

The Constant Princess Study Guide

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Plot Summary

In 1491, Catalina, who will become known to the world as Katherine, is traveling with her parents on the battlefield. They are fighting for Christianity. Her childhood, spent in conquered lands and watching her parents in one crusade or war after another, will uniquely prepare her on her own quest for the crown of England's queen. From the time she is three years old, she is betrothed to Arthur, Prince of Wales and son of the king of England. She will often say that there was never a time she didn't know that she was Princess of Wales and future Queen of England. When she meets Arthur, she's taken by his good looks but soon realizes that she finds few admirable traits in him. They travel to Ludlow, and it's on the way that Catalina becomes so cold that she can't get out of the litter. Her tear-stained face is Arthur's undoing. He says that he hadn't realized he has the power to make her cry, that he's sorry and will protect her from this day. And he does. With that vow, there's a new friendship between the two that quickly blooms into love. Though they are under orders to spend only four nights together each month, Arthur slips into Catalina's rooms nightly and the two find that they share ideas and goals to be accomplished during their reign as king and queen of England. Then Arthur becomes ill and dies a few days later. On his deathbed, he tells Catalina that he wants her to promise that she'll still become queen. He instructs her to tell everyone that the marriage was never consummated, clearing the way for her marriage to Harry, Arthur's younger brother.

Harry is self-absorbed and, at eleven, is suddenly heir-apparent to the throne. He is then protected and pampered even more than before. He is enamored with Catalina, and she begins to plan how to make a marriage with him happen. Meanwhile, Arthur's mother dies in childbirth and his father, King Henry, asks for Catalina's hand in marriage. Realizing that her son would be in line behind Harry for rule of the throne and would never rule unless Harry died without an heir, Catalina refuses the King's offer, holding out for the marriage that would put her son on England's throne. Harry's father approves the betrothal but never means to go through with it. However, six years later, he dies and Harry quickly arranges his marriage to Catalina. On their wedding night, Harry has his suspicions about Catalina's virginity, but doesn't press the issue. Upon their coronation, she becomes Queen Katherine and he becomes King Henry.

As a new king, Henry is impetuous, but Katherine quickly takes control of the court and of the kingdom, handling day-to-day operations while Henry entertains himself and his friends. Katherine then delivers a little girl who is stillborn and later a son who lives only a few days. Henry involves himself with another woman who claims to have been a virgin, saying that the marriage of Henry and Katherine wasn't binding because Katherine had not been a virgin. Katherine convinces him that the woman was conniving and that allowing her to gossip about the queen undermines the throne. She skillfully manipulates the situation so that Henry again pledges his love to Katherine, and to her alone.

Katherine eventually agrees that England will stand with Spain—the country of her father—against France. It's while Henry is gone to fight this battle that Katherine joins



the forces of England to quash a Scottish invasion. She writes to Henry that she will be traveling to a particular shrine, hoping that he will understand that she means to give thanks for yet another pregnancy. In 1529, she appears in court, ordered to defend her claim to the throne as Henry seeks to put aside their marriage in order to marry Anne Boleyn.

Granada

Granada Summary

In 1491, Catalina, who will become known to the world as Katherine, is traveling with her parents on the battlefield. They are fighting for Christianity. Catalina notes that when they take over Granada there is a promise that the conquering Spaniards will allow religious freedom, but that the promise is soon broken with many becoming fatalities of the Spanish Inquisition. Catalina describes the palace at Granada but focuses on a beautiful garden. She says that she is taken with the place and that she never wants to leave it, but at fifteen she is sent to England to marry Arthur, Prince of Wales.

Granada Analysis

Catalina is the daughter of Isabella of Spain and King Ferdinand. She and her sisters are taken onto the battlefield with her parents in their quest for Christendom. When the camp catches fire and is totally destroyed, Isabella rules that they'll build a fortress of rock. The generals object, saying they've laid waste to the land around and that there's nothing for them to live off. Isabella says that they will do this and her husband affirms. It's noteworthy that Catalina is confident of her mother's ability to make this come to pass. Even as a young child, Catalina believes in her mother and holds her up as her idol. She will later tell the King of England that she has always known she is Princess of Wales. When her mother tells her that she expects Catalina to act in a specific way—such as remaining calm when their camp is on fire—Isabella says that it's what's expected of a Princess of Spain. Catalina adds that she's also the Princess of Wales.



Dogmersfield Palace, Hampshire, Autumn 1501

Dogmersfield Palace, Hampshire, Autumn 1501 Summary

Henry Tudor demands to see Catalina, though she has been taught that her future husband and his father should not see her until after the wedding. Her duenna, Dona Elvira, objects, but is overruled. King Henry pushes his way into Catalina's bedroom. He fears that she is ugly or scarred somehow, but is relieved to find that she's more beautiful than her portraits revealed. Catalina's first impression of Arthur is that he's handsome and kind—attributes she finds extremely appealing. She thanks him for writing to her and he says that he was made to write. She says that she was made to respond but that she is still appreciative because it makes her feel as if they aren't complete strangers. Henry says that there was no need for him to tell her he was made to write and Catalina says she wants honesty between them. Henry says that lies are the "great savior" of marriage.

The following day, Henry and Arthur travel to Windsor while Catalina goes on to London. Along the way, she is to meet Harry, Arthur's younger brother. She is unprepared for his enthusiasm. He presents her with a horse—a wedding gift—and tells her he would very much like to have one of the fighting horses used by the Spaniards. Catalina notes that she's seen her own brother use the same "wheedling" tone to get what he wants. Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, is to accompany Harry and Catalina on their journey. He assures her that Harry is indulged by his grandmother, who rules the court, and that he will be her friend.

Dogmersfield Palace, Hampshire, Autumn 1501 Analysis

Henry Tudor notes the attraction he feels for Catalina and wonders what it would have been like to have purchased her for himself rather than his son. He quickly pulls away from her at their first meeting. Catalina, rather than hiding herself or being afraid of the king, makes several barbs. She asks if he would like to wash up but says that perhaps he doesn't like to wash. Arthur is amazed as her temerity in addressing the king that way. During their first conversation, Catalina thanks Arthur for writing to her—that it makes her feel as if she knows him somewhat. He says he was forced to write, and Henry chastises him for the statement, saying that he could have allowed Catalina to think that it was his own idea. Catalina says that she prefers honesty, though Henry says the "great savior" of marriage is the lie.



As Catalina is alone on her travels toward London, she ponders her life. She says that it is better than any members of her family, including her mother who lived her life on the edge, traveling from one besieged camp to another and pawning her own jewels to pay for mercenaries to defend her quests. She says that Henry Tudor must surely die soon for he is old and ill-tempered, and that she and her husband will come to an understanding as they rule England together and preserve the peace between her country and that of her mother.



London, 14th November, 1501

London, 14th November, 1501 Summary

Catalina and Arthur enter the church on a raised platform so that everyone can see her. King Henry notes that the young couple are now irreversibly bound, regardless of whether Catalina's father should now change his mind. Henry hopes that the marriage will mean that Catalina's father will stand with England against France, prompting peace between England and France. The people of England hold the same hope and hope that a secure line of men to take the throne will follow from this union. Catalina will later say that the alliance benefits Spain as well, halting the spread of France's power. As Henry voices his thoughts to his wife, Elizabeth, he notes she is crying. He admits that he never knows what she's thinking, that she has a strong claim to the throne without her marriage to Henry and that it's possible she had wanted to marry another. His look then turns to his mother, Margaret Beaufort, who pulled the family back to power against overwhelming odds.

During the reception, Catalina and her ladies dance, and Henry notes that she's "the most beddable woman in the room". He fears that she will become frigid left to his son's bed and admits that he shouldn't even think of her himself. The lovemaking is awkward, with Catalina initiating the union. She notes that it's what they are supposed to do, and after the very brief interlude, Arthur is relieved that he was able to perform. When his servants help him prepare for the following day, he boastfully says that he "has been in Spain". Catalina notes that her mother endured hardships on the battlefield and that she, Catalina, will endure her ordeals in private. Catalina's entourage—except a few personal servants, her treasurer, and spiritual leader—are sent back to Spain. Catalina is bereft, standing on the pier watching the departing barges when Henry approaches. He knows of her homesickness having been exiled from England for a period of time himself. He shows her his library and offers her the pick from many exquisite pieces of jewelry. He notes that she can be "bought", like any other girl. His attraction is so strong that he is relieved when she leaves the room.

Arthur is told to prepare to go to the castle at Ludlow. He asks if Catalina is to go as well, and Henry says it's up to Arthur to provide diversion for his wife, to buy her things and flirt with her. When Henry asks Catalina if she wants to go, she says that she will do whatever her king asks of her. He toys with the idea of keeping her in court with him, though he knows he shouldn't entertain the idea. Elizabeth wants Arthur and Catalina to remain in London for the winter, but Margaret says they should go to Ludlow together—that there's nothing to do there and so there might be an heir. Henry says that Arthur should go, that learning to rule a principality will prepare him to rule a kingdom, but wavers on whether to have Catalina remain. In the end, she is sent with her husband.



London, 14th November, 1501 Analysis

Catalina notes that a man named Edward Plantagenet had held a stronger claim to the crown than had Henry. Her parents refused to allow her to go to England as long as Edward lived. Catalina says that her mother sacrificed to buy the throne for her, but that Edward sacrificed more because he was beheaded. Catalina says that she—Infanta of Spain—is not to cry like a girl over such things, but admits that she prayed that she might be forgiven for her role in his death. Catalina seems to question her parents here for the second time. She says that they had promised that the conquered people of Granada would have freedom of religion but that they soon forgot that promise. They rule that all Spaniards have to live by the law—that even a wealthy man cannot order the death of a peasant—but that her parents forgot this when it came to Catalina's reign in England. She confides that she wonders if her mother has "driven God's will too far".

Catalina's early opinion of Arthur is quickly revised. She says that he is painfully shy, has the look of a thoughtful poet but not the wit, and that she demeans herself in trying to please him. Over the coming weeks, their relationships deteriorates even less and Catalina refers to him as a milksop.

Catalina says she is happy when Henry spends time with her and singles her out for notice. Margaret rules the house Catalina and Arthur shares, down to the times Arthur is to spend the night with Catalina. When her monthly cycle arrives, Arthur's weekly visit is suspended and he notes that he isn't invited back later and doesn't initiate an encounter himself. When he finally does, he tells Catalina that she shamed him by sending word that he was not to come to her bed. She says that she couldn't have told him herself because it would have been embarrassing. When he gets into bed with her, she dutifully raises her nightgown and he says that she seems to be prepared to endure him in order to be Queen of England and it angers him that she doesn't seem to want him. He gets up and says he's going to his own room. She begs him not to, that everyone will know there's something wrong and will suppose that either she doesn't attract him or that he is impotent. He says that both seem to be true and leaves anyway. She cries herself to sleep but says it's temper, not a broken heart that prompts the tears.

Catalina and her sister-in-law, Margaret, don't get along well. Catalina seems to be trying to make polite conversation once when she says that she understands Margaret's fear of marrying and leaving her home. Margaret snaps that the difference is that there's nowhere better than England, that Catalina came to a wonderful place while she herself is basically being exiled. When Henry gives Catalina the sapphire necklace, she shows Margaret and says she'll now have to confess that her reason was to make Margaret jealous and that she'll have to do penance for it.



Oxford, Christmas 1501

Oxford, Christmas 1501 Summary

Catalina and Arthur stop for several days at Oxford College. They are polite in public but have little to say to each other in private. One night, Arthur announces that he'll be coming to her bedroom that night. When he arrives, she and her ladies are in the room, some playing cards and none ready for bed. Catalina says she felt certain after his public announcement that he was bringing the entire court with him and that she was prepared to entertain. He goes to the bed and she undresses in an outer room before entering the bed chamber. He notes that it is Christmas and he's feeling kindly toward his wife. She says she must pray before she goes to bed. Arthur has had lots to drink and he falls asleep before she finishes praying. She is careful not to wake him when she comes to bed, and when he realizes what happened, he's angry and vows that he'll never speak to her again. They leave soon for Ludlow and he is rude and uncaring of her discomfort along the way, once going inside and leaving her in the litter. When he sees her in distress from the extreme cold later that day, he says that he's been childish and unkind and vows to do better. Catalina does likewise and when he whispers to her that he wants to be alone with her, she agrees.

When he arrives at her rooms that evening, she has dismissed all the servants, arranged a meal on a low table similar to that used by the Spaniards in their private dining halls, and has dressed in traditional garb worn by most Spanish women—a wisp of silk that barely hides her body. He is enthralled, especially when she tells him that she has come to realize that they are nothing alike. He fears that she is trying to change things to be like they were at his home. She tells him that she wants only for him to realize what she was like as a child, and that she will be Queen of England, accepting the ways of the English as her own. They make love that night and Catalina admits that she has a wonderful gift—the love of her husband and her love for him.

Oxford, Christmas 1501 Analysis

The trip and Catalina's sudden change into a tearful young girl marks a major change in her relationship with Arthur. When they arrive at their destination for one of the nights of their travels, Catalina is so cold she can't get out of the litter. Arthur demands to see her and she says that she's so cold she's ready to die. He says that he hadn't realized that he had the power to make her cry, that her tears spoke to him more than her words, and that he will carry her inside and never again be cruel to her. Catalina apologizes for her actions the night she prayed so long and the two seem to make a new start. It seems that Arthur is a different person when he is not under his father's rule, but is seen by his people as a ruler in his own right.



Ludlow Castle, January 1502

Ludlow Castle, January 1502 Summary

Catalina is disappointed in the castle. It's small and there are no gardens or fountains. She hides her disappointment as best she can but Arthur knows she is homesick. When they first see the castle, Catalina learns that Arthur's room is on one side and hers on the other. His grandmother has decreed the order of the household—down to the fact that Arthur is to visit Catalina's rooms only four times each month. However, there are battlements joining the two suites and Arthur slips out most nights to sleep with Catalina. Their days are filled with duties. Catalina and Arthur are formally polite in public and many wonder if the two please each other. However, Arthur can hardly keep his eyes off Catalina and sometimes when she dances, she snaps her fingers to snap him out of his stare. At night, Catalina often tells stories and she tells Arthur that he is like a child, always begging for another story of her childhood.

During their evenings alone together, Arthur and Catalina talk of many things. Among them are their plans for the kingdom once they are in power. They debate issues such as taxes, how to find loyal, honest tax collectors, and how best to defend their borders.

In February, Catalina writes about the cold weather. She says that the spring rains in Spain were taken in by the land, but that the cold rains of Wales fall on the cold earth and ice forms in the puddles with no signs of spring. She longs for her mother and wishes to hear from her. At sixteen, she is not ready to be without her mother's advice, and notes that there is no one to take the place of her mother. Arthur's mother has little control over her own life and his grandmother is a hard woman who seems to have no tenderness for anyone. She knows that Henry would not allow Arthur to leave England—no father would allow the heir to leave his homeland. She hopes that her mother will call for Catalina to come to Spain for a visit but she hears from her mother seldom, and most of that contact is simply instructions through the ambassadors. Catalina says that she had always known she was to be Princess of Wales and Queen of England, but that it had never quite sunk in that she was always to be away from her mother, living in England, and that she would never return to her home.

One night, Catalina admits her deep homesickness to Arthur, telling him that she also worries for her mother. She notes that she was the last of the children to leave home, that Juan—Prince and heir to the throne—died, followed by the only other male heir, Miguel. Catalina was the last to leave home. She says that her grandmother was "tormented by sadness", and that she isn't certain her own mother is always comforted by her relationship with God.

In March, Arthur says that he has a friend he wants Catalina to meet. When she learns this friend is a woman, she immediately assumes that this is a woman with whom Arthur has had an affair. She draws upon the words of wisdom from her mother, who said it does no good to complain. She told Catalina that regardless of affairs, a marriage is



forever and that the husband will always return to the marriage. Catalina says that her father had often become enamored of some pretty woman and that her mother would put a large dowry on the woman's head and marry her off, urging the new husband to take the woman far away. Catalina thinks all these things before Arthur tells her that the woman he wants her to meet is Lady Margaret Pole, sister of the beheaded Edward Plantagenet. Catalina says she'd hoped never to have to meet the woman. Arthur says Lady Margaret isn't angry at Catalina, nor at Arthur nor even at King Henry who ordered her brother's death. He says she understands that there couldn't be another who might lay claim to the throne and that she is "resigned" to the situation. Catalina agrees to meet her but insists on a private meeting in case there's a scene. Instead, she finds that Lady Margaret is warm and charming. The woman says that she's been away nursing one of her children and that she hopes everything has been to Catalina's satisfaction. She says that she doesn't blame anyone for her brother's death, though her voice shakes with emotion when she says that he was an innocent and would have been no threat to the Tudors' claim to the throne. She says that she might have ordered a similar action herself.

Over the coming weeks, Lady Margaret and Catalina spend many hours together and become close friends. Catalina notes that Lady Margaret's presence fills the castle while Arthur is away on a hunt or other outdoor excursion. Gradually, Catalina comes to recognize that Lady Margaret is filling the void Catalina feels for a strong woman role model. One afternoon, Catalina asks Lady Margaret's advice regarding the dowry. As it turns out, King Ferdinand has paid only half the promised dowry, urging King Henry to take the rest out of Catalina's possessions with her in England. King Henry has refused and now Catalina is being forced to use her own household goods—including plates that are devaluing with every nick of a knife. As things currently stand, Catalina has no money of her own and is faced with the necessity of asking Arthur to pay her servants' fees. Lady Margaret says that things would go more smoothly for Catalina if there were a child on the way. Catalina says she sees no signs of pregnancy at this point, but that her allowance should be paid no matter what.

That night, Catalina tells Arthur the story of a young sultana who laughed at children playing in the mud but who was not allowed to go outside herself. The sultan ordered rose oils spread over the marbled hallway where the sultana and her ladies played "like mud larks" all afternoon. Catalina then asks Arthur to tell her a story. He says that he has no stories like that, that his are all of wars and winning. He then says that it seems her father is going to war as well. Arthur says that King Ferdinand and King Louis of France plan to invade Italy together, and that it vexes King Henry that Ferdinand would join with France—England's enemy. Catalina says that her father has always wanted Naples and predicts there will be a high price for the French to pay in return for the alliance. Arthur says he would never fight in order to gain lands but would fight to protect his borders. Catalina says that it's often better to invade, that the army has the wealth of the countryside ahead for supplies and that morale is better when an army is pressing forward. Arthur says he wishes he had her knowledge and she pledges that he does—that she will share her knowledge when needed and that she will stand and fight with Arthur and with England.



Arthur and Catalina continue to talk about their lives together, and eventually come to the conclusion that they should begin writing down some of their plans for the country under their reigns. It's during one of these talks that Arthur says only a male heir will inherit the throne. Catalina says that if they have a daughter, she will be heir to the throne and an able ruler for England. She also says that if need be, she herself could lead an army, but Arthur says no English army would follow the orders of a woman. Catalina objects, saying that a good army should be willing to follow their leader—regardless of who that leader is. One day Arthur tells Catalina about a story that she'd heard of Arthur's mother, Elizabeth. Catalina says she thought she heard someone say that Elizabeth had been engaged to her tyrant uncle, Richard. Arthur says it is true but that there are two stories about it. One is that Elizabeth's family had been in line for the throne and Richard—fearing that they might revolt and try to capture the position—had Elizabeth's two brothers captured and they disappeared, believed to be dead. The rest of the family goes into hiding, Elizabeth writes Henry and promises to marry him, Henry raises an army, and the marriage brings peace to the two lines. Arthur says that the second story is "scandalous"; that Elizabeth wasn't really in hiding but was betrothed to Richard as his own wife was still on her deathbed. Arthur ends the story by warning Catalina that she isn't to provide any competition to his grandmother, that she is a hard woman because she sent Henry away as a child to keep him safe, forced him to fight for the throne, and rules the court absolutely. Catalina says there's no danger of her challenging Henry's mother, that she fears the woman.

The next morning, they awake as the servants begin moving around in Catalina's outer rooms. As Arthur is getting up, she discovers that he's very hot. Later in the day, she's told that Arthur is ill and he says that he might have "taken a chill". Catalina blames it on the late night walks across the battlements in the cold. Catalina plans to dine in Arthur's room that night but Lady Margaret insists that Arthur see the doctor first. Her immediate concern is for any child that Catalina might be carrying. The doctor begins with medicines to bring down Arthur's fever but to no avail. Catalina spends hours in the chapel. She prays, reassuring herself that she is "Catalina, Princess of Spain and of Wales", that she is "beloved by God" and that nothing bad can happen to her. She is told that Arthur is "wandering in his mind", that there are many gathered in his outer rooms awaiting news of any change, and Catalina begs to be allowed to see him, but there continues to be fear for an unborn child. When it becomes certain that Arthur won't recover, Catalina is allowed to the foot of his bed but holds a clove of herbs at her nose to keep infection away. She demands of him that he recover and he replies that all he wanted from his life was to live it with her. They affirm their love for each other and Catalina is prompted to leave the room. That night, she orders everyone from the room so that the two may talk of "the business of the kingdom". Arthur tells her that he is dying and she sways under the blow. Arthur then tells her that he has a final request to make of her, that Harry is too impetuous to make a good ruler and that she is to marry Harry. He tells her that she is to tell everyone that he was unable to perform his husbandly duties and that she remains a virgin. As the door opens and Catalina is told she must leave Arthur to rest, he begs for her promise. She says that he will recover, but he continues to demand the promise.



Arthur dies on April 2, 1502. That night, Catalina has a dream. She is standing atop the gate at Alhambra Palace and someone asks, "Where is the Infanta?" She replies that she is "Katherine, Queen of England. That is my name now". Arthur is buried on St. George's Day. Catalina sinks into a deep depression, prompting a visit from Doctor Bereworth, the physician who had attended Arthur. Catalina cries when she sees the doctor. He advises everyone to allow her time to grieve. Meanwhile, the king has demanded that Catalina return to court. Catalina asks Lady Margaret what is to become of her. Lady Margaret explains that if Catalina is pregnant with a boy, the child will become Prince of Wales and then King of England. Catalina will remain in the country. Otherwise, she'll likely be returned to Spain. Lady Margaret's own Tudor blood was "diluted" by a marriage to a lowly person, making her and her children no threat to the throne. She tells Catalina that a woman holds a position only by virtue of her husband's position. Catalina doesn't answer the question of her pregnancy though she knows there is no baby. She wonders how she can keep her word to Arthur, but says that she will not fail him. As she makes her way to court, she begins to plan. She knows that she will have to be clever and wishes for someone to advise her on her current path.

Ludlow Castle, January 1502 Analysis

Arthur's nights with Catalina are limited because of the fear that too much sex is not good for a young boy. Catalina notes that her own brother died after only six months of marriage.

Catalina occasionally writes a letter to the King of England, requesting leave to return to Spain for a visit, but she always tears up the letters before sending them. It's noted that had she sent them, the letter would never have reached the king, let alone found approval. After all, the marriage of Catalina and Arthur have forged Spain and England against a third emerging world power—France. A homesick girl isn't going to be allowed to undo that.

Arthur says that his younger brother, Harry, is a selfish boy and the favorite. He notes that Harry has been given things that Arthur had to work for and says that Harry imagines himself in love with Catalina.

It's interesting that Catalina feels so strongly that she is to blame for Edward Plantagenet's death. Catalina goes so far as to tell Arthur that she feels their marriage is cursed, but he reminds her of their love and passion. The fact that Lady Margaret was not at Ludlow when Catalina and Arthur arrived made her think that the woman would avoid Catalina. In fact, she tells Catalina that she doesn't blame anyone for her brother's death, but Catalina reminds her that it was her parents' insistence that her way to the throne be cleared that prompted Edward's death. Catalina persists, indicating that she wants to be certain Lady Margaret knows the full extent of her role in the matter.

Catalina's upbringing has given her some ideas about life that are not in keeping with Arthur's. The couple almost have an argument when Arthur says that her mother "took" the throne of her country just as his father took the throne of England. Catalina says it



was God's will that her mother rule. While Arthur doesn't deny that point, he says that it remains that she had to fight her way to that position.

Arthur's own father was a "pretender"—a person who wanted to take the throne from the current holder. Henry escaped being executed himself and it was his mother who arranged the coup that led to Henry's ascension. Arthur says that there will come a day when he and Catalina are in power in England. He then points out that he has power—within reason—in Ludlow. He suggests that they build schools and commission the first of the defensive ships for the fleet they envision. It seems that Henry's plan to have Arthur prepare for ruling England by practicing in a smaller principality is working out.

The change in the relationship between Arthur and Catalina is extraordinary. Arthur slips into Catalina's room almost every evening. They fight sleep in order to spend more time talking. There is often a teasing between them. One night, Catalina tells Arthur that she wants him to explain something to her and he responds that he's in an particularly expansive mood, that he'll explain everything and that he's wise enough to do so. She says that everyone thinks young Harry is a braggart, but that they've never seen this side of Arthur. When Catalina asks if lettuce can be grown in England and explains the vegetable to Arthur, he tells her to send for a "regiment of gardeners", because she's going to be Queen of England and if she wants everyone to eat raw vegetables, it will be so.

While Arthur is dying, Catalina wishes for many things. She says that the Moorish doctors were the best in the world and wishes that she could have their knowledge at her hands now. She also says that she wishes for all the books that her parents destroyed during their war against the Moors. When Arthur demands that she promise to marry Harry, she first refuses then agrees. When she says that she will do as he asks, he sighs with relief. It seems evident that Arthur, knowing he is dying, worries most for his country as any king would. He believes that Harry would not make a good ruler and that Catalina is strong enough that she will temper his judgment and will have the opportunity to be a ruler in her own right.

As Catalina travels to court after Arthur's death, she wishes that Lady Margaret could be with her. She notes that she already knows what Lady Margaret would advise with regard to her plan of action, and that she would not follow that advice, but that she still wishes she could have it.



Summer 1502, London, June 1502

Summer 1502, London, June 1502 Summary

Catalina arrives at Croydon Palace in the summer of 1502. She is not immediately summoned for an audience with the king and queen but is housed in rooms she declares "fit for a princess". She is anxiously awaiting instructions from her mother and sends immediately for Dr. de Puebla. He gives her a letter from her mother, inquires about her health, but finds only that she won't tell anyone of her news other than her mother. She waits until she is alone to read the letter. Catalina says that had her mother known how much her comfort was needed, she would have written more than the single page. The letter includes only instructions—that Catalina is to stay wherever she's told until she's certain there's not a baby, that she's to rest if she is pregnant and hope for a boy, that she's to "demand" her due as Dowager Princess of Wales if she is not pregnant, and that she's not to leave the country without that settlement.

Dr. de Puebla—acting as the Spanish Ambassador—talks with the king. He says that there's a chance the princess is pregnant but that he can't be certain. The king says that he hopes she is, but that if she isn't she'll be allowed to return to Spain "as soon as her dowry is paid". Then Catalina is moved to Durham House in the Strand. She immediately asks if this is where a princess would be housed and is assured by Dr. Puebla that it is adequate, that she's being given an allowance and that her situation would be resolved if the king could be assured "of her health". She says that the king should be told that she is well, nothing more.

In June, Catalina—under pressure from Dr. de Puebla—admits that she isn't pregnant. He tells her that her passage home is to be arranged and she says that she won't leave—that if she is to remarry it will be in England. That evening, Dona Elvira—the woman who has been in charge of Catalina's household during their stay in England—is brushing Catalina's hair when Catalina tells everyone else to leave the room. She then instructs Dona Elvira to tell their parents that she and Arthur never consummated the marriage. Dona Elvira asks why Catalina hadn't said so. She tells her that she'd hoped youth was to blame and that the problem would be rectified in time. Dona Elvira says that people saw that the couple were in love but Catalina says that people saw only that they served as prince and princess together. She then says that, if necessary, she will tell the story herself and that it will become apparent that Dona Elvira wasn't properly overseeing her charge. She then points out that they have two options—return to Spain where they'll be married to a nobody and moved to some obscure location, or remain in England in a position of power. She then reveals the remainder of her plan—to marry Prince Harry.



Summer 1502, London, June 1502 Analysis

Dr. de Puebla is immediately taken with the changes in Catalina. He notes that the favored child who grew up being petted and loved has been tempered by heartache, and that it's made her a different sort of person. This child who had complained bitterly about the weather on the trip to England—as if someone could change that because she wanted it so—has now been hardened by circumstances. When she dismisses him without answering his questions and tells him that she will write a letter for her mother's eyes only with her news, he says that he isn't certain that he likes this new person she's become.

Catalina says that she aches for her mother's comfort and is bitterly disappointed by the fact that she gets a single page of instructions—nothing more. She notes that her mother is concerned about Spain and the king is concerned about England, and that she is concerned about keeping her promise to Arthur. She says that she keeps insinuating that she might be pregnant in order to have time to make her plans.

Dona Elvira is shocked at Catalina's plan, but Catalina has chosen her ally well. Dona Elvira wants power and has wielded her authority whenever she had the opportunity. Catalina points out that Dona Elvira will be sent with Catalina's household, and that if she is married to an archduke, Dona Elvira will become an unimportant person in an unimportant household.



Winter 1503

Winter 1503 Summary

Having been widowed for almost a year, Catalina still waited in Durham Palace, though Dona Elvira is not patient. The king and queen are expecting a child and Catalina is sewing a layette for the baby in hopes of gaining their favor. Dona Elvira suggests that if the child is a boy, Catalina will simply be sent home. Then they receive news that the queen has given birth to a boy who died, and the queen has also died.

After a few weeks in mourning, Catalina is summoned to court to dine with the royal family. Harry—as the only heir to the throne—is protected and pampered. He is not sent away to learn to run Wales as Arthur had been, not allowed to participate in anything that might be dangerous, and given all the best food and care available. When Catalina sees him looking at her, she realizes that he's a spoiled little boy. She supposes that if he were soon married, he might become so accustomed to obeying a wife that the trend would continue into adulthood. She also notes that it's possible that he could be easily diverted with hunting and games, leaving the running of the kingdom to his wife. The king soon decrees the meal ended and the royal family—including Catalina—retire to private chambers. King Henry's mother suggests that Catalina should be sent home, that she hasn't earned her place in court as mother of a child and hasn't paid for it with her dowry. The king asks if his mother finds anything agreeable about Catalina and she denies that there is anything. The king asks for a moment alone with Catalina, says they have a link in their grief and asks what she believes her destiny to be. He hopes she'll say to be queen so that he can reveal his own thoughts to her. She says only that she's to do God's will.

Henry visits Catalina but doesn't tell her that he wants to marry, though it's on his mind. He tells his mother that it's time to make some decision regarding Catalina and she admits that Catalina would make an acceptable match for Harry, but Henry says he wants her for his own. The queen points out the obvious problems—Catalina's parents would prefer their daughter wed Harry so that her children would be in line for the throne and that Catalina is Henry's daughter-in-law so that their marriage is a sin and could be disapproved of by the people. She does agree that Catalina is an acceptable choice, that she seems to be biddable and that she could be an effective queen with the proper teaching. Henry says that he'll ask Catalina the following day and will send for the Spanish ambassador to make the proposal at once. He tells de Puebla that he wants to marry Catalina. When de Puebla suggests that Harry might make a better match, Henry says he won't make arrangements for his son for four years. He says that Catalina will then be twenty-one and will need to be set up in a household in the meantime, which would be an expensive proposition for her parents. De Puebla agrees to send word to Spain for permission.

When Henry makes the proposal to Catalina, she's shocked but doesn't say no. He realizes that she's ambitious enough to marry him in order to be queen. She knows that



she doesn't desire him but that she also doesn't desire Harry, who she considers a child. As Henry holds Catalina in his arms, he notes that she is stiff, but puts it down to the fact that she is still a virgin and is unsure of herself. He promises that he will move slowly with her. Several days pass without another visit, which makes Catalina begin to worry and prompts her to send a message inquiring into his health, which makes him know that it's time for him to visit her.

When Henry arrives at her home, he sees only surprise on her face and knows that she does not love him, but that she will marry him for the sake of the throne. He takes an opportunity to kiss her, shaken with his own desire. She doesn't shrink from him, but stops the interlude with a caution that they might be seen. As they walk, she asks if their children will inherit the throne. He says that Harry is next in line. She asks him to promise that Harry will reign over some other part of Henry's holdings with their son taking over for England and he says it can't be done. She asks, "Then what would be the point of marriage?" He says that she will still be queen, but she insists that having her son on the throne be part of the arrangement. He says that he will have an obedient wife and that her world will begin and end with filling the nurseries. Henry says that his desire for her is no stronger than his desire to rule England, and that she will be happy but will never rule the country.

Catalina talks with de Puebla the following day, verifying the rule of lineage, and says that she refuses to be Henry's wife. De Puebla says that he understood there was already an agreement and Catalina says no agreements are adhered to and that she will simply break it in order to achieve her true goal—to marry Prince Harry to become the true Queen of England. De Puebla says that it's fine to make that decision, but asks who will tell Henry. As it happens, de Puebla takes that news. He tells the king that Catalina's parents refuse the alliance and that it's her mother's wish that Catalina either marry Harry or return to Spain. Henry asks if Catalina was toying with him as she led him on and de Puebla, using Catalina's own double-dealing tactics, says that the princess did have a preference but that she will do as her parents bid. Henry is angry and de Puebla later tells Catalina that he believes the king was even more angry than he let on. She asks what will happen, fully aware that many who posed a threat to the king have been killed, but de Puebla says he doesn't know what Henry's next move will be. Henry has, in fact, declared that Harry will marry Catalina as soon as a dispensation can be received. However, Henry tempers his promise with the threat that Spain and Catalina will be sorry they ever played him for such a love struck fool.

Winter 1503 Analysis

While some might believe that Catalina is cold regarding matters of the heart, King Henry notes that she holds onto her feelings well. He crooks his finger to her in summons and notes that she seems to take a moment to decide whether to answer, then approaches him as if she has already been crowned Queen of England. It's also Henry who realizes that Catalina has lost something with Elizabeth's death—her only ally at court.



Henry comes later to visit and Catalina smoothly tells him that she would offer wine, but that she has none and no money, providing him homemade ale instead. When he asks what she wants, she says only to obey him. She says that she'd thought he was referring to a possible marriage with Harry, but then he asks if she thinks him terribly old. Catalina says that King Henry is nothing like the great warrior her father is, nor the womanizer, and that she thinks him more like a grandfather or an elderly priest. She is suddenly unsure what it is that's on his mind, and he seems unable to ask her outright to become his wife, though that's what he hopes for. With a young wife, he considers that he might even be able to produce another heir. Henry himself is busy calculating the advantages of marriage with Catalina—the remainder of her dowry paid and continued peace with Spain at the top of his list.

Catalina now has Dona Elvira in her confidence, but the older woman doesn't at all approve of the possibility of a match between Catalina and Henry. When several days pass without a visit from Henry, Catalina sends a message inquiring into his health. Dona Elvira clearly doesn't approve and says that her advice goes unheeded, making her "an empty vessel". Catalina notes that she is too distracted to try to soothe the woman. It's interesting that Henry seems to want Catalina's affection. He notes that when he surprises her at her home, she shows only surprise—not love. Henry admits that no matter what the marriage might be to him, to her it is only a marriage of convenience.

When Henry's proposal is denied, he's angry. He says that he can't imagine that any woman would not want to be Queen of England. It's important to remember that any other man in line for the throne could be considered "a pretender", and therefore dangerous to the king. The fact that Catalina is so determined that her sons will reign is a danger sign to the king.



Whitehall, June 1503; Princess Again, 1504

Whitehall, June 1503; Princess Again, 1504 Summary

In June, Henry tells Harry that he, Harry, is betrothed to Catalina but warns him that the marriage won't actually happen. Arthur knows immediately that something isn't right and asks Henry if the oath he is about to make is serious. Henry replies that it is but doesn't elaborate. As Harry and Catalina are formally betrothed, Harry is pleased that his own desire for Catalina has come to fruition—that Arthur is gone and now Harry is the sole heir to the throne and married to Arthur's bride. Catalina notes that her father-in-law is solemn and fears that his anger is a serious matter. Some worry about the king's health, that he seems to have recently aged rapidly, and that some believe he's been crossed by a woman.

In 1504, Catalina's mother dies and the family's fortunes are in disarray. Juana, heir to Isabella's throne, is mad from the grief for her dead husband and Catalina's father has spent his fortunes on crusades. There is nothing left for Catalina's dowry. Catalina discovers that Dona Elvira is plotting with Juana to help overthrow Catalina's father and sends the older woman away, uncaring whether she tells of the lie of Catalina's virginity. Catalina sells off her plates—one at a time—to sustain her household, though she knows that technically the plates belong to the king. Harry turns fourteen, then fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen and still there is no marriage. De Puebla is recalled to Spain and Catalina learns that he had actually been her friend and ally. Catalina is reduced to a minimum household living in servants' quarters at court with no money. She says that she thought the king had forgiven her but had actually agreed to the betrothal as a punishment.

Then in 1509, Catalina learns that her nephew, Prince Charles, is to marry Harry's sister, Mary. She believes that this means her own dowry will be forthcoming and she'll be free to marry Harry. Her ambassador, Don Gutierre Gomez de Fuensalida, says that he has heard a rumor that Harry has been released from the betrothal vows and that he is to now be betrothed to Charles's sister, Eleanor. Catalina says her father will avenge this cruelty, but de Fuensalida says that he believes her father already knows. Later, de Fuensalida has all Catalina's dowry treasure moved out of the country. When Catalina finds out, she orders him to leave, saying that if she were queen she would have him hanged. Then he reveals that it was her father who ordered the move and that he didn't order that Catalina be taken to safety. In April, de Fuensalida writes to Catalina that the king is dead and that Henry gave Harry permission to marry anyone he wants. De Fuensalida says that he has personal funds available to pay for Catalina's passage to Spain in order to avoid the potential danger in England.

Then, in an abrupt turn of events, de Fuensalida is summoned to a meeting with the young king's ministers, told that the dowry doesn't matter and the new King Henry says



that the wedding is to take place as soon as possible. When he tells Catalina, he says that she should rejoice because she is going to be Queen of England. She responds simply that she was always going to be Queen of England.

Whitehall, June 1503; Princess Again, 1504 Analysis

As Catalina's true situation sinks in, she asks de Fuensalida what she should do and he advises that they run back to Spain. She says that she cannot leave England because she'd never be able to return. De Fuensalida says that she could be executed if she stays, but she insists that her royal blood—as "Infanta of Spain"—exempts her from that type of threat. It's becoming accepted that the peace with Spain is quickly eroding and that there is bound to be war between the two countries. De Fuensalida, believing this to be so, orders all of Catalina's possessions loaded onto a merchant ship bound for Spain.

Catalina considers leaving the country and can't decide what she should do. She is secretly doubtful that Harry will marry her after all, but she knows that he will forget about her if she should decide to leave the country. Instead, she decides to remain. She says that she can't imagine that he will bring another woman into the court as his intended with her still here and she hopes that neither her father nor her ambassador will offer to take her away. After Harry's abrupt announcement, Catalina knows she has one more person to face down—his grandmother, Margaret. She does so by saying that things are "as they should be". Margaret manages to get in one jab, saying that she hopes Catalina to be fertile. Catalina doesn't seem to consider the possibility at this point that she might not have children. She was, after all, making love with Arthur on a near-nightly basis for more than three months and there wasn't a child of that union.



Greenwich Palace, 11th June, 1509

Greenwich Palace, 11th June, 1509 Summary

Catalina and Harry—now King Henry—were married quietly in deference to the recent death of the king. On their wedding night, Harry comes to Catalina and she reassures him that she is a virgin, that she and Arthur were little more than companions and that she is anxious to rule with him. When he mentions that he's heard rumors from his grandmother, Catalina says that "old women" have a tendency to gossip and urges him to remember that the two of them have been kept apart by his grandmother. When the time comes for love making, Harry notes that there's not enough resistance but is overcome by desire and doesn't remark on it.

Very soon, Catalina admits that she married Harry because it was what Arthur wanted, what her mother wanted, and what she felt to be her destiny, but that she falls in love with him. At the same time, she makes certain that Harry trusts her implicitly and slowly takes the place of his grandmother as advisor. Many who seek his approval come first to Catalina, knowing that if she introduces the topic ahead of time, the king is much more likely to find in their favor. None let on that this is the case, and Catalina slowly takes on more and more of the duties of running the country, also beginning to implement the ideas she and Arthur had planned.

Soon, everyone is gathered around Harry's grandmother's bed. He notes that with her death he will no longer be the second son trying to gain attention. Then she is dead and Catalina is to organize her first royal event—a funeral. She calls for a book of etiquette written by the old woman herself and finds a list of instructions for her own funeral. Catalina "cuts almost everything in half", and makes the arrangements. The event garners respect, for everyone knows Catalina planned the funeral, endearing her as their queen before her coronation.

The coronation event goes on as planned, despite the "ill-timed death" of Harry's grandmother. On the throne amidst the cheers of the people, Catalina says that she has dreamed of this day for so long that she can barely believe it is true. Harry asks if she is happy that he's given her the crown of the Queen of England. She tells him she is happy, but her thoughts turn to Arthur as always. She pledges that she will rule and then join him in the garden where he waits. Then Catalina says that she is truly English and that she will now be called "Katherine". Harry, liking the idea says that he will now be "King Henry".

Greenwich Palace, 11th June, 1509 Analysis

Catalina's first opportunity to undermine Harry's grandmother comes soon. He tells her that he wants war with France. Catalina's father has written her, telling her to urge this course of action and giving directions for how it should be done. Harry says he'll name



his grandmother regnant while he is away at war. Catalina suggests that his grandmother is too old for the duty but Harry says she isn't. Catalina then says that his grandmother might take actions to end any hostilities—including cutting war funding—so that Harry will have to return home safely rather than remain on a battlefield. Harry says then that he "won't be ruled by some old woman", and asks Catalina if she would be up for the role in his absence. She assures him that she will rule carefully until his return. Catalina notes that the triumph over Harry's grandmother is sweet, and that there are others who tormented her during her widowhood who will also eventually get their due, but that she is content to wait.

Catalina notes that Henry's grief for his grandmother is superficial and she understands what that means. This woman had prayed for him, arranged tutors and teaching for him, shielded him from unpleasantness and done everything she could for him, but when she stood between him and what he wanted, she instantly became the enemy.



Katherine, Queen of England, Summer 1509; Westminster Palace, January 1510

Katherine, Queen of England, Summer 1509; Westminster Palace, January 1510 Summary

In the summer of 1509, Katherine and Henry travel for some two months. Katherine conducts some business but Henry does nothing but enjoy hunting, tennis, boating, and archery. Katherine, never tiring, finds entertainment for her teenage husband, takes over the job of entertaining him, then of managing the kingdom's business. During an archery contest, Katherine tells Henry that if they have a son, she wants to name him Arthur because she believes Henry has created the best court in England since the days of the famed King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. He agrees to the name, "Arthur Henry". A few weeks later, she tells him she is expecting. He sends for the royal doctor but the man can't examine her because no one is allowed to touch the body of the queen other than the king.

In January, Katherine delivers a dead baby girl, but the doctor soon insists that she had been carrying twins and that the second child survives. Arthur tells everyone and he prepares for the birth. Then Katherine consults a Moorish doctor, Yusef, who tells her that if her breasts are not swollen, if she continues her monthly bleeding, and if she feels nothing, it is because there is nothing to feel. He suggests that it might be an infection. Katherine holds to the hope that she is pregnant, and she and her ladies are then moved to Greenwich to await the birth, but Katherine says she knows that the bulge of her belly is getting smaller. When it becomes undeniable, she again sends for Yusef. He tells her that she should eat fruits and vegetables, drink water that has been boiled, ride astride a horse before intercourse and in a litter after, and that she will most likely become pregnant two weeks after her cycle, so she should lie with her husband then. He tells her that she is young and obviously fertile, and predicts that a baby will soon come.

Katherine, Queen of England, Summer 1509; Westminster Palace, January 1510 Analysis

Henry's young friends are egging him toward war, though his father's advisors hope against it. Katherine writes to her father, saying they will support Spain against France and that Arthur will lead, but she tells him that the young king must not ever truly be in danger and that he must not know he is being protected. Ferdinand agrees with his daughter, but adds that the war must be fought and that she must not over-protect the young king. He adds a post script that of course Henry's role will be "mostly play" and that "he will not know". It's interesting that Catalina goes on about her father's plans and her own role in the emerging war, but then says that her father would also like for



England to do all the work while he merely becomes the conqueror, but that she isn't going to let that happen, though she doesn't say so to her father. Catalina, schooled in intrigue and the ways of a ruler since birth, says that she would be angry with Henry if he were a dullard, but that he simply hasn't been taught to be a ruler. His interests are quickly captured and just as quickly lost, and she often has to prompt him as to the next move.

Katherine notes that the Moorish doctor is the only person who is willing to tell the truth. When she remains large with a hardened belly after the miscarriage, the English doctor assumes she must be pregnant. He wants to deliver news that will be received well.

Katherine and Yusef are natural enemies. He says that his parents fled their home when Katherine's mother implemented the inquisition, meaning they would be tortured. He says that they are each a long way from home, that they are devout to their particular faiths, and that they are perhaps meant to be friends. Katherine says that she believes in the true God and that Yusef is an infidel, but says it with much less conviction than ever before.



Greenwich Palace, May 1510

Greenwich Palace, May 1510 Summary

Katherine sends for Henry, who knows it must be bad news. She tells him there wasn't a child after all and he says that everyone will think he's a fool. She reminds him that they've had a child and so can have another. He asks if God is punishing them and Katherine says her heart is clear, a thought Henry echoes. That night, Katherine prays sincerely. She says that she made a deathbed promise that she felt was for the good of England, for Arthur, for her mother, and for herself. She now sits quietly for an hour, listing for God's anger. When she doesn't hear it, she assumes that she's been correct in her actions and that she will proceed.

Upon her return to court, Katherine notes a difference in Henry. He doesn't rush to kiss her when they first meet and he seems to be forcing gaiety into his speech. He tells her that it was "awkward" for him with Katherine gone, that the business of the kingdom suffered while she was away doing nothing and that her ladies were undisciplined without her presence. She notes that he has turned her confinement into his personal problem without a thought for her, but agrees with him and promises to send Anne and Elizabeth away to please him. Later, he says that the duke and his sisters may return to court if it pleases Katherine. She praises him mightily for handling a particular matter, but he is irritable and leaves her quickly with instructions to write a letter on the matter.

Katherine is certain that Henry had an affair with Anne Stafford, and she confronts him with the question. He begins to lie but she stops him. He then says that it wasn't a sin because his marriage to Katherine wasn't lawful—that she had not been a virgin upon their marriage. He says that Anne's husband is impotent and that she had been a virgin, and that it was nothing like his first encounter with Katherine. She tells him that it's an old trick, that Anne likely called out and had him stop and he agreed that's what happened. She says that the woman had a bladder of blood so that Henry would think it was her blood. Katherine then says that the king cannot allow gossiping against the queen, for it undermines the throne. She says that some people may say that Henry has no claim to the throne because his mother wasn't a virgin on her wedding night, that she had lain with Richard the usurper. At Henry's outcry, Katherine points out that this is how rumors undermine the throne. She tells him that there will be many women seeking his favor because he is king. He promises that it will never happen again and she pledges that they will never again talk of it. Despite his pledge, she is fearful. If Henry couldn't stand firm for the three months of her confinement, how was he to be faithful for a lifetime? The following morning, Henry and Katherine attend mass. Henry notes that she is in confession only moments, that she exudes purity and serenity, and that she has probably never told a lie in her entire life.

The day comes when Katherine again tells Henry that she is expecting a child. She predicts that it will be born sometime after Christmas. That winter, Katherine makes plans for the child. She imagines that Henry and the other men of court will teach him to



ride and joust while she will teach him other things—of war, handling affairs, and of his duties as king. Henry vows to make a pilgrimage once the child is born and Katherine, feigning weariness, says she supposes he will then want to make another baby. On New Year's Eve, the labor begins and six hours later, a healthy son is born. Katherine looks at him carefully, noting that he is England's son and will be king.

Greenwich Palace, May 1510 Analysis

Katherine notes that Henry is cool toward her during his visit, but she doesn't remark on it. That night, Lady Margaret Pole tells Katherine that there has been an upset at court. Anne Stafford has had an assignation with William Compton, Henry's best friend. Anne's husband has virtually locked her away and her brother, the Duke of Buckingham, has become involved, having words with Henry. Katherine says that an argument between the duke and the king is not merely an argument but is of national importance because the duke is the most important man in England, next to the king. She tells Margaret that the court is nothing more than a schoolyard and Margaret says that it's only Katherine's steady influence that keeps order. Upon her return to court, Katherine learns that the duke has taken his sisters and left.

The situation continues to fester when Katherine discovers that there were exorbitant expenses paid out for William Compton's reported courting of Anne. Katherine soon asks Lady Margaret whether it could be that William was involved only as a smokescreen to hide Henry's involvement with Anne, and Margaret says she fears it is so. After Katherine confirms this, Margaret tells her that the king's wandering has created a situation in court—every young girl believes she might be the next to capture his attention. Margaret says that it was once known that Henry had eyes only for Katherine, but that things are now different. Katherine says these hopeful young women will have to wait for her death, that the crown remains her own in the meantime.



Spring 1511; Walsingham, Autumn 1513; Blackfriars Hall

Spring 1511; Walsingham, Autumn 1513; Blackfriars Hall Summary

The country "went mad" with the announcement of the birth of the son, immediately calling him Henry despite anything Katherine might have said. Henry disobeys rules of confinement to check on Katherine and the child, often twenty times a day. They stand together, amazed at the child's fingernails and toenails, and Henry says that "God be praised" he now has a son. Henry goes to the shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham to give thanks for the safe birth of the son. Katherine sends a gift of money for the nuns there with a message that they are to pray for the queen. Henry says it's their job, but Katherine says she wants to remind them. She also says that she will go there personally when she is again pregnant. Upon Henry's return, there is a joust and Katherine makes certain the event is spectacular. Then Henry reveals his banner, which reads "Sir Loyal Heart". Katherine notes that if she could, she would say to all the women that she is again secure in her position with Henry and that no one can replace her in her husband's affection.

On February 22, 1511, Katherine learns that her son has died. She sinks immediately into despair and feels there is no reason to go on. Lady Margaret Pole, keeper of the nursery, comes to Katherine and says that there was "nothing remiss" and begs Katherine to believe that she had nothing to do with the child's death. Katherine spits out that Lady Margaret always seems to be with her at times of sorrow, then collapses, crying, into the woman's embrace. Lady Margaret predicts that Katherine will learn to bear the grief, just as she has before.

A letter comes from her father, that he is invading the Moors and wants England to join him. Katherine talks to Henry, convincing him it could be a good venture for England, and they agree. Henry is eager to go, but Katherine skillfully dissuades him, reminding him that it's better for him to have his warfare debut on more exciting fronts—England against France. However, the crusade doesn't happen. Instead, Ferdinand writes with news that the French and the Pope are at war and requests that the English troops help on that front instead. Then Scottish privateers attack an English merchant ship, prompting a reprisal. The English victory on this front means that Henry's interest is caught by ships and that he wants many sailing ships, with no credence given to Katherine's advice that the navy should include some galley ships. The Scottish border raids continue and Henry boasts that he could "raise an army" to quash the Scots. Katherine skillfully advises patience and writes a letter to Richard Bainbridge, Cardinal Archbishop of York, who "happens to be at Rome", advising that if the English are forced to defend themselves against the Scots, they won't be able to help Rome against France. The Scottish leader is immediately chastised by the Church and warned against



further raids. He then writes Henry, asking why Henry would go behind his back with a complaint. Henry tells Katherine of the letter and she admits her deed. Henry says that he hopes he never has her as an enemy, and she assures him that she will always be on his side and on England's. While Katherine and Henry begin preparations for war against France, Ferdinand is holding peace talks with France. Edward Howard commands the navy, but an early French battle claims his life—the life of a young man Katherine had hoped would show the world the English as a power to be reckoned with.

Katherine has planned perfectly. With the help of her trusted aide, Thomas Wolsey, the French troops leave fully provisioned and with no requirements to camp while last minute details are attended. Henry gives Katherine power to rule in his absence, and the English army sets sail in four hundred newly built ships. The moment Katherine returns to Richmond Palace, she issues orders for Thomas Howard—Edward's younger brother—to lead an attack on Scotland. Katherine's ladies-in-waiting are dismayed to find that Katherine is going into the field of battle and that she commands three go with her while the others remain to sew banners and make bandages. She then addresses her troops. She assures them of victory, saying that God is always with men who are fighting for their homes. She is soon greeted with the news that the Scots are not merely participating in an uprising. The leader of the attackers has been promised the throne of England, if he is successful in taking England.

Katherine leads her forces, riding every day and taking incredible risks, for she knows that she is again expecting a child. She tells no one, knowing that there would be an outcry at her behavior. As the battle rages, she learns that her men have killed the King of Scotland. She hardens her heart, reminding herself that she must think as a warrior, not as a woman carrying a child would think of the many women who have lost husbands. She then sends for a messenger and drafts a note to Henry. She wants to tell him of the child, but knows that Henry doesn't read his own mail. A clerk reads missives to him and then he dictates replies. She tells him only that she will "now go to Our Lady at Walsingham, that I promised so long ago to see", hoping that Henry will understand her message.

Katherine makes the pilgrimage in the autumn of 1513, praying as she promised upon the knowledge of her pregnancy. Though she should have prayed to God, she sees Arthur, tells him of her victory but that it was truly Arthur's victory, and begging him to wait for her because she will join him when her own work is complete.

In June of 1529, Katherine says that she always knew she would have to answer for her lie, but never thought the answers would be required in front of the entire world. She says that she's seen Henry's lovers come and go and can read them as a storybook, but that his affair with Elizabeth Boleyn's daughter, Anne, was a surprise. More importantly, Anne is ambitious and it's because of that ambition that Katherine is in court, defending her right to the title. Katherine ignores the court officials and says she does not recognize the authority of the court in this matter. Katherine says she has no prepared defense, but that she is Queen of England and will be so until death.



Spring 1511; Walsingham, Autumn 1513; Blackfriars Hall Analysis

When Katherine learns that the crusades have not come to fruition but that the English troops are needed to aid Spain against France, she's suspicious. She wants to believe the best of her father, but seems to know that he has manipulated English forces into helping him attain his own goals. Even then, with Katherine on the brink of understanding, she doesn't quite figure her father's next moves, and it will be some time before she realizes that he wants the English forces to remain in place, frightening the French into moving forces of their own to defend in that region while Spanish forces take Navarre.

It's during this time that Katherine comes to admit that her mother's wisdom may not have always been infallible. She remembers that her mother killed off much of the knowledge of the places she conquered. The Moors were infidels and so their learning was destroyed, but Katherine admits that the Moorish doctors know much that has eluded others. She also admits that her mother has left her alone in a foreign country, destitute, to achieve a goal. Katherine even goes so far as to realize that it was her own mother's lack of care that caused such a carelessly written marriage contract that left her in that position. She says that she can't have an argument with her mother now, and that perhaps her realizations are part of growing up.

As Katherine begins to get past the grief for her son, she comes to some additional conclusions. She begins to make plans to lead the English against the Scots while Henry is away at war against France. She says that even if she never gives England a son, she'll have done her duty if she prevails against the Scots. It seems that Katherine, now fearful that she might never have a child live to reign, is looking for other ways to fulfill what she sees as her "duty to England". In truth, Katherine recalls her discussions with Arthur and that he had been concerned about the threat posed by the Scots. She spends hours in prayers, but is really talking to Arthur, honing her decision, and seems to be seeking reassurance that she's taking the correct action.

Katherine's conduct on the battlefield is a marvel to the men. One advisor tells her that there are sixty thousand Scots, "perhaps more". When Katherine pushes him to say "perhaps" how many more, he says the force is estimated at a hundred thousand. She doesn't cry out but says merely that she's seen worse.



Characters

Catalina, Later Known as Katherine, Queen of England

Catalina is born Infanta of Spain, the daughter of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. As a child of three years old, she becomes betrothed to Arthur, Prince of Wales and future King of England. She will often note that it was almost from the moment of her birth that she had known she is to be Queen of England. Her childhood is spent with her parents, often on the battlefield. She is a beloved daughter and feels that nothing can go wrong in her life—an idea she continues to question through the terrible losses of her lifetime.

As a teenager, Catalina leaves her parents and travels to England. She is appalled by the English ways of doing things. She hates the fact that there are no bathing facilities and that the diet is largely made up of meat with few vegetables, and none to be eaten raw. She believes Arthur to be the most handsome young man she's ever met but is soon disenchanted with him. She continues to stand firm and strong, never wavering, until she's forced to ride many miles in a litter. She becomes terribly cold, and it's then that she shows that she is a vulnerable young girl. Arthur says that he hadn't realized that he had the power to hurt her, and their apologies immediately change their relationship. Their love is deep, and they disobey the dictates of Arthur's mother by spending every night together, though they're limited to four nights each month. Katherine, having been raised to be queen, has spent most of her life planning what she would do as ruler, and she and Arthur quickly begin making plans together. Before they can implement any of these, Arthur dies—just six months after the wedding.

Catalina is devastated by the death of her young husband and is soon even more aggrieved by her mother's attitude. There is no kindness from her mother, only instructions of what is to be done next. It's a sign of her strength that she hardens her resolve to obey Arthur's deathbed request—that she tell everyone he was impotent, so that she remains a virgin and can marry Harry in order for her to still be Queen of England. Through a seven year wait, she does whatever is necessary to remain in England and become queen. She turns down an opportunity to marry Arthur's father, King Henry, because her sons would not inherit the throne. Though she eventually comes to love Harry as well, her heart always remains with Arthur.

Arthur

Catalina's first husband, Prince of Wales and future King of England. Catalina notes that he is very handsome and that his kindness is a wonderful trait in a husband. Arthur's father, Henry Tudor, is pushy with regard to his son, and Arthur seems shy and quiet in his father's shadow. Catalina soon comes to resent Arthur's shyness, saying that he would never have made the first move in the bedroom had Catalina not taken control of the situation. She says that she demeans herself by trying to please him. Arthur is



intimidated by this Spanish princess and becomes cold toward her, apparently feeling at least somewhat inferior to her haughty disposition. Then comes a day when they are traveling and Arthur discovers that she is so cold that she is crying. He says that he hadn't realized he had the power to make her cry and that he would never do so again.

Arthur's love for Catalina is deep, but so is his love for his country. It's once noted that Harry had little training necessary for ruling the country because the country hung their hopes on Arthur. On his deathbed, he requires a promise from Catalina—that she will marry Harry and become Queen of England as she was meant to be. Catalina will come to say that she paid a high price for keeping her promise to Arthur. He holds a place in her heart forever and she often prays more to him than to God when she is troubled.

Harry

Arthur's younger brother and second son of Henry Tudor, in line for the throne. Harry is young and impetuous and meets Catalina with an enthusiasm for which she is not prepared. Harry presents Catalina with a mare, one of her wedding gifts, and when she tells him of the fighting horses of Spain he transparently asks for one as a gift. Arthur tells Catalina that Harry believes himself in love with Catalina. That fact eventually clears the way for their marriage.

Harry's devotion to Catalina is evident, but he has been indulged his entire life and his interests are always subject to change. As England is facing a double threat—from France on the one border and Scotland on another—Catalina sends Harry off to fight France without offering any inkling that she plans to command the defense against Scotland. It's noted that she realizes his interest must not waver from his own goal. Harry's interest in women wavers as well. Catalina learns early on that her young husband must be entertained, and she takes on the task of finding something new to capture his interest on a regular basis. The fact that she does so soon creates a situation in which she's allowed to take on more duties until she is almost single-handedly ruling England as Harry's most trusted advisor. His interest does eventually wane and Catalina will find herself required to defend her right to the throne.

Henry Tudor

King of England. Henry arranged the marriage of his son, Arthur, to Catalina. When Catalina arrives in England, Henry demands to see her, fearing that she was scarred in some way. He notes that he is instantly attracted to Catalina and that it's a shame that she would be handed off to his bumbling son's bed, but that at least he was to reap the benefit of her dowry. When Henry's wife, Elizabeth, dies in childbirth, he proposes marriage to Catalina, though to do so requires a dispensation from the church because she is his daughter-in-law. When she turns down the opportunity because she wants her own children on the throne, he is angry and announces the betrothal of Catalina to Harry but swears that the marriage will never happen.



Isabella

Catalina's mother. Catalina has grown up with this woman, who commanded on the battlefield and the palace as a role model. Catalina truly believes her mother to be perfect and infallible, and it's not until long after Isabella's death that Catalina seriously questions that image.

Lady Margaret Pole

Sister to Edward Plantegenet and the woman who oversees the castle where Catalina and Arthur live in Ludlow. Catalina fears that Lady Margaret will blame her for Edward's death. In fact, Lady Margaret becomes close friends with Catalina, and she notes that the woman has filled a void in her life—the longing for a mother. It's Lady Margaret who is overseeing the nursery with Catalina and Harry's son, Henry, when he dies.

Elizabeth

Arthur's mother. Henry notes that she's sweet tempered and trusting, and that it's a good thing she has nothing to do with making policies for the nation. When she dies, Catalina feels that she has lost the only friend she had at court.

Edward Plantegenet

Another in line for the throne when Henry Tudor took control. Catalina's parents refuse to send her to England as long as Edward lives for fear that he would refute Henry's claim and take the throne for his own. He is Lady Margaret Pole's brother.

Margaret

Henry Tudor's mother, grandmother of Arthur and Harry. Lady Margaret was the driving force behind Henry's own quest for the throne and rules court with an iron fist. Her domineering ways are what eventually puts her out of favor with Harry. On her deathbed, she tries to make Catalina promise that she will not allow Harry to go into battle nor England to go to war. Catalina refuses the promise but she does tell the old woman that she will pray for her.

Dona Elvira

The duenna who is to oversee Catalina while she is in England. The woman is power hungry, and it's this that makes Catalina trust her to help spread the story that her marriage to Arthur was never consummated. When Catalina discovers that Dona Elvira is planning to stand with Juana against King Ferdinand, she dismisses the woman immediately, angry at the betrayal against her father.



Objects/Places

Granada

Where Catalina is with her parents at five when their camp catches fire, prompting her mother to order the building of a fort for a long siege that ends with the capture of the city.

Dogmersfield Palace

Where Catalina is when Henry Tudor and Arthur demand an audience with her, despite the fact that it goes against custom.

London

Where Catalina goes upon her arrival in England.

Wedding Ale

A drink served hot to "bolster courage" for a young couple on their wedding night.

Baynard's Castle

Catalina and Arthur's London home.

Ludlow's Castle

Where Arthur rules and where he and Catalina go shortly before Christmas of their first year as husband and wife. This is where their relationship changes to a deep love for each other.

Croydon Palace

Where Catalina is summoned following the death of Arthur.

Durham House on the Strand

Where Catalina goes following her stay at Croydon Palace.



Greenwich

Where Katherine goes for her confinement period to await the birth of her child.

Our Lady at Walsingham

The shrine where Henry goes to give thanks for the safe birth of his first son.

Richmond Palace

One of the newest castles in England, this is where Katherine's son is to live and where he dies.



Themes

The Quest for Power

Catalina has been raised from infancy to know that she is Princess of Wales and future Queen of England. The fact that she was the beloved Infanta of Spain is simply a forerunner of the great woman she is destined to be. She believes completely in that destiny. When the time comes to travel to England, she does so though she admits that she misses her mother. She often says that she is just a girl and that she still needs her mother, but that she is doing what she was supposed to do for her coming role as queen. She seems to have believed that enduring the trip to England and being away from her mother were hardships, but they were nothing compared to the hardships she was to endure over the coming years.

The death of Arthur meant that Catalina would likely be shipped home to Spain where she would marry a lesser man. As she tells her duenna, she would be married to a "nobody" and rule a household in some obscure location with no power at all. While Catalina says that she is fulfilling her deathbed promise to Arthur, she desperately wants to be Queen of England. But her desire for power goes further than that. She also wants the assurance that her son will be the country's next King of England. When Catalina is offered the chance to marry Arthur's father, the reigning king, she declines because her child will be second in line and will never take the throne unless Harry dies. While Catalina wants to be queen, she is also determined that the power will transfer to her own children as well.

When she is faced with seven years of waiting for a marriage to the next in line for the throne and is then told that her own life may be in danger, Catalina wavers but only briefly. She says that if she leaves England, Harry will forget about her and that her only hope of gaining the throne for herself and her children is to remain nearby so that he can always see her.

Love

Catalina is immediately enamored with Arthur. She says that he looks like a troubadour, but soon changes that opinion. However, when the two young people do connect, the love is deeper than Catalina could have imagined. The two find much to talk about and the common ground is the foundation for their love, though their time in the bedroom is fulfilling and Arthur sneaks into her room each night. When he dies, Catalina feels that there is no need to go on. She spends hours praying while he struggles to hold on to life and grieves deeply once he is gone. When friends are concerned for her and call in a doctor, he says that she suffers only from grief and that time will heal her.

Catalina does find the strength to go on, but for a long time she bases that strength on her love for Arthur and her determination to fulfill her promise to him - that she would



become queen by marrying his brother. While Catalina's love for Arthur continues to be an important part of all her actions, it's important to remember that Arthur's love for Catalina was deep as well. Arthur - still just a teenager himself - is dying but is concerned that Catalina not come too close to his death bed so that she doesn't contract his illness. Then, despite the fact that he tells her he is dying, he exacts a promise from her. Arthur says that his younger brother isn't fit for the throne and that he needs a steadying influence. He wants Catalina to exert that influence. He tells her what to do in order to marry Harry and become Queen of England, even though her actions will forever mar his name. Arthur's loving act is twofold. He knows that Catalina wants very much to rule and he knows that his country needs her leadership. Arthur's love for Catalina and his love for his country combine to make a selfless request that would change the course of Catalina's life.

Selfishness

There is no doubt that many of the characters in this novel have become accustomed to having whatever they want from life. It's the Spanish ambassador who says that Catalina complained bitterly about the weather during the voyage to England, as if he or someone else would do something to change the conditions so that the young princess would be comfortable and happy. Though Catalina changes dramatically over the course of the next few months, she continues to be selfish in many ways. When given the opportunity to become queen, she refuses because she wants nothing less than to have her son next in line for the throne.

Catalina isn't alone in this desire and ambition. Henry Tudor's mother, Margaret, sent her son away as a baby and then spent years arranging to have him take the throne though it meant putting her son in harm's way. She would accept nothing less than to be mother of the king. Once the family held the throne, she was anxious that nothing would change that. She dictated how many days each month her grandson was to visit his wife's bedchamber, a statement to the thought of the day that too much sex was not good for a young ruler and might even put his life in jeopardy. Even from her death bed, she attempted to exact a promise that Catalina would not allow England to go to war nor Harry to lead a battle so that the family's position would remain secure. It's interesting that Margaret even wrote a book on every possible royal event, dictating the rules and proper etiquette, so that she controlled those as well.

Isabella and Ferdinand each exhibit this characteristic as well. Catalina grew up as the beloved, the favored child, and it comes as a shock to her when she discovers that her mother is willing to use her as a pawn to achieve her own strategies and goals. Isabella demands that Catalina be returned to Spain after the death of her young husband, but has no intention of carrying out the order. She actually wants Catalina in England, on the throne, using her influence to keep the alliance between the two countries strong. Ferdinand goes a step farther, using his daughter to control an army of men in order to gain a province he's always wanted for Spain.

Style

Point of View

The book is written partly from a third person point of view and partly from first person. Both are limited to Catalina's perspective. There is a near equal division of first person and third person sections. Those passages written in first person are presented in italicized text so that there's no mistaking when the change occurs. The first person writing could either be personal thoughts of Catalina or could be entries from a journal. There is no indication of which is correct and no explanation of the first person accounts. There is no doubt that these are personal observations and thoughts.

The third person passages of the novel continue to be limited to Catalina's point of view. This is acceptable because there is really no need for the reader to have any other perspective. The reader learns about things outside Catalina's perspective as she does, usually through conversations with others or Catalina's personal accounts. The changes are handled well and are not confusing.

Setting

The book begins in Granada and then moves to England during the early 1500s. The setting is real and at least largely historically accurate. The descriptions of people and places are also largely historical. The fact that the people really existed and the events really occurred adds a level of drama to the book that would not exist in an entirely fictional work. The places are described from Catalina's point of view, meaning that she recalls the places and people of her childhood fondly and it takes her some time to warm to England. In fact, over the course of almost a decade in England, she continues to lament the fact of the country's weather and to compare weather conditions to those of her beloved Spain. From Catalina's point of view, it seems that England is a desolate place, almost always gray and overcast, and that the food and people are less desirable than their counterparts in Spain. Through her stories and conversations with Arthur, she paints a picture of Spain as an exotic place filled with wonderful sights, sounds, smells and tastes.

Language and Meaning

The book is written in an easy-to-read style with a story line that flows adequately through the lifetime of Catalina, Infanta of Spain. There are a few instances in which words of that time period are used that might not be familiar to all readers. In most cases, the meanings are not obscure and a reader with an adequate vocabulary will have no trouble reading and understanding the book.

Names are sometimes confusing. Arthur's father is Henry Tudor and Arthur's younger brother is also Henry. Catalina's son who dies is another Henry. For the majority of this



story, Arthur's brother Henry is known as "Harry". For the purposes of this guide, Harry becomes "Henry" upon his coronation, the point at which he himself begins referring to himself as Henry rather than Harry. The same is true of Catalina, though it's for a different purpose. Catalina is the name of the child born in Spain, but she begins using the English version of her name, Katherine, upon her own coronation as England's queen. There are other instances of this confusion. Both Arthur's grandmother and the woman who runs his house in Ludlow are named Margaret.

The fact that the story is—at least to some degree—historically correct will likely make the book more interesting to some readers, but it also places some limitations. For example, Henry VIII—brother of Arthur—is arguably best known for his wandering eye, the fact that none of his sons with Katherine lived to adulthood, and that he called upon the church to declare their marriage void. Though the story stops with only vague details of those happenings, most readers will know the ending of the book, as history has put forth those events.

Structure

The book is divided into sections and chapters and is presented in a chronological order. Any background information needed at a specific point in the book is typically presented through conversations between Catalina and another person. For example, there are many cases in which Catalina and Arthur talk long into the night about their childhoods. Through this, the reader learns about a number of important events—including the fact that Arthur's mother was willing to marry another if it meant she was to become queen. That fact is later important to Catalina, and she uses it to rein in Harry when he was prepared to put her aside because she wasn't a virgin when they married.

The divisions are not at all uniform, but typically won't be a problem for the reader. For example, the sections have titles such as "Princess of Wales", "Princess in Waiting", "Princess Again", and "Katherine, Queen of England". These section titles offer a clue as to the contents of the following pages. Sections are further divided into "chapters" that are named in two different ways. The first of these is "Granada", with a subtitle of "1491", but there is not another subtitle in this chapter. The next chapter is "Dogmersfield Palace, Hampshire, Autumn 1501", and this chapter has not subtitle. In the section titled "Princess in Waiting" the first chapter is "Winter, 1503". This chapter begins without a subtitle but there is later a subtitle, "May 1503", within this chapter. Though there is little continuity, the dates and places of sections, titles, and subtitles bring the reader to the date and place of the current activities.



Quotes

"'You can be quiet.' The child rounded on her with sudden angry spite. 'If I, the Princess of Wales herself, can be left in a burning campsite, then you, who are nothing but a Morisco anyway, can certainly endure it.'" Catalina, Granada, 1491, p. 4

"'You will be all in favor of the polite lie then. The great savior of a marriage is mutual ignorance.'" Dogmersfield Palace, p. 31

"'She's homesick,' his father said briskly. 'It's up to you to divert her. Take her to Ludlow with you. Buy her things. She's a girl like any other. Praise her beauty. Tell her jokes. Flirt with her.'" London, p. 65

"'To make a country is the most real thing anyone can do. We will make a kingdom that we can be proud of, just as my mother and father did in Spain. We can decide how it is to be, and we can make it happen.'" Ludlow Castle, p. 107

"'For everything I know is yours, and everything I am is yours. And if you and our country ever need me to fight for you, then I will be there.'" Ludlow Castle, p. 129

"'Catalina kneeled on the threshold as the priest anointed her husband with the oil and bowed her head for the blessing. She did not rise from her knees until they told her that her boy husband was dead and she was a widow of sixteen years old.'" Ludlow Castle, p. 158

"'Deliberately, she delayed her mourning until she had the safety to indulge it. While she jolted along in the litter, she was not weeping for him, she was racking her brains how to fulfill his dream. She was wondering how to obey him, as he had demanded. She was thinking how she should fulfill her deathbed promise to the only young man she had ever loved.'" Ludlow Castle, p. 166

"'I shall not give myself to heartbreak, I shall give myself to England. I shall keep my promise. I shall be constant to my husband and to my destiny. And I shall plan and plot and consider how I shall conquer this misfortune and be what I was born to be. How I shall be the pretender who becomes the queen.'" Summer 1502, Croydon Palace, p. 173

"'I thought that if I had been able to tell her of my promise, then she would have known



the pain that seeps through me like ice every time I think of Arthur and know that I promised him I would marry Harry. I thought that she might have understood if you are born to be Queen of England you have to be Queen of England, whoever is king. Whoever your husband will have to be." Winter 1503, p. 186

"Arthur was gone, and he was his father's favorite, the rosebush of England. Arthur was gone, and Arthur's bride was his wife. He stood straight and proud and repeated his oaths in his clear treble voice. Arthur was gone, and there was only one Prince of Wales and one Princess: Prince Harry and Princess Katherine." Whitehall, June 1503, p. 235

"I have sworn never to despair - the women of my family dissolve into despair like molasses into water. But this ice in my heart does not feel like despair. It feels as if my rock-hard determination to be queen has turned me to stone." Princess Again, 1509, p. 250

"Becoming a Queen Regnant is like coming home. I am happy as Queen of England. I am where I was born and raised to be." Greenwich Palace, 1509, p. 276

"And I, God forgive me, am too quick to think of the husband that I lost, and not of the husband that I won. He is not the man that Arthur was, and he will never be the king that Arthur would have been. But he is my husband and I should respect him. Indeed: I will respect him, whether he deserves it or not." Greenwich Palace, 1510, p. 324



Topics for Discussion

Describe Catalina's childhood. What is it about that childhood that makes her ultimately qualified to become queen? What are the drawbacks? Compare that to the childhoods of her two husbands.

What is Catalina's initial reaction to Arthur? to Harry? to Henry? How do her opinions of the three men change over the course of time?

Describe the marriage of Catalina and Arthur. Compare that to the marriage of Catalina and Harry.

How does Arthur's father, King Henry, acquire the throne? How does his marriage to Elizabeth come about? How does that compare with Catalina's own marriage to Harry?

What conditions does Catalina place on her acceptance of marriage to the elder King Henry? What does he say about those conditions? What happens to the arrangement?

What is Catalina's attitude about her mother? How does it change over the course of her lifetime?

How does Catalina change over the course of her lifetime? Who sees changes in the young woman? How do they describe those changes? What prompts the changes?

What deathbed promise changes Catalina's life forever? What does she eventually come to believe about that promise? Might Catalina have set out to marry Harry without that promise?