

When 21-year-old Princess Elizabeth (played in this scene from *Elizabeth R* by Glenda Jackson) was imprisoned at the Tower of London - implicated in Wyatt's Rebellion of 1554 - she was accompanied by her beloved teacher and governess Kat Ashley (played, in this clip, by Rachel Kempson - the mother of Vanessa and Lynn Redgrave).

Elizabeth entered the Tower through the drawbridge, not the Traitor's Gate (as depicted in this recreation). And ... she was housed in a four-room suite, not a simple cell, as shown here and described in *The First Queen of England* (by Linda Porter), at page 311:

Many legends have grown up about Elizabeth's time in the Tower of London. They are based on a colourful retelling of her story that was appended to John Foxe's Acts and Monuments. These tales are affecting and dramatic, but largely untrue.

The princess entered the Tower not by the Traitors Gate - an impossibility, given the low tide at the time she arrived - but over the drawbridge. She passed along a route lined with armed men, disconcerting in itself, and below the Bloody Tower.

In the distance, Lady Jane Grey's scaffold was still there, a grim reminder of the fate of another young woman who had entered the Tower as the queen's prisoner and never left it. And somewhere in her consciousness, though she never alluded to it, must have been the knowledge that her own mother, desperate and bewildered, had made this journey 18 years before.

'Oh Lord!' she said to Winchester and Sussex and the others accompanying her. 'I never thought to come here as prisoner; and I pray you all, good friends and fellows, bear me witness, that I come in no traitor but as true a woman to the queen's majesty as any is now living; and thereon will I take my death.'

Brave as the declaration was, much as she hoped to live, death must have seemed a hideous possibility.

Why would death "have seemed a hideous possibility" to the daughter of King Henry VIII? Because the reign of her father *and* her sister included the torture and death of many individuals. For Elizabeth, one of the deaths was intensely personal—the execution of her mother, Anne Boleyn.

She was released, from the Tower, due to lack of evidence. Legend tells us that while Elizabeth was also imprisoned at Woodstock Manor (in Oxfordshire) she carved these words into a window by using a diamond:

*Much suspected by me,
nothing proved can be.*

(See *Elizabeth I: The Voice of a Monarch*, by Ilona Bell, at page 51.)

Credits:

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Original broadcast, 1971. DVD released, October 16, 2001.

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Anne Boleyn - Second Wife of Henry VIII

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