

The Matriarch

by Kenita Gibbins

Sometimes I think I could be Queen of my dominion. I suppose the term matriarch suits me better. I came by this position by default. I don't particularly like being the head of the family alongside my husband. I didn't study for the job. I instinctively know not to step into the lives of our children and grandchildren. Sometimes I can't help from being a backslider. I must stay out of religion and politics just like it is best not to talk about those things anywhere except with my bridge friends. I don't understand how our children got such narrow viewpoints, those being the opposite of how I view the world.

Many reasons entering into why I don't want to be a Queen has to do with the mating selection. Anna, Queen of Spain, was born in Spain in 1549, but lived in Austria most of her childhood. She became Queen of Spain by marriage to her uncle, King Philip II of Spain. Her father promised her to Philip's only son Don Carlos who died in 1568. Phillip's third wife Elisabeth died in childbirth also in 1568. She left him with two girls and no sons. In 1569 Anna's engagement to her uncle Phillip II was announced and in May 1570 they married by proxy since she was en route to Spain.

History says he maintained his relationship with Anna twice a week in the form of notes, as well as visiting his niece's bedchamber up to three times a day. She did her duty. She was a good stepmother and gave birth to five children, including four sons. The last son survived and succeeded as Philip III. No wonder she died at age 30.

I'm sure we all know what happened to Henry VIII's wives. He wanted a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. To obtain a divorce he had to create his personal Church of England and banish Catholicism.

Number two wife carried her bloody head around the castle because Cromwell didn't trust her. Jane Seymour bore Edward Prince of Wales who went on to be king from age nine when his father died until he died at age 15. Jane died of natural causes after one year of marriage. Anne of Cleves became the lucky one because Henry divorced her for being ugly. Kathryn Howard met the executor after two years of marriage. Katherine Parr outlived the old coot.

No way I'd want to be a Queen. I did play Princess Juliana of the Netherlands who went on to Queen status.