howards. Katherine cannot save her brother, and Jane tells her she will have to remember him only in her prayers. Jane assures her there is no man stronger than the King and he will do what he wants.

The King has turned on the Howards; Charles, Katherine's brother has escaped by boat to France to join other exiles. The king fears potential problems with the exiled nobility. Margaret is back in the convent "prison."

Katherine takes stock of all the estates and land she now owns and knows the King will die soon and she will be free. If Henry dies, Katherine will be Queen Regent and would care for Prince Edward. She still fantasizes about having a young lover again but ignores her urges.

There is wild misbehavior of every sort at court; the Duke often lectures Katherine on propriety. The King thinks she is a perfect girl and the only one who can make him happy. Jane reports to Norfolk that Katherine fancies Culpepper, and says that Katherine is greedy. Reformists and Lutherans are enemies of Katherines, and all the Howards, because they are rising in power, or "winning."

Anne still has her admirers. The King is not gracious; he is laughed at by other countries about Katherine Howard. Anne is at Hampton Court for Christmas and has to kneel to Queen Katherine. The Duke of Norfolk and other Howards greet Katherine; the Howards are overwhelming the Tudors. Anne and the Duke retain their false politeness toward one another.

Pages 328 - 353 Analysis

Silly Katherine is going to carry on a flirtation with Thomas Culpepper, asking for great trouble. Philippa Gregory clearly portrays Katherine as a ridiculous character, who is so immature, naive and uneducated that she should never have been considered a queen. The talk about the King's disgusting problems is an interesting aspect of his reign, but not necessarily a pleasant part of this very unpleasant story. The Boleyns, the



Seymours and the Howards, all vying for the Tudor throne, are portrayed, basically, as greedy and selfish people who will sacrifice a daughter or son to gain favor from a King who is clearly insane.

The threat to Katherine's brother Charles because he is having an affair with the King's niece is interesting; his life would have been taken had he not escaped, and the niece is back in the nunnery at twenty-one years old, her first husband having been executed for the same reason - a perceived threat to Henry's power.

The entire court exists on a foundation of lies, secrets and plots. Katherine's court, although her friends are bawdy and loud and unsophisticated, at least are real. The hierarchy and struggle for power of the older generations, such as that of the Duke of Norfolk, is absurd and unfortunately, documented historically. The Duke of Norfolk is portrayed as being the most devious and ambitious of all of the vying families.

Poor Anne still calls Queen Katherine "little Kitty Howard." Although she has been repositioned as sister to the King, she is actually happier now. The invitation to Christmas feast is unfortunate, but her new motto about doing things with grace reveals her strong, moral side. Ironically, the one who was rejected would have made the better queen.



Pages 354 - 372

Pages 354 - 372 Summary

Anne is only twenty-five, but now possesses a huge fortune; her reputation is unstained, and she will not remarry. She is now "freed of the danger of privilege" and able to be herself. Anne is Princess Mary's only friend at court and Lady Elizabeth's only advocate, for whom she will be guardian and aunt.

Jane reports to her uncle that Katherine is not yet pregnant and Norfolk suggests they hire some "vigor" to help Katherine get pregnant. He suggests that the secret could be kept if Jane were the one protecting Katherine. He suggests that the donor be done away with when the deed is done to avoid any scandal.

Anne considers Katherine's friends vulgar, ostentatious and bad-mannered; the court has become lax and immoral. Katherine shared that she doesn't think Henry can give her a child, as he can barely move, but it is treasonous to say the King is impotent, and Anne warns her not to speak of it.

Katherine takes stock again of her possessions. She has many diamonds and pearls, a new horse and a choir. One of her ladies suggests to Katherine that the king is missing Anne.

The King is melancholic, wanting to be alone. He turned Katherine away, so she went walking with Culpepper. Norfolk is pressuring Jane about Katherine getting pregnant.

Pages 354 - 372 Analysis

Anne is truly a quality person, according to the author. Because of her simple, strict background, she is more gracious and mature than little "Kitty" Howard will ever be. It is a strange situation to have her at court as a sister figure, since she is more "royal" than the Queen, but the King will have what he wants. It is interesting that Anne is now blooming as a woman, but will never have a husband or children because of the stigma the King has given her by putting her aside.

Norfolk is up to his dirty tricks again, this time trying to orchestrate a pregnancy for Kitty so that the King will think he has sired a new heir, and ultimately, so that the Howards can take the throne or, at the very least, gain a new title and power for the Duke himself. Norfolk has Jane over a barrel, since she testified against the Boleyns and is now bound to the Howard family and must do whatever he tells her to do. Norfolk not only wants Jane to somehow get Katherine to sleep with Culpepper but then do away with Culpepper when they are finished with him.

Anne is a good role model for Katherine, who is perhaps hopelessly immature. She is as independent as a woman was allowed to be in those days, with her own income and



the ability to make her own decisions. Unlike queen Kitty Howard, she is no longer in a position to get on Henry's bad side and end up vulnerable or beheaded.

The young Queen is in love and cannot hide her feelings for Thomas Culpepper. She has to be reminded how important it is to get pregnant by the King, but in his illness, he is not having much to do with her. Now that Katherine knows Culpepper is in love with her, we can assume that some dangerous events are in store for Katherine, as well as Culpepper.



Pages 373 - 388

Pages 373 - 388 Summary

Katherine and Culpepper are seeing one another regularly since the King is still in his room with doctors and advisers. They talk flirtatiously and admit they are in love; she agrees to meet him in the privy garden again.

Ambassador Harst tells Anne the King is distressed over his impending death and to whom to entrust prince Edward. The prince's family are Seymours and enemies of the Howards. There may be an uprising in the north, and the King suspects there are papists cooking up a rebellion against him. Anne is not necessarily safe, even though she practices in accordance with the King's church. If the King turns against reformers, she, as a Lutheran, may be in danger.

Katherine thinks if she is discreet with Culpepper, nobody will notice. Katherine is frustrated that the King has given her nothing for months and is being a poor husband. She requests to dine with him so she can cheer him up.

Jane reports that Katherine has had sex with the King again.

Pages 373 - 388 Analysis

Katherine is courting trouble by blatantly spending time with Thomas Culpepper. This is a tired story of England's history, since adultery and deceit seemed commonplace in the King's court. Katherine does not really try to appease the King's failing sense of manliness, and, when he rejects her, she happily goes on with her flirtation, apparently oblivious to the disastrous possibilities it could bring. Culpepper, as well, should know that he cannot play this very dangerous game.

Anne is again feeling somewhat threatened, but she is certainly more secure than Queen Katherine, or even Jane Boleyn at this time. Her grace under the pressure of being a woman set aside has been impressive to those around her, and, unless something goes terribly wrong with the Lutherans, she should be safe. Although she came to England as a Protestant, she has faithfully practiced worshiping in the Church of England.

Now that Katherine is beginning to understand what happened to her Aunt Anne Boleyn and Anne's brother George, it is dawning on her that her maid-in-waiting, Jane Boleyn, must have given testimony against them. It would be appropriate for her to suddenly feel unsafe around Jane, since Jane is plotting again on behalf of the Howards, to get Katherine pregnant somehow. Jane wants to be a good person; she is too afraid for her life to risk crossing her uncle.

The treachery continues with Norfolk and Jane Boleyn, who will most likely encourage Katherine's relationship with Culpepper in the hope that she will become pregnant.



Pages 389 - 399

Pages 389 - 399 Summary

Anne contemplates the King's madness and how he was once so admired and such a pillar of leadership, but has now turned into a terrifying monster. He has committed such terrible crimes himself, such as murdering thousands of innocent priests and killing people accused of heresy based on information they are too ignorant to give properly to their interrogators.

Jane has had to do very little to encourage the affair between Queen Katherine and Thomas Culpepper. The King throws the two together; he loves Culpepper and likes having him next to him, with the three of them a "merry trio." Katherine and Thomas play cards and dance together. Norfolk tells Jane that Culpepper raped a woman and killed her husband, but was pardoned by the King for both.

Anne learns that Henry has executed 70-year old Margaret Pole, and again realizes how dangerous he has become. Dr. Harst tells Anne that apparently Henry thought Margaret Pole was plotting against him while in the tower. There are rebels in the north who want to bring back the old religion. Margaret Pole was the last of the Plantagenets and had taken the side of Katherine of Aragon when Henry put her aside; Henry does not forget his enemies.

Pages 389 - 399 Analysis

Anne's assessment of Henry as a monster is correct, but what she does not mention is that it is Henry's deep fear of losing his power that has created the monster in him. In a self-perpetuating pattern, he has unfairly executed people, plundered abbeys and churches and killed thousands of innocent people. As a result, and probably rightfully so, he is in fear for his life and his throne because he knows he has gone too far.

The affair between Katherine and Culpepper is blossoming and silly Katherine is swimming in euphoria over it, without giving thought to her own safety. Norfolk's mention of an Irishman is foreboding; he has someone in mind who he would like to put before Katherine, so she can get pregnant with a false heir. He is also putting Jane off about arranging a marriage for her, which is not a good sign.

Katherine is nonchalant and happy, but Margaret Pole has paid the ultimate price for having Plantagenet blood. She is totally innocent and an elderly woman, but Henry's hunger for power and control must be satisfied at all times.



400 - 413

400 - 413 Summary

The King is back in court, not recovered, but no longer in his bed. He has rages and, perhaps, dementia. Henry treats Katherine like a "lapdog," and she pretends devotion to him. He embarrasses her with open sexual overtures, but she dutifully allows it. Jane tells Thomas that Katherine cries with lust for him, and that she has to calm her down at night. She suggests he come to the Queen's chambers after she has left the King's bed and she will let him in. Jane secretly looks on as Thomas and Katherine share intimacy. She tells Norfolk the next morning that the deed is done and Katherine is besotted.

Henry wants Anne to go on progress to the northern lands. He is going there to punish those who disagree with his new religion. Anne tries to weigh the dangers of going; Norfolk will not want Katherine to fall out of favor with the King. Anne knows Norfolk has fabricated false evidence against her and could choose to use it to destroy her. If she does not go, she cannot defend herself and does not know who would speak in her favor. Anne likes being at her Richmond Palace home and prays not to have to go on progress. She decides to stay alone for the summer and risk talk, rather than go and attract envy of any kind. She is afraid of the King turning on her.

Jane tells the Duke that Katherine has been discreet with Thomas and slept with him six times. The Duke promises that if Jane can get Katherine to get pregnant by the end of summer, Jane will be Madame la Comtesse by winter. He is a good man with money, who would allow her to live both in England and France.

400 - 413 Analysis

The king's behavior is so outrageous that he should perhaps be assassinated. His physical condition is so deteriorated that he is disgusting; he has the audacity to order the deaths of innocent people with no accountability whatsoever. He is piggish toward young Katherine and can turn on his peers at any moment. He is a blight, and this is the stuff from which revolutions result.

Jane is no better now than when she plotted to expose Anne and George Boleyn. She is no longer thinking every minute about them, but is deep into her dark assignment and is focusing on her upcoming marriage, which her uncle keeps promising to arrange. She makes sure Katherine and Thomas are safe for their trysts, neither one realizing she is hoping for a pregnancy to result so that she can have a life of her own.

Anne makes a decision for her personal safety by choosing not to go on progress with the King, who has had the executioner sent ahead to begin his ugly work. Anne knows that no one is exempt from Henry's bad temperament.

Most evil of all, the Duke of Norfolk is a bad seed. He is constantly plotting and finding ways to twist the truth so that he can get his lieutenancy and raise the Howard family to the throne. He has no scruples and apparently, no compassion for other human beings, but seems to see people as puzzle pieces he can use to win his goals.



Pages 414 - 430

Pages 414 - 430 Summary

Katherine is surrounded by young men, including Thomas and Francis, with whom she is flirtatious. Dereham has implied at court that he has a long relationship with Katherine, and she admonishes him about making trouble. Francis reminds her they were married before God; she warns him to never speak of it or she will send him away.

Enjoying summer in her Richmond palace, Anne's lands are prosperous and she wishes for peace. Henry's hatred of papists and protestants is relentless, and he insists on people publicly accepting the "host," or suffer the risk of being punished or killed.

Jane thinks Katherine might be pregnant, but wants her not to tell Thomas, but only to inform the King; this will be Henry's child, regardless of who impregnated her. The King is happy and will crown her as Queen, even though his son Edward is the first heir to the throne. He promises her the greatest coronation England has ever seen; he will declare a day of national celebration for her. .

Pages 414 - 430 Analysis

Being on progress is like a happy vacation for Katherine and Thomas, whose intimacy is aided by the clever Jane Boleyn (Lady Rochford). Francis Dereham showing up out of nowhere is a bad sign for the future. Someone is up to something, and we can recall that earlier in the story, Norfolk mentioned an Irish man he was interested in bringing to court. The groundwork for his next major move is being laid with Dereham.

Anne is living a wonderful life on her beautiful property. She is the only wife who has escaped harm, and she appreciates and enjoys her life as a spinster. It is somewhat unnerving, since Henry's tendency is to not let a good thing stay good for long, but thus far, she has escaped suspicion of any kind of treason, and all the other things of which he accuses people.

Katherine's pregnancy is more than likely from Thomas, but the King apparently has no suspicions about her, knowing that loyal Jane Boleyn is watching out. It is obvious that the King sees Katherine as a rose without a thorn because she is so innocent and empty headed and causes no trouble for him; she is also easy to look at and touch, and has no baggage or agenda to complicate his love for her. However, the reader knows this is not true, because of Francis Dereham. Francis's willingness to make implications about his former relationship with the promiscuous Katherine foretells big trouble.

Jane Boleyn's advice is not always in Katherine's best interests, obviously. Telling her that Thomas would not like her if he thought she was the mother of his child was underhanded, not to mention presumptuous. But Katherine is likely headed to the chopping block over her affair with him, regardless.



Pages 431 - 452

Pages 431 - 452 Summary

Katherine is not pregnant, so it was good she had not told Thomas. Katherine is figuring out that Anne Boleyn's fate was due to adultery more than treason and questions why Jane would help her with these dangerous meetings with Culpeper.

Katherine is again taking stock of what she has: no friends, no lovers, no family, no husband, no confessor, and the archbishop, who has become her inquisitor. She was taken from dancing with her ladies and locked up, but was thinking it was a game, but it is about Francis Dereham. She is taking the position that it was only a flirtation and this is all gossip, but the slurs against her must be resolved. She is becoming uncomfortable with being confined and knows things are not good. Cramner tells her that they know she had a relationship with Dereham, and assumes she has employed Francis to be her paramour. She is being accused of adultery. The King has gone to Oatlands palace; Cramner admits that he told the king about Francis and assumed Katherine and Francis were still lovers. The King is heartbroken, but Katherine takes comfort that Thomas is with the King and perhaps is safe. Cranmer wants a confession and threatens the scaffold for treason. Katherine admits that she was very young when Francis took a fancy to her; she claims he raped her, almost, that she did not want to lay with him; he was never naked, but she did lay with him as husband and wife. Betraying the King is punishable by death, regardless of how young she was at the time. .

Pages 431 - 452 Analysis

We do not know how things have gone from very good in Katherine's world to very bad. She has been in the King's high favor for even suspecting she was pregnant. He has decided to declare a day in her honor, once she is pregnant, and has made all the churches thank God for her. Suddenly, she is locked away, and even Anne's life appears to be in danger. This King is a major bully and psychotic, who, in present times, would be under lock and key. Everyone is afraid of the conclusions he might draw, whether there is evidence for them or not. He is well known for executing innocent people and it only takes being in the wrong place at the wrong time - and no one gets to know what those moments might look like. Anne dancing with Queen Katherine at Christmas may now be interpreted as her having either taught Katherine witchcraft or tainted her with witchcraft.

Katherine's dawning understanding of Jane's role in the deaths of George and Anne Boleyn foreshadows trouble for both of them. Katherine is uneducated, but not stupid. She could well have an inkling that Jane is involved in a plot against her. Jane seems to see herself as a hero, in that she saved Rochford Hall and the Boleyn inheritance by doing as she was instructed. It is all she has to make herself live through the guilt she feels over their Anne Boylen and George's deaths.

Frances Dereham has told the Archbishop everything and, although Katherine tries to paint it as an innocent childhood accident, her failure to tell the King the truth amounts to treason. There is little chance she will be spared.



Pages 453 - 464

Pages 453 - 464 Summary

Katherine is terrified; Cramner seems determined to make her confess. He also assures Jane she will die for her role in the Queen's affair with Thomas.

Katherine is now locked in an abbey; people are being gathered as witnesses. Henry will annul his marriage to Katherine on the grounds of "her abominable behavior." Anne hopes he will spare

Katherine as a sister figure as he did Anne.

The King may be thinking of taking Anne back as his wife. The King of France wants Anne back on the throne, and wants Henry and Anne's brother to join with him against Spain. Anne is appalled and knows Henry will kill her, too. Harst is told that Henry will offer her guarantees, but Anne knows he is a murderer and if she goes to his bed, she is a dead woman. She tells Harst to tell them that she believes she was pre-contracted, just as Henry accused her of earlier; she is settled in her single state.

Pages 453 - 464 Analysis

Norfolk tells Jane that even George's hounds came between them, that George utterly despised her. Anyone who has read Gregory's other novels knows that this is true. In this story, however, the author gives Jane a little compassion as she lives out her life without her husband and sister-in-law.

Norfolk turns out to be more evil than the King or Jane, combined. He has used Jane in the worse, most dishonest ways and has even promised her a future if she will do his dirty work for him in court, spying on the Queen. She is not much better, but at least Jane has a conscience and feels guilty about what she did. Norfolk has no such emotions and promises he will see to it that she is thrown away, like so much garbage, now that he is done with her. He is every bit as much of a mad man as Henry. Jane gives up every drop of pride, if she had any left, when she begs Norfolk and even tells him she loves him. This is an ugly scene in the story.

Poor little Kitty Howard is still the same childish person, only this time her naughtiness has caught up with her. She knows she will be executed and is hysterical. The King is very sad, and one would think, ashamed of himself, for dealing this way with a sixth wife. No matter that she is only sixteen, her deeds at fourteen will send her to her death.



Pages 464 - 476

Pages 464 - 476 Summary

Katherine is assessing her possessions. She has only a few articles of clothing; her possessions have been taken by Thomas Seymour to be returned to the King, and Katherine realizes they were never gifts but were just on loan. She lives in three rooms with servants and her half-sister, Isabel, and two others. All her friends and relatives have abandoned her, and her household members, including Jane Boleyn, Francis Dereham and her childhood girlfriends are in the Tower for questioning. Thomas Culpepper is also in the Tower, and she is sick to think of it. She claims she has nothing to confess.

She thinks through all that the king's investigators will find out from her childhood friends. She assumes Jane will protect her, as she has in the past, but she knows what Jane's testimony did to others. Katherine feels she'll be spared because all she did was "go a bit too far with Henry Manox and Francis Dereham" when she was a young girl. She feels sure the King would never hurt her or Thomas.

Jane, now in the Tower, is being interrogated and is terrified. If they only want to know about Katherine's girlhood, Jane is safe. She does not feel she will be punished because she was only following orders. She feels the questioners have predicted her answers; she says she knows nothing of Katherine's life before; she denies that Katherine asked her to bring Culpepper to her rooms.

Pages 464 - 476 Analysis

Imprisoned due to her earlier mistakes, young Katherine is still only a child and Philippa Gregory takes care to remind us of that. Although she has been the queen, she is still just a little girl, which makes it unconscionable for Henry to have taken her as his bride and now to be considering her execution for adultery. Katherine did not have the guidance that girls should have when they are young, and the King may be about to find out just how "lustful" she actually was. She is mentioning Henry Manox, although there is no indication as of yet that anyone outside of her own circle of girls even knows about him. The Seymours are using this opportunity, as usual, to step in and get close to the King, reminding us of the nature of these competitive and opportunistic nobles, who maneuver constantly to gain favor of the King and get closer to the throne.

It is difficult to decide how evil Jane Boleyn actually is. There is a possibility that she was simply so needful of attention and love that she was driven to testify against her own husband, or perhaps she is just shallow and self-serving enough to want to save her own life. But she will be responsible, again, for more deaths and very likely, her own. In any event, however involved in this affair, she at least tells the truth, even at her own peril. She is an enigma.



Pages 477 - 493

Pages 477 - 493 Summary

Francis and Thomas are accused of presumptive treason for having intercourse with the Queen. The king has called Katherine a "common harlot," while both young men plead innocent, their judge being the Duke of Norfolk. Both men will be hanged and butchered. Anne feels this foreshadows Katherine's fate, as well, but questions why they think a fourteen-year-old girl can make the right judgment.

Taking stock of what she has on Christmas of 1541, Katherine notes the view of her garden from her two rooms, a copy of the Bible and prayer book, a crucifix and a kneeler, plus two maids and a lady to sit with. Thomas was beheaded. It has been only one year since she was a married Queen and now is in her worst state. It is good that Thomas and Francis are both dead, since they cannot now bear witness against her. She is bored, unhappy and does not know what her future holds, although she is still counting on being released.

Jane continues to wait in the tower, thinking that if the King forgives Katherine, he will forgive her. If Jane goes mad they cannot kill her, so she is trying to pretend madness and is not so sure it isn't true because it is hard to remember not to really drive herself mad with her thinking.

Anne's inquisitors tell her the King has heard she pretended to give birth to a son of the King's and plan with Papists to put him on the throne to usurp the Tudors. She says this is a lie. She assures them she counts herself as Henry's most loyal subject; her name is cleared. They tell her the King's heart is broken; his leg is painful and Katherine's behavior has caused the court to be in mourning as if she were dead.

Pages 477 - 493 Analysis

Little Katherine is miserable, but still alive with no inkling of how things are going to end for her. She likes to be a positive thinker and imagines that she and Thomas will both be spared and will be together again, like a fairy tale, but this is how she gets through her days in the monastery. Perhaps if she had paid more attention to her actions than her things, Katherine would be in a better position, but her impulsiveness and materialism has led her to where she is now.

Jane is probably really losing her mind, re-living the fates of others who have gone before her. She suspects her blood will be spilled on the green grass where Anne lost her life, but not knowing, as with Katherine, is the worst part of waiting. She, too, has optimistic thoughts of being spared, hoping that if Katherine is spared, there will be no reason to execute her. But Norfolk has already given us the feeling that he will have her executed, no matter what, as she now only represents a problem to him, and he will not need her services any longer. Jane is finally telling herself the truth about what she did



to George and Anne, and why she did it. She is also determined to get the Duke executed before she is finished.

Anne is spared once again. Able to mask her fear and stress, she is cool and collected as she hears the false allegations against her. The only thing she has lied about - the horses in waiting — was beautifully covered by Harst for her. Harst is a good friend. and is severely underpaid by Anne's unpleasant brother.



Pages 494 - End

Pages 494 - End Summary

Jane laughs and skips trying to appear crazy. Parliament has passed an act of attainder against Katherine and Jane for treason and conspiracy; they are guilty without a trial. The King's doctor comes to visit her, but she knows that if he knew how to recognize madness the King would have been locked up long ago. She looks out delighted to see the workmen building Katherine's scaffold; she still thinks she will be sent away to her family to grow sane again; she plans to dance and sing and talk to clouds for a while and return to sanity when the new King is on the throne.

Katherine waits for the royal barge to arrive and grant her a pardon. She dresses in black and Tudor green and wants to look good. Her uncle arrives to take her to the tower; she still doesn't believe she will die. She will be executed as a condemned traitor. She begs to see the King; they hold her hands and feet and take her down the river; she sees the heads of Thomas and Francis on spikes. She wants nothing and requests the executioner's block in her room so she can practice dying correctly, since there will be people watching.

Jane knows this is the day Katherine will be beheaded; the crowd is gathering on the green; Jane waves merrily. Jane is considered witless but is still going to die. The guards say Henry changed the law; anyone, even if there is madness, will be beheaded for treason.

Five years later, Anne is at Hever castle where Anne, George and Mary Boleyn grew up. Henry is dead. He has killed thousands and thousands who disagreed with him. Anne feels that there should be no King, based on the monstrous tyrant Henry became while king. Anne's piece of the inheritance is this pretty castle in the Kent countryside, her favorite home. She will mourn the King and attend the coronation of Prince Edward. Anne did what she promised herself when she was spared - she lived her own life and lived as a woman in her own right.

Pages 494 - End Analysis

The denial that is taking place in the heads of both Katherine and Jane is a result of shock and terror. Neither one believes that Henry could allow this to be their fate. But Henry is already moving on. This dramatic conclusion is disgustingly graphic in an emotional sense. The women try everything to change what is going to happen to them, including begging and pleading. Philippa Gregory has gone to great lengths to impress upon her readers that this was a time of horrible tyranny and violence, one which we can be glad is over. However, for the modern reader it reveals that many things are the same in today's world, such as leaders who think they are speaking for God, battles and

divisions over religion, baseless accusations and witch hunts and the abuse of power all are still present in our society today.



Characters

Anne of Cleves, Queen Anne of England

Cleves was considered a primary link between England and other European countries. King Henry asked the artist, Holebein, to paint portraits of the women related to the Duke of Cleves and from those portraits, he chose the duke's sister, Anne to become his wife. Anne's brother has a confusing fascination with Anne and is cruel, controlling and demeaning to her, but perhaps, attracted to her as well. She is thrilled to escape the stifled atmosphere of her brother's home, and as she travels to England she begins to grasp the enormity of her new position.

In the process of learning English, learning the cunning ways of the courtiers and coming to understand Henry, Anne is transformed into a very dignified and compassionate person. She does become Queen of England, but her marriage to Henry is never consummated. Instead of having her beheaded for some fabricated reason as he has done in the past, Henry spares her life and makes her a "sister" figure to him, keeping her comfortable and secure when he sets her aside to marry the very young Katherine Howard. Anne knows her own mind, and, of all the queens of England, she was probably the most level-headed and mature.

Anne has a maternal side that is never truly fulfilled. When she settles in to her new life, she desperately wants to have relationships with the King's children and calls them her step-children. Smarter than most of the people who surround her in court, she is also a very strong woman, who claims that she is never afraid of anything. Not much is known of her true story, but in this novel, Anne is one of the most likable characters.

Katherine Howard

Katherine is an adolescent in this story, but a very precocious and pretty one, who knows far too much about sex and seduction than most girls her age. She has grown up without a mother, and in the dormitories where she spends her childhood, she sees and hears enough to develop a flirtatious and promiscuous nature. Concerned primarily with dresses, her beauty and her possessions, when she is called to court to be a maid-in-waiting to the new queen, Katherine takes full advantage of her talents. She immediately begins to flirt with King Henry, who is elderly, obese and very immature himself. The Howard family, who is constantly trying to get the females of the family in the King's favor, situates her in such a way that King Henry, once more, decides to set aside his wife and marry young Katherine.

Having lost her virginity at thirteen, the young man who took it appears on the scene and makes it clear that legally, Katherine was already "betrothed" to him, and, thus, her marriage to Henry was a sham. Katherine loses her life, just as her cousin, Anne Boleyn lost hers, at the hand of a King, to whom loyalty is everything. In each chapter narrated



by Katherine, she takes stock of what she owns, and as her fortune increases, her misfortune increases until she meets her final end. Katherine is not a bright girl in most respects and spends most of her time very conscious of how she is appearing to others. She maintained her facade until her death.

Jane Boleyn (Lady Rochford)

Jane Boleyn is a character who is wracked with guilt and remorse. She played an integral part in the deaths of both her husband, George Boleyn, and his sister, the Queen Anne Boleyn. In almost every narrative by her, she discusses their deaths and how she might have been able to speak up and, perhaps, help them avoid the executioner. But she did not speak up, partly due to her loyalty to the Howard family and the duke of Norfolk, and possibly because her jealousy over George's relationship with his sister, Anne, had made her half-crazy. There are times when she speaks of beautiful Anne Boleyn with love in her heart and refers to Anne as her "sister-in-law," but George and Anne were so close and shared so many secrets that when they were accused of incest and witchcraft, Jane could not bring herself to defend them. Further, she did not really think they would execute George, although later in her desperation, she finally admits to herself that she wanted to punish him, too.

Jane is still tied to the duke of Norfolk and is his primary spy in the Queen's household. Jane has made young Katherine agree to tell her every small thing that goes on with Queen Anne of Cleves, so that Jane can report back to the duke. It is difficult to say whether Jane actually had a conscience, or whether she simply grieved the loss of the people she loved. In this story, Jane's personality is revealed in more detail, and she is clearly a complex person and, perhaps, not all bad. She does seem to care for Anne of Cleves, but she is enmeshed in England's politics and the Howard skulduggery, as she serves as an extension of her uncle Howard in the queen's court.

Howard, Duke of Norfolk

This very powerful and wealthy man uses women as spies to manipulate the King and the decisions made by the King's men. He is always watching for an opportunity to put one of his relatives before the King with the hope that the King, who has a reputation for doing so, will set aside his current wife in favor of a Howard girl. He cares nothing about the fate of anyone with the exception of himself and has not lived with his wife of many years. He could be considered an evil man, since he helped make the decision to have Jane and George Boleyn executed and, in this story, allows young Katherine to meet with the same fate. Howard is power hungry more than anything else, and, even though he has more money than he will ever need, being a man in court is a game for him, which he plays beautifully and usually wins. He is also a misogynist, as well as a cruel patriarch, and human life is not as important to him as his wealth and prestige.

His betrayal of Jane Boleyn, who was no more than a handy spy for him, was particularly cruel. He promised her a husband and a future, and laughingly and abruptly



pulled hope out from under her, cruelly telling her no one would ever want to marry her. Because he has made himself indispensable to the King, he feels free to abuse his power, especially when it comes to women.

King Henry VIII

Obese, a leg wound that is rotting, teeth that have rotted and an easily-angered disposition make King Henry one of Gregory's less likable characters. He is not only physically repulsive but has no scruples and uses the excuse that God tells him what to do. He has plundered and pillaged all the Catholic establishments, stealing their wealth, destroying their art and taking their buildings as his own. He has formed the Church of England, of which he is the head, and if anyone dares speak out against it, they are killed. He has killed several wives due to various excuses he concocts, all in the name of God. He is lecherous, preferring young, pretty women to good, wholesome queens who might have made him look better.

Gregory provides a good example of the arbitrary nature of Henry's rule, when Jane finds out after days of trying to convince others she is mad, that Henry has changed the law and can execute even someone who is mad if treason is involved. He made the rules and changed them according to his whims; an entire nation suffered under his reign.

Anne Boleyn and George Boleyn

These characters are not alive in this story, but they dominate the mind of Jane Boleyn, since she testified against them, securing their deaths by execution. Their ghosts haunt her with memories of how happy they were as brother and sister, and how cruelly she lied in order to punish them. Jane was jealous of her husband's relationship with his sister, and she felt left out. When they were accused of treason, adultery and witchcraft she spoke out against them both. Anne Boleyn was a powerful, beautiful and manipulative queen with personality traits that Henry once loved, but grew to despise. She abused her power and was conniving, however, it is, at least, debatable whether she and her brother deserved the cruel executions to which they were subjected.

Dr. Harst

Dr. Harst is the ambassador from Cleves who serves as Anne's friend and confidante throughout the story. Anne's brother, the duke of Cleves, is responsible for Dr. Harst's pay and living conditions and treats him quite poorly. Dr. Harst lives like a pauper on the meager salary he is afforded but remains loyal and true to Cleves and to Anne. He arranges for her escape more than once, and when she is interrogated about having horses ready to flee, Dr. Harst takes the blame for this, saying he was contemplating fleeing from his creditors. He is a good, loyal servant.



Duke of Cleves

Anne of Cleves' brother is a cruel and jealous man, who sends Anne to England without the proper papers to protect her. He has abused her throughout her childhood, being repelled by her, but also apparently fascinated by her, given his spying on her. He is appalled that she would even look out the window, and he punishes her frequently, using their mother as the go-between. His maltreatment of Anne and of the ambassador in England makes him a very despicable character.

Amelia of Cleves

Anne's younger sister, Amelia, is also painted by Hans Holbein for the king's inspection, but she is not as pretty as Anne and is not chosen to be sent to marry Henry, a dubious prize. She is favored by her brother, who is kind to her, but she is extremely cruel to her sister, Anne.

Hans Holbien

Holbien is a famous dutch painter who painted portraits for royalty during the 1500s. He fell in and out of favor with the King, but only plays a cameo role in this story, by delivering the likenesses of the Cleves girls to Henry.

Katherine of Aragon

Another ghost in this story, Katherine of Aragon is the mother of lady Elizabeth and was King Henry's first wife. She is only remembered occasionally in this story as a wonderful woman, who was sent away to live in poverty by Henry when he fell in love with Anne Boleyn.



Objects/Places

Cleves

Cleves is the region of Germany where Anne of Cleves resides. It is a critical region for King Henry due to its strategic position among the other European countries. He marries Anne to ensure that he will have allies in the region in case England comes under attack from France and/or Spain. When the duke of Norfolk makes a visit to France, they realize Cleves is no longer as important as it once was. That, and the fact that Henry is in love with a young girl, gives him the motivation to set Anne aside and not have her crowned as Queen of England.

Hampton Court

The palatial mansion where the court spends spring and the Easter holidays. The King's court goes on progress and stays at various castles and palaces throughout England.

Rochester

A palace in England where the king's court spends Christmas and winter holidays.

London Tower

The tower is the last stop before execution and is a dark, dank and horrible place to be. If one is convicted of a crime, they arrive at the tower through the water gate by boat. Near the tower is the "green," where executions take place within visual distance of the tower, so that those imprisoned are able to see the killings.

Blickling Hall

This is the Norfolk residence where Jane Boleyn lives before she returns to court. During her waiting period prior to her execution, she still imagines that she will be sent back here. Blickling is 120 miles from London

gyrfalcon

A pet name Anne's father used for her, the gyrfalcon was a bird that would be caged or "mewed" up when it was not hunting. Anne's father is the only one in her family who truly cared for her, and she recalls this nickname several times throughout the story.



Norfolk House, Lambeth

Lambeth is the house where young Katherine Howard lives in a dormitory with a group of rowdy, sometimes promiscuous girls. With her mother gone, she is raised under the authority of her step-grandmother, who does not properly guide her. Lambeth is where Katherine slept with Francis Dereham at fourteen years old. This is the sexual relationship that led to her death by execution for treason. Because her step-grandmother did not warn the King she was not a virgin, she, too, was executed for treason.

Greenwich Palace

The most beautiful of the King's palaces, this is where queen Jane Seymour died during childbirth. The court sometimes spends Christmas here.

Papists, Reformists and Protestants

Papists were the true Catholics, who, at least in their hearts, answered to the Pope. The Church of England, Henry's creation, was still very much Catholic in its ceremonies and beliefs, but did not place the Pope at the head of the church. Instead, it looked to Henry as the leader through whom God speaks. Protestants did not believe in any of the Catholic ways, and reformists did not believe in the transformation of wine to Christ's blood during the taking of communion.

barge

Large platform-type ships that sailed up and down the rivers, transporting royalty from castle to castle; the barges were decked out and trimmed with the standards and pennants of their royal owners.

Whitehall Palace

A large summer home where the court enjoys jousts and other celebrations. The size of a small city, it is easy to get lost here, with secret passageways and alleys.



Themes

Power Corrupts

Henry VIII, is a perfect example of the corruption that can occur when a person possesses, not only every material thing he could possibly want, but the total power to take a human life if someone disagrees with him. Philippa Gregory describes this man who can barely walk, as so obese from eating so much of the rich food served to him. His clothes are sewed with precious jewels and furs, and his surroundings are extravagantly elegant with woven tapestries and ornaments made of precious metals. But he is not gracious about, or grateful for his possessions; he wants more. He has shut down churches, abbeys and monasteries, stealing their art and religious treasures for himself, leaving beggars and homeless without a place to be fed or lodged. He has hanged monks from the rafters of their own monasteries and hanged or beheaded thousands who dare utter anything against him. The Church of England was a church established to worship Henry, himself. He told people that his decisions were from God because God spoke through him. Thus, it was God's will that the laws be changed to benefit him, and that people who did not swear their allegiance were killed. Henry is the ultimate proof that power corrupts, and absolute power is dangerous.

Spies in High Places

The Howard family, whose hunger for power is uncontrollable, has a spy at all times at the closest levels of service to the Queen and King. In this story, Jane Boleyn, the wife of the late George Boleyn and sister-in-law to Anne, has become part of the Howard family by marriage. "Uncle" Howard, the Duke of Norfolk, promises Jane favors in exchange for the constant feed of information regarding the royal family. In this way, he is able to place the right people in front of the King and manipulate from the background. In this story, he is aware that one of his young nieces, Katherine Howard, is extremely attractive, flirtatious and precociously seductive. He also sees that the King is attracted to her, as she leans forward to show her cleavage and practices coquettishly in front of the King. Thus, Howard contrives to place yet another Howard girl on the throne for his own benefit. He gets Katherine's cooperation simply by promising her new gowns and jewelry and, perhaps, the throne. Cooperation from Jane Boleyn is achieved in much the same manner, but it is also true that Jane helped the duke in bringing about the deaths of George and Anne Boleyn, so, in a sense, the duke is controlling her, as always, under the threat of betrayal. The Howards are enemies with the Seymours, who also aspire to place a female from the family on the throne and, whose Jane, was a recent queen, who died in childbirth.

Jane Boleyn has gotten Katherine to tell her everything, since Katherine is Queen Anne's lady-in-waiting. The details Katherine passes along are as personal as whether or not the King had sex, and the state of the bed sheets. This covert spying and its



horrible consequences are only a piece of the very sick and corrupt atmosphere in the English court.

Patriarchy

Patriarchy is not just a theme of the story, but was the way of life in the 1500s in Europe. Anne of Cleves is utterly dominated by her brother until she goes to London, where she is to be under Henry's dominance. Jane Boleyn is controlled and used by the duke of Norfolk, and everyone is under the dominance of King Henry, who claims that his actions are due to his conversations with God. Philippa Gregory does a masterful job of recreating a time in history when women were born into subservience and were appreciated primarily as child-bearers and ornaments for men. Pregnancy is referred to as being "in pup," and the primary goal of a woman is to give birth to a son. Ironically, as in the case of Anne of Cleves' mother, if the husband dies, the son takes over the dominance of his own mother. Not only was this enforced by the men of this time, but the women seemed to accept it willingly. Anne of Cleves, having been dominated all her life by men, found her autonomy and independence fully, only when Henry died.

Everything Comes Back Around

King Henry has killed so many innocent people. He spends the last part of his adult life in terrible pain from an unhealed wound and gastric distress. He is almost unable to do anything by himself due to his pain and obesity, and he suffers greatly from a broken heart when he learns that young Katherine is only a "common whore." Of course, all of this is not enough punishment for a man like this, but he does not get through life unscathed.

Jane Boleyn suffers greatly from remorse over testifying against her husband, George and his sister, Anne Boleyn, resulting in their executions. She senses their ghosts and ultimately pays the same price they paid - execution for a crime she did not commit. Jane's suffering from guilt and remorse torments her throughout the story. Although she was spared in exchange for the Boleyn's lives, her life is not happy. She is doomed to be without a husband and is under the cruel hand of the Duke of Norfolk for the rest of her life.

Anne of Cleves, who is more gentle-spirited and not vain, is spared from false accusations and death. She agrees to be a sister figure to Henry VIII, and, although she is crushed by the annulment, she tries to comply and wants to be a good stepmother to his children. She is kind and does not have any conceit or false sense of beauty, and her reward is a life of her own.

Style

Point of View

This novel is divided among three different points of view. The short chapters are "narrated" in a journal style by Jane Boleyn, Katherine Howard and Anne of Cleves. Each woman, by telling her own observations and sharing her experiences in the English court, contributes to the tapestry of this story. This is a clever way to weave together Gregory's story of Anne of Cleves' short reign as queen, and allows the readers to feel the feelings and perspectives of each of the three characters. There are instances when a character does not know the truth about what is taking place, but the readers can count on finding out the details from one of the other characters. However, there are also passages where the character is speaking in the present and suddenly looks back to explain what happened afterward, so the characters themselves, are somewhat omnipotent. Philippa Gregory's point of view, to the extent it involves these three, is omnipotent. Much of her work is gleaned from recorded history, which makes the story more fascinating.

Although the experiences of the three characters are primarily contrived by Philippa Gregory, it is clear that they may be close to the truth, based on the realities of recorded history during this period of time in England. There is not a lot of historical information about Anne of Cleves and Katherine Howard, and Philippa Gregory has given them personalities, complete with vanity, opinions and character traits that make them come alive for the reader.

Setting

The story takes place in Europe, primarily England, in palaces, castles, abbeys and other lush and extravagantly-decorated homes, where royalty lives and plays. The queen always has a set of rooms in a palace where she and her ladies live and play cards and games and sometimes have gentleman callers. When the court goes on progress, they travel on fine horses with much of their household goods and servants from one castle to the next, stopping at small towns in between. The settings are quite lavish and, although we see medieval times as being primitive, members of the royal family and their close friends lived in luxury. Beautiful horses, lap dogs, pet kittens, beautifully embroidered curtains and clothing and perfectly kept gardens are second nature to members of the royal entourage. Most castles are surrounded by a green area and lush forests where the court members go hunting. The castles must be large enough to accommodate not only the rather large group of courtiers, but a full range of servants for each of them.



Language and Meaning

Phillipa Gregory uses modern language and does not make us guess at her meanings. She does use implications at times, but there is very little subtlety involved in the telling of this story, since the story is coming from the mouths of her characters. For instance, young Katherine is promiscuous, but we never see that word. However, she clearly and unabashedly describes her torrid sexual affairs, beginning at the age of fourteen.

Anne's stilted English is very well communicated by Gregory, as is her gradual grasp of the language. Being of German descent, Anne uses the language barrier to her advantage when she hears things that sound like they might be considered "treasonous." But the author does not subject us to the tedium of "thous" and "thees" of the middle ages, but instead allows us a sense of the formality through their actions, such as the deep curtsy. The effect of this is that we realize that, regardless of the century, people are somewhat the same. We still have tyrannical leaders who think they are spoken to by God; we still fight wars based on religion, and we still do witch-hunts when it comes to politics. We consider ourselves less barbaric than the people of that time, since they jousted for fun and brutally tortured their accused criminals. However, if one looks closely at our society and thinks honestly, not much has changed. It may be Philippa Gregory's intention that we notice the similarities.

Structure

This book is divided into many small, unnumbered chapters, each narrated by one of the three main characters. They are not necessarily in the same running order, and not even in size or impact. The novel spans 514 pages, and each small chapter intertwines with the others so that we have a running account of the progress of the three main characters, who also keep us abreast of political matters as we read. This story could easily be adapted to a screenplay, since each "chapter" is actually a scene.

As the story unfolds, we are led to understand what each of the three characters have inherited from Anne and George Boleyn and their uncle, the duke of Norfolk. Although there is some repetition, especially when Jane Boleyn repeats the scene of Anne's and George's executions time and time again, the effect is that we finally realize how ill Jane really is and how obsessed with her own guilt and remorse she is. The small narrations often exposes us to information about the other two main characters, as well. Among the three of them, we are kept abreast of a short period of history that ended with thousands of executions during a time of confusion and horror in Europe, all predicated on differences in religious beliefs.



Quotes

"I have it! I am to be it! I shall be Queen of England. I have slipped my jesses like a free falcon, and I shall fly away." Pg. 17

"Now, let me see, what do I have?" Pg. 10

"Thousands of mothers saw their sons march out to protect the shrines, the holyplaces, the roadside statues, the monasteries and the churches; and thousands of sons never came home again. The king will decide what is faith and what is heresy; it is not for the people to say In this new and dangerous world it is not even for the church to say. The king will decide who will live and who will die; he has the power of God now." Pg. 31

"I can hear the roar of the feasting court from the hall as we walk toward it, serving men with great jugs of wine and platters of meat marching in line to serve the hundreds of people who dine every day with the king. In the gallery above are the people who have come to watch, to see the great monster that is the inner court of the noblest people, a beast with a hundred mouths and a million schemes, and two hundred eyes watching the king as othe only source of all wealth, all power, and all favor." Pg. 36

"My brother does not know that half the houses in Canterbury were hospitals for the poor and sick and that the church aid for poor pilgrims to stay and be nursed back to health and that the nuns and monks spent their lives serving the poor. Now our soldiers have to push their way through a murmuring crowd of people who are looking for the holy refuge that they were promised but it has all gone." Pg. 62

"But she was always like this, she and her sister; they always had a way to make me feel that they saw better, understood better, considered better. From the moment that I married George I was aware that his sisters were supposed to be finer young women than I: one the king's lover and then the other. One, in the end, the king's wife and Queen of England. They were born for greatness! The Boleyn sisters! And I was only ever a sister-in-law." Pg. 71

"And then suddenly a bulky man I don't know, a stranger smelling of sweat and wine and horses, pushes in front of us, into the window bay where we are standing, pushes rudely by me, and says to the Lady Anne, 'I bring you greetings from the King of England,' and he kisses her, full on the mouth. At once I turn to shout for the guards. This is an old man of nearly fifty, a fat man, old enough to be her father. She thinks at once that he is some drunk fool who has managed to push his way into her chamber." Pg. 76

"She pushes him away, two firm hands against his fat chest and her face, sometimes so dull and stolid, is burning with color. She is a modest woman, an untouched girl, and she is horrified that this man should come and insult her. She rubs the back of her hand over her face to erase the taste of his lips. Then, terribly, she turns her head and spits



his saliva from her mouth. She says something in German that needs no translation, clearly it is a curse against this commoner who has presumed to touch her, to breathe his wine-scented breath into her face. He stumbles back, he, the great king, almost falls back before her contempt." Pg. 77

"Archbishop Cranmer is to marry them: drone, drone, drone, like an old bee. He asks them if there is any reason why they cannot be married, and if we, the congregation, know of any impediment and we all say very cheerfully, 'No, we don't,' and I suppose only I am fool enough to wonder what would happen if someone said, 'Stop the wedding, for the king has had three wives already, and none of them died of old age!' but of course, nobody does." Pg. 117

"She has no thought of the future; she cannot imagine beyond the next masque. She will do tricks for sweets, but she does not dream that she might learn to hunt and pull down the greatest prize. 'Interesting.' He bares his yellow teeth in a smile." Pg. 161

"I say nothing during the slow taking off of my gold collar, my bracelets, my rings, net, my hood, my sleeves, my stomacher, the two skirts, the padding, the petticoats and the shift. I say nothing when they throw my nightdress over my head and I sit before the mirror and they brush my hair and plait it and pin my nightcap on my head. I say nothing when Lady Rochford lingers and asks kindly if I need anything, if she can be of service to me, if my mind is easy tonight." Pg. 194

"This is a bloodletting again, a scatter of charges against those the king wants out of his sight. Last time Henry sought vengeance, the long days of his hatred took my husband, four others, and the Queen of England. Who can doubt but that Henry is about to do it again? But who can know whom he will take?" Pg. 266

"She lets him caress her, and she runs her fingers through his curly brown hair, pulling his face down to her bared neck. I cannot tear my gaze away. It is as I always imagined it when I used to think of George with his mistress. A pleasure like a knife, desire as pain." Pg. 406

"Now, let me see, what do I have now?

I have the Seymour inheritance, yes, all of it. All the castles, lordships, and manors that were given to Jane Seymour are now given to me. Imagine how furious the Seymours are? One moment they are the greatest landholders in England; next, up jump I, and all of Jane's lands are mine." Pg. 340

"I have looked sideways under my eyelashes at the king, and smiled at him, curtsied bending forward so that he could see my breasts, and worn my hood back so far he could see my face. Now everything has gone faster than I could have imagined, everything is happening too fast." Pg. 290



Topics for Discussion

The very first sentence of this novel mentions the plague. Discuss how the plague may have altered or influenced the social structure in Jane Boleyn's time.

Philippa Gregory mentions "Master Holbein," as the artist who painted the likeness of Anne of Cleves for King Henry's inspection. What is known about Holbein and his work during the 1500s.

Jane Boleyn's character is shown with more complexity than in Gregory's earlier novels. Is Jane Boleyn mentally stable? What are her motivations and why is she a prominent character in this story?

Katherine Howard is pretty, a good actress and a gifted flirt. Is she happy? Is she promiscuous? Do we ever really get to know who she is?

Howard, the duke of Norfolk, seems to be the puppeteer behind much of what goes on in Henry's court. Why and how does he have such power? Is he a good man? Is he interested in England's future?

Anne of Cleves experiences a certain degree of culture shock when she moves to England. What are the differences between her culture in Cleves and the one she encounters in London? Does she adapt?

Discuss the wealth of the court at this period of history. How were the nobility able to obtain jewels, fine fabrics, tapestries and other fineries?

Discuss the difference between the Catholic Church and the Church of England. What brought about the separation of England from the Catholic church?