

A Tale of Two Friends

A story of King Henry VIII and
St. Thomas More of London

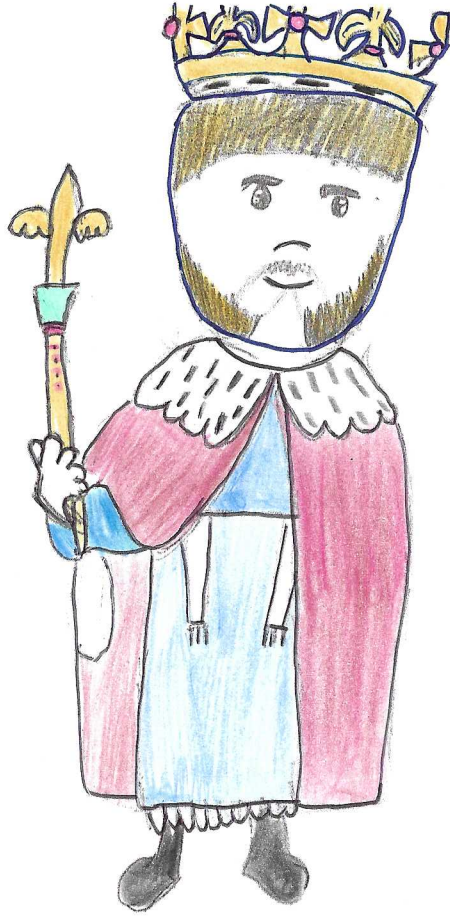
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A long time ago there lived two great friends in a country called England. One was a very important king. His name was Henry and he loved to have fun, play jokes, and eat yummy food. The other was a clever lawyer called Thomas More.



Henry and Thomas were both devout and loyal Catholics. Henry loved his Faith so much that the pope recognized his zeal for the Holy Faith and gave Henry the title of “Defender of the Faith!”

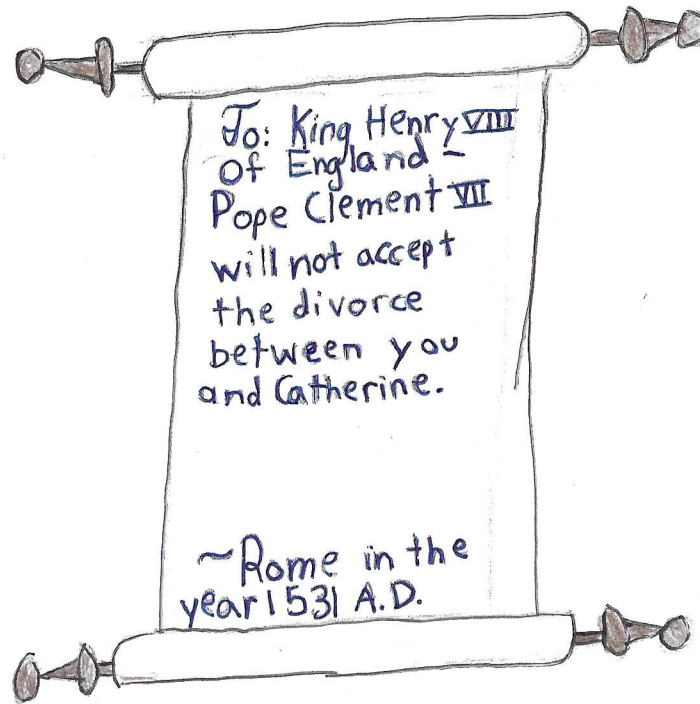


King Henry
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Queen
Catherine



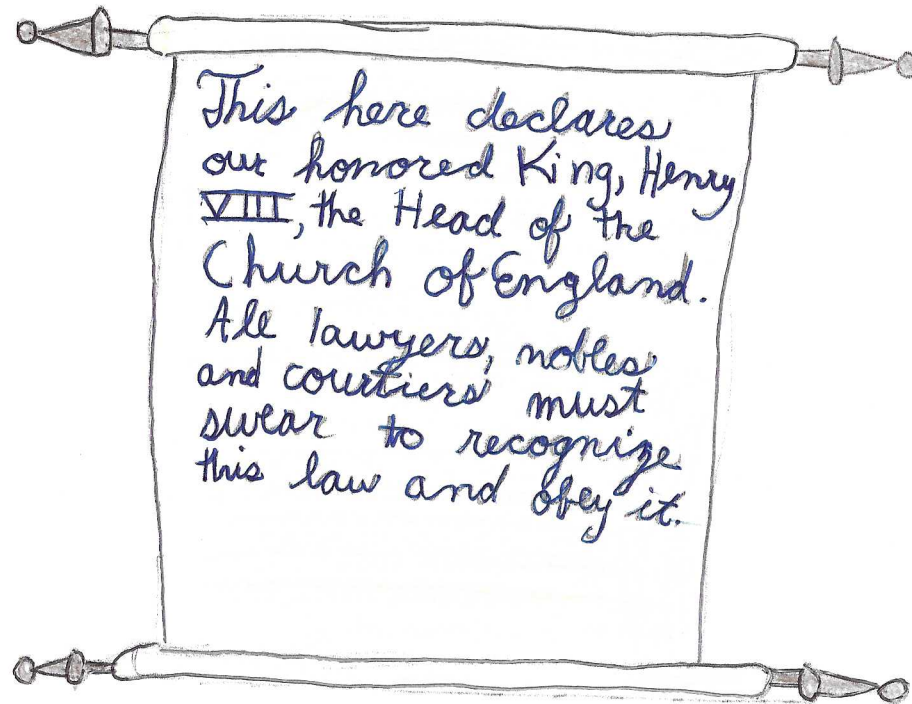
Henry had a very kind and good wife named Catherine. They had been married for a long time now, but they did not have any sons! Henry wanted a son who would be king after him. Since Catherine did not give birth to a son, Henry did not like her anymore. Instead, he liked another woman called Anne. Henry no longer wanted to be married to Catherine so that he could marry Anne. When somebody does this to their spouse it is called a divorce and it is wrong in the Eyes of God. Henry thought if he married Anne, she would give him a son.



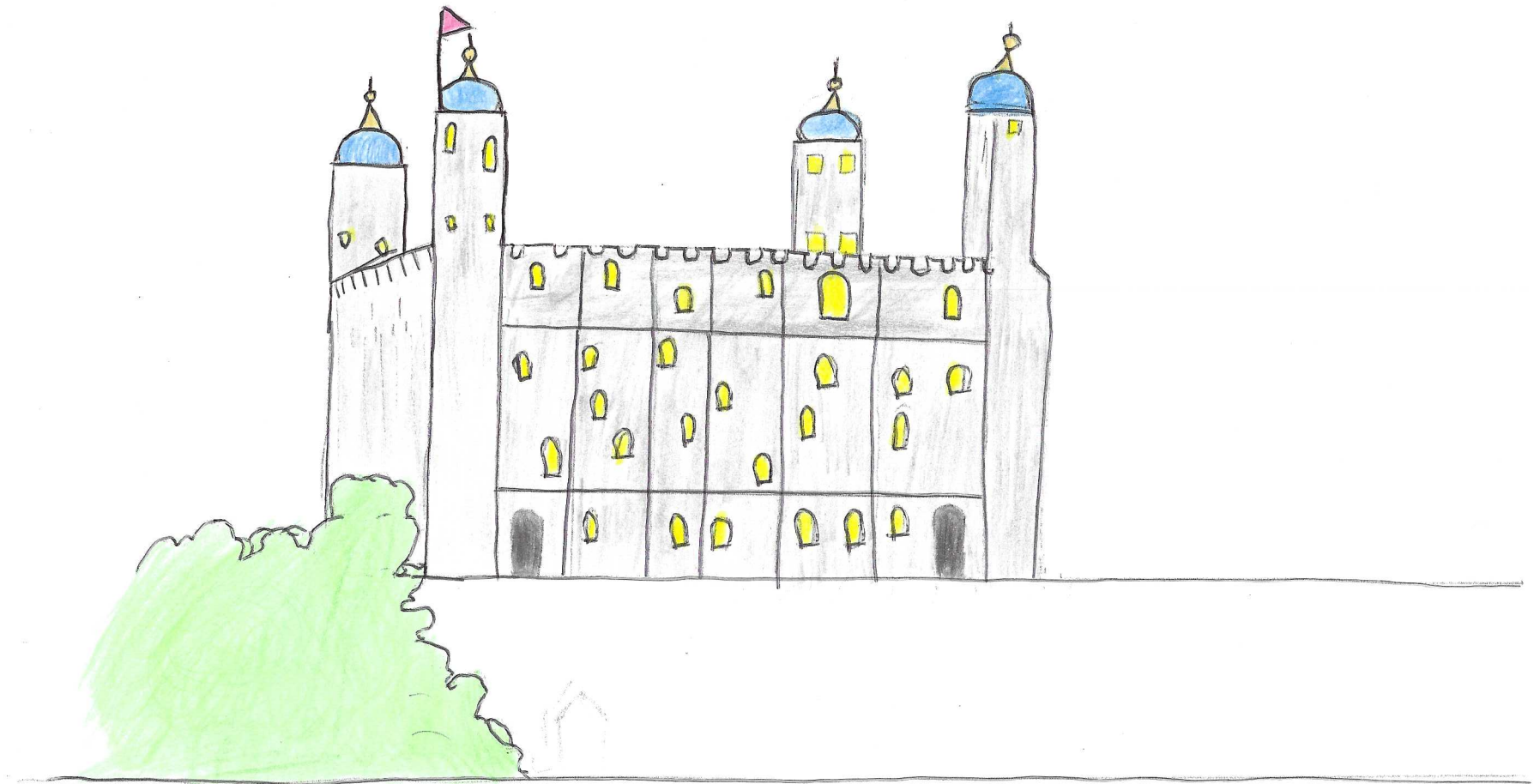
But, the Pope did not agree with Henry's decision to divorce Catherine. In the Church, you are married to your spouse until they die. Neither did Henry's friend, Thomas, who wanted the best for his friend. Henry got upset because he wanted Thomas to approve of his re-marriage.



Suddenly, the king's Lord Chancellor, Wolsey (his chief advisor) died. Henry wanted his best friend Thomas to take Wolsey's place. Thomas did not want to become so important, but to please the king, he agreed.



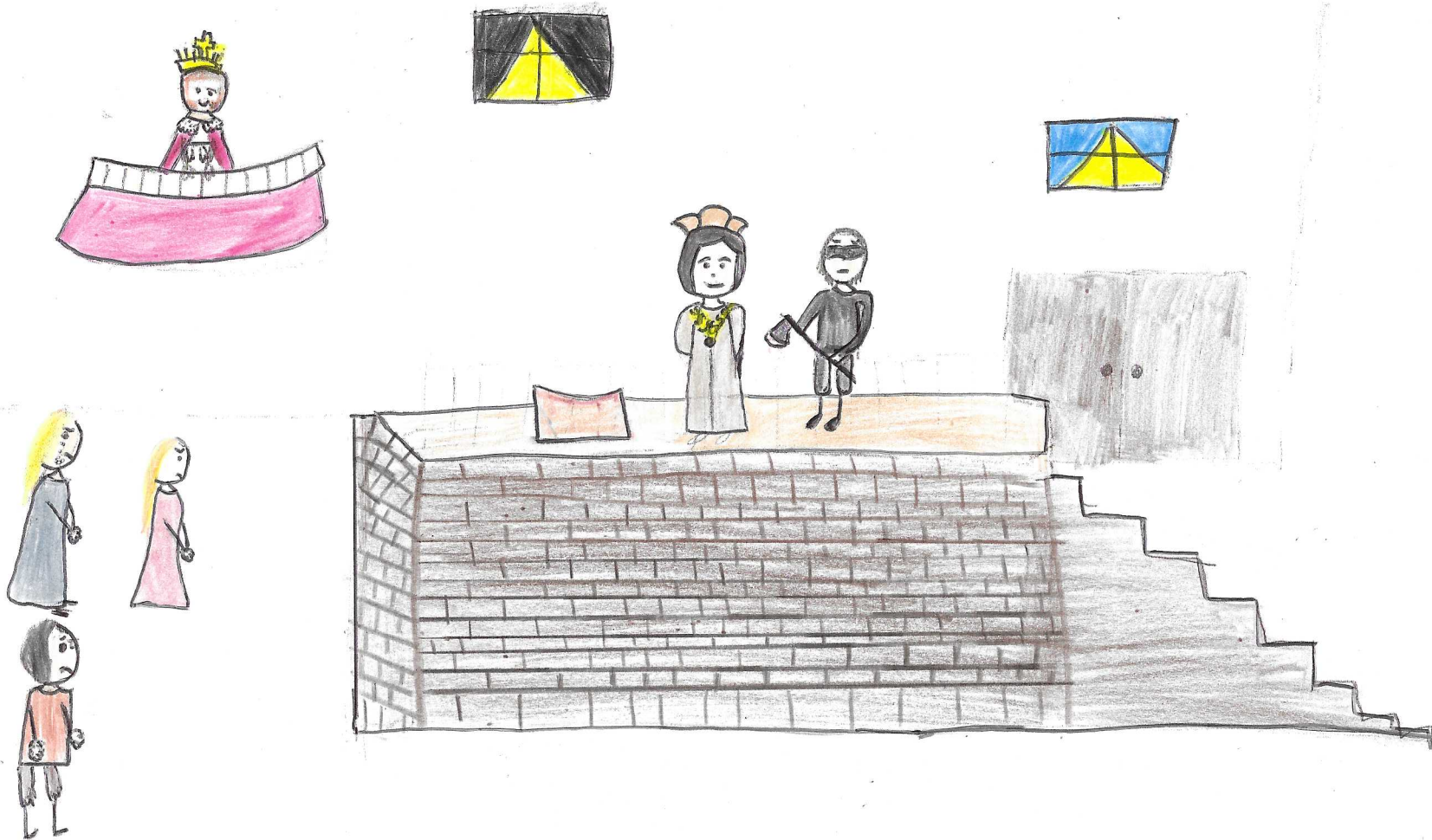
A group of men from all over England, called Parliament, made men swear an oath (the Oath of Supremacy) saying that he must agree to Henry being Head of the Church in England instead of the Pope in Rome. Thomas did not like this new law and remained silent. Being a lawyer by trade, Thomas was wary of crossing the king's will.



Henry got very mad, again! He ordered that Thomas should be put into jail unless he swears the oath. The king wanted Thomas to publicly agree to his new power. He saw Thomas' silence as a threat to his new title. Thomas wanted to be loyal as much as possible to his king, Henry, without disobeying God's laws. Since he would not swear the oath, Thomas got put into the Tower of London.



Thomas was surrounded by scheming men who wanted to trick him into saying wrong things about Henry. An evil man, Rich, said he heard Thomas say he did not like King Henry and his decisions. This was a mean lie which Henry and the judges believed. The furious Henry said that Thomas should be killed! Thomas was sad that King Henry believed the wicked men, but loved God so much, he was willing to die for what was right.



Soon afterwards, the king ordered that Thomas should be be-headed. Right before he died, Thomas declared he served God first, and the king second.



After Thomas died, Henry married many other women. He had six wives in all! Catherine was banished from the palace, Anne was executed, Jane died after giving birth to Henry's long-wanted son, and another Anne was also executed. There were two more Catherines, one was killed and one lived without Henry killing her.



Towards the end of his life, Henry got very fat and he grew very, very cross. Finally, about ten years after Thomas died, Henry died. Few people were sad he died because he had done a lot of mean things before he died. To this day, King Henry VIII has a bad reputation for having so many wives, and putting a lot of people to death, while Thomas is known for his humility and his desire to do God's Will before any man's desire on this earth.