

QUEENS

From Scene 19 - THE BIRTH OF A SON.

JANE S

I felt prepared for the birth of our child. I had rested well and spent the last month in darkness feeling nothing but excitement and hope for our future family. I had dreamed of a boy and was sure that almighty God was going to answer our prayers.

It was a very difficult birth, and very long. So very painful. Henry was extremely nervous. He had lost so many sons, so many children at this stage in his previous wife's pregnancies. The labour lasted three days... My baby, my precious baby was just not coming. I was bleeding so much and was having trouble breathing. The midwives and doctors started to panic. The child would not come out. I could see fear on their faces. They did not want to present the King with yet another dead child. I was screaming in pain and fear. Please save my baby. Please save my son.

The King was sent for; usually a father will not visit his wife in labour until after the babe has been born and the wife has tidied herself up prepared to present her child, but grave concerns were held for my child's mortal soul, as well as mine own.

Henry entered the room. He was horrified. There was so much blood. He grabbed the doctor by the throat, and I heard him yell. "Do whatever you can! Cut that babe out of her. Save my son! Save my son!"

It was then that I felt a new pain, a slicing though my very being. The pain was white hot; I felt my insides being torn from within... and then no more. Thankfully, I cannot seem to remember anymore. My child was ripped from me, not in the way God intended. My child was frail, but he was alive, and he was a boy. A son for the King. Finally, Henry had the heir he had desired all his life and I had provided it for him. Henry wept when he took this longed-for heir in his arms.... But I was mortally wounded and could not heal. A human body is not made to endure what my poor body had to. I understand Henry's desire for a son eclipsed his love for me, but we could have had more children. I could have survived to produce him many children, many sons. We could have been happy...if only....

Our dear child Edward lived to be King, but not for long. He was always weak and frail. It was as though he too never recovered from his traumatic birth. Oh Henry, I fought for you. I became the personification of a quiet, obedient and kind wife, but you did not protect me. Oh, what a tangled mess.