

ENGLISH LEARNING  
FOR CURIOUS  
MINDS



Thank you - your ongoing membership makes Leonardo English possible.  
If you have questions we'd love to hear from you: [hi@leonardoenglish.com](mailto:hi@leonardoenglish.com)

---

## Episode #339

### Elizabeth I | The Virgin Queen

### 7th Feb, 2023

[00:00:00] Hello, hello hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:00:11] The show where you can listen to fascinating stories, and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:20] I'm Alastair Budge, and today is part two of our mini-series on queens.

[00:00:26] In part one we looked at the [tragic<sup>1</sup>](#) life of Anne Boleyn, the wife of Henry VIII.

[00:00:33] And in part three it's going to be Catherine the Great of Russia.

[00:00:37] I should say that if you haven't listened to the one on Anne Boleyn yet, I would advise you to listen to that one before this one.

[00:00:45] Anne Boleyn was Elizabeth the First's mother, so an understanding of her story will help you better understand the story of Elizabeth, and give you an indication of why, perhaps, she took some of the decisions she did, decisions that would mean

---

<sup>1</sup> characterised by sadness, unfortunate

she was able to truly manage to control her own destiny and legacy, in a way her mother wasn't.

[00:01:08] So, let's get right into it and learn about Elizabeth I, The [Virgin](#)<sup>2</sup> Queen.

[00:01:16] There's an expression in modern English called "broken home".

[00:01:22] It tends to mean an [unstable](#)<sup>3</sup> and unhappy childhood, often with separated or fighting parents.

[00:01:31] There is little evidence that this expression existed in the 16th century, but let me introduce you to a situation that would certainly meet our modern description.

[00:01:42] Imagine your mother was the queen of England, but when you were only two years old she was publicly [executed](#)<sup>4</sup> on the orders of your father.

[00:01:53] You were then [disowned](#)<sup>5</sup> by your father, along with your half-sister from his first marriage.

[00:02:00] And when your father had another child with his new wife, a boy no less, you became even less important.

[00:02:09] This was the situation that young Elizabeth found herself in.

---

<sup>2</sup> who never had sexual relations

<sup>3</sup> not safe or normal

<sup>4</sup> killed as legal punishment

<sup>5</sup> refused to have connections with him, rejected

[00:02:14] A broken home is perhaps even a **euphemism**<sup>6</sup> for the early years of Elizabeth I.

[00:02:21] Despite being **disowned** and having little chance of ever sitting on the **throne**<sup>7</sup>, she was still the king's daughter and had an extremely **privileged**<sup>8</sup> childhood and education.

[00:02:34] She learnt mathematics, poetry, **rhetoric**<sup>9</sup>, and music, and was fluent in five languages.

[00:02:42] From an early age, it was clear that this young girl **was a cut above the rest**<sup>10</sup>, she was something special.

[00:02:50] She was tall, she had bright red hair, and was exceptionally clever.

[00:02:56] And this intelligence and **wit**<sup>11</sup> would come in very handy, as she had to be constantly on guard, looking out for men **plotting**<sup>12</sup> and **conspiring**<sup>13</sup> against her.

---

<sup>6</sup> a phrase that describes the situation as better than it really was

<sup>7</sup> the special chair a king or queen sits on

<sup>8</sup> having special advantages

<sup>9</sup> the art of effective speaking or writing

<sup>10</sup> was better (cleverer) than other people

<sup>11</sup> cleverness, wisdom

<sup>12</sup> making secret plans

<sup>13</sup> planning with others to do something bad

[00:03:09] This all started from a young age.

[00:03:12] When she was only 14 years old, her father, Henry VIII died, passing the [throne](#) to her 9-year-old half-brother, Edward.

[00:03:22] Clearly, a 9-year-old can't exactly rule for himself, so his government was left in the hands of elder [noblemen](#)<sup>14</sup> and officials.

[00:03:32] And, as you might imagine, before Henry had even taken his last breath, there were plenty of [plots](#)<sup>15</sup> and [schemes](#)<sup>16</sup> about how to [manipulate](#)<sup>17</sup> and control not only his son and [heir](#)<sup>18</sup>, but his other children, Mary and Elizabeth.

[00:03:50] At this point, the young Elizabeth was sent to live with Henry's 6th and final wife, Catherine Parr, who had married a man called Thomas Seymour after Henry had died.

[00:04:02] If the surname "Seymour" [rings a bell](#)<sup>19</sup>, Thomas Seymour's sister was Jane Seymour, who was Henry VIII's third wife.

---

<sup>14</sup> men of high social rank

<sup>15</sup> secrets plans

<sup>16</sup> secret plans, conspiracies

<sup>17</sup> use to their advantage

<sup>18</sup> the one who would receive his position and title after his death

<sup>19</sup> sounds familiar

[00:04:11] Now, I know there are a lot of names and relationships here, so don't worry if it's a bit [tricky](#)<sup>20</sup> to follow.

[00:04:19] The important point is that Thomas Seymour was not good news for Elizabeth.

[00:04:24] Believing it would get him closer to the crown, Seymour began to make sexual advances towards the teenage girl.

[00:04:32] He was 25 years older than her, and were he to be alive today, he would certainly be called a [sexual predator](#)<sup>21</sup> and thrown into prison.

[00:04:42] Elizabeth's servant reported that Seymour would come to Elizabeth's bedroom every morning before the young princess was even dressed.

[00:04:51] He would [verbally abuse](#)<sup>22</sup> her, and it's thought he probably sexually abused her as well.

[00:04:57] It's believed that Catherine was well aware of her husband's behaviour but initially did nothing to stop it.

---

<sup>20</sup> difficult

<sup>21</sup> a person who looks for sex or sexual partners in an aggressive or offending way

<sup>22</sup> insult or attack her with words

[00:05:05] In fact, in one horrible episode she actually joined in this behaviour with him, with the couple reportedly tearing the young girl's dress to pieces to [humiliate](#)<sup>23</sup> her.

[00:05:17] It was not until Catherine found Elizabeth in Seymour's arms that she reacted and sent the young girl away from her palace never to see her again.

[00:05:27] Around a year after Elizabeth had been sent away, Catherine died, leaving all her riches to Seymour and making him one of the wealthiest men in the country.

[00:05:39] So, to [recap](#)<sup>24</sup>, Henry VIII dies, his surviving wife, Catherine, marries this horrible [abusive](#)<sup>25</sup> man, Thomas Seymour, who is planning to marry Elizabeth.

[00:05:51] Then Catherine dies, leaving her fortune to evil Thomas Seymour.

[00:05:56] Seymour now has the chance to carry out his plan to marry Elizabeth and gain [influence](#)<sup>26</sup> over his nephew, Elizabeth's half-brother, the young king Edward VI.

[00:06:08] Some say he actually planned to kill or marry off his nephew and put Elizabeth on the [throne](#).

[00:06:16] In any case, he didn't have the chance to do it.

---

<sup>23</sup> to make her feel shame, embarrass

<sup>24</sup> state again as a summary

<sup>25</sup> extremely offensive or violent

<sup>26</sup> control

[00:06:19] He was arrested for **treason**<sup>27</sup>, by his own brother **no less**<sup>28</sup>, and eventually executed.

[00:06:26] Anyone involved with Seymour also **came under suspicion**<sup>29</sup>, and this, naturally included Elizabeth. She was central to Seymour's plan, even though there is no evidence that she wanted anything to do with him.

[00:06:41] She was accused of helping him and of having a sexual relationship with him.

[00:06:47] She was **interrogated**<sup>30</sup> for weeks, with attempts to **bully**<sup>31</sup> a confession out of her.

[00:06:53] However, at just 15 years old, Elizabeth **outsmarted**<sup>32</sup> the council and denied all the charges, proving herself to be wise, confident, careful, and able to look out for herself in this world of **manipulative**<sup>33</sup> and **conspiring** men.

[00:07:12] But this would only be the start of her lifelong battle against men **plotting** to get rid of her.

---

<sup>27</sup> the crime of not being loyal to the country or king

<sup>28</sup> in a surprising way

<sup>29</sup> thought possibly guilty of having done something wrong

<sup>30</sup> asked a lot of questions in a threatening or violent way

<sup>31</sup> force

<sup>32</sup> was smarter than

<sup>33</sup> using people to their own advantage

[00:07:19] In 1553, her half-brother, King Edward VI, died, aged only 15.

[00:07:27] In his will just days before he died, he had named his Protestant cousin, Lady Jane Grey, as his **heir**, most likely because he didn't want his Catholic half-sister, Mary, to take control of the country.

[00:07:41] Well, the **throne** did pass to Lady Jane Grey, but for a **measly**<sup>34</sup> 9 days, before the **tide turned**<sup>35</sup> and Catholic Mary **seized**<sup>36</sup> the **throne**.

[00:07:52] Mary was determined to undo her father's religious reforms and return the country to Catholicism.

[00:08:00] Her father, Henry VIII, remember, had broken with Rome and declared himself to be head of the Church of England, the Protestant Church of England, so that he could marry Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's mother.

[00:08:14] Mary was a **devout**<sup>37</sup> Catholic.

[00:08:17] Protestants who refused to convert to Catholicism were **burned at the stake**<sup>38</sup>, earning Mary the nickname of Bloody Mary.

---

<sup>34</sup> very small number of

<sup>35</sup> things changed

<sup>36</sup> took hold of, took

<sup>37</sup> having deep religious feeling

<sup>38</sup> killed by burning

[00:08:25] Yes, if you're wondering, the drink with tomato juice and vodka is named after this religious [zealot](#)<sup>39</sup> of an English queen.

[00:08:34] Elizabeth, who was born a Protestant, would find herself caught up in this religious [turmoil](#)<sup>40</sup>, with Mary even locking up her own sister in the Tower of London, supposedly believing that she was [plotting](#) against her.

[00:08:48] It was two months before Elizabeth would be released from the Tower, and after this she was sent off to be kept under what was essentially [house arrest](#)<sup>41</sup> for another year.

[00:09:00] Now, to skip forward a little bit, Bloody Queen Mary died childless in 1558.

[00:09:07] She had failed to produce an [heir](#), so the crown passed to the 25-year-old Elizabeth, turning her into Queen Elizabeth I.

[00:09:16] Now, I know it has taken us a while to get to the bit where Elizabeth actually becomes Queen Elizabeth, but the [back story](#)<sup>42</sup> is important. Think about what she has gone through so far, and it might help you understand the actions she'll take when she's on the [throne](#).

---

<sup>39</sup> extreme supporter, fanatic

<sup>40</sup> a state of confusion or uncertainty

<sup>41</sup> the state of being kept as a prisoner in her own house

<sup>42</sup> the past events, background story

[00:09:34] She was crowned in a [coronation](#)<sup>43</sup> ceremony that was nothing short of a [spectacle](#)<sup>44</sup>.

[00:09:40] She [paraded](#)<sup>45</sup> through the streets in a small golden carriage as thousands of excited Londoners tried to catch a [glimpse](#)<sup>46</sup> of the new Queen.

[00:09:50] But not everyone was so excited over the [coronation](#).

[00:09:55] Remember, there are still vast religious divisions, and Catholics were angry at the idea of a protestant being back on the [throne](#).

[00:10:05] It was not only her religion that made Elizabeth problematic.

[00:10:09] She was an unmarried, childless, female monarch, a very unusual combination at the time.

[00:10:16] So, there was an [exceeding](#)<sup>47</sup> amount of pressure on her to do something about it.

[00:10:22] And what that meant, in practical terms, was first to find a husband.

---

<sup>43</sup> a ceremony where she was made queen

<sup>44</sup> impressive presentation or show

<sup>45</sup> carried around in public, especially so as to be seen

<sup>46</sup> quick look

<sup>47</sup> very great

[00:10:28] Not just so that he would do the important job of producing a male **heir** with her, but also so that he could help her make the tricky decisions that a monarch needed to take.

[00:10:40] Women at this time were not considered to be intellectually capable of making these kinds of tough decisions, so a queen needed to find a man to help her.

[00:10:51] As you might imagine, for an incredibly intelligent and independent woman, one who had already proved that she was perfectly capable of looking after herself, this must have been a **tricky pill to swallow**<sup>48</sup>, a difficult reality to accept.

[00:11:08] And indeed, Elizabeth didn't accept it.

[00:11:12] In fact, she had **resolved**<sup>49</sup> never to marry, even taking a **pledge**<sup>50</sup> as an 8-year-old to never take a husband. She would keep this **pledge** for her entire adult life.

[00:11:24] But how could she sell this to the public, a public that expected her to take a husband?

[00:11:30] Well, as queen, she transformed her image and public persona from ordinary woman into a god-like figure, a **deity**<sup>51</sup>.

---

<sup>48</sup> a difficult reality to accept

<sup>49</sup> decided in a strong or firm way

<sup>50</sup> promise, oath

<sup>51</sup> god-like figure

[00:11:40] She announced that she would live and die a **virgin**, earning her the nickname “The **Virgin** Queen”.

[00:11:47] It was actually a very clever move, as it placed her in a completely different category to a normal queen, who would constantly be **bombarded**<sup>52</sup> with marriage requests.

[00:11:58] If people thought of her more like a god than a queen, well this gave her the perfect excuse to not take a husband.

[00:12:07] So, why was this, why was she so **opposed**<sup>53</sup> to getting married?

[00:12:12] Well, perhaps it was just her character.

[00:12:15] Perhaps she had seen the devastating effect of marriage on her own mother, Anne Boleyn, as well as the fate of the other five women who had married her father.

[00:12:25] Perhaps it was the horrific **abuse**<sup>54</sup> she likely suffered at the hands of Thomas Seymour.

[00:12:31] Perhaps she was simply disgusted by all of the **scheming**<sup>55</sup> and **plotting** men at court.

---

<sup>52</sup> bothered by a large number of

<sup>53</sup> against

<sup>54</sup> cruel or violent treatment

<sup>55</sup> making secret plans

[00:12:37] Perhaps she thought that being independent was, [counterintuitively](#)<sup>56</sup>, her best chance at surviving.

[00:12:43] Whichever it was, one thing is undeniable: this was a man's world where women were second-class citizens.

[00:12:52] It was not long, though, before Elizabeth had much bigger problems than [fending off](#)<sup>57</sup> the advances of male [suitors](#)<sup>58</sup>, because in 1562 she fell very ill.

[00:13:04] Initially, she and her court believed it was just a cold but she grew weaker and weaker and soon she could not even talk.

[00:13:13] It became obvious that the queen had [Smallpox](#)<sup>59</sup>, the deadly disease that killed between 20-30% of everyone it infected.

[00:13:23] Everyone believed Elizabeth was about to die.

[00:13:27] Thankfully, though, she did not and she amazed everyone by making a full recovery. The disease would, however, leave her with terrible scarring on her face, which she would cover up with a permanent thick layer of white makeup.

---

<sup>56</sup> contrary to what one would naturally expect

<sup>57</sup> defend herself from, pushing away

<sup>58</sup> men who wanted to marry her

<sup>59</sup> a deadly disease

[00:13:43] She tried to take full advantage of her escape from death, describing it as evidence that God supported and protected her.

[00:13:52] But it wasn't taken this way by all, with her [critics](#)<sup>60</sup> suggesting that this only proved her to be a weak and [sickly](#)<sup>61</sup> woman who desperately needed a husband.

[00:14:02] And the pressure continued to grow, with her advisors continually putting forward potential matches. But Elizabeth rejected them all.

[00:14:12] Now, it is, of course, possible that there was another reason that Elizabeth was not interested in any of her advisor's suggested husbands.

[00:14:22] Perhaps it was because she had a [love interest](#)<sup>62</sup> of her own.

[00:14:27] One man above all others was believed to be her lover. His name was Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester.

[00:14:35] The pair had known each other since childhood and were almost inseparable. The Queen called him her 'Sweet Robin' and gave him many gifts, riches and powerful positions within her government.

---

<sup>60</sup> people who didn't approve of her or like her

<sup>61</sup> in poor health

<sup>62</sup> someone who she liked in a romantic way

[00:14:48] Over the years, many **rumours**<sup>63</sup> came out about the pair having had multiple **illegitimate**<sup>64</sup> children, who were subsequently sent abroad to protect the Queen's **virginal**<sup>65</sup> image.

[00:14:59] Whether the **rumours** were true or not, they clearly show that not everyone was **convinced**<sup>66</sup> by the Queen's claims she was a **virgin**.

[00:15:08] And Dudley certainly seemed to start to think that he was the one for Elizabeth, he was the man she was waiting for. He planned a **lavish**<sup>67</sup> proposal to her in an **extravagant**<sup>68</sup> 19-day-event, featuring water fountains, musical performances, plays and fireworks.

[00:15:26] The highlight of the entire event was planned to be a play, during which Dudley would dramatically propose to the queen.

---

<sup>63</sup> information that wasn't proven to be true

<sup>64</sup> born of parents not married to each other

<sup>65</sup> of a woman who didn't have sexual relations

<sup>66</sup> completely certain about

<sup>67</sup> impressive and rich

<sup>68</sup> costing too much money

[00:15:34] But Elizabeth had other plans. When she [got wind of](#)<sup>69</sup> what was about to happen, she refused to let the performance start, and Dudley's plan was [thwarted](#)<sup>70</sup>, it was stopped.

[00:15:47] The [Virgin](#) Queen was not planning on breaking the promise she had made to herself as an 8-year-old.

[00:15:53] She would remain single, she did not need a man to tell her what to do.

[00:15:59] And all around, the threats were growing. After all, the queen's ticking [biological clock](#)<sup>71</sup> and refusal to take a husband was problematic for the [succession](#)<sup>72</sup> of the British crown.

[00:16:11] With no children, who would the [throne](#) pass to after her death?

[00:16:17] For some, they sensed opportunity.

[00:16:19] In 1571 an Italian banker, Roberto Ridolfi [conspired](#)<sup>73</sup> with Elizabeth's Catholic cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots.

---

<sup>69</sup> became aware of

<sup>70</sup> stopped, prevented

<sup>71</sup> the system in body that controls when things happen (often used when referring to female fertility)

<sup>72</sup> The sequence or order in which one person after another receives a title or position

<sup>73</sup> made secret plans

[00:16:29] The pair **plotted**<sup>74</sup> to gather an army from Spain and then kill Elizabeth so Mary could take the English **throne**, and the country could be returned to Catholicism.

[00:16:40] But while there were plenty of **plotting** men around, Elizabeth also had a network of spies, she knew that knowledge was power.

[00:16:51] Her chief spymaster was a man named Sir Francis Walsingham, and he managed to discover this **plot**<sup>75</sup>, a **plot** which would go down in history as The Ridolfi **Plot**.

[00:17:03] Elizabeth ordered the executions of everyone involved, but she decided to **spare**<sup>76</sup> her Scottish cousin, Mary.

[00:17:11] Her **mercy**<sup>77</sup>, however, would not **go rewarded**<sup>78</sup>.

[00:17:15] In 1586, 15 years later, Mary, Queen of Scots began to **plot** again.

[00:17:21] She had been sending coded letters in beer **barrels**<sup>79</sup> to an Englishman named Anthony Babington.

---

<sup>74</sup> made secret plans

<sup>75</sup> secret plan, scheme

<sup>76</sup> not harm, show mercy to

<sup>77</sup> forgiveness, kindness

<sup>78</sup> bring anything good to her as a result

<sup>79</sup> round wooden containers

[00:17:28] The plan was much the same as the Ridolfi [Plot](#), with Spain to invade, kill Elizabeth, place Mary on the [throne](#) and [restore](#)<sup>80</sup> Catholicism.

[00:17:38] But the [conspirators](#)<sup>81</sup>, including Mary, did not realise that their letters were yet again being [intercepted](#)<sup>82</sup> by Elizabeth's trusted spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham.

[00:17:50] This time, Elizabeth wouldn't be so forgiving towards her rebellious cousin. Mary was caught, held in the Tower of London, and [beheaded](#)<sup>83</sup> the following year.

[00:18:02] But even with her rival to the north now dealt with, there was little peace for this English queen.

[00:18:09] There was increasing rivalry with Spain, with Philip II expressing his desire to attack England and [restore](#) Catholicism to the country, which would clearly require removing the Protestant monarch, Elizabeth, and replacing her with a Catholic.

[00:18:25] This all [came to a head](#)<sup>84</sup> in 1588, just a year after Elizabeth had got rid of the "Mary" threat.

---

<sup>80</sup> bring back

<sup>81</sup> people who made secret plans against her

<sup>82</sup> found, made known

<sup>83</sup> killed by having her head removed

<sup>84</sup> reached a point where something should be done about it

[00:18:34] On the south coast of England, the **troops**<sup>85</sup> were preparing for the arrival of the Spanish armada, the Spanish fleet.

[00:18:42] On the 19th of August 1588, Elizabeth went to visit them, making a **rousing**<sup>86</sup> speech to her soldiers.

[00:18:51] She declared, 'I know I have the body of a weak and **feeble**<sup>87</sup> woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too.'

[00:19:02] The English were **looking down the barrel of**<sup>88</sup> a potentially huge defeat.

[00:19:07] The Spanish forces were far greater in number, but there were terrible storms on their route north. There was a battle, the battle of Gravelines, and the Spanish were pushed away from the coast, forced to retreat back to Spain via the North Sea, and the threat was **averted**<sup>89</sup>.

---

<sup>85</sup> soldiers

<sup>86</sup> making people feel excited and proud, encouraging

<sup>87</sup> powerless, frail

<sup>88</sup> facing a situation that was unpleasant or dangerous

<sup>89</sup> prevented, stopped

[00:19:27] This victory, although it was certainly helped by bad weather and storms, brought Elizabeth's popularity to new heights, and [cemented](#)<sup>90</sup> her in the minds of the public as the Queen who had [seen off](#)<sup>91</sup> the Spanish.

[00:19:42] And despite all of these domestic and international threats, with cousins and Spanish kings trying to kill her, the Elizabethan era, as it has come to be known, was a period of relative peace, both domestically and internationally.

[00:19:58] Yes, there were all of those people at home and abroad who wanted her dead, but compared to the years that came before and after, it was remarkably peaceful.

[00:20:08] And with this peace came an era of [unparalleled](#)<sup>92</sup> cultural development, and the [flourishing](#)<sup>93</sup> of the arts.

[00:20:17] The Elizabethan era saw the plays of William Shakespeare, the explorations of Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh, and huge development in poetry, theatre and music.

---

<sup>90</sup> secured her, made her position certain

<sup>91</sup> made them go away

<sup>92</sup> unusual, unmatched

<sup>93</sup> development

[00:20:30] It's pretty amazing to think that in the years before she was made queen, the country was in the [midst](#)<sup>94</sup> of bloody religious wars, and then less than forty years after her death the UK experienced its most bloody civil war and then the execution of a King.

[00:20:47] And here, in the middle, came this "Golden Age" of peace and [tranquillity](#)<sup>95</sup>, which the lady on the [throne](#) can take a large amount of credit for.

[00:20:57] So, she was an admirable woman, and a strong and intelligent leader.

[00:21:02] But she was, after all, human.

[00:21:06] By 1597 she was 64 years old, an impressive age at the time when the average life expectancy was just 42.

[00:21:15] That year, the French ambassador wrote that the Queen looked aged, with [wrinkles](#)<sup>96</sup> and many missing teeth. She also [bore](#)<sup>97</sup> the [scars](#)<sup>98</sup> of [smallpox](#), which she covered up with her thick white makeup and her orange wig.

---

<sup>94</sup> middle

<sup>95</sup> calmness, restfulness

<sup>96</sup> the small lines on the skin caused by old age

<sup>97</sup> had, carried

<sup>98</sup> marks

[00:21:30] And many took her ageing face to be a reminder of the fact she was now too old to have a child but had still not named an [heir](#) to the [throne](#).

[00:21:41] And she could not escape [time's winged chariot](#)<sup>99</sup>.

[00:21:45] On 24th March 1603, at the age of 69, without ever producing an [heir](#) or naming her [successor](#)<sup>100</sup>, she died, ending the near 120 year-[reign](#)<sup>101</sup> of the Tudors.

[00:21:59] She was truly remarkable, overcoming imprisonment, disease, assassination attempts, war and rebellion, to rule for 45 years.

[00:22:09] This would have been impressive enough as is, but to do that as an unmarried woman in a world dominated by [scheming](#) and [unscrupulous](#)<sup>102</sup> men was even more so.

[00:22:21] She has gone down in British history as one of the most influential monarchs of all time, seeing the country through religious rivalries, domestic and international conflict, and turning the country from an [infighting](#)<sup>103</sup> minor European power into a [fledgling](#)<sup>104</sup> imperial one.

---

<sup>99</sup> an expression used to mean the passing of time (especially when referring to human life)

<sup>100</sup> the one who would receive her position and title after her death

<sup>101</sup> period of rule

<sup>102</sup> behaving in a dishonest way

<sup>103</sup> competition or conflict within the country

<sup>104</sup> arising, developing

[00:22:39] She was also, compared to her mother, Anne Boleyn, and even the subject of the next episode, Catherine the Great, the only one who really managed to control her own image and write her own story, [defying](#)<sup>105</sup> her critics and leaving an enormous legacy on the country.

[00:22:58] When she was born, she was a disappointment to her father because of her gender.

[00:23:03] The great [irony](#)<sup>106</sup> was, despite this “disappointing” gender, she was far more intelligent, [cunning](#)<sup>107</sup>, and brave than her father.

[00:23:12] This father, Henry VIII is remembered as a [selfish](#)<sup>108</sup> and nasty king.

[00:23:19] His daughter, on the other hand, managed to write her own story, define her own path and ultimately be remembered as a far more successful ruler than any man.

[00:23:32] Ok then, that is it for today’s episode on Elizabeth I, the [Virgin](#) Queen, part two of this three-part miniseries.

[00:23:42] Next up we’ll be talking about Catherine The Great.

[00:23:45] And if you missed it, part one was on Elizabeth’s mother, Anne Boleyn.

---

<sup>105</sup> resisting, ignoring

<sup>106</sup> a situation that seemed different from what it was expected in an amusing way

<sup>107</sup> clever, able to get what she wanted

<sup>108</sup> someone who thought only of his own advantage

[00:23:50] As always I would love to know what you thought of this episode.

[00:23:53] How much did you know about the life of Elizabeth I?

[00:23:57] Why do you think she never married?

[00:23:59] Can you think of any parallels between Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II?

[00:24:04] I would love to know, so let's get this discussion started.

[00:24:08] You can head right into our community forum, which is at [community.leonardoenglish.com](http://community.leonardoenglish.com) and get chatting away to other curious minds.

[00:24:17] You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:24:22] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]

---

## Key vocabulary

<b>Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Tragic</b>	characterised by sadness, unfortunate
<b>Virgin</b>	who never had sexual relations
<b>Unstable</b>	not safe or normal
<b>Executed</b>	killed as legal punishment
<b>Disowned</b>	refused to have connections with him, rejected
<b>Euphemism</b>	a phrase that describes the situation as better than it really was
<b>Throne</b>	the special chair a king or queen sits on
<b>Privileged</b>	having special advantages
<b>Rhetoric</b>	the art of effective speaking or writing
<b>Was a cut above the rest</b>	was better (cleverer) than other people
<b>Wit</b>	cleverness, wisdom
<b>Plotting</b>	making secret plans

<b>Conspiring</b>	planning with others to do something bad
<b>Noblemen</b>	men of high social rank
<b>Plots</b>	secrets plans
<b>Schemes</b>	secret plans, conspiracies
<b>Manipulate</b>	use to their advantage
<b>Heir</b>	the one who would receive his position and title after his death
<b>Rings a bell</b>	sounds familiar
<b>Tricky</b>	difficult
<b>Sexual predator</b>	a person who looks for sex or sexual partners in an aggressive or offending way
<b>Verbally abuse</b>	insult or attack her with words
<b>Humiliate</b>	to make her feel shame, embarrass
<b>Recap</b>	state again as a summary
<b>Abusive</b>	extremely offensive or violent
<b>Influence</b>	control
<b>Treason</b>	the crime of not being loyal to the country or king

<b>No less</b>	in a surprising way
<b>Came under suspicion</b>	thought possibly guilty of having done something wrong
<b>Interrogated</b>	asked a lot of questions in a threatening or violent way
<b>Bully</b>	force
<b>Outsmarted</b>	was smarter than
<b>Manipulative</b>	using people to their own advantage
<b>Measly</b>	very small number of
<b>Tide turned</b>	things changed
<b>Seized</b>	took hold of, took
<b>Devout</b>	having deep religious feeling
<b>Burned at the stake</b>	killed by burning
<b>Zealot</b>	extreme supporter, fanatic
<b>Turmoil</b>	a state of confusion or uncertainty
<b>House arrest</b>	the state of being kept as a prisoner in her own house
<b>Back story</b>	the past events, background story

<b>Coronation</b>	a ceremony where she was made queen
<b>Spectacle</b>	impressive presentation or show
<b>Paraded</b>	carried around in public, especially so as to be seen
<b>Glimpse</b>	quick look
<b>Exceeding</b>	very great
<b>Tricky pill to swallow</b>	a difficult reality to accept
<b>Resolved</b>	decided in a strong or firm way
<b>Pledge</b>	promise, oath
<b>Deity</b>	god-like figure
<b>Bombarded</b>	bothered by a large number of
<b>Opposed</b>	against
<b>Abuse</b>	cruel or violent treatment
<b>Scheming</b>	making secret plans
<b>Counterintuitively</b>	contrary to what one would naturally expect
<b>Fending off</b>	defend herself from, pushing away

<b>Suitors</b>	men who wanted to marry her
<b>Smallpox</b>	a deadly disease
<b>Critics</b>	people who didn't approve of her or like her
<b>Sickly</b>	in poor health
<b>Love interest</b>	someone who she liked in a romantic way
<b>Rumours</b>	information that wasn't proven to be true
<b>Illegitimate</b>	born of parents not married to each other
<b>Virginal</b>	of a woman who didn't have sexual relations
<b>Convinced</b>	completely certain about
<b>Lavish</b>	impressive and rich
<b>Extravagant</b>	costing too much money
<b>Got wind of</b>	became aware of
<b>Thwarted</b>	stopped, prevented
<b>Biological clock</b>	the system in body that controls when things happen (often used when referring to female fertility)
<b>Succession</b>	The sequence or order in which one person after another

receives a title or position

**Conspired**

made secret plans

**Plotted**

made secret plans

**Plot**

secret plan, scheme

**Spare**

not harm, show mercy to

**Mercy**

forgiveness, kindness

**Go rewarded**

bring anything good to her as a result

**Barrels**

round wooden containers

**Restore**

bring back

**Conspirators**

people who made secret plans against her

**Intercepted**

found, made known

**Beheaded**

killed by having her head removed

**Came to a head**

reached a point where something should be done about it

**Troops**

soldiers

**Rousing**

making people feel excited and proud, encouraging

<b>Feeble</b>	powerless, frail
<b>Looking down the barrel of</b>	facing a situation that was unpleasant or dangerous
<b>Averted</b>	prevented, stopped
<b>Cemented</b>	secured her, made her position certain
<b>Seen off</b>	made them go away
<b>Unparalleled</b>	unusual, unmatched
<b>Flourishing</b>	development
<b>Midst</b>	middle
<b>Tranquillity</b>	calmness, restfulness
<b>Wrinkles</b>	the small lines on the skin caused by old age
<b>Bore</b>	had, carried
<b>Scars</b>	marks
<b>Time's winged chariot</b>	an expression used to mean the passing of time (especially when referring to human life)
<b>Successor</b>	the one who would receive her position and title after her death

<b>Reign</b>	period of rule
<b>Unscrupulous</b>	behaving in a dishonest way
<b>Infighting</b>	competition or conflict within the country
<b>Fledgling</b>	arising, developing
<b>Defying</b>	resisting, ignoring
<b>Irony</b>	a situation that seemed different from what it was expected in an amusing way
<b>Cunning</b>	clever, able to get what she wanted
<b>Selfish</b>	someone who thought only of his own advantage

*We'd love to get your feedback on this episode.*

*What did you like? What could we do better?*

*What did you struggle to understand?*

Let us know in the forum [community.leonardoenglish.com](https://community.leonardoenglish.com)