

3 The Last Steps to the Scaffold

How did Anne Boleyn become an iconic figure?



1 Anne's downfall

A. Look at the still from the series *The Tudors*. What problems might have led the couple to an end?

B. Groupwork.

- **Group A** reads Text 1. Check your hypotheses and make a list of the problems mentioned.

- **Group B** reads Text 2. Focus on dates, places, names, and reasons for Anne's downfall.

C. Together, say how the still illustrates both texts.

Text 1

Despite all the years of waiting and longing, there had been "much coldness and grumbling" between the couple since their marriage, for Anne, once won, had perhaps been a disappointment. She had not been born to be a queen, nor educated to that end. She had found it difficult, if not impossible, to make the transition from a mistress with the upper hand to a compliant and deferential wife, which was what the King, once married, now expected of her. Years of frustration, of holding Henry off while waiting for a favorable papal decision that never came [...], had taken their toll on her as well as the King, and made her haughty¹, overbearing, shrewish², and volatile, qualities that were then frowned upon³ in wives, who were expected to be meek⁴ and submissive, not defiant and outspoken. And Henry VIII was nothing if not a conventional husband.

1 *hautaine* • 2 *acariâtre* •

3 *voir d'un mauvais œil* • 4 *douce, docile*

The Lady in the Tower,
Alison Weir, 2010



Text 2

Henry and Anne's daughter Elizabeth (the future Queen Elizabeth I) was born in September 1533. Two more pregnancies ended in miscarriage¹ [...]. When Henry discovered the second baby had been a boy, he became convinced the marriage was cursed. Henry was still desperate for a male heir and he blamed Anne for² this misfortune. He took on Anne's lady-in-waiting³ Jane Seymour as his mistress and looked for a way to end his marriage. In April 1536, Sir Francis Weston, William Brereton, Mark Smeaton, Sir Henry Norris and Anne's brother Lord Rochford were arrested on suspicion of having had relations with the Queen. Anne was investigated by a secret commission which included her father, her uncle the Duke of Norfolk and Thomas Cromwell. On 2 May 1536 Anne was arrested on charges⁴ of adultery with five men including her own brother, Lord George Rochford. At the trial⁵, presided over by the Duke of Norfolk, Anne was accused of adultery⁶ [...]. She was convicted⁷ and imprisoned in the Tower of London.

1 *fausse-couche* • 2 *reprocher qqch à qqn* •

3 *dame de compagnie* • 4 *accusations* • 5 *procès* •

6 *adultère* • 7 *déclarée coupable*

HELP!

Adjectives

- doomed /du:md/ = ill-fated
- unfair: *injuste*
- biased: *partial*
- scared = afraid

Verbs

- argue /'ɑ:gju:/ = quarrel /'kwɒrəl/
- condemn
- sacrifice /'sækrɪfaɪs/

Expressions

- even if = although = despite the fact that...
- go to great lengths to do sth
- desperate for a male heir /eə/
- star-crossed lovers
- the end justifies the means