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An edition of Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy's The young Elizabeth

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AN EDITION OF AMELIE RIVES TROUBETZKOY'S
THE YOUNG ELIZABETH

BY

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Vita
In the edition which follows, the objective has been to present a reading as well as an acting edition of Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy's *The Young Elizabeth*. While major revisions to the manuscript will be discussed briefly, it has not been the purpose to present a perfect collation of the separate manuscripts of the play. The intent, instead, has been to bring to light a significant contribution to dramatic literature.

The introductory section has been divided into three parts. Part I constructs an evolution of the creation of the play and serves as the major part of the introduction. Part II is concerned strictly with the manuscripts themselves and the different states that the drama passed through. Finally, Part III briefly discusses the methods employed in editing the text.
I

THE CONSTRUCTED EVOLUTION OF A DRAMA

The purpose of the first section of this introduction is to construct the evolution of a work of art. The work of art to be examined belongs to the genre known as drama and is entitled The Young Elizabeth. Its creator is Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy. What is contained herein will not be called definitive, but rather an attempted piecing together of two decades of unpublished work by the playwright. The authoress is hereby called a playwright and justifiably so. For if the drama under consideration here is to be one that she is to be judged on, then she is unquestionably deserving of that title. The situation necessitates that speculation be as much a part of what is to follow as facts will be. The compilation and construction of the evolution of this play is done almost entirely from the study of unpublished manuscripts, letters to and from the playwright, and other documents of a similar nature. Research of this type often leaves many gaps unfilled and questions unanswered. One can only attempt to bridge the gaps and offer answers based on assumptions in the places that seem wanting. The examination will not be divided into several major sections, but instead will only very humbly attempt to unfold the history of an unpub-
lished play from its rather vague beginning to its final form in the year that it was performed for the first and—
to this day—the only time.

The Young Elizabeth by Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy was a play on "the love-story of Elizabeth Tudor and Robert Dudley, when they were young, according to legend, not to history."\(^1\) The play was also entitled The Crown of Flame as well as Bol Phoebe during the several stages of its development. The Young Elizabeth, however, was the title finally decided on and the one under which it was finally performed. The play contained four acts and was written in prose rather than poetry. The playwright had written poetic dramas before, but they were not of the same caliber as this play. According to Dr. W. D. Taylor, "those whose knowledge of Elizabeth I's greatest love derives from Maxwell Anderson's Elizabeth the Queen (1930) should read this drama. Though not as probing as Anderson's play, it shows more sides of the Queen's nature."\(^2\) After a careful reading of both plays, one is inclined to agree.

When the idea for the play was first conceived is not known, nor is one able to determine the date when the first draft was composed. However, one can speculate that it was sometime between 1917 and 1920 when the playwright was in her

\(^{1}\) Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy, The Young Elizabeth (unpublished manuscript of July 1, 1938), title page.

mid-fifties. The earliest manuscript of the play is dated 1920 and is entitled The Crown of Flame. The playwright has written, in her own hand, on the title page, "as first criticized by Harley Granville-Barker (unrevised) written in 1920." This copy of the play was one hundred twenty-seven pages long and had been sent to Curtis Brown, Ltd., in London for reading. The number of pages in the play is mentioned only because it changes several times through the numerous revisions the play underwent.

The next copy of the play is also dated 1920. This manuscript, which once again is entitled The Crown of Flame, is called the Alice Kauser copy. The play had apparently been sent to Alice Kauser in New York to be read. Alice Kauser was probably an agent and once again the playwright has written a significant comment on the envelope which was used to transport the play. Directly underneath the title, The Crown of Flame, she has written "the copy of 1st writing of play that Alice Kauser had and did not think good theatre." As can be seen by the number of pages in each act, the play had been altered, as it would be many times. This copy of the play was thirty pages shorter than the first manuscript had been.

A letter from the playwright's friend, Harley Granville-

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3 Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy, The Crown of Flame (unpublished manuscript which had been sent to Curtis Brown, Ltd. in 1920), title page.

4 Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy, The Crown of Flame (unpublished manuscript called the Alice Kauser copy and had been sent to same in 1920), title page.
Barker, is the next relevant occurrence in the history of the play. The letter was written on May 27, 1922 from England. Granville-Barker is high in his praise of the play:

I like "The Crown of Flame." That is a bald sentence, and may seem to express little of my liking. But I leave it bald, because I want it to express a great deal, and if I merely launch into terms of friendly hyperbole all I say will become meaningless. Therefore—as emphatically as possible—I like it.

He goes on to comment on the characterization of Elizabeth:

Elizabeth is bravely done. She has the right trumpet tone all through, and in the hands of an actress of sufficient resource and the appropriate gifts she should be a magnificent figure. But—and rub this into whoever plays it—she must not be shirked. The actress must blaze away just as whole-heartedly as you have done.

In this same letter Granville-Barker makes several critical suggestions to which the playwright replied by writing in the margin. Several of these merit mention. He wishes that she did not have to be so explanatory of history for it tends to take away from the actuality of the scenes where it occurs. The playwright has written in the margin that this has been corrected. The critic goes on to comment that he wishes that Elizabeth was not so easily taken in by Cecil in Act IV. He further says that one of the greatest things about Elizabeth is that she has been drawn as a passionate woman who is neither a fool nor a wanton. He thinks that the power of moving the last act should reside in Elizabeth alone. The playwright comments in the margin of the letter that she has rewritten

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5 Unpublished letter from Harley Granville-Barker, May 27, 1922.
and reconstructed this last act to Harley Granville-Barker's liking. This one example points up the respect that the playwright had for her friend's insights and criticisms. Not to give the impression that she agreed with everything that he said, it is worth citing one more thing from this same letter. Granville-Barker felt that the character of Robert Dudley suffered a bit toward the latter part of the play because the playwright had not developed him. Written very curtly in the margin next to this passage is simply "Here Harley and I differed."

Harley Granville-Barker again wrote to the playwright concerning The Crown of Flame in a letter dated September 28, 1922. One can surmise from this letter that Granville-Barker, with the consent of the playwright, had been trying to get someone to produce the play in London. The letter says that he showed it to some theatre people who commented to him that "It is the best Queen Elizabeth one I have read." Nevertheless, they were not ready to jump at it because they did not consider it "safe" enough. He expresses his desire that the playwright will soon get some good news of the play, but realistically adds that the theatre business in London is pretty tough to crack at the moment.

About one month after the just-mentioned letter from Granville-Barker, there is a letter dated October 25, 1922.

from A. W. Barmby, the playwright's publisher, to the playwright. He comments on the beautiful letter that Granville-Barker wrote about *The Crown of Flame*. There is no way of knowing if this is the same letter that the playwright had received, or whether Granville-Barker had written a separate letter to Barmby praising the play. One can speculate that it was probably the former. Barmby goes on to say:

> Of course he couldn't help but like it because to my mind it is one of the finest pieces of dramatic writing that I have seen for a very long time. I know it is going to be an awful job to find an actress capable of playing the part, but some day she is going to be found. We are constantly on the lookout. Ames is going to produce a play entitled *Will Shakespeare* and if this takes on it may revive the market for period plays and we shall be all ready to jump in with *The Crown of Flame.*

The play Barmby mentions, *Will Shakespeare* by Clemence Dane, was produced in January, 1923, at the National Theater in New York City. The reviewers were not particularly kind to the play as a whole. They said that even though it had a few good moments and that Miss Haidee Wright was excellent in the role of Queen Elizabeth, the play failed dramatically. Reviewers hinted at the play being very loosely constructed and contrived. One can only speculate that this was partially the reason that Barmby, and others, were not particularly eager "to jump in with *The Crown of Flame.*" The market at this point did not look ready to accept a whole rash of period plays. Other explanations there well may be, but it

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7 Unpublished letter from A. W. Barmby, October 25, 1922.
is worth mentioning at this point that the playwright had had successful productions of such plays as The Sea-Woman's Cloak and November Eve during this period and was not unknown to New York theatre-goers.

During the middle years of the 1920's the playwright was hampered with frequent attacks of the grippe and of neuralgia. This trouble with her health, coupled with a decrease in her financial security, accounts for the lack of literary output during this period.

It is almost four years after the letter from Barmby that the next reference is made to the play. Once again it is in the form of an epistle—this time from Mrs. Harley Granville-Barker to the playwright. The letter is dated June 17, 1926, and the playwright has written the following on the envelope: "A dear letter from Helen about my 'Elizabeth' play." Just as her husband had done, Mrs. Granville-Barker praised the play. She said that she was especially proud of the dialogue—that it was so crisp and witty. She goes on to say that she personally would have liked the play to end where Elizabeth says, "I am England!" This reference was to the end of the fourth act where the conflict between woman (love of Dudley) and queen (love of England) were

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8 Taylor, p. 173.

9 Unpublished letter from Mrs. Harley Granville-Barker, June 17, 1926.
brought into a direct confrontation. Dudley's love is selfish and Elizabeth tells him that he has forgotten England. His answer to this accusation is, "It is you come first for me,—then England!" Her sterling reply is, "I am England!" Apparently this did not end the play as it was later to do. The fourth act, especially the very last segment of it, was to receive the most attention during the many revisions the play was subjected to.

The letter from Mrs. Granville-Barker also mentions something else of consequence. She asks the playwright if there is any likelihood of the play being done. Coinciding with her praise of the play generally, she realizes that the leading part would be magnificent for someone. This someone, however, should not be Sybil Thorndike, for in Mrs. Granville-Barker's words, "she is so middle-class (between you and me)." By this letter, one is made aware that the playwright had not yet been able to get the play produced. Along these same lines, however, there is no indication as to how hard, if at all, she was actively trying to have it put on the stage. One must remember that she was a very proud artist and would not prostitute herself or her art.

There is a manuscript of the play which is dated around this period of 1926. The playwright had written on the envelope which contained this copy of the play the following message: "This is the original form from which I corrected, revised & rewrote the version of 1926."10 The play, at this

10 Amelie Rives Troubotzkoy, The Crown of Flame (unpublished manuscript rewritten during 1925), on envelope cover.
point, was still entitled *The Crown of Flame*, but a curious thing can be found in this copy of the manuscript. Each of the four acts were bound separately and on the cover of each act *The Crown of Flame* had been crossed out and *Bel-Phoebe* written above it. The length of the play had once again changed. The play was now one hundred forty-five pages in length. The fourth act was the one with the most notable change. It had been expanded to forty-six pages. This was twelve pages longer than it had been in any of its previous stages. This serves to point up once again the recurring fact that this final act was the one that caused the playwright the most trouble and thus the one that underwent the most revision.

October 13, 1927 is the next significant date in the evolution of the play. This date is written on a group of pages that have been cut from the fourth act of, what is now being called by the author, *The Young Elizabeth*. The changes start with page twenty of the fourth act which has now been cut to thirty-three pages. The revised pages contain extensive notes made by the playwright. It is very evident that she is still deeply concerned with this play and means to keep working on it until it reaches, in her own judgment, absolute perfection.

Seven years stand between the manuscript revisions of October, 1927, and the next dated manuscript materials which read December 20, 1934. During this period the authoress had written *Love-in-A-Mist* (1927), which turned out to be the only successful commercial play of hers that was published
after its Broadway run.\textsuperscript{11} She also published \textit{Firedamp} (1930), which was to be her last novel. One does not need to be told, of course, that these were the years of the Depression. The Troubetzkoys were pretty hard-hit by these years. The playwright also continued to have bouts with her health during these years. Her frequent attacks of neuralgia were now joined by urticaria in 1933.\textsuperscript{12} One can only surmise, however, that the playwright, despite all of her troubles, did continue to be concerned with perfecting her unproduced drama.

On the front page of the group of materials dated December 20, 1934 is written the following note: "3 copies copied from the last revised (typed) MS 1932-34, with corrections to Act IV."\textsuperscript{13} The playwright once again called the work \textit{The Young Elizabeth}, and it seems that this is the title she has finally decided to use. The complete copy of the play contained in this group of manuscript materials has extensive corrections written in the author's hand. The fourth act continues to be the one part of the play which commands the most attention. It would not be, at least at this date, speculation to say that the work of art was still a very active and primary concern of the artist.

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\textsuperscript{11} Taylor, p. 181.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 194.
\textsuperscript{13} Unpublished notes, December 20, 1934.
\end{flushleft}
That the playwright was in touch with various agents and producers during this period there is no doubt. A scrutiny of the manuscript materials from around December of 1934 will evidence this fact. A brown envelope, which was obviously used to mail the play, has the following written on it: from Brandt & Brandt Dramatic Dept. Inc., 101 Park Ave., New York. There is no reference, however, as to what Brandt and Brandt thought of the play, or a reference as to whether they considered doing anything with it. In the meantime, the revision of the text had continued. On the page before the first act, the setting of Act II and Act IV had been changed from the Queen’s Privy Chamber at Windsor to the Queen’s private apartments at Windsor. The length of the overall play had once again undergone a transition and the complete play was now one hundred twenty-three pages long, with Act IV now having been cut to twenty-nine pages.

A play, unlike a novel or a poem, is intended to be acted on a stage. Many plays read well as literature, and The Young Elizabeth is fortunately one of these. Nevertheless, it is on the stage that this particular type of art is given life. Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy received a letter on August 10, 1937 that served to announce the coming theatrical birth of a play whose gestation period had been far too long. The letter was from a man who would have quite a bit to do with the playwright and her play for the better part of a year, and who would help to bring the play into the final stage of its evolution. He was a director named Harold Bassage and
the opening lines of his letter are quite informative:

I am going to direct the Saint Louis Little Theatre next season, and am, of course, looking forward with eagerness and delight to directing "The Young Elizabeth."14

St. Louis is a long way from Broadway, or for that matter from Virginia where the playwright resided. How and why is the play, after almost twenty years, being produced for the first time in St. Louis? A review of the play, which appeared in March of 1938, serves to partially answer this question. The review calls The Young Elizabeth last year's—meaning 1937—winner of the national play competition sponsored by the Little Theatre group.15 Why the playwright decided to enter her play in a competition of this nature is not known, but the fact remains that she did enter and that she did win. Both of these latter facts became the reason, therefore, that this play which had been on the drawing board for almost twenty years was finally going to be performed.

In the rather long letter that the playwright received from Harold Bassage one can see the beginning of the first editing of the play in preparation for its stage production. Suggestions had been made to the playwright before by people such as Harley Granville-Barker, but they were suggestions about the writing of the play and they were not made by a professional director intent on staging the play. Within

14 Unpublished letter from Harold Bassage, July 31, 1937.
15 Review that appeared in Variety, March 27, 1938.
the body of the letter Bassage has made several suggestions, and, as was her habit, the playwright has written her reactions to these in the margins beside the suggestions. The suggestions are not critical of the writing, but instead only a professional's opinion of what would probably come off best on the stage. Most of the suggestions seem to be agreeable to the playwright. Bassage prefaced his suggestions with "in the interests of making it as thrilling to an audience as it is to us who know and love this period and this kind of play, might it be possible to make a few changes?" This polite approach may have served to temporarily soften whatever of the temperamental artist there may have been in Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy. Several of the suggestions deal with cutting some of the play. For example, Bassage says "in Act II, could we boil down the scene with the ladies in waiting, before Elizabeth's entrance? I feel that less of it would make the point, and hold better." The playwright, as evidenced by her marginal note, agrees to this. In another instance, Bassage says, "On page 14 of Act III, could we cut the four lines about Elizabeth's semi-plan about being a nun! I feel they hold up the progress of the scene." The playwright's marginal comment is "certainly." Bassage seems very interested in seeing that the action of the play does not become stale. He goes on to say, "Could the opening of Act IV be cut down a bit? Will the entire scene between Elizabeth and Dudley at the start of the act hold, at this stage of the play? It is pretty actionless." Once again the playwright agrees with
her new-found director. At the end of his suggestions Bassage has written, "The curtain is simply swell." The comment to the right of this is "Thank you, dear Mr. Bassage. I like it too. A. R. T." Mr. Bassage, with the closing paragraphs of his letter, undoubtedly continued to win the playwright's favor. He very tactfully states that, "No doubt some, perhaps many of these suggestions will seem wrong. I feel presumptuous making suggestions about such a beautifully written script. I think you realize how tentatively they are made." And further on he says, "Obviously I would recommend nothing that would injure the calibre of the play, in the interests of pandering to popular taste. But I do feel we should do all we can to sharpen the clarity, variety and dramatic impact of the piece." This last sentence was underlined by the playwright with the comment, "So do I," written in the margin. This very important letter in the history of The Young Elizabeth closes on the following note of exciting anticipation: "As I have read it just now, for the fifth time, I am more eager than ever to be at work on it. It will indeed be a thrilling experience for me, the company and the audience, I'm sure." This letter from Harold Bassage not only makes one aware of the newly arrived state of the play, but also enthusiastically launches a fine piece of dramatic literature into a future state of fine drama.

The next several installments in the evolution of The Young Elizabeth, with a few exceptions, concern the play, the playwright, and the director in the intervening time
between the fall of 1937 and when the play was performed in March of 1938. The letters from Bassage to the playwright are the primary source of information regarding the play.

In a letter from Bassage dated September 7, 1937, one finds the next reference to the play. After thanking the playwright for her gracious letters, he says, "Basically, I am especially pleased that you didn't mind my making all those suggestions about the play, and it seems as if we are going to have a fine time working together on it." From the letter it is apparent that Amelie had invited Bassage to come to Virginia to work on the play, but he tells her after thanking her for her fine, traditional southern hospitality that he does not know when he could possibly get away. The letter continues with "We probably won't do The Young Elizabeth until late in the season, so that we will have time for writing and for the difficult job of casting that wonderful, thrilling part of Elizabeth." The reference to having time for writing is an indication that, in Bassage's opinion, there is definitely rewriting to be done on the script. This rewriting would later be the cause of minor strife between two people who started out with so much warmth and respect for each other. This is not to suggest that there was to be a major falling out between Bassage and Amelie—only the natural disagreements that playwrights and directors seem to encounter.

Following the letter of September 7, there is another dated September 17, 1937. This letter becomes highly inform-
ative in that it names a tentative time for the play's production: "I think it will be all right with everyone if The Young Elizabeth isn't produced until March. It has been the custom to do prize plays here at that time—and obviously it does give us more time for thought and work on it." ¹⁷

Approximately one month later, in a letter dated October 14, 1937, Bassage says that he has not forgotten Amelie or "Elizabeth," but that he has been terribly busy with his many duties as director of the St. Louis Little Theatre. This letter also suggests that there is to be a meeting with the playwright in the not too distant future as Bassage says, "I do look forward to meeting you in this world of so-called reality—and it now seems that it will be at Christmas time. I feel I must get to New York for a few days then, and I fear I won't be able to get away at any other time." ¹⁸ Whether the playwright ever met her director is unknown, but regardless of whether they did or did not meet, one gets the distinct impression that they grew to know each other rather well through their correspondences.

That the playwright continued her time-worn preoccupation with the fourth act is substantiated by a reference to it by Bassage in a letter on November 19, 1937. After talking about the script in general he says, "I am especially

¹⁷ Unpublished letter from Harold Bassage, September 17, 1937.

¹⁸ Unpublished letter from Harold Bassage, October 14, 1937.
delighted about the new fourth act." Another reference to the play, and to the fourth act, is made by a cousin of the playwright's in a letter postmarked January 5, 1938, and addressed to Landon Rives. The cousin, Carolyn Martin, had gone to stay with Amelie while Amelie's sister, Landon, had gone away on a cruise. After making general remarks about Amelie and how well she looks, she goes on to say,

Last night I didn't think she'd helped the final curtain of the rewritten Elizabeth. She had added a few short sentences, and a theatrical exit to go to Chapel, following the purely dramatic statement to Dudley—"I am England." I told her that exit, to the sound of Chapel bells seemed anticlimax to me, and she got so alert and interested I think it did her good—Now she agrees that the original last line—that really is a line of triumphant renunciation—is the true way, and she seems quite happy to cut out the added scene.

All of the rest of the rewritten last act is splendid and it really ought to thrill her to find that at her age, and with all she's been thro' the lamp still burns.20

The excerpts from this letter serve the purpose of possibly providing a personal insight into the life and work of the seventy-four-year-old author and her prize play. One is also once again made aware of her deep concern and desire to perfect this work—one of her finest creations.

The problems of proposed changes, rehearsals, and slight

19 Unpublished letter from Harold Bassage, November 19, 1937.

irritations on the part of the playwright make up the succeeding several references to the production in progress. A letter dated February 28, 1938, from Bassage to Amelie, contained nine pages of proposed changes in the script of The Young Elizabeth. The letter says that the play has been in rehearsal for two weeks and has almost four weeks yet to go. Bassage states that, "we have an excellent cast throughout, and I think Adelaide Strong, who is playing Elizabeth, will be very fine."21 The director says that the changes he has sent have been made tentatively and that they seem to work. He adds with a touch of diplomacy that he hopes the changes will meet the approval of the playwright. He says that he has tried to make the changes as slight as possible because he does not want to worry her, but that he feels that he should do everything possible to make the play as right as he can in every detail. Of the nine pages of proposed changes, the playwright, by her marginal notes, makes one aware that she is not always going to agree with her director, and that minor disagreement may be pending.

In a letter dated March 3, 1938, Bassage writes "I was delighted to have your letter today concerning the change at the end of the last act. It had been bothering us, too, and, as you say, will be very easy to make."22 He goes on to say


that they are hoping that Amelie will approve the changes that have been suggested. Once again a diplomatic approach is used by Bassage when he goes on to say, "The company and I are developing a really religious devotion and enthusiasm for the play and a passionate desire to make the production really fine. And we do feel that these changes help our performance." He wishes she could be there to see the rehearsals, for with three weeks still to go, "many scenes in it already play with great fire, beauty and dramatic force."

The fact that the artist was beginning to be disturbed at the apparent liberties of her director is substantiated by a copy of a letter to Mr. Bassage that she sent to an H. Freedman on March 5, 1938. On the envelope she has written, "Corrections and concessions to the changes for The Young Elizabeth, only as it will be given at the Little Theatre of St. Louis." Before the changes, the playwright has written very curtly:

The following are the concessions that I make in regard to Mr. Bassage's changes in my play The Young Elizabeth, which he has put into rehearsal without consulting me beforehand. I do this not to hold up the play at this late hour.

Bassage had written her that if any of the words that he added did not seem right, he would be glad to have her suggest others. Her reply to this did not leave any room for doubt about how she felt on this matter when she said, "I have written others in place of yours and I will surely

Unpublished letter to H. Freedman, March 5, 1938.
expect you to use them." It is very clear that the playwright, at this point, was extremely upset by Bassage taking matters into his own hand and tampering with a play that she had so laboriously been concerned with.

The partial reconciliation that was achieved between the well-intentioned director and the aging playwright was due, with all proper respect to the artist, to the sincere effort of the director. He seemed to be truly concerned with the production of the play and was not going to let the textual disagreements stand in the way. In a very warm letter dated March 7, 1938, Bassage says, "I was heartbroken when I received your letter this morning, both because I am sorry all this is disturbing to you, and because I had so hoped we were doing the right thing."24 He goes on to say that there is still plenty of time in which to straighten out their differences. Bassage then very tactfully expresses himself in a way that was sure to touch the playwright's heart:

Don't think for a moment that I fail to realize how very much every word of this play is deeply yours. I have made every change hesitantly and fearfully, because the writing, word by word and scene by scene, is so beautiful that I know changes by any one else are dangerous. However, sometimes these things do sound different when a play is on its feet, and that fact has moved me to suggest the alterations.

An examination of the entire correspondence of Harold Bassage to the playwright constantly points up a recurring sincerity.
and tactfulness on his part. Without this element, the play may never have seen a successful production. One learns from Bassage's final letter to Amelie just before the production, that she is not in good health, and that all of the changes are being made exactly as she wanted them. He tells her to "rest completely assured that we will follow all your requests and suggestions meticulously."25

The Young Elizabeth was staged in the latter part of March of 1938 at the St. Louis Little Theatre. A review of the play appeared in "Variety," and one learns from the review that the sets were done by Gordon Carter and the costumes by Margaret Bishop Breen.26 The review is favorable, stating that "while the play needs polishing, it is interesting. Having a combo of romance, intrigue and international background. Play has Broadway possibilities." The review praises director Harold Bassage saying that "he has done a fine job with the cast showing evidence of careful training." Adelaide Terrant Strong, according to the review, "turns in a good performance," in the lead role. These varied accolades must have pleased the playwright who had spent almost two decades polishing her dramatic masterpiece.

The remaining history of The Young Elizabeth deals with various minor revisions and the mention of the slight possi-


26 From "Variety" review, March 27, 1938.
bility of a future Broadway performance. The letters are dated from the spring of 1938 on into the summer. The playwright had small problems with her publishers during this period as well as bouts with her health. The final, and most completely revised manuscript of the play is dated July 1, 1938. This final edition of the play contains one hundred two pages and is the final stage which the play reached. Any information past this date is very scarce and does not seem to point to the possibility of any further production or publication of The Young Elizabeth.

Thus concludes the evolution of a play which Dr. W. D. Taylor calls "the best-rounded portrayal of Elizabeth I in American fiction."27 It is a work of art that contains a polish that was missing in much of Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy's earlier fiction. This polish was achieved through labor—twenty years of careful scrutiny and revision. These laborious steps have herein been sketched. In this particular instance the artist lived in her work. When Elizabeth says, "I am England," one cannot help but believe that Amelie's England was her writing, and that the American stage should definitely lament the absence of The Young Elizabeth from its published and performed dramas.

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27 Taylor, p. 209.
II

THE MANUSCRIPTS

The manuscript material now in the Amelie Rives Collection in the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia includes thirteen various copies of *The Young Elizabeth* (not all these copies qualify as separate states), a number of loose pages from various texts and states of the play, and a number of revised sections or acts. These manuscripts, consisting of more than 1,700 pages from which came the final text of 102 typewritten pages, constitute an astoundingly complete assemblage of the materials concerning the play. These documents, along with the letters and various other materials dealing with the play, more than anything else in the Amelie Rives collection, make it possible to construct an evolution of the play as well as speculate upon the number of states of the manuscript that do exist. The examination of the 1,700 pages of manuscript, as stated in the preface, was conducted in order to separate the major states. The following, then, represents the results of such an examination.

An examination of the manuscript materials concerning *The Young Elizabeth* reveals that of the thirteen copies of the play only six qualify as separate states or stages. With few minor exceptions, the multiple revisions that Act IV underwent are the main reasons that one is able to distinguish separate stages. A scrutiny of each and every minor change is not the intention here. Concentration, with the exception
of a few other areas, will center on Act IV and the ending of the play.

An examination of the two earliest copies of the play makes it difficult to discern which came first. However, there are enough differences between these two manuscripts and what the playwright called on July 1, 1938, "the latest copy," to qualify them as separate states. The first manuscript in the collection has two dates on it: April, 1920, and October, 1927. The reason for the latter date is unexplainable. This copy of the play is entitled The Young Elizabeth and can be differentiated from other possible states in several ways. The cast contains thirty-seven characters, which is roughly fourteen more than what was eventually used, Earls, dukes, footmen, trumpeteers, and various other lords and ladies make up these extras. None of these extra characters are major, and none contribute to the play. The appearance of these superfluous people in this early copy and the subsequent disappearance of them in later stages can simply be attributed to dramatic frugality. Another significant difference in this play occurs at the end of Act III. In the final draft of the play Cecil appears in the last few pages along with Elizabeth and Dudley, whereas in this copy Elizabeth and Dudley appear alone for the final few pages. However, it is with Act IV that one can see that even at this early stage the ending of the play would be the part that would undergo the most revision. This very early draft does not have the powerful ending that the final draft would have.
The other early copy of the play that qualifies as a definite state is dated 1920, and bears the title The Crown of Flame. There is just as great a possibility that this is the first draft of the play as there is that the copy discussed in the preceding paragraph is the first. One notable difference in this copy is that Dudley, after he is made Earl of Leicester, is called Leicester. There is also a difference at the beginning of Act III. This act, in the final draft of 1938, begins with Elizabeth in an extremely nervous state with Kate Ashley consoling her. But in the 1920 manuscript Act III begins with a conversation between Elizabeth and Lady Mary Sidney, which takes the first five pages of the act. Once again Act IV does not end as it would in the final draft.

The manuscript which is dated June 3, 1923, qualifies as a third and separate state of the play. This copy has a distinction that none of the other manuscripts have: it has four titles written on the cover sheet. The four possible titles are The Crown of Flame, When Great Queen Bess was Young, Bel-Phoebe, and The Young Elizabeth. This version contains a few other differences from any of the previous states. Act I starts a little differently, but the most notable difference is in the ending of Act IV. The play ends after Elizabeth has made it clear that nothing comes before England, with Leicester saying, "I ask no more!"

The next notable state of the manuscript is dated 1925, and is called The Crown of Flame. Act I begins in the same manner as the final copy. In Act III, however, one finds
Elizabeth, Kate Ashley, and Lady Mary Sidney conversing for the first ten pages of the act. This rather sustained employment is very wisely shortened in later stages of the play. Act III also has a different ending from the one the playwright finally decided to use. One finds Dudley and Elizabeth in comradeship, but not with the same speeches that were later decided on. The most curious aspect about this copy of the manuscript is the ending to Act IV and the play. Very close to the end one finds Elizabeth's very powerful utterance "Nay! I am England!" But these are not the final words before the curtain. A boy dressed as the Herald of the Court of Love says, "I am Herald Eros, sent to conduct your gracious Majesty, Queen of May and of England, to the Court of Love!" Elizabeth, as though under a spell, and in a dreamlike voice says, "Lead on sweetheart! ..... I follow ..... " This is an effective ending, but a little too romantic and a lot less powerful than the final ending that was chosen.

Almost all of the revisions that take place between the manuscript copy dated 1925 and the next copy that qualifies as a separate state (that of December, 1934) deal with minor changes to Act IV. However, since it is not the purpose here to examine in detail every minute change, it is the copy dated December, 1934, that one must next make mention of. This copy is entitled The Young Elizabeth. Act I begins in the same manner as the final draft: that is, Elizabeth has swooned. The act ends with the Chief Herald's speech proclaiming Elizabeth queen in which the last word ("Crown")
of the written act appears. Unlike the final draft of the play where the word "Queen" was used, the word "Crown" is employed here as it is in most copies of the play. The word "Crown" is much more appropriate in the context of the Chief Herald's speech. Act III ends in the same manner as the 1925 version of the play which has been mentioned. Act IV, ends, as do the rest of the existing copies of the play right up to 1938, with the very powerful and dramatic proclamation by Elizabeth: "I am England!"

The rest of the copies of the play, of which there are eight, are very similar and do not qualify as separate states of the manuscript. The eighth copy, which is the one considered to be the final draft, is dated July 1, 1938. The manuscript right before this one is dated June 30, 1938, and has a curiosity about it worth mentioning, but which does not qualify it as a state. The name of the performer assigned to play the part in the St. Louis production is written beside each character in the *dramatis personae*.

It seems that the playwright made the correct choice of titles in choosing *The Young Elizabeth*. On this same subject it is also interesting to note that any of the titles she contemplated would have satisfactorily captured the mood and tone of the play. With mood and tone in mind, one of the most interesting revelations that these manuscripts afford is the manner in which Amelie Rives Troubetzkoy instilled in *The Young Elizabeth* a special flavor of its own. This particular flavor is brought out in one of the best portraits drawn of
a most powerful and glamorous figure in western history. The extreme magnificence of this woman and her unselfish love for her country is nowhere more lucid than in the final few speeches of the play. This is the section that the playwright labored over the most, and the one that deserves additional attention.

One must necessarily ask if the ending chosen was the best. A reading of the play with its intense final scene would unquestionably evoke admiration for the playwright that so wonderfully captured the character of a woman who gave her name to an entire age. The letter from the playwright's cousin, which is quoted and discussed earlier in this paper, crystallizes what one feels concerning the last speech of the play. It is, as the cousin so astutely points out, "a line of triumphant renunciation." And yet it is more than that, for that only seems to refer to the tragic affair with Robert Dudley. When Elizabeth says "I am England!" one realizes the literal truth as well as the depth of implication.

III
A STATEMENT OF EDITORIAL METHOD

The text of this edition is taken from the manuscript dated July 1, 1938. The playwright's note on the cover sheet reads: "This is the latest copy of this play, corrected by me. A. R. T." This copy of the play seems to incorporate all of the various revisions made to the draft, and there-
fore represents the latest stage to which the work had pro-
gressed.

In examining the manuscript, one does not discover many
errors in grammar, spelling, or general usage. I have
silently corrected obvious typographical errors in the play.
The punctuation in this edition is virtually the same as the
playwright originally had it. There were two places in the
text where periods were employed outside of quotations. This
also was changed silently as current practice dictates. These
changes were very minor indeed, and therefore the edition
presented here is mechanically and grammatically almost ex-
actly as it was written by the playwright.

The manuscript of July 1, 1938, as well as all other
existing copies of the play, employed a curious method of
numbering the pages. Each act was started over with the
number 1. This has been altered and repagination has taken
place. I have numbered the pages of the play consecutively
from page two of the first act to the last page of the play
in the fourth act. I believe this is much more consistent
with current methods of numbering dramatic literature re-
gardless of the number of acts employed.

In addition to repagination there has been a significant
change in the typed form of the play. The playwright marked
the division of each act with title pages at the beginning
of each act. This seemed superfluous and has been discarded
for the more conventional method of observing an appropriate
four-inch margin at the top of the page of each new act. She
also positioned her characters, when speaking, in the middle
of the page with their speeches directly underneath. Any
parenthetical stage directions were awkwardly placed between
the speaker and the speech. In this edition I have used a
more accepted dramatic format based on Parks and Beatty's
edition of The English Drama: An Anthology 900-1640 (New
York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1935). Changing the
typed form has made the play more compatible with traditional
dramatic practices. The length of the play was also seriously
affected. The manuscript of July 1, 1938, had 102 pages,
whereas the current edition is comprised of 76.

Another noticeable change in form is the use of explanatory
footnotes. It is my hope that these will be helpful
to the reader—especially the initiate into the Elizabethan
period. An attempt has been made to keep the footnotes from
being overly technical. In all cases I have tried to relate
the person, place, or event strictly to the context of the
play. Researching the information for these footnotes re-
vealed that the playwright very seldom made an historical
error in the composition of this play. The footnotes, for
the sake of convenience, are numbered anew with each act.
The Dictionary of National Biography was a constant and ex-
cellent source in uncovering information for many of the foot-
notes.

The present edition, then, conveys accurately the latest
stage in the evolution of the play, but avoids the encumbrance
to the reader of obvious typographical errors and inconsist-
encies in form.
TUB YOMR G BLIZARJTI:

A Play
in
Four Acts

Being the Love-story of
Elizabeth Tudor and
Robert Dudley, when
they were young,
according to legend,
not to history.

By

Amalie Rives Troubetzkoy
(Playwright's) NOTE:
(X) before a name signifies only a few words or lines to speak.
(o) before a name signifies a non-speaking part.

CHARACTERS

PRINCESS ELIZABETH............... Afterwards Queen of England.
MISTRESS BLANCHE PARRY........... Her confidential lady-in-waiting, afterwards Lady Parry.
MASTER THOMAS PARRY............... Blanche's husband, Afterwards Comptroller of the Royal Household and Sir Thomas Parry.
(X) SIR THOMAS POPE............... Governor of the Princess Elizabeth, appointed by her sister, Queen Mary.
SIR WILLIAM CECIL.................. A friend of Elizabeth, afterwards her First Secretary and Chief of her Privy Council.
SIR NICHOLAS THROGHORTON......... A friend of Elizabeth, afterwards her Ambassador to France.
LORD ROBERT DUDLEY............... Afterwards Earl of Leicester and favourite of Elizabeth.
(X) THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK......... Lord Chancellor under Queen Mary.
ALVAREZ DE QUADRA, BISHOP OF AQUILA.......... The Spanish Ambassador.
(X) THE EARL OF ARUNDEL.......... Premier Earl of England and Lord High Steward of the Royal Household.
LADY MARY SIDNEY............... A sister of Lord Robert Dudley and the wife of Sir Henry Sidney.
(X) MISTRESS KATE ASHLEY.......... Elizabeth's old Governess.
(X) MASTER ARTHUR GUNTER......... A retainer of the Earl of Arundel.
(X) MASTER GEORGE COTTON.......... A retainer of Lord Robert Dudley.
(X) MASTER BOWYER.................. Usher of the Black Rod.
(X) CHIEF EMBLE... THE COUNTESS DE PERIA.......... Formerly Jane Dormer and a lady-in-waiting of Queen Mary.
TWO ELDERLY LADIES-IN-WAITING...Sent by Queen Mary to spy on the Princess Elizabeth.

(0) LADIES-IN-WAITING
    (Maids of Honour).............To Elizabeth as Queen.

(X) A TIRE-WOMAN

(0) ANOTHER TIRE-WOMAN
THE YOUNG ELIZABETH

ACT I: A room in Hatfield House. Near daybreak on the 18th of November, 1558.

ACT II: The Queen's private apartments in Whitehall. Two years later.

ACT III: The same as in Act II. A night five months later.

ACT IV: The same as Acts II and III. Some months later.
ACT I

SCENE: A room in Hatfield House on the ground floor. Windows at back. Great door at right. Smaller door at left. A portrait of Edward VI hangs well in view at left. The park is seen beyond the windows. The room is richly, but simply furnished: Chair of state, other chairs, table, tapestries, etc.

Near daybreak on the 18th of November, 1558.

As the curtain rises, an ATTENDANT throws open the door right, and bowing low, stands aside as the PRINCESS ELIZABETH enters, leaning as if exhausted, on the arm of SIR THOMAS POPE and supported on the other side by BLANCHE PARRY. She is followed by two of Queen Mary's ladies, who have been sent to

1 A red brick palace in Hatfield, a rural district in Hertfordshire, England, which is twenty miles north of London. The palace had been kept by the Tudors since the time of Henry VIII. It was here that the Princess Elizabeth received the news of her accession.

2 Sir Thomas Pope (1507?-1559), founder of Trinity College, Oxford. He was appointed in 1556, by Queen Mary, to keep a surveillance on Princess Elizabeth at Hatfield.

3 Blancha Parry (d. 1596), Elizabeth's confidential lady-in-waiting who had been with her since childhood years. Blancha Parry remained in the Queen's service for almost the entire reign.
wait on her, and by THOMAS PARRY. As the doors are opened the intoning of a prayer for the dying is heard.

ELIZABETH is slight, somewhat over medium height, graceful, and on occasion imposingly regal in her carriage. Her hands and feet are very beautiful. She has vivid dark eyes and gold-red hair, and when she chooses, a great charm of expression and manner. Her temper is as fiery as her hair, and her regret for its indulgence as quick as her outbursts. Many historical witnesses agree that in her youth she was very comely and charming, and at this time she is just twenty-five. Of her hair, Sir James Melville, Ambassador of Mary, Queen of Scots, said that "it is more reddish than gold, and curls naturally."

SIR THOMAS POPE guides her to the great Chair of State, into which she sinks, leaning her head against its back and closing her eyes.

BLANCHE: (Bending over her anxiously) Your Grace! Oh, she has swooned!

POPE: No wonder, poor lady, after such a vigil!

(ELIZABETH opens her eyes and looks dazedly about her)

BLANCHE: There! Thank God! Do you know me, Madam?

ELIZABETH: Aye, Blanche... Why, what's this? I was in the Chapel... They pray there for Queen Mary's recovery, do they not?

POPE: Yes, your Grace... but, alas! though you will

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4 Thomas Parry (d. 1560), attended Princess Elizabeth in her confinement at Hatfield. When Elizabeth came to the throne, he was knighted, given a seat at the Privy Council, and made Comptroller of the Royal Household. Parry is said to have been the chief promoter of Dudley's proposed marriage with the Queen.
not believe it, Her Majesty is beyond all prayers save for her soul's welfare.

(The two ladies put their handkerchiefs up to their eyes)

ELIZABETH: (Agitated) Do not say so again! See how you've made her poor friends weep! You have listened to rumour, sir! I will not believe my dear sister dead till I have proof!.....

POPE: My messenger was trusty, madam...he came from the Palace.

ELIZABETH: And are palaces trusty, Master Pope?.... I would laugh at you, if I weren't so sorrowful!..... Come, sir! Your arm!..... I'll go back to the chapel... My will can rule my flesh.... (As SIR THOMAS comes up, she rises to her feet, then sinks back as if unable to stand, and exclaims bitterly) Plague on this woman's body that fails me!.. (Striking her breast, she adds) There's a man here would joy to flog it! (She seems on the point of tears)

POPE: I implore your Grace to have pity on yourself and take some rest.

BLANCHE: Aye, do, dear Princess! I'll bring cushions... Try to sleep.....

ELIZABETH: Sleep! And my sister's life in the balance? No! If I may not watch at God's altar, I'll watch here.... (Addressing SIR THOMAS and MASTER PARRY) But do you return, sirs.... (To the two ladies-in-waiting) And you, too, ladies.. I know how dearly you love Queen Mary, and she you.... Please you, go at once. Mistress Parry will stay with me. (The two ladies-in-waiting curtsey deeply and go out, followed by SIR THOMAS and PARRY. An ATTENDANT then closes the door from without. As soon as the door is shut, ELIZABETH springs vigorously to her feet and stands rigid, watching it for a few seconds. When she is quite sure that it is fast and all have gone into the chapel, she whirls around, seizing BLANCHE by the arm, exclaiming in a low fierce voice) Blanche!.... 'Tis a trap.... By God, it is.... I've sent those Papist cats to pray for Mary, but she sent them to spy on me. They're trying to trap me with false news.... mousing my every look, word, act for some show of treason! .........and Master Pope lends himself to it!

BLANCHE: Oh, Madam, I cannot think so!..... He is your true friend!

ELIZABETH: He is my gaoler, too!..... set over me by
Mary...God's death! If her death be false, and I bear me too royally...even by the lifting of my neck...the axe will shorten it!

BLANCHE: Dearest Lady!..... Do not turn your wits with such imaginings!

ELIZABETH: (Bitterly) Were my wits so easily turned, where should I now be? Where poor little Jennie Grey is...Blanche!.......Blanche! You were with me when they forced me through the Traitor's Gate!.....You were with me in the Tower, and when I came forth again...saved by these same wits..... (Touching her brow) Will you talk of imaginings to me?

BLANCHE: But, Princess.....they say Queen Mary has declared you her heir.

ELIZABETH: "They say! They say!" I say they lie!

BLANCHE: Yet she sent you the Crown jewels.....

ELIZABETH: Wit and wariness are my Crown jewels! No, girl.....I'll not believe her dead till I see on this hand (Holding up her beautiful hand) the ring Philip gave her...Come nearer.....I have sent Sir Nicholas Throgmorton to London for that ring........ If Mary be truly dead, one who is my friend will give it to him.... He should be here

5 Lady Jane Grey (1537-1554), granddaughter of Henry VIII and a cousin to Elizabeth. She was the victim of a plot to have her crowned queen after Edward VI's death in order to continue the Protestant rule. The plot failed and she was executed on February 12, 1554, at the age of sixteen.

6 Another name for the water gate at the Tower of London.

7 Elizabeth spent two months in the Tower in 1554, after she was suspected of complicity in Wyatt's revolt.

8 Philip II of Spain (1527-1598), married Queen Mary Tudor in 1554.

9 Sir Nicholas Throgmorton (1515-1571), made chief butler and Chamberlain of the Exchequer immediately after Elizabeth came to the throne. A few months later he was made Ambassador to France.
soon......The day is breaking......God grant my fears break with it! Whist! What was that?

BLANCHE: Only the wind, Madam.

ELIZABETH: I hate the wind!........ How it moaned the night my dear Ned died....and the night I was haled to the Tower........

(The sky outside the great windows at back flushes with the first glow of sunrise)

BLANCHE: (Pointing to the windows) But this is the dawn wind, and brings the sun;

ELIZABETH: (Gloomily) What will the sun bring me? (There comes a discreet knocking at right. ELIZABETH glances at door left, agitated) Ah!........... Sir Nicholas... Bid him enter...........

BLANCHE: (Running to the door, opening it a little and turning to the Princess) 'Tis Sir William Cecil,10 your Grace.

ELIZABETH: (Greatly excited now, yet controlling herself) Open! Open!......... (BLANCHE stands aside. The ATTENDANT throws open the door and SIR WILLIAM CECIL enters, followed by SIR THOMAS POPE and PARTY. CECIL is a man of about forty-five, rather short in stature, but well-proportioned, very straight and upright. His eyes are grey-blue, clear and steadfast. His brown hair and beard are streaked with grey. He is dressed soberly, as always, in somewhat old-fashioned garments, his coat trimmed with fur. His manner is quiet, grave and circumspect. ELIZABETH hastens to meet him) Master Cecil! My dear Sir William..... What is it?

CECIL: (Kneeling on one knee before her) Your Grace, I bring you sorrowful and glad tidings both in one. Her Majesty, Queen Mary.....whose soul God have!...died close on midnight. The Lord Chancellor has repaired to Westminster to summon both Houses of Parliament and proclaim your Grace Queen of England.

(A pause)

10
Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley (1520-1598), was the first to receive an unqualified expression of esteem from Elizabeth. Elizabeth made him chief Secretary of State and head of the Privy Council.
ELIZABETH: (Scarce ly able to speak for emotion) God's will be done!

CECIL and the others: (Who also kneel) Amen!

ELIZABETH: (Now in a firm voice) I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast set me up, and not made my foes to triumph over me! May it also please Thee to give me understanding to know Thy will and strength to do it, for Christ's sake and for England's.

ALL: Amen!

ELIZABETH: (Raising CECIL with her own hand and motioning the others to rise also) Master Pope, tell our Household the grievous news. Order also a Mass for the soul of my illustrious and lamented sister. (To the others) I wish to be alone now with Sir William Cecil. (All withdraw. When they are alone, she turns to Cecil, holding out both hands: her voice is again choked with emotion, which she tries to smile down) Oh, Master Cecil! Master Cecil! If I be dreaming, I pray you wake me gently.

CECIL: 'Tis no dream, but glorious truth, your Majesty.

(He is about to kneel again when she stops him)

ELIZABETH: You have stood by me in secret all those years, now you shall stand by me openly.

CECIL: (Moved, but quiet as usual) Till God takes me from your service, Madam.

ELIZABETH: May that day be far off. (With a flash of exultation) Oh, we will do great things together, Master Cecil! You shall be both my Joshua and my Aaron. You shall hold up my hands that the sun set not on England's glory!

CECIL: I am your Majesty's and England's in all things.

ELIZABETH: (Beginning to pace to and fro, becoming more and more exalted) By God's help I will make the crooked paths straight! I will set up the fallen! I will restore religion as my dear brother Edward wished it! All that he willed for England shall be done. Oh, Ned...sweet
brother... can you hear me? Is your fair soul with me in this hour?.... I pray God it be so.... (She breaks off, overcome)

CECIL: (Reverently) Your Grace..... I am sure that prayer is answered.

(A pause, during which she turns away to recover her composure)

ELIZABETH: (Coming back to him) Do not think it strange that my first act as Queen was to order a Mass for my sister's soul.....

CECIL: Nay, Madam, I think 'twas a most wise and gracious act.

ELIZABETH: (More to herself than to him) I could not bear that dark soul to hate me more in death than it did in life.... (She shudders)

CECIL: Your Grace.... think of the future.

ELIZABETH: (Rousing with another flash of exultation) A future without dread! O day of miracles!..... By God! I'll make so merry a bursting of prison bars.... they'll say it thunders in November!..... Oh, if I were a common lass, I'd dance for joy....like the sun at Easter! (She lowers her voice and says demurely, coming close to him) Sir William, would you see an uncommon lass dance for joy?

CECIL: (As demurely) His majesty, King David, danced for joy before the Ark.... It must have been a gladdening sight to look on....

ELIZABETH: Then look on this. (She gathers up her flowing skirts on each side, and dances a few steps "high and disposedly," humming a dance tune to which she sets impromptu words, singing softly as she dances) Elizabeth, late prisoner, sings: "I dance for joy! I'm free for aye! And," sings Elizabeth, the Queen, "My friends shall dance the selfsame way!" (She stops suddenly, turns to CECIL and lays her hand on his sleeve) Good friend, if you think me too light of mood for so grave a day..... (He makes a gesture of protest and would speak, but she stops him and continues) remember how long I was a prisoner, sitting in darkness and in shadow of death....

CECIL: My dear Liege! Do not wound yourself with such memories.

ELIZABETH: (Still fixed on the past) ..... In the shadow of death..... (She looks up at him with the gloom
of her thought still clouding her face) Once I wrote to my
sister asking that, if I must die, she would send to France
for an executioner...so that my head might fall by the
sword, not by the common axe!

CECIL: (In great distress) Your Grace! Your Grace!
I entreat you!....

ELIZABETH: (Not heeding him and still sunk in her
gloomy thoughts) Now with her crown she has bequeathed me
a new danger. By her death I gained all, but King Philip
lost all - his hope of ruling England as her consort -
the Catholic cause here. (She turns to Cecil) There lies
my nearest peril as Queen of England.

CECIL: Alas! Yes, your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: I will go softly with Philip. There must
be no war.

CECIL: He mislikes war. He is slow to come to sharp
decisions. All measures will he first try to restore Cath-
olic supremacy.

ELIZABETH: As God lives he shall not restore it. I
will evade.... I will temporize - I will glut him with half-
hopes and past promises. I will tolerate the Catholic re-
ligion, but the Pope shall never rule my people! Someday,
I know well, that as Queen of England I shall have to out-
face him as King of Spain, - but with God's help I will
keep that day far off! Aye, as long as may be, I will
treat Philip as my very good brother-in-law, I will even
seek his approval - in such things as are expedient. (She
smiles suddenly as she says the last words)

CECIL: (Gazing at her in somewhat awed admiration)
Experience could not better this policy. England will have
a great sovereign in Your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: (Laughing outright now) As a modest maidon
I must deny that! For England's sake I hope it may be true.
(In her most alert, practical tone, she adds:) Now to the
moment's need! What papers have you there?

CECIL: 'Tis a list of suggestions touching pardons and
appointments, Your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: (Interrupting) I have made one appointment
already. (CECIL looks taken aback. ELIZABETH's look melts
and flashes kindly as she goes on) I have appointed one
Sir William Cecil to be my First Secretary and Head of my
Privy Council!
CECIL: (Overwhelmed, about to kneel before her)
Your Majesty!...

ELIZABETH: (Preventing him, much moved herself)
Stand up! Nay! Sit down! (Laughingly) I know your legs are as full of gout as your heart is of loyalty.

CECIL: It grieves me to bring such a crippled body to my Princess' service.

ELIZABETH: (Still laughingly) I choose you for your good head, not for your bad legs!..... Come. Let's to work. You spoke of pardons?.......

CECIL: Yes, your Majesty. I suggest that you pardon...

ELIZABETH: (Interrupting as before) I have already pardoned one....

CECIL: (Again taken aback) May I ask his name, Madam?

ELIZABETH: (A certain defiance in her tone) I have pardoned Robert Dudley.11 I bade Sir Nicholas Throgmorton tell him.....were Queen Mary really dead..... So head that list of pardons with his name.

CECIL: (Anxiously) Your Majesty will make him the first pardoned?

ELIZABETH: (Sharply) Have I not said so?

CECIL: As your Majesty's chief adviser, may I venture...

ELIZABETH: (Still more sharply) You may not!..... This is no question of policy Sir William, but of gratitude! (CECIL cannot suppress entirely his look of surprise at her words, and she rushes on) Yes, of gratitude!......... I never told you, because you never liked him....

CECIL: Believe me, your Grace mistakes....

ELIZABETH: My Grace does not mistake! Only to hear his name makes you prim your mouth! Lord Robert is not light and wavering as you think, but deep and steadfast...

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11

Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1532?-1588), favorite of Elizabeth.
When we were both prisoners in the Tower, he risked all to send me a message of good cheer and loyalty... A sprig of oak...his device...hid in a posy! (Her voice becomes more and more moved as she goes on) And when I was in darkest trouble...and very poor...You know how poor! (She comes nearer to Cecil) he sold his possessions to give me funds! Ah! That moves you. I thought it would! You are of so practical a bent! (Her mood flashes back to passionate feeling) But to me, that sprig of oak, which might have cost him his head... (She breaks off and turns away, walking toward the great windows, her back to him, for she can no longer command her voice)

Cecil: (In a low, quiet tone, but with sincerity) Madam, the man who has so nobly served you shall have my best service and my constant friendship always.

Elizabeth: (Without turning around) I thank you. (A pause. Then she comes forward again, and as she approaches Cecil, speaks in another manner, somewhat abruptly, watching him keenly) Sir William, do you believe in the influences of the stars?

Cecil: (Cautious) I have never considered the matter, Madam.

Elizabeth: (Smiling, a little ironically) No? Well, Plato did. He says that each soul has its particular star! I believe with Plato, and so... I have had my horoscope cast!

Cecil: (Non-committal) Your ruling planets must be glorious, Madam.

Elizabeth: (Watching him closely) They are the same as Robert Dudley's....

Cecil: (Really staggered, and not able to conceal it entirely) The same?....

Elizabeth: Lord Robert and I were born on the same

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12 Dudley was committed to the Tower in July, 1553, for aiding in the attempt to place Lady Jane Grey on the throne. He was released in October, 1554.

13 It is generally thought that Dudley did sell some lands in 1556 or 1557 and give Elizabeth the proceeds.
day, in the same hour, of the same year. 14

CECIL: (At a loss) Is it possible!

ELIZABETH: (Sharply) It is so. Reflect, Sir William! You believe in the Star of Bethlehem. Would it become you to deny all others? The stars in their courses have knit Robert Dudley's fate to mine, and no earthly power can unravel it!

CECIL: (Evasively) Who would dare meddle with Heaven's decrees?

ELIZABETH: (Dryly) Maybe some of those who daily break Heaven's commands. This is no time for your middle way, but for my royal way. . . . And Robert Dudley shall tread it with me! (There comes a sudden noise of horse's hoofs on the stones below, and the voices of groom's, calling: "So boy! Whoa! Steady there!" etc.) Sir Nicholas at last! Come too late. . . . . . .poor Nicky! (Her mood is all gay excitement again)

CECIL: (Surprised) Too late, your Grace?

ELIZABETH: Aye, for you came first. I sent him to bring me sure proof of Mary's death from one of her household, - the ring Philip gave her on their wedding day!

CECIL: (Perturbed) By your Grace's leave, that was a grave risk.

ELIZABETH: (Watching the door by which Sir Nicholas is to enter) I am not Lady Temperance in all things. (With sudden fierceness) That I had to know! (PARRY, from without, opens the smaller door left and pulls back the tapestry that partly concealed it)

PARRY: Sir Nicholas Throgmorton!

(THROGMORTON enters jubilantly, not, at first, seeing CECIL. He is a good-looking man of thirty odd)

THROGMORTON: (Holding up a black enamel ring) Your Grace! . . . . Behold what I have brought you! (As he kneels to deliver the ring to ELIZABETH, he catches sight of CECIL and his face falls) Sir William here? Then my news is stale!

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14 Dudley was born June 24, 1532 or 1533, and Elizabeth was born on September 7, 1533.
ELIZABETH: (Taking the ring from him and motioning him to rise) But not this ring, good Nicholas, (She gazes at it, her face vivid with varying emotions) For this little ring girdles England, and, with God's help, England shall be as safe within its circle as this my finger. (She puts it on, then turns again to THROGMORTON) I thank you for running this great risk for me... I will not forget it. (She interrupts his attempted thanks kindly, smiling) No need for words...... Did anyone come with you?

THROGMORTON: (Glancing doubtfully toward CECIL and speaking with much hesitation) Your Majesty bade me deliver a certain message...if I met a certain person.... He rode back with me....

ELIZABETH: Robin! 'Tis Robin Dudley!..... Go fetch him to me! (THROGMORTON bows and goes out at door left. When ELIZABETH and CECIL are alone, there is a short silence. Then she turns to him and, noting his troubled look, says in a softer voice than any she has yet used, even coaxingly) My dear friend, don't let your prudence take fright. I am not lacking in discretion.

CECIL: Oh, Madam, your discretion in the past has been our marvel!

ELIZABETH: (Laughing) But in the present you fear 'twill fail! Not so.... I know well how many enemies poor Robin has....and I, too, God save me! I will advance him, but soberly....little by little. (She cannot restrain a mischievous impulse) .....Small beginnings make great endings, they say!...... Little by little..... You shall see!

CECIL: (Touched and relieved) I see already that your Grace is Wisdom's chosen!

ELIZABETH: (Laughing again) My Grace is also Folly's darling.....Sometimes. You have no light task before you, Signor Prudentio!

CECIL: The heavier the task the better, so it safeguard your Majesty.

(The private door, left, is here flung open and ROBERT DUDLEY enters. DUDLEY is a tall, finely made man of five and twenty. He is very dark, well meriting Lord Sussex's term, "that Gipsy." His eyes are full of fire, his nose high and well formed, his lips finely cut. He wears his hair short, yet clustering)

ELIZABETH: (Going to meet him impulsively) Robin!....
Robin Dudley!...... Welcome! From my heart, welcome!

(CECIL makes a sign to THROGMORTON and they withdraw out of earshot to the embrasure of one of the windows)

DUDLEY: (Kneeling before her, with deep emotion) With all mine I thank your Majesty, both for myself and what is left of my luckless House!

ELIZABETH: (As much moved as he is) My debt of thanks to you is greater than yours to me..... But I'll mend that.... (She holds out both hands to him, not giving him time to reply) Stand up now. I would see you face to face, after all these years.... (As he rises) How many years?

DUDLEY: Too many, Your Majesty..... I saw your Grace last at St. James' ...... I was in your escort across the Park that day.

ELIZABETH: (Smiling) Well do I remember it! You rode a black devil that stood upright like a man-at-arms!..... You rode him well, Robin!

DUDLEY: (Smiling also) I rode to please your Grace... My spurs had much to do with Hector's prancings!

ELIZABETH: Vanity! Vanity!..... We women are not alone in it.....

DUDLEY: (His black eyes fixed eagerly on hers) Not when you are so fair, your Grace, and a boy so near....

ELIZABETH: (Laughingly withdrawing a little) To be near seems to make you forward, Lord Honeytongue!

DUDLEY: (Standing his ground, as was always his way with her) I spoke only plain truth, Madam. As to forward, ...if a cat may look at a King, may not a boy worship his rightful Princess? (In his earnestness again he takes a step nearer her, and this time she does not draw back) From that hour I vowed my life to your service.... To have served better, I'd have forsworn all else...become a beggar, a wandering monk, and whispered "Elizabeth" in every ear, till I roused all England!

ELIZABETH: (Touched, yet smiling a little mockingly) Oh, Robin, Robin! How little you've changed since you played at St. George killing dragons. You! A monk? Why, at eighteen you married.

DUDLEY: (Dashed, with formal respect) Nay, your Grace, my father married me to one of his choosing... yet
she is fair and virtuous beyond my deserts.

ELIZABETH: (A little stiffly) You must bring Lady Amy to Court by and by.

DUDLEY: (With sincere feeling) I thank your Grace, but my poor wife has a grave malady. A canker of her breast. The doctors give little hope. She keeps at home.

ELIZABETH: (Also sincere) Oh, I am sorry! I had heard she was ailing, but not to this point. My own doctor shall wait on her... Tell her so... Tell her I'm sorry....

DUDLEY: Your gracious message will be the best balm for her sufferings.....

ELIZABETH: Nay, I'll send Dr. Wendy to cure her of them! (She puts her hand on his shoulder for a second, then says) Forgive me that I must turn from you now.... (She raises her voice and addresses the two at the window) Gentlemen! (As CECIL comes forward, followed by THROGMORTON, she says to DUDLEY) Lord Robert, I will make known to you one that you only half know...my First Secretary of State... who has promised to be your friend.

DUDLEY: (Bowing low to CECIL) I am at a loss, sir, whether most to congratulate you, Her Majesty, or myself.

CECIL: (Bowing in return) My Lord, I hope earnestly that we shall work in accord, and with equal zeal, for Her Majesty's good and glory.

ELIZABETH: (Breaking in to cover this somewhat lukewarm speech) I am sure of it. (Playfully assuming the manner of one about to make a formal speech) Gentlemen, there is luck in odd numbers, and I see here three friends, all of whom have done their best for me. I were no Queen, if my best for them did not better theirs for me! (She turns to THROGMORTON, holding up her hand with the black enamel ring on it) You, Sir Nicholas, that went on so ticklish an errand this morning and brought me assurance.... you shall to

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15 Amy Robsart, Lady Dudley (d. 1560), Robert Dudley's wife.

16 Thomas Wendy (1500?-1560), Court physician to Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth. He attended Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary on their deathbeds.
France as my Ambassador, and bring me peace!

THROGMORTON: (Dropping on one knee) My gracious Queen!

ELIZABETH: (Laughing) My nimble Ambassador, stand up! I shall have only too much of looking on the crowns of pates before this day is done....and my own crown secure. (She turns to DUDLEY, and says, still laughingly) As for you, Lord Robert...so many foes bark at you, that I must not make them bite by giving you now too big a bone!...... Later I will file their teeth and give you what I please... but now... Let me consider....

DUDLEY: (Breaking in on her musing with passionate earnestness) I ask only to be Your Grace's eyes, and watch for you!

ELIZABETH: (Taking refuge from emotion in a lighter tone) But, indeed, to make you my eyes is not enough. There must be eyebrows to 'sm! (She looks at him consideringly) I have it! What your brother, John, was to my brother, Edward, you shall be to me....My Master of the Horse! (As DUDLEY is about to kneel and kiss her hand, she prevents him, leaving her hand in his for an instant, as she says in a lower voice, full of kindly meaning) A good horseman may ride far....

(On the end of this sentence, SIR THOMAS POPE enters breathlessly at small door, left)

POPE: Your Majesty! The Archbishop of York! And others of the late Queen's Council, to wait upon your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: (In her most royal yet quiet tone) Admit his Grace of York and her late Majesty's Councillors. (POPE bows low and withdraws. ELIZABETH turns to CECIL) Master Cecil, conduct me to my chair. (CECIL does so, and she seats herself on the great gilded chair with deliberate and graceful majesty. Then she says) Now stand at my right

17 Sir Nicholas was not made Ambassador to France until May, 1559.

18 Nicholas Heath, Archbishop of York (1501-1578), was made Archbishop of York in 1555 and Lord Chancellor in 1556. While Elizabeth was queen, she did not renew Heath's commission as Lord Chancellor, although he still sat in the Privy Council.
hand. (CECIL takes his place there. She then beckons to DUDLEY and THROGMORTON) And you, sirs, take your places at my left. (DUDLEY and THROGMORTON stand at the left of the chair. She rests her hands on either arm of it, lifts her chin regally, and says) We are ready. (At this moment the doors right are thrown open, and the ATTENDANT announces the Councillors, who enter as their names are called, the ARCHBISHOP OF YORK being dressed in his robes of office)

ATTENDANT: His Grace, the Lord Archbishop of York!
The Right Honourable, the Lord High Admiral, Lord Clinton!19
The Right Honourable, the Lord Howard of Effingham!20
The Right Honourable, the Earl of Pembroke!21
The Right Honourable, the Earl of Arundel!22

(SIR THOMAS POPE and PARRY then enter, unannounced)

ELIZABETH: Greetings, my Lords! What is your message?

YORK: Your Grace, her Majesty, Queen Mary.....whose soul God cherish....is dead. We come to cry! God save Queen Elizabeth!

ALL: God save Queen Elizabeth!

ELIZABETH: (Reverently, in a low but clear voice)
"It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

(YORK and all the others say, "Amen." ELIZABETH

19 Lord Clinton, Edward Fiennes De Clinton, ninth Lord Clinton and Saye, Earl of Lincoln (1512-1585). He was Lord High Admiral under both Mary and Elizabeth.

20 Lord Howard of Effingham, Lord William Howard, first Baron Howard of Effingham (1510?-1573). He served as Lord Chamberlain under Elizabeth and was employed in diplomacy.

21 Earl of Pembroke, Sir William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke of the second creation (1501?-1570). Immediately after Mary's death Pembroke traveled to Hatfield and attended Elizabeth's first Privy Council. He and Cecil were on a committee to discuss the ecclesiastical situation.

22 Earl of Arundel, Henry Fitzalan (1511?-1580), 12th earl of Arundel. He was a leader of Catholic nobility and was imprisoned twice under Elizabeth for suspicions of implications in Catholic plots.
sits quite still, but her lips move as though murmuring a prayer. All stand with heads bowed reverently. A prolonged fanfare of trumpets. ELIZABETH starts and looks toward the sound)

YORK: 'Tis the Heralds, come to proclaim your Majesty before the gates of Hatfield.

ELIZABETH: Open the windows!

(An ATTENDANT and PARRY open the chief casement. Another flourish of trumpets, and the four HERALDS enter in their gorgeous tabards and stand in a row outside the windows at the back. ELIZABETH rises, stands erect, her breast swelling, her chin lifted high. As the Proclamation is read, she seems to grow visibly taller. The trumpets sound a third time. At the first words of the CHIEF HERALD, who reads aloud from the parchment in his hands, all kneel except ELIZABETH)

CHIEF HERALD: Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, -- because it has pleased Almighty God by calling to His mercy out of this mortal life, to our great grief, our dearest sister of noble memory, Mary, late Queen of England, France, and Ireland (whose soul God have!) to dispose and bestow upon us, as the only right heir by blood and lawful succession to the Crown......

(As he is reading, the CURTAIN falls slowly)

(Playwright's) NOTE: Only as much from this extract need be read as to give Elizabeth an opportunity to show her silent pride and exultation, and to make an effective CURTAIN

23 The word "Queen" was used in several of the copies of the play, including the manuscript that the playwright called "the latest copy." However, the word "Crown" was used considerably more times and seems more appropriate in the context of the Chief Herald's speech.
ACT II

SCENE: The Queen's private apartments at Whitehall.¹ To left, a window and a door opening on a private passage. To right, a fireplace and the door of formal entrance. At back, a tapestry-hung doorway leading into the Queen's bedchamber. The tapestry is looped back, showing a portion of the room beyond, the great bed with its gorgeous trappings, a toilet table, etc. This room is really an alcove lit with candles. On either side of the alcove at back are windows.

The outer Chamber is richly furnished, but with few articles. To right, a Chair of State for the Queen; other chairs near the fireplace. To left, a carved wooden table with writing materials and some books upon it. Also, to left, the virginals - a musical instrument resembling a tiny harpsichord, with a keyboard, the keys of which, when pressed, release quills that strike strings.

(Playwright's) NOTE: ELIZABETH was a noted performer on the virginals.

TIME: Morning of the 9th of September, 1560. Nearly two years later.

As the curtain rises, BLANCHE, now LADY PARRY, is seen supervising a tire-woman in the arrangement of gown, petticoats, farthingale, etc., some of which are being laid out on the bed, while MISTRESS KATE ASHLEY²

¹ A royal palace used by Elizabeth located near Westminster Abbey.

² Kate Ashley (d. 1565), was Elizabeth's governess from the time the Princess was four years old.
is sewing some furbelows on a bodice of gold brocade.

BLANCHE: (Comes from the inner chamber with a gold tray in her hand, upon which are Venetian glasses and a decanter of wine. She puts the tray on the table and begins to lay in order the pens, papers, etc. Then suddenly, as if struck by a thought) Mistress Ashley! Mistress Ashley!

KATE: I come! I come! (She advances into the room, still stitching the gorgeous bodice) What's to do?

BLANCHE: (Taking a small key from her bosom and handing it to KATE) I forgot to give you this. 'Tis the key to her Grace's jewel coffer. She'll wear King Philip's emeralds.

KATE: (Taking the key) Lord! Lord! When I first knew her, poor lamb, she had only two shifts to her back and but one holiday gown. (Holding up the bodice) New cloth of gold's her wear, and the kings of the earth send her gewgaws! Times have changed, indeed!

BLANCHE: (Laughing and turning her towards the door of the bedchamber) Hurry! Or they may change again for the worse! ... If she's late, 'twill be God's will! ... If we're late, 'twill be the devil's!

KATE: (As she hurries back into the bedchamber) I go! I go!

BLANCHE: (Calling after her) Loose the curtains!

(KATE ASHLEY, from within, unfastens the tapestries before the bedroom door, and they fall into place, masking it. At this moment, the door right is opened by a PAGE from outside, and SIR THOMAS PARRY enters, a roll of papers in his hand)

PARRY: (Holding out the roll) Here, Blanche.... put this with the other papers... Stay! Not on top!

BLANCHE: Not on top? (She laughs suddenly) Ah! The Household accounts!

PARRY: Yes, God help me!

BLANCHE: (Laughing again) God help you, indeed, if they're excessive!

PARRY: (Ruefully) What's excessive is her Grace's
BLANCHE: You should stand up to her.

PARRY: Stand up to her! Woman, you babble...... There's not a man-jack in both Houses of Parliament can stand up to her!

BLANCHE: Lord Robert does! That's why she likes him best of all, I warrant.

PARRY: Heaven grant she come from hawking in good humour! (Flourish of trumpets, outside of Palace) There! 'Tis she.....I go to receive her. (Pointing to roll on table as he goes) For the love of heaven, hide those till she's in good humour! (He hurries out)

(Almost immediately there is another fanfare nearer at hand, and within the Palace. BLANCHE hurries to put the roll of accounts to one side behind some papers. At the second sound of the trumpets, a PAGE enters by door left, and stands stiffly before it. The PAGE's livery is scarlet cloth, with Tudor roses in gold embroidery on breast and shoulder. The next moment, BOWYER, Usher of the Black Red, throws open the door right, to admit ELIZABETH and her party. She wears a gorgeous riding habit and a hat be-jewelled and plumed. She is radiant with the gold red-haired comeliness of her seven and twenty years and in towering spirits. The EARL OF ARUNDEL attends her on the right hand, LORD ROBERT DUDLEY on the left. ARUNDEL is a man of about forty, overbearing and supercilious in manner. He carries the Queen's mantle. LORD ROBERT carries her jewelled riding whip. LADY MARY SIDNEY, a young and lovely woman, follows the Queen. Last of all come MASTER ARTHUR GUNTER and MASTER GEORGE COTTON. They carry the cloaks and whips of their respective patrons. All the party is splendidly attired in hunting dress)

3 Lady Mary Sidney was the sister of Robert Dudley, the wife of Sir Henry Sidney, and the mother of the poet, soldier, and statesman, Sir Philip Sidney.

4 Master Arthur Gunter was a retainer of the Earl of Arundel.

5 Master George Cotton was a retainer of Lord Robert Dudley.
ELIZABETH: God’s glory! What a glorious morning! I’m sure they went a-hawking in Paradise!

DUDLEY: (Smiling and a little familiarly, as of one privileged) I’m sure 'twould take a flaming sword to keep your Grace from it!

ELIZABETH: (Laughing) Two of 'em, more like! (She seats herself on the Chair of State and, taking off her hat, flings it on the table. To BLANCHE, who stands near her at back of chair) Pin down my hair, Blanche! Thank God it curls naturally! (BLANCHE does her bidding. ELIZABETH draws off her white gloves embroidered with seed pearls and fans herself with them) Jesu! but 'tis hot for September! The devil must be abroad!

ARUNDEL: (With a side glance at DUDLEY) Alas! He’s never at home, your Grace!

ELIZABETH: (Laughing) Nay, he mends the fires o’ Sundays! ... But this is Monday... and my thumbs prick... Kate Ashley says that’s a sign evil is near.

DUDLEY: (Who has caught ARUNDEL’s spiteful glance, though ELIZABETH has not) Have pity, your Grace! ........... My Lord Arundel is nearest you!

ELIZABETH: (Looking mischievously at ARUNDEL) That might have meant evil once .... but not now. (She gives a mild rebuke to DUDLEY and delights ARUNDEL by adding) To have old enemies for friends is the salt of life. (She holds out her hand to ARUNDEL, who gets on one knee to kiss it)

ARUNDEL: Your Majesty is a seraph of forgiveness!

ELIZABETH: Rather an imp of selfishness to forget my poor Mary... I've two privy audiences, and not time to change for them...but that's no reason that she should smother, too. (To LADY SIDNEY) Go, sweetheart, and change to lighter dress. ...You shall robe me afterwards. (She signs to the PAGE, who opens door right, and LADY SIDNEY, after curtseying deeply, goes out. BLANCHE also withdraws, into the bedroom, and closes the door behind the tapestries. To ARUNDEL and DUDLEY, with mock seriousness) My Lords! .... I've discovered Satan's business, and why my thumbs prick!... He snared me to be late a-hawking, so that I must receive his Holy Pomposity, Bishop de Quadra,6 in hunting garb!

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6 Alvarez de Quadra, Bishop of Aquila, the Spanish Ambassador sent to arrange a marriage between Elizabeth and King Philip II of Spain.
ARUNDEL: Diana herself was not so beauteously garbed, nor so beauteous.

ELIZABETH: (Laughing) Diana? The Spanish Bishop would fly from a Pagan goddess.

DUDLEY: (Quickly) Not from the Virgin Huntress of England, your Majesty... He seeks to find her a Prince Endymion, and a new religion both in one.

ELIZABETH: (Gaily) 'Tis in my mind that Diana was her own religion, and found her Endymion for herself.

ARUNDEL: Blest Endymion!

ELIZABETH: Nay, curst as I remember... for she tired of him!

DUDLEY: (With a sneering smile at ARUNDEL) And she tired of him most likely because he was o'er sugared of tongue and o'er puffed of heart!

ARUNDEL: (Glaring angrily at DUDLEY) Better too much heart than too little.

DUDLEY: Better some heart and some wit!

(ELIZABETH has been enjoying this passage at arms. Now, however, she interrupts)

ELIZABETH: My Lords, pray one of you give me a glass of wine. Hawking is thirsty play.

(Both ARUNDEL and DUDLEY rush over to the table and put their hands on the decanter of wine at the same moment. ELIZABETH watches them with sidelong eyes that have an impish gleam in them)

ARUNDEL: Give way, sir! ...... I have precedence of you as premier Earl of England!

DUDLEY: I touched this flask first....that gives me precedence over one and all! Do you give way!

ARUNDEL: We'll have you a Bear for cognisance.... 'Tis the symbol of your manners!

DUDLEY: A Bear and a Ragged Staff....Do not forget the Staff! .... Would you were better acquainted with it!

ELIZABETH: My Lords!

(They are so angry that they do not hear her)
ARUNDEL: Do you threaten me, upstart!

DUDLEY: (Coolly) That stuffed Apollo, Pickering,\(^7\) once called you "knave" ....... If you call me names, I may give you yet a worse one!

ELIZABETH: (Now thoroughly angry) My Lords! My Lords! ......... I will have no brawling! God's death! Will you come to blows in our presence? Shame on you both!

(DUDLEY and ARUNDEL partially recover themselves)

ARUNDEL: I humbly crave your Majesty's pardon. But I touched the wine flask first... As Lord Steward of the Household, surely 'tis my right to serve your Majesty.... and I touched it first.

DUDLEY: Pardon, your Majesty.........'twas I touched first! (He turns to GEORGE COTTON) Master Cotton here saw me, did you not, George?

ARUNDEL: And my gentleman-in-waiting, Master Gunter, saw me touch first! I'll answer for it.

GUNTER: Your Lordship, I'll swear to it. (In his zeal, he forgets himself, and turns to the Queen) May it please your gracious Majesty, I'll swear to it.

ELIZABETH: (Glad to vent her anger on a third person) How now, sir! ...... Do you dare address your Queen without permission? Withdraw!

(As GUNTER sneaks out at left, half dead with fright, ARUNDEL starts forward)

ARUNDEL: Your Majesty! Believe me, on my soul's salvation.........

ELIZABETH: (Turning on him indignantly) Withdraw also! ....... All of you .... withdraw! (ARUNDEL and DUDLEY bow low and start to the door, right, followed by MASTER COTTON. As they reach it, ELIZABETH stops them with an imperious gesture) Stay a moment! ...... (She then addresses ARUNDEL in a kinder tone) My Lord Arundel, we do not forget your rights of precedence, but we will have no brawling in our

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\(^7\)Sir William Pickering (d. 1575), was, during the spring of 1559, briefly in favor with the Queen, and there was some rumor that he would marry her. Elizabeth liked his company, but never dreamed of marrying him.
presence. Pray you remember that! As for Lord Robert Dudley, we ourself will read him a lesson in behaviour. (To DUDLEY, in a curt tone) Remain, Lord Robert. (To ARUNDEL) You have our leave to go. (ARUNDEL bows low and then, with one spiteful glance at DUDLEY, goes out, followed by COTTON. As they exeunt, ELIZABETH addresses the Usher of the Black Rod) Master Black Rod, admit only the Spanish Ambassador and Sir William Cecil.

BOWYER: I will, your Majesty.

(He retires, closing the door after him. As soon as it is shut, ELIZABETH turns to DUDLEY with an entire change of voice and manner. They are now sad, reproachful, even anxious)

ELIZABETH: Oh, Robin! Robin! Can you not curb your temper, even for my sake?

DUDLEY: 'Tis for your sake it rages! When I think how that pompous popinjay once led the death pack after you...

ELIZABETH: (In her royal tone) For that very reason you should be wary. My forgiveness has tamed him...for the moment. Since I have forgiven, you must.

DUDLEY: Elizabeth! I beg of you! Do not use the Queen's voice to me! God, who made me, and you, who make and unmake me with a look, know how little politic I am by nature!..... Yet for your sake I play the game of politics like a game of forfeits!..... Has there been one princely wooer whose suit I have not furthered, when you required it? Have I not supplied my stiff neck and lapped wormwood for your sake?

ELIZABETH: Come, Robin, give over raging. You know well that I shall marry none of them....

DUDLEY: I know well you think so.........but you do not love as I love!

ELIZABETH: I am not free to say how I love.....while you are bound.....

DUDLEY: (With a note of despair in his voice) And while I am bound you are so pressed on every side to marry.. not only by these foreigners, but by your own people... so hounded to it that some Prince may come who'll touch your heart nearer than I have!

ELIZABETH: (Softly) I think not, dear Robin....

DUDLEY: (Rushing on) You think! You think! God help
me! ....That shrivels me! You only think, where I know! ....And I know also that Cecil waits for his chance to offer you as husband the handsomest King in Christendom!

ELIZABETH: What's this? ....... What king? .......

DUDLEY: Eric of Sweden. 8

ELIZABETH: I have already refused him.

DUDLEY: Aye, by proxy. But if he come in person..... what then?

ELIZABETH: Enough! My patience cracks!

DUDLEY: And mine! I must play any part you set me..... and play it merrily, or scorch with your anger! ....... 'Tis not enough that I've run your errands to Quadra about the Austrian marriage! 9 No! I must be present while he offers you as husband a great-headed dwarf!

ELIZABETH: (Checked in her growing anger by surprise and real horror) What! Is the Archduke a dwarf?

DUDLEY: (With grim bitterness) An Arch-dwarf, with a head as big as a harvest moon!

ELIZABETH: (Her anger dispelled for the moment by a burst of laughter) Gentle Jesu! ....... What perilous husbands lie in wait for a poor Virgin Queen!

DUDLEY: (His last shred of self-control giving way) Aye, you can laugh, Elizabeth! I love you as my life, but you only love me as your playmate, your jig-maker, your Merry Andrew! To you I am only Robin Goodfellow!

ELIZABETH: (Now thoroughly angry, and in her most cutting and Queenly voice) Nay, to me you are a married man, and at this moment also a madman.

DUDLEY: (Stopped short as by a sword thrust, then

8 Eric, as Prince of Sweden, courted Elizabeth by proxy in 1559. He became King of Sweden in 1561 and continued unsuccessfully in his courtship of the Queen.

9 When Elizabeth had refused King Philip II's suit, Philip put forward the names of the Holy Roman Emperor's sons, the Archdukes Ferdinand and Charles. This, however, refers only to the Archduke Charles.
bowing low, but proudly) Your Majesty's rebuke was well deserved. I humbly crave your Majesty's pardon. (His lips quiver suddenly, and he adds in a choked voice) Yet... if I had told you... (He closes his mouth firmly, and stands erect, waiting her further displeasure)

ELIZABETH: (Relenting as she watches his pale, unhappy face) What is it you haven't told me?.........Come, Robin! We must not quarrel.... We two, of all the world, should not quarrel......... In reminding you that we are honour bound, I did but remind myself...... Do not be offended.

DUDLEY: (Bitterly) Who am I, Robert Dudley, to be offended with the Majesty of England?

ELIZABETH: We're both hot-tempered... and both sorry... Let's both forgive!

DUDLEY: (Brokenly) You bade me be your eyes and watch for you....

ELIZABETH: Robin.........come here. (DUDLEY goes over to her, then, suddenly dropping on his knees beside her, hides his face on the hand she holds out to him. ELIZABETH, with a gesture of great tenderness, puts her other hand on his bowed head, her fingers playing with his short locks. Then she says softly) At least...... if I do not love you, Robin, I love those locks of yours....... (Drawing her other hand from beneath his cheek, she takes his face in both hands and lifts it) Look at me, dear eyes....... Did I blind you with tears? ...... I must heal where I have hurt. (She kisses him on the eyes)

DUDLEY: (Overcome, throwing his arms about her, as he still kneels beside her) My love!

ELIZABETH: Yes.... Your love, as you are mine! (She releases herself almost instantly, putting him from her) Nay! We must not....... (She tries to smile down her emotion) We're too fiery to play with fire! Much less fling it at each other with both hands!...... There... stay there.... No... 'tis not too far.... Now tell me what you kept back. What's troubling you? (She notes the look of pain and apprehension that changes his face as she speaks, and adds quickly) Is it so bad as that? Come! Tell me quickly!

DUDLEY: I thought to keep it from you till after the audience with Quadra......

ELIZABETH: No, no! I'll have it now.
DUDLEY: This morning, as I was mounting to join you, a letter was handed to me..... from Cumnor Hall....

ELIZABETH: (Under her breath) From Cumnor Hall?

DUDLEY: Oh, 'tis horrible! ..... Poor Amy's malady has driven her frantic... Owen11 writes me that she wanders through the house at all hours..... must be watched night and day..... cries out that if God will not end her misery, she will!..... (He covers his eyes with his hand for an instant as if to shut out some dreadful sight)

ELIZABETH: (Much moved) Christ have mercy on her!.... Why doesn't Owen give her soothing drugs? Fool! Fool to let her suffer so!..........I'll send Dr. Wendy to her again ..... He shall ride with you...... Oh, Robin! You should have told me at once! What if she..... harm herself..... before you get there?

DUDLEY: (With toneless quiet) For her it would be release...for me, ruin.

ELIZABETH: What! What did you say?

DUDLEY: If she...dies....unnaturally....my enemies will say that I plotted it.

ELIZABETH: By God! They dare not!

DUDLEY: They have dared already.....

ELIZABETH: (Clenching her hands in an access of fury and in a low, concentrated voice) May they be damned with plenteous torments!

DUDLEY: (His rigid self-control breaking somewhat) Oh, Elizabeth! You, who knows me..... You could not doubt me...even if this horror fell on me... You could not..... Say you could not!

ELIZABETH: Robin! You have my faith and my love..... Go, now, and God go with you. (Bending to kiss his forehead

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10 Dudley had leased this place in 1559. It was in North Berkshire, near the Oxfordshire border. Lady Dudley, neglected by her husband, lived in a portion of the house. It was here that Lady Dudley died.

11 Reference is to a former court physician, who had once owned Cumnor Place. Dr. Owen, however, was dead at this point.
as he kneels before her, she says with sincere feeling)
I shall pray for you...and for poor Amy.......
(DUDLEY goes out quickly, unable to command his voice for her last words. When she is alone, she takes a small gold cross from her bosom and presses it to her lips. Thrusting it back, she rouses herself and calls) Blanche! Blanche!

BLANCHE: (Appearing on threshold of bedroom) Your will, Madam?

ELIZABETH: Go bring me the Spanish emeralds. Hurry!
(She seats herself on her Chair of State, assuming a composed manner, while BLANCHE, hurrying back with the emerald necklace, has barely time to slip it over the Queen's head before the Usher of the Black Rod announces the BISHOP OF AQUILA (QUADRA), a fine-looking old Spaniard of the unctuous type - rather than the fiery - superbly habited in the robes of a bishop)

BOWYER: His Grace, the Lord Bishop of Aquila, Ambassador from Spain.

ELIZABETH: (As he bows low before her) Good morrow, my Lord Bishop.........I am sorry to receive you in hunting weeds. But I returned late........ (She touches the necklace of emeralds) I had only time to don King Philip's emeralds, in his honour and yours....... They are the most splendid I ever saw!

QUADRA: Ah, your Majesty, had you but consented, my royal master would have given you, not only these poor emeralds, but the crown jewels and the crown of Spain. Your refusal was a sore grief to him.

ELIZABETH: Your Grace, King Philip was my sister's husband..... I could not marry a brother! ...........

QUADRA: As to that, there would have been a dispensation.

ELIZABETH: (Dryly) We dispense with such dispensations in England......

QUADRA: Alas, your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: (With irritation) Come, my Lord! You seem to think that we are Turks or Moors here, whereas we only differ from other Catholics in things of small importance.

QUADRA: (Meekly, but with a twinkle in his eye) Do you count the Pope a thing of small importance, your Majesty?

ELIZABETH: (Her look also mischievous) Why, in England,
we do not count him at all!

QUADRA: (Maintaining an unruffled demeanour) And yet, he counts your Majesty the chief wonder of the world!

ELIZABETH: What's that?

QUADRA: His Holiness has specially praised your Majesty in the strongest terms, and in my presence.

ELIZABETH: Indeed? What said he?

QUADRA: (Feigning embarrassment) I fear his speaking was too plain for maiden ears.

ELIZABETH: Tut! I'm no mewed-up nun to require expurgations of Holy Writ. (Her eyes flash laughter) or holy speech! Go on, my Lord! Tell me what your Pope said of me.

QUADRA: He said...... Your Majesty has commanded it! He said: "Elizabeth of England is a great woman. If she and I could marry and have a son, he would rule the world!"

ELIZABETH: (Bursting into laughter) By God as Man!.... I never considered the Pope till now. (Pause) If he were marriageable, I would consider him more than any!

QUADRA: (Bowing) May I acquaint His Holiness with your Majesty's comment?

ELIZABETH: Do! We shall be better friends for it.... And now, my Lord, I must pray you come to the point for which you have asked audience.

QUADRA: Madame, I am here on behalf of the Austrian envoy. He would offer you once more the hand of his Highness, the Archduke Charles.

(She leans her chin on her hand and fixes on the Bishop a penetrating and solemn regard)

ELIZABETH: What like, as mere man, is your Archduke?

QUADRA: Oh, a most personable Prince, Madam!

ELIZABETH: Mb! Personable. Do you mean handsome?

QUADRA: (In for a penny, in for a pound) Certes, very handsome, your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: (Smiling rather wickedly) Well, my Lord,
since that's so.......tell the Archduke to come and woo me for himself.

QUADRA: But your Majesty knows that the Emperor has opposed it. He fears to send his son, lest your Majesty deal with him as with so many other princes.

ELIZABETH: If the Archduke wants his answer, he must run his risk.

QUADRA: But....... I was assured by Lord Robert that your Grace felt now favourably inclined to the alliance..... Would he were here to second me! ......... He promised to be here.....

ELIZABETH: (Her face changing in spite of her will) He meant to be here, my Lord... Sad news called him away at the last moment..... His poor wife is worse.... Maybe dying...

QUADRA: (Before he can prevent it, in the tone of one who has an expectation confirmed) Ah!...........

ELIZABETH: (Haughtily, fixing him with piercing eyes) And what may you mean by that "Ah!", my Lord Bishop?

QUADRA: (Once more in full possession of himself, and calling on all his resources of craft, both natural and acquired) 'Twas an expression mixed of many feelings, Madam .......Acceptance of death's solemnity, as a priest... Regret for its tragedy, as a man... Commiseration for Lord Robert, as his friend. (Here he permits himself an unctuous sigh)

ELIZABETH: (Rigidly erect, and in a low, menacing voice) Take care, Bishop de Quadra! God has bestowed on me an inner ear!......... It listens for hidden meanings..... and understands them.

QUADRA: Misericordia! What hidden meaning does your Grace impute to my poor words, uttered from a pure heart....

ELIZABETH: (Cutting him short) Of your pure heart I know nothing, Lord Bishop! That your pure ears are filled with the skulduggery of Court gossip, I know well. .... One great gift I had at birth, among many faults, my Lord of Aquila, ..... the gift to reckon men at their true value. ....... It is so I have reckoned Robert Dudley, and his sum is honour with greatness of mind.... I would have those beware, who seek, in belittling him, to enlarge themselves!

QUADRA: But, your Majesty, I am Lord Robert's devoted friend.... I.....
ELIZABETH: (Again cutting him short) Are you indeed? I am not so sure of it as I would wish to be of my soul's salvation.......

QUADR.A: And his Majesty, King Philip, holds Lord Robert in the greatest esteem...has the highest opinion of his worth and merits.

ELIZABETH: Then do you see to it, my Lord, in so far as you are able, that his esteem and opinion remain unchanged. (She stands up and makes a regal, though courteous, gesture of dismissal) The audience is finished.

QUADR.A: (Bowing ceremoniously before her) I thank your Majesty for having granted it.

ELIZABETH: (Significantly) Thank no more for having granted you sound advice, my Lord Bishop!

BOWYER: (Opening the great door, right) The Right Honourable, the First Secretary, Sir William Cecil!

(CECIL enters quietly, some papers in his hand. He is sedate, calm, circumspect, as usual, and still wears dark, somewhat old-fashioned attire, his coat bordered with fur. He passes QUADR.A, who is already on his way out)

CECIL: (Bowing as they pass each other) My Lord Ambassador!........

QUADR.A: (With a gracious bend of the head) Senor Secretary!

(As the door is closed behind QUADR.A, ELIZABETH, who has left the Chair of State, stands looking after him)

ELIZABETH: That purple fox drips with honey, yet my teeth are on edge as from vinegar!.........I mistrust him more and more, Sir William......... (She turns to CECIL as she says the last words. Stopping him as he would kneel to her, and leading the way to the table, where she seats herself, motioning him to a chair opposite) Pray you, be seated. (Leaning her cheek on her hand, she takes up her train of thought again) Yes, a very complete, consecrated Reynard, indeed....... And no friend to me or mine.

CECIL: Your Majesty's quick wit has divined what my slow wit had to discover by taking pains.

ELIZABETH: (Quickly) And what pains did you take?
CECIL: (Demurely) One took them for me, Madam, and intercepted a letter from the Spanish Bishop to the Spanish Court.

ELIZABETH: Ha!........... What said he?

CECIL: Many things not fit for your Grace's ears..... vile and scullion-like gossip.......... 

ELIZABETH: I knew it!

CECIL: (Startled) What, Madam?

ELIZABETH: (Drumming with her fingers on the table) No matter. Go on. What else?

CECIL: The Bishop's chief grievance was that your Majesty would not accept any of the consorts proposed by Spain..... 

ELIZABETH: I will not accept a husband at the bidding of others!

CECIL: I know, none better, your Grace's dislike of marriage .... but, for your own welfare and that of the realm, ..... I venture, with your Grace's other Councillors, to urge not too long delay...... 

ELIZABETH: (Now shaken by one of her nervous fits of exasperation in which her love and anxiety for DUDLEY are the chief ingredients) Too long delay! ... God's death, sir! I am but twenty-seven.... I shall not have reigned two little years till January!....... Am I to be curse for a barren fig tree, because I have not picked up the first Princeling offered, and so cannot give England an heir to the succession, as a Christmas dole! (She springs up impetuously as she speaks, and begins to pace the room. CECIL also rises, much distressed) 

CECIL: (Earnestly, with his usual lack of humour) Madam, God be my witness! Sooner than vex you, I would have an ague with five fits a day...... 'Tis only that I would spare you public annoyance. Parliament intends sending a deputation to implore your Grace to take a husband...

ELIZABETH: Let Parliament attend to its own duties, and I'll attend to mine! It's not Parliament will take a husband, but Elizabeth Tudor! Little do Lords or Commons care if I be wretched, so that the Queen be safely married!... But I'll not be coerced by anybody! .... I will marry whom I choose, when I choose, and no otherwise! (A pause)

CECIL: (Gentle, but determined) And yet, your Majesty
has small choice left.... Would you perchance again consider the King of Sweden?

ELIZABETH: I will consider no more foreigners! If I marry, I will marry an Englishman! (A pause)

CECIL: Your Grace would marry..............a subject?

ELIZABETH: (Her head held high and defiantly) I will remind you, Master Secretary, that my own father several times married subjects! Aye! And kept his authority in spite of it, as fully as if he had married abroad. (A pause)

CECIL: (Quietly, but with some emotion) Madam, may I ask whether or not you have already named to yourself such anyone?

ELIZABETH: (Haughtily) That you shall know in good time!

CECIL: Ah, Madam, believe me! ....... The time is here, good or ill.. There are certain things I must disclose to your Grace, or be disloyal.

ELIZABETH: (Anxious, perturbed, yet still haughty) Then disclose them!

CECIL: For the first time since your Grace called me to serve you, I could wish another in my place.....

ELIZABETH: Pray you, say what you have to say, and say it quickly!

CECIL: Your Grace........ Lord Robert Dudley is a married man, but there are many who believe, and speak it openly....... that were he to lose his wife, your Grace would take him for consort.

ELIZABETH: (Speaking with suppressed anger) And you think your Queen's ears a fitting repository for such insolence?

CECIL: (Deeply moved, but determined) Madam, there's yet worse to tell..........

ELIZABETH: (Alarm and rage struggling within her) Worse?

CECIL: It is also believed near and far.....by all sorts and conditions of people.....that Lord Robert is plotting ....to kill his wife.....and that he.....

ELIZABETH: God's blood! You dare say so....... and to
You dare? ... You dare? ... (She breaks off, suffocated with pain and fury)

CECIL: (Very pale, but unshaken) I dare, for the loyalty I have sworn your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: What? You sop up this infamy, then come and spit it out in our presence and call it loyalty? Jesu cleanse such loyalty! You call yourself his friend... and when his back's turned... call him murderer! ... Shame on you, shame! ... And shame on me to have chosen such a one as you!

CECIL: Madam, as God lives, I do not believe this calumny... By the Cross of Christ, I do not... I know too well Lord Robert's fiery, disdainful temper to credit him with such villainy... but I would be no friend, either to him or to your Grace, if I kept this rottenness hid from you... Quadra's letter was full of it...

ELIZABETH: (Brokenly, after a struggle with herself, and a long pause) Sir William... my good friend... forgive me....

CECIL: (His usual self-control a good deal shaken) Nay, forgive me, your Grace, that I had to wound you.

ELIZABETH: (Still brokenly) Why do they hate him so?... 'Twas well known his poor wife is dying of a malignant canker of the breast....

CECIL: Alas, Madam! The canker of envy is more malignant....

ELIZABETH: (Again walking to and fro feverishly) What to do? ....... What to do? .......

CECIL: (After watching her intently and anxiously for a time) When you were proclaimed Queen, your Majesty, you gave me a great and noble charge ..... One sentence of it rings now in my ears.....You charged me "that without respect to your private will, I should give you that counsel which I thought best."

ELIZABETH: (Stopping short in her restless pacing) And what is your counsel?

CECIL: (With deep perception of her anxiety for DUDLEY) For Lord Robert's sake, as well as for your Majesty's, I would advise that for the present ....... till this calumny be blown over....your Grace see him less often....less intimately..... (A pause)
ELIZABETH: (At last, in a low voice) I will follow your counsel. (As she speaks, she turns and goes to the table, where she stands fingering some papers as if in deep thought, her back towards him. Suddenly she turns again, now in full command of herself, and, coming up to him, lays her hand on his arm. Smiling through unshed tears, she says in her most winning voice) Ah, Cecil, Cecil! You are like my conscience... at once my torment and my protection..... Because of that I let you bit and bridle me!

CECIL: (Protestingly) Bit and bridle you, your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: Aye, curb me, for England's sake. (With an affectionate tap on his cheek, she adds in a lighter tone) Yet be not too perked up! ....... I bend my neck for England, but for no man!

(Here the door of the bedroom is opened, and BLANCHE appears through the parted tapestries)

BLANCHE: (Sinking down in a low curtsey, just outside the door) Your Grace bade me remind you when 'twas noon.

ELIZABETH: Presently. (BLANCHE sweeps another deep curtsey and withdraws into the bedroom) They wait to robe me for dinner, so farewell till then.

CECIL: (Bowing low over the hand she holds out to him) God keep your Grace.

ELIZABETH: And you. (As CECIL lifts his head, she says pleadingly) Defend him to the best of your power!

CECIL: (Firmly) To my utmost, Madam.

(ELIZABETH takes a little gold bell from the table and rings it once. BOWYER opens the door, and holds it while CECIL passes through, then closes it. As soon as he has gone, BLANCHE throws open the door of the bedroom, and the TIRE-WOMAN loops back the tapestry curtains. Within are to be seen LADY MARY SIDNEY and four other LADIES-IN-WAITING, beautifully dressed and ranged in a semi-circle, according to precedence, before the dressing table of the Queen. On this table, which is lighted by many candles, as the bedroom has no windows, are laid out gold articles of the Royal toilette. The Queen's dress, petticoats, farthingale, etc., are so laid out on the great bed that each article must pass through five pairs of hands to those of BLANCHE PARRY, who robes her mistress. LADY SIDNEY's place is next to the Queen. As she goes into her bedroom
and they begin to dress her, ELIZABETH assumes a gay, rattling tone, which at times becomes almost feverish. First of all, LADY SIDNEY and two others hold up a wide breadth of cloth of gold, elaborately fringed, while behind it, BLANCHE and the TIRE-WOMAN assist the Queen to take off her hunting dress and boots. Passing from hand to hand, the Queen's chemise is given to her next, a rather narrow slip of white satin. As the breadth of gold cloth is being held, a TIRE-WOMAN, kneeling, is seen putting on the Queen's slippers over silk stockings, knitted for her by her silk woman as a gift in 1560. Another TIRE-WOMAN, meantime, arranges the Queen's hair and sets a head-dress of emeralds and pearls upon it. When the cloth of gold is at last lowered and rolled up, ELIZABETH attends in the slim over-chemise of white satin, while BLANCHE laces her stays of silver cloth, and LADY SIDNEY slips over her head the farthingale. This is a cage of whalebone, wound with silver ribbon and ruffled with silver lace. It is of the graceful, moderate size and shape worn in 1560, and not of the enormous dimensions that came into fashion later in ELIZABETH's reign. There are still several petticoats of fine lace and silk to be put on, bodices, etc., before the gorgeous gown of State is slipped over her head.

ELIZABETH: (In gay imitation of a street-vendor's cry, as they begin robing her) Ladies! What d'ye lack? News? Here is rare news! ....... Your Queen has again been offered the Archduke Charles! (Respectful "Oh's" and "Ah's" from the ladies. ELIZABETH rattles on) And what think you was the Queen's answer? That she'd marry no Prince in a poke! (Subdued but appreciative laughter from the LADIES. ELIZABETH joins them, then assumes a reproachful air) Oh, fie, ladies! ....... You must not think your Sovereign used such milkmaid words! No, no! Though her meaning was plain, her language was courtly. His Highness, said she, must come in person .......... God's truth! I'm sick of proxy wooings! ....... All these vendors of Princes, crying: "What d'you lack? ..... A fine tame husband! I have him safe at home for you, by the fire!" (The LADIES laugh softly, and ELIZABETH heaves a deep sigh) Heigh-ho! Sometimes I could wish I were a nun! (Murmurs of protest. ELIZABETH continues in a vigorous tone) I'll tell you this, though! ....... If ever I do marry, I'll not marry a man that sits all day by the fire, but one that can ride and hunt and fight! (The LADIES murmur approvingly as her look and tone kindle. Sharply to the TIRE-WOMAN, who is arranging the jewels in her hair) Be careful, girl! You're pulling our hair!
TIRE-WOMAN: (Scared) Oh, pardon, your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: (Taking up her thought again) 'Twould be glorious to swing a sword for England with my own hands.... (She breaks off with a cry of pain, and, jerking her head from the TIRE-WOMAN's hands, gives her a smart box on the ear) Take that, hussy! ....... We warned you not to pull our hair! (The TIRE-WOMAN snifflies, trying to suppress her tears) There, there! Don't snivel! (She snatches up her gold comfit box and, selecting a sweetmeat, holds it out to the girl) Stop blubbering, goose, and open your mouth. So....... (She pops the sugar-plum into the TIRE-WOMAN's obediently opened mouth, adding, with a laugh) That's sweet amends, hey, poppet?

TIRE-WOMAN: (Her mouth full) I humbly thank your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: Well, well! Jesu knows I've the mildest temper by nature, but there's always something to try it! (She rises, suddenly, exclaiming) By heaven! I smother in here with all these candles! (As she speaks, she comes out into the outer Chamber. The Second TIRE-WOMAN follows her, holding the long silk laces of the Queen's stays, which she is trying to lace. BLANCHE takes them from her and continues the lacing herself. ELIZABETH, catching sight of the roll of the Household Accounts, which has been brought to the topmost by her own absent-minded fingering of the papers on the table during her interview with CECIL, darts forward and snatches it up, while BLANCHE runs after her, holding the laces like reins. ELIZABETH unrolls the paper and glances over it angrily, then speaks in a high, indignant voice, which mounts as she goes on) What's this? ......... Fifty sheep daily? ......... Six fatted oxen.......Eight and a half of calves.......All these daily.........! Is your husband mad? ......... I told him I would have but thirty sheep, and four oxen, and five calves daily! We must be frugal!

BLANCHE: May it please your Grace, the Lord Bishop of Aquila and all his suite have been here this past week.....

ELIZABETH: Go to, Blanchet ..........Though the Bishop's a Spaniard and likes bull-baiting, he cannot eat an ox at a meal! I shall have something to say to your husband about this, I promise you! ..........Six fatted calves daily! ......... And I, a poor Sovereign, half ruined already! Oh, these Ambassadors! They'll eat me out of palace and patience yet! (There comes a knocking at door! right. ELIZABETH throws the roll back on the table angrily) In God's name! What is it now! (BLANCHE hurries to the door and is seen listening for a second to BOWYER, who passes her a small sealed paper through the chink. When she turns round, her face looks scared and startled. ELIZABETH calls her im-
periously) Well? What's to do? (BLANCHE advances and gives the paper to the Queen, who still frowning, breaks the seal and reads it. Her expression becomes transformed with alarm. She thrusts the paper into her bosom and calls out violently, to her ladies in general) Come! No more dawdling! Robe me! Robe me! (As they begin hurriedly to pass the last Petticoats and bodices from hand to hand, ELIZABETH says in a fury of impatience) Faster! Faster! .... God's death! Must I stand here all day! (Suddenly she wrenches herself from BLANCHE and LADY SIDNEY and begins snatching the articles from the hands of her ladies, turning swiftly from one to the other and dressing herself with shaking fingers. To LADY SIDNEY, who approaches with the skirt of her rich gown) No! Take that away! .... Give me my dressing robe.... Quick! (BLANCHE flings the beautiful furred garments about her, as she stands clad only in a silver lace Petticoat and bodice to match. ELIZABETH draws it rapidly into place and waves them all toward the bedroom) In there, all of you! ... Drop the curtains. Make the door fast. (They disappear into the inner chamber, like a cloud before a whirlwind. When they are gone, ELIZABETH goes toward the door, right, and says in a low, vehement voice) Enter! (BOWYER opens the door, and DUDLEY, pale as death, comes in and stands rigid, as if fixed where he is. BOWYER withdraws quickly, closing the door after him. Going up to DUDLEY) Robin.... why have you turned back? .... What's happened?

DUDLEY: (In a low voice, speaking with difficulty) I met one from Cumnor....... with a message......... She... is.... dead.....

ELIZABETH: (Almost as shaken as he is) Dead?........ (DUDLEY bows his head in assent) When? (After a breath's pause) How?

DUDLEY: Yesterday....... She died.......not naturally

ELIZABETH: (In a whisper of horror) Oh, God! (For a second or two they stand gazing at each other as if frozen, then ELIZABETH seizes his arm feverishly) But how? ......... How? .........

DUDLEY: She.....fell down a stairway....... (He shudders, then masters himself) When they found her....... she was.......dead..........

ELIZABETH: They found her?.....Surely someone saw her fall?

12 Although there was much suspicion that Dudley (and even the Queen) was implicated in his wife's death, a coroner's jury returned a verdict of accidental death.
DUDLEY: (with a gesture of despair) Bowes tells me none saw it.

ELIZABETH: 'Tis impossible!

DUDLEY: No one was with her. All the servants had gone to the fair at Abingdon...

ELIZABETH: What! Not even her waiting-woman with her? By God! I cannot believe it! There's something amiss here. Think, Robin, would your whole household dare to go a-fairing and leave your Lady helpless? No, no! I will not believe it!

DUDLEY: (In a level tone of despair) My enemies will believe it. (Suddenly his voice breaks and changes) They will say I ordered it! (ELIZABETH gives an inarticulate cry) But I will have full inquiry made... by the law openly to all men!

ELIZABETH: Yes, yes! Do not delay an instant! Go, Robin! Go yourself to Cumnor!

DUDLEY: (With anguished foreboding) Yet, should this horror divide us!

ELIZABETH: It shall not divide us! Are not your stars mine also? And are not mine in the ascendant? Courage, Robin! Your star shall not set while mine has light. Go now! Go quickly!

DUDLEY: (Lifts the hands she holds out to him, kisses them, and says brokenly) God keep you!

ELIZABETH: (Passionately) If He keep not you, I care not how He uses me! (DUDLEY goes out left. Now alone, ELIZABETH lifts up her arms in appeal) Oh, Lord God! That savest in time of trouble... defend him! Guide him!

QUICK CURTAIN

13 Bowes was one of Lady Dudley's servants at Cumnor.

14 Elizabeth Jenkins, in Elizabeth and Leicester (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1961), corroborates this story.
ACT III

SCENE: The same as Act II. It is night, and all the candles in the room are lighted. On the hearth is a great fire of logs. A wild wind is blowing, now loud, now low.

TIME: Five months later, toward the end of February, 1561.

As the curtain rises, ELIZABETH is seen at the virginals. She is seated sideways on the small tapestried bench, as if she had flung herself there in nervous half-heartedness. The chords she strikes are quick, flurried, changing from one key to another. KATE ASHLEY, on a low stool near the fire, is watching her anxiously with an expression full of loving concern.

ELIZABETH: (Suddenly brings both hands down on the keyboard in a crashing discord, and, springing up, covers her ears as if frantic) That wind! That accursed wind! It blows but to spite me! (She begins to pace to and fro like the lioness to which she has so often been compared) Sir Henry should have been here a full hour ago!

KATE: (Going to her) Now, now, sweet lambkin Majesty! Do not fret. 'Tis a long ride from Cumnor.

ELIZABETH: (Shuddering) Mark! Another tree down!.... What if he be lying out there in the forest......crushed to death?

KATE: No, no! God will protect him.

(BLANCHE enters suddenly from the bedroom)

ELIZABETH: (Darting towards her) Blanche! What news?

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1 Sir Henry Sidney (1529-1586), Lady Mary Sidney's husband, and thus a brother-in-law to Lord Robert Dudley.
BLANCHE: Alas, Madam! None as yet.

ELIZABETH: O Christ! Give me patience! (There comes a knocking at the door, left. ELIZABETH turns toward the sound, frowning) Who can it be coming secretly at this hour? (To BLANCHE) Go ask. Stay! . . . No matter who it be, . . . whether I admit or dismiss him, . . . afterwards do you go straight to Lady Sidney and tell her to bring Sir Henry here the instant he returns.

BLANCHE: I will, Madam. (She then goes to the door, left, and opens it slightly. Someone outside speaks to her in a low murmur. Still at the door, which she holds ajar) Please, your Majesty, 'tis Sir William Cecil.

ELIZABETH: Admit him. (CECIL enters, without closing the door behind him, and while near it bends his knee to the Queen. She motions BLANCHE and KATE ASHLEY toward the bedroom. They curtsey low and withdraw) What's this, Sir William? What new mystery have you to serve up, you most secret man?

CECIL: Your Majesty, one waits outside . . . . a proven servant of your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: Who is it?

CECIL: Your Ambassador to France, Madam.

ELIZABETH: What! Sir Nicholas Throgmorton here in England! . . . . What's happened? . . . . Come in, Sir Nicholas. (THROGMORTON enters and bends his knee to her. She speaks to him graciously, extending her hand, which he kisses) You are most welcome!

THROGMORTON: I fear your Majesty may not think so, when I have said my say.

ELIZABETH: Why, what have the French done now?

THROGMORTON: They know nothing of my presence here, Madam. I am reported ill in my bed, and must return before any guess my absence.

ELIZABETH: Here are dark words! But not so dark as your looks! Come, surely your head is not in danger from treason, or you would scarce have brought it here!

THROGMORTON: When I have spoken, it may be in danger . . . . though not for treason.

ELIZABETH: God's help! Would you frighten me, sir? Beat no more about the bush, Speak out!
THROGMORTON: I will, Madam..... This terrible slander against Lord Robert Dudley has spread to every land.....Because of certain things, my position as your Majesty's Ambassador at the Court of France has become unbearable!

ELIZABETH: Unbearable.....How so? What are these certain things?

THROGMORTON: I will repeat one to your Majesty, and you shall judge of it.... The other night the Queen Dauphine, Mary Stuart, fell a-laughing and dared to say to me: "I hear that the Queen of England's Horse-keeper has murdered his wife and will marry with the Queen!"

ELIZABETH: (With a look of still, concentrated fury in her narrowed eyes) I will be equal with Mary Stuart for that outrage. Go back and tell the black-tongued jade that she shall never set foot in Scotland with my permission, and if she do so without it, she shall mourn that day in sackcloth and ashes.

THROGMORTON: (Bluntly) Nay, Madam. Threats to the Dauphine will not mend things. I am so baited on all sides about this matter, that I know now which way to look or how to bear myself for shame. All tongues are wagging. The French are a broad-mouthed folk. I could not venture to tell your Majesty the vileness of their slanders.

ELIZABETH: (Menacingly) You are a brave man even to hint at them!

CECIL: (Softly) Indeed, Madam, Sir Nicholas could not do otherwise and keep his loyalty.

THROGMORTON: Your Majesty! Hear me! .... My heart is like a millstone in my breast with this matter! .... I have crossed swords for you with some of the wickedest blades in France, but 'twill not serve! Only you, yourself, can give me the sword will defend your honour!

ELIZABETH: (Moved by his emotion, raising him) What sword is that?

THROGMORTON: Break with Lord Robert, Madam! Send him from you!

ELIZABETH: (Bitterly) Nay, I am not a man, nor my name Peter, to deny my Lord, even once! .... What! Because

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2 Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, married the French dauphine (who became Francis II in July, 1559) in April, 1558.
he is accused falsely of murder, I am to turn on him? To drive him forth like a dog? You rave, sir! I give thanks to the Almighty that my chief adviser here.... (She indicates CECIL) is of more Christian mind. From the first, he has believed in my Lord's innocence! (To CECIL) Speak! Confirm what I have said.

CECIL: It is true, Madam. I do not believe him guilty ..... but the world does.

ELIZABETH: I am for him against all the world!

THROGMORTON: Oh, Madam! Think again......A man who has been attainted of high treason.... whose father and brother suffered for that crime on the scaffold....

ELIZABETH: (Furioulsy) Silence! (In a calmer voice she continues) Oh, fool! High treason, say you? When he was in the Tower for High treason, I was there, too......and on the same charge! (Here the tapestries at back are parted by BLANCHE to admit LADY SIDNEY, who hesitates near the door of the bedroom on seeing THROGMORTON and CECIL. But ELIZABETH calls to her imperiously) Mary! ...... Where's your husband? Has he been injured by the storm?

LADY SIDNEY: Not gravely, Madam. A flying branch cut his head. The wound still bleeds. He waits till it is stanch'd to attend your Grace.

ELIZABETH: His news! His news!

LADY SIDNEY: Good news, Madam, most good! Amy's maid has confessed everything ..... that her poor mistress tried many times to take her own life..... My husband has it down in writing.... duly witnessed..... That and much more. Positive proofs of Robert's innocence, to all that have open minds!

ELIZABETH: (Grimly, glancing at THROGMORTON) Into such minds as are shut, proofs shall be driven home like nails! You need a sword for my defense, say you? I will give you one that cannot break! Take this news to France. The Queen of England will not marry her Master of the Horse.... but the chief noble in her realm!

3 John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland and father to Lord Robert Dudley, was executed in 1553 for his implication in the plot to place Lady Jane Grey on the throne. Lord Guildford Dudley was Robert Dudley's brother and the husband of Lady Jane Grey. He was executed in 1554 along with his wife.
THROGMORTON: (Overjoyed) You will marry... whom, Madam?

ELIZABETH: I will marry... Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester... for I will make him so! ... And now... farewell!

THROGMORTON: (Kneeling before her... she does not give him her hand to kiss) God preserve your Majesty... in all things.

(He rises and goes out quickly at left, as he has come. CECIL hesitates, not knowing whether she means to dismiss him also, but she makes a quick sign to him to remain)

ELIZABETH: Master Cecil, I would have you seek Sir Henry at once, and inform yourself further of my Lord's innocence.

CECIL: (Bowing low) I will do so with pleasure, Madam.

ELIZABETH: (Suddenly dropping her formal tone and speaking with unconscious pathos) Is it really with pleasure that you will do it? ... Oh, Sir William! Forget the statesman and even the Queen! ... Wish me joy as a woman who would marry the man she loves.

CECIL: (Moved) I do, Madam! I do wish you joy from my heart... in this as in all things.

ELIZABETH: Thank you, my friend. Goodnight.

CECIL: (Kneeling to kiss the hand she holds out) Goodnight, your Grace.

(He goes out by door, left. As soon as the door is closed, ELIZABETH whirls joyously on LADY SIDNEY)

ELIZABETH: Now, Mary, you shall go to Bishop Quadra!

LADY SIDNEY: (Utterly taken aback) I, Madam? ... To Bishop Quadra, Madam? For... for what, Madam?

ELIZABETH: (Smiling at her bewilderment and echoing her playfully) For me and for your brother, Robert, Madam!

LADY SIDNEY: Your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: (Kissing her) Your Sistership! I shall marry Robert... but I must have Philip's approval. Go to the Bishop... Say that I'll give him audience now, at once.
Go, sweetheart! Go!

LADY SIDNEY: (Troubled) But, your Majesty......

ELIZABETH: (Her brows drawing together) "But!" ..... S'death! Am I to bear all I've borne for Robert's sake, and then be "butted" by his sister!

LADY SIDNEY: Oh, Madam! Do not be angry! 'Tis only that Bishop Quadra would not believe me.

ELIZABETH: Not believe you!

LADY SIDNEY: (Made bold by desperation) Indeed, no, your Majesty! 'Tis too short a while since you sent me to him on behalf of the Archduke Charles!

ELIZABETH: That pestilent Charles! What if I did temporize about Charles...to keep Spain soothed! In this matter, Quadra must believe you. Yes, by the Cross! My love for Robert has blazed in his defense for all to see!

LADY SIDNEY: Your Grace....believe me.....nothing I could say would convince him.

ELIZABETH: (Her long-strained nerves snapping in a burst of wrath) Obstinate wretch! You are as stiff-necked as your brother! 'Tis a family trait! Aye, my Lady, I see your brother in you! 'Tis a warning......... a warning! (She storms furiously to and fro as she speaks)

LADY SIDNEY: (On the verge of tears) Your Grace! Forgive .... All my thought was for you....

ELIZABETH: Ha! Robert's very turn of speech! Whenever he defies me, 'tis all for my sake!

LADY SIDNEY: Oh, Madam!

ELIZABETH: By God! You have whey for blood! I pity poor Sir Henry! Yes, my lady! I pity your poor husband, who has a man's fire to be quenched in whey!

LADY SIDNEY: (With the illumination of desperation) Your Grace, could you not send my husband on this errand? The Bishop will not doubt his word!

ELIZABETH: In God's name, send him then, and send him quickly! (LADY SIDNEY curtseys and starts toward door, left. She stops as ELIZABETH continues) Bid him assure the Bishop that, if King Philip will stand by me in this marriage, I will at once....restore the Cross and candles to my chapel altar.....and....put vestments on my clergy.... (In self-justification, as LADY SIDNEY stares at her) God's
splendour should go splendidly! Now, fly! (LADY SIDNEY curtsies again and taps on the door, left, which is opened from without by a PAGE. As the door closes behind her, ELIZABETH turns excitedly toward the tapestries before her bedroom door) Blanche! .... Mother Kate! (BLANCHE and KATE ASHLEY enter hurriedly and go to her, but before they can curtsey, she seizes a hand of each, as she stands between them, and swings it gaily) What think you, dear poppets? ... Your Queen has at last chosen a husband.

BLANCHE: Oh, joyous news!

KATE: God be praised! ....Will you name him to us, sweet Majesty?

ELIZABETH: Nay, guess! Guess! I give you three guesses!

BOTH: (In a breath) My Lord Robert!

ELIZABETH: (Feigning displeasure) What's this? .... Think you I'd marry a subject?

KATE: (With the privileged reguishness of an old Governess) As for that, sweet Queenling.... you are a subject, too, for all are subject to love.

ELIZABETH: Oh, witty Kitty! For that you shall have a new lace cap and a kiss. (She kisses KATE on the cheek) Yes, my dears! It is Lord Robert! I'm an English Queen, so I'll marry an Englishman...and be as happy with him as any Jill with her Jack! (As she speaks, there comes a loud blast of wind and a crashing noise almost directly overhead) Great God! What was that?

BLANCHE: (Soothing her) Only some chimney toppled over by the wind.

ELIZABETH: The wind! The wind! Why must it rage tonight of all nights!

KATE: Aye, aye, my royal lamb! Even as a babe you had liefer have a wind-colic within you, than a wind storm without you!

ELIZABETH: (Laughing) Fie, Mother Kate! To bed with you!

KATE: (Going toward the tapestried door at back) A sweet wakeful night to you, sweet Majesty....

ELIZABETH: What!

KATE: (Chuckling) ....Wherein to think on the man you love, Queenling!'
(She withdraws quickly backward between the tapestries, still chuckling)

ELIZABETH: (Calling after her) Sound sleep to you, goody goose! (ELIZABETH then turns, and as she moves forward some of the anxiety that clouded her mood at the beginning of the Act comes back. She throws herself into a chair and says sadly) Ah, Blanche! I am crossed and defied at every turn! But I will have my way in this! (She sets her teeth and says through them) I will, I will!

BLANCHE: And you will do wisely, dear Queen! Never could there be a braver pair than you and my Lord. . . . nor, please God, some day a finer heir to the succession!

ELIZABETH: That woman lies who loves as I love, and feigns to marry for babies! So I have my Lord and England while I live, God may see to the succession when I am dead!

BLANCHE: (Smiling fondly at her) Surely you are the humanest Queen that ever reigned!

ELIZABETH: And shall be the happiest!

(Here the door, left, is opened from outside by a PAGE, and LADY SIDNEY enters, out of breath, as though she had been running)

LADY SIDNEY: Your Majesty! . . . Just as Henry was starting . . . . for the Bishop's palace . . . . His Grace himself appeared. . . . Henry is telling. . . . him everything . . . . and His Grace will be here at any moment!

ELIZABETH: (Her face once more sparkling with animation) Good! I thank you, sweetheart! Blanche, tell Master Bowyer of the audience. (BLANCHE goes to the door, right, opens it and is seen speaking briefly to BOWYER, who then closes the door. LADY SIDNEY curtsies and is about to withdraw, when ELIZABETH stops her) No, no! Don't go, Mary! The purple fox must not find me waiting alone like a plump pullet on a roost! Come, Mary! Take up your lute! Sit there. . . . . . . no, there! Smile! You here, Blanche! Now for my part in the play!

(She seats herself at the virginals and begins a gay and charming melody, which is presently interrupted by BOWYER, who opens the door, right, to admit BISHOP QUADRA)

BOWYER: His Grace, the Bishop of Aquila, Ambassador from Spain!

(QUADRA enters, habited as in Act II. ELIZABETH rises and moves a little forward very
graciously. LADY SIDNEY and BLANCHE rise when the Queen does)

ELIZABETH: Good evening, my Lord Bishop!

QUADRA: (Bowing) Your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: Your leave for a moment's word with my door-keeper....

(While ELIZABETH turns to BOWYER, the two ladies sink in deep curtseys to the BISHOP. He bows in return, less low than to the Queen, murmuring)

QUADRA: Mesdames!

(LADY SIDNEY and BLANCHE then withdraw into the bedroom, as ELIZABETH says in an emphatic tone)

ELIZABETH: Master Black Rod, I charge you most particularly not to admit anyone while His Grace is with me..... not anyone, mind you! There must be no exception...... no exception whatever....

BOWYER: (Bowing low) I will obey, your Majesty. (He withdraws)

ELIZABETH: (As she seats herself in the Chair of State) Pray you be seated, my Lord.

QUADRA: (As he sits) I thank your Majesty. What a night! It seems as though Satan had loosed all his fiends!

ELIZABETH: (Smiling at him with meaning) I look to your Grace to lay a worse fiend than any howling outside!

QUADRA: I will count it a privilege to do so, your Majesty. I am distressed to note that your Majesty looks paler than your wont.

ELIZABETH: (Sighing) I have my own troubles to bear as well as England's!

QUADRA: (Softly sympathetic) I am here to aid your Majesty in these troubles to the best of my poor power.

ELIZABETH: I thank your Grace. (After a slight pause, she adds, but with a questioning inflection) You were, of course, convinced by the proofs Sir Henry showed you?

QUADRA: (With solemn emphasis) Nay, I needed no convincing, your Majesty, but I was greatly rejoiced for Lord Robert. Only his enemies can doubt him now.
ELIZABETH: (Proudly) A great man pays with fifty enemies for each friend. My Lord, 'tis in my mind at this moment to make you my ghostly father and confess to you!

QUADRA: (Gravely) Should you do so, Madam, I promise you absolution in the name of that Holy Church in whose bosom I long to see you safe. Will it please you to proceed, my ghostly daughter?

ELIZABETH: (Crossing her hands on her breast and looking down) First of all, I will confess...... (She looks up at him as she finishes speaking) that I am no angel!

QUADRA: (Used, by this time, to her flashing unexpectedness) Alas, my daughter! There are no angels save in Paradise.

ELIZABETH: My thoughts are of an earthly Paradise, good Father.

QUADRA: Proceed, my daughter.

ELIZABETH: I will confess that from childhood I have loved Lord Robert dearly....And that, since I must marry, to please my people....I would rather marry one I love than some foreigner, who would care as little for me as I for him. Besides, the English humour requires that I marry an Englishman.

QUADRA: Are you quite sure of that, my daughter?

ELIZABETH: (Sharply, re-assuming her character as Queen) Indeed, yes! Since I tell you so!

QUADRA: (Somewhat dryly, casting off his role of father confessor) Pardon, your Majesty, but I had thought your subjects divided on that question.

ELIZABETH: Those that count with me, are not so divided. I reign to please my whole people, not sects and parties! (She resumes a softer tone) And yet, I would not offend so good a brother as King Philip by marrying without his approval. What think you he would say to my marriage with a subject?

QUADRA: That I cannot tell.

ELIZABETH: I will be plain with you and ask you to be plain with me, my Lord. I would have you write to King Philip.....tell him my heart is fixed....and seek his approval. And tell him, also, that these religious differences are not so great as are supposed, my Lord Bishop, and may be adjusted.
QUADRA: I will write to him, as your Majesty desires.

ELIZABETH: And as for Lord Robert, you know well his broad views on religion.

QUADRA: (Dryly) I do indeed, your Majesty, for while Lord Robert was assuring me of his sympathy with the Catholics—he was at the same time assisting the Protestants of France!

ELIZABETH: (In her most royal manner) Your Grace forgets that you are speaking to a Protestant Queen! I have never permitted evil to happen to any Catholic for his faith, but only if he were plotting against my state! ... That Lord Robert should help persecuted Protestants does not mean that he would persecute Catholics!

QUADRA: Your Majesty will recall that, only a moment past, you requested me to be plain with you.

ELIZABETH: (With her usual honesty on great occasions) So I did. But to reproach Lord Robert goes beyond plainness.

QUADRA: I was but thinking how to soften such things to King Philip.

ELIZABETH: Such things? .... Now you stop this side of plainness, my Lord! Be clear.

QUADRA: Yet......if my clearness offend your Majesty .......

ELIZABETH: (Smiling shrewdly) I do not think your Grace will offend me twice in one evening.

QUADRA: Then....I would mention...with all respect ....even with admiration for such manly qualities....the fiery spirit...the...the....I might say.....headstrong zeal of Lord Robert. (He pauses as if almost afraid to continue)

ELIZABETH: Well, your Grace?

QUADRA: I think, perchance...only perchance, your Majesty....that King Philip might....I venture to say might ...in spite of his great affection for Lord Robert....that his Majesty might fear so....so dominant a nature in your King-Consort...

ELIZABETH: (Haughtily) A King-Consort is not a King, your Grace.

QUADRA: (Softly persisting, though a little scared)
Yet his proud temper....his strong will....his zealous influence....

ELIZABETH: (Blazing up again) God’s crown, sir! Think you I am of a nature easily influenced? (She smiles suddenly) No, no, your Grace! Have no fear in that quarter....Lord Robert knows well that my people would suffer none but me to rule them, and that I will be ruled by none but God.... And so, my Lord, I would have you urge King Philip to suggest that I marry an Englishman....and to name Lord Robert Dudley.

QUADRA: I will do so gladly, your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: I thank your Grace, and.....pray you assure him of Lord Robert’s dutiful submission in all things fitting....

QUADRA: (At his silkiest) I will assure him, your Majesty, that though he knows Lord Robert to be far from meek as a man, he may count on his meekness as a husband....

ELIZABETH: (Sharply) I did not say “meek,” but “dutifully submissive” ..... (She breaks off, startled, as a loud altercation is heard outside at door, right)

BOWYER: (Off) My Lord! I cannot admit you! Her Majesty’s orders are to admit no one.

DUDLEY: (Off) Those orders do not hold for me. Let me pass!

BOWYER: I cannot!

DUDLEY: (Violently) Out of my way, sir! ..... You shall lose your place for this!

(BOWYER rushes in ahead of DUDLEY and flings himself at ELIZABETH’s feet. DUDLEY strides in after him, but stops short at the look of concentrated anger on ELIZABETH’s face)

BOWYER: Pardon, your Majesty!..... My Lord will enter and says I shall lose my place! ....

ELIZABETH: (To BOWYER) Rise, and return to your office. You shall not lose it, on my word who am both Queen and King! (As BOWYER is withdrawing, she turns on DUDLEY) God’s death, my Lord! .....I have loved you well! But if you think to rule here, I will set my course accordingly.....I will have here but one mistress, and no master!

DUDLEY: (Haughtily, furious, but controlled, half
turning to go as he speaks) I ask only leave to go!

ELIZABETH: That you shall not! .... I have more..... much more....to say to you! (To QUADRA) I crave your indulgence for this rude ending to our talk, Lord Bishop!.... I bid your Grace goodnight. (She tinkles the golden bell, BOWYER throws open the door, right, holding it for QUADRA to pass through)

QUADRA: (As he goes) Goodnight, your Majesty. May the storm lessen and give you a good night indeed.

(ELIZABETH glances at him haughtily, suspecting irony to be concealed in his silken speech, as in truth it is. The old BISHOP has much enjoyed DUDLEY's tempestuous entrance and disregard of the Queen's commands. He bends his head courteously as he passes DUDLEY, who, blind with rage and humiliation, neither sees nor acknowledges the salute)

ELIZABETH: (As BOWYER closes the door, turns to DUDLEY, who is standing drawn to his full height with arms folded) How dare you dispute me commands and threaten my servants, Robert Dudley? ..... I order you to remain in your apartments ..... I give order here that no one is admitted, no one! Yet you storm into my presence like Hodge into his wife's kitchen! You are not my husband yet, nor like to be, if the bare prospect puffs you to this pitch!

DUDLEY: (Controlling himself rigidly) Your Majesty prides yourself on your justice. Show me but a little!

ELIZABETH: You have violated my privacy as Queen! By Heaven! When I remember all I've endured for you, and from you, this new affront is beyond endurance!

DUDLEY: (Now struggling visibly to maintain his self-control) Where no affront was intended, 'tis hard to be so lashed.... and before that sleek Spaniard!

ELIZABETH: You do well to mention him....You that have outraged my sovereignty for his scorn! ..... I have heard that he calls you the King-that-is-to-be, but I call you the King of Fools! ..... What! Do you think me so fond as to take for consort a hectoring swasher? ..... Do you think that I will hand you over my sceptre to baste me with? ..... Or toss you the orb of England to play ball with my greatness? Oh, what a blind toad in Vanity! ..... I gave you the freedom of my heart's city! But does that content you? No! You must make free with my estate as Queen! .... I warn you for the last time! ..... You must mend your manners!
DUDLEY: (On the verge of exploding) 'Tis my patience that most needs mending.....

ELIZABETH: (Furiously) 'Sdeath! Do you sneer at me! ..... You......you......that I raised from the dust!

DUDLEY: (Unable longer to keep back his own wrath) Your Majesty lowers yourself whence you raised me, to say so!

ELIZABETH: By God! ...... I could send you to the Tower for that!

DUDLEY: You can send me to the Tower for naught, if it please you.

ELIZABETH: Splendour of God! You dare word me, too? You dare carry a high hand and a high head to _me_?

DUDLEY: My head shall not be lowered while 'tis on my own shoulders. When it rolls from the block, your Majesty may kick it where you will.

ELIZABETH: God blast me, if I have not taken a serpent to my heart!

DUDLEY: Eve gave a serpent welcome!

ELIZABETH: Hold your forked tongue! ...... Oh, Lord Almighty! ...... Had ever Queen such vile return for great favours? (She snatches up the parchment that is about to create him Baron Denbigh and shakes it in his face) See you this, viper? 'Twas to make you Baron Denbigh..... which now you shall never be! So! And so! And so! (She tears the paper in his face, flings the fragments on the ground and tramples them)

DUDLEY: I'd rather you rent a paltry barony than _me_!

ELIZABETH: Oh, to set my nails in that hateful smile of yours, .... to tear it from your face in tatters!

DUDLEY: The thing that's in tatters is your Majesty's dignity!

ELIZABETH: For that you shall go to the Tower! (She darts to the table and rings the golden bell, calling out as she does so) Master Black Rod!

DUDLEY: (Hedging as he scents real danger, and speaking quickly while BOWYER is opening the door) I will go gladly to be out of the anguish of your wrath!
BOWYER: Your Majesty's will?

ELIZABETH: (Hesitating, and in a changed voice) Be sure that you sleep not at your post, Master Bowyer.

BOWYER: (Shocked at the idea) Oh, never, your Majesty! (He withdraws)

ELIZABETH: (Turning to DUDLEY, in a more moderate tone, but still bitterly) The bare fact that I have power to hurt you keeps me from it! (Beginning to be very nervous and a little repentent) I have warned you not to cross me! I have warned you that I will be ruled by none but God.

DUDLEY: Is to seek to be near you, to seek to rule you?

ELIZABETH: (With a nervous laugh) Seek it or not, when you are near me, you do rule me in some sort.....That is, you rule my affections.

DUDLEY: Your affections!

ELIZABETH: (Sharply) Yes! My affections! ..... Else you had slept in the Tower tonight!

DUDLEY: Think you I could sleep tonight? Whether in prison or on a bed of down?

ELIZABETH: Come! Come! .... You should acknowledge your fault, and not dwell on my spicy temper.

DUDLEY: Spicy! ..... I think it is compact of gall and wormwood and Greek fire!

ELIZABETH: Well..... 'tis a fiery temper....I have it from my father.

DUDLEY: Would he had left you only his crown!

ELIZABETH: Come, Robin, say you were in the wrong.

DUDLEY: (Stiffly) I crave your Majesty's pardon most humbly.

ELIZABETH: And the fault was yours?

DUDLEY: What your Majesty asserts must be the truth.

ELIZABETH: Ah, Robin! I cannot let anger come between us. Say only you're sorry, and I'll forgive.
DUDLEY: (Beginning to soften) Shall I say it to the Queen's Majesty?

ELIZABETH: No......to Elizabeth!

DUDLEY: (Giving in suddenly, kneeling before her and kissing both her hands) I am sorry with all my heart and all my duty!

ELIZABETH: (Raising him) Leave out duty....! 'Tis a blistering word.

DUDLEY: With all my love then!

ELIZABETH: With all mine, I forgive!

DUDLEY: George Cotton brought me word of Henry's arrival, but knew not if his news were good. When all my happiness hung on this issue, can you wonder that my anxiety proved stronger than my obedience? Oh, Elizabeth! What was his news?

ELIZABETH: The best!

DUDLEY: God be praised!

ELIZABETH: We shall hear the details together! (She tinkles the golden bell, which is on the table, and as BOWYER opens the door, she calls) Master Black Rod! Send word to Sir Henry Sidney that he wait on me at once!

BOWYER: I will, your Majesty. (He bows and retires, closing the door)

ELIZABETH: (Suddenly beginning to laugh uncontrollably) Oh, Robin! No wonder I was furious! There was I, all Queen .... persuading the purple fox that you were all lamb..... and in burst you like a mad wolf! ..... Jesu be thanked that I had already gained my chief point!

DUDLEY: (Eagerly) Your chief point? What point?

ELIZABETH: The Bishop has consented to write Philip...

DUDLEY: Well? Well?

ELIZABETH: To ask his Majesty to propose an English husband for me.... and to name.....Robert Dudley!

DUDLEY: Elizabeth!

ELIZABETH: (Pushing with her shoe-tip the fragments of the paper she has torn) I'm glad I tore that paper.....You shall have one far better in its place.....
DUDLEY: I want only your love!

ELIZABETH: My love will give it! .... You shall be both Baron Denbigh and Earl of Leicester!

DUDLEY: (Really somewhat overwhelmed by the promise of this royal honour) Your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: Aye, my Majesty must marry a Prince, it seems .... so I'll make you one! .... 'Twill confound the Bishop, who is all for Princes..... (Suddenly she begins to laugh again) Oh, Robin! Could you have seen old Quadra's face when I named him my ghostly father and confessed to him....

DUDLEY: (Startled) Confessed to him? ..... What did you confess?

ELIZABETH: That I was no angel! And, Robin.....

(She flings wide her arms to him) I am not!

DUDLEY: (Seizing her in a passionate embrace) Thank God for that!

ELIZABETH: (Withdrawing from him laughingly) Mind my ruff!

DUDLEY: (Vexed by her withdrawal) God have your ruff!

ELIZABETH: (Laughing still more) Heaven help us! What should God do with my ruff?

BOWYER: (Throwing open the great doors) The Most Honourable, the First Secretary!

(CECIL enters in haste)

ELIZABETH: (Surprised and frowning slightly) Why has not Sir Henry come? I sent for him.

CECIL: He is on his way, Madam. He went to fetch the papers he brought from Cumnor. I crave your indulgence.... Anxiety drove me here. I beg you to have your guard doubled by day and night....

ELIZABETH: What now?

CECIL: I have just had ill news....rumours of a fresh plot against your Majesty.... (He breaks off and goes on in a breath) ...against your life.

DUDLEY: Great God!

ELIZABETH: Names! Names, sir! Give me names!
CECIL: The source is Durham House.

ELIZABETH: (With horror) Quadra! .... I knew him false....but to plan murder I can scarce believe it!

DUDLEY: Nor I. 'Tis beyond all reason.

ELIZABETH: Aye, it has no meaning......He favoured Lord Robert's suit...Just now he sat there, promising to write to King Philip in his behalf....Why should he wish me dead? (To CECIL) I must have proof before I can believe it! You must get proof!

CECIL: I am seeking proof, Madam. Durham House is already surrounded. But even in the doubt, I beg you to eat and drink nothing that has not been tasted first. To....

ELIZABETH: (Rousing suddenly and breaking in) Death of God! If this villainy prove true, I will wait no longer on Spain! Nay, I am minded to act now! I will lay the question of this marriage before my own people! (To CECIL) You shall straightway select a Council from the three estates.....

CECIL: (In dismay) Your Grace! To press that question now would be disastrous! Your people.....

ELIZABETH: I know my people better than you do!

CECIL: You do not know them in angry mood. This rumour will rouse fury.....

ELIZABETH: (Again breaking in) Only against Spain! Not against Lord Robert!

CECIL: Alas, Madam! Lord Robert's friendship with Bishop Quadra has been questioned....

DUDLEY: (Angrily and jeeringly) I can scarce be suspected of plotting with him to murder the Queen!

CECIL: (Standing up to him) What is feared, my Lord, is undue Catholic influence.

DUDLEY: By God, sir! Do you fear it?

CECIL: (Quietly) No, my Lord. What I fear is violence, even outbreaks among the people if the subject of this marriage be brought forward now. (He appeals to ELIZABETH) Your Grace......

ELIZABETH: (Slowly) I would not endanger the peace of my realm. You feel sure of this?
CECIL: As sure as that I live to serve you!

ELIZABETH: Then England's welfare before mine. This matter shall wait.

CECIL: (Moved) Your Grace....

ELIZABETH: (Holding out her hand to him. He would kneel to kiss it but she stops him) Do not kneel. Pray you see to all measures for my safety.

CECIL: (Going towards door left) On the instant, Madam.

DUDLEY: (Opens the door for him. As CECIL goes out, DUDLEY turns back to ELIZABETH. He is much wrought up) This rumour is a lie invented by my enemies!..... They have gained their end! For look you! England that has knit us so close, now divides me. Cecil made sure of that!

ELIZABETH: (Firmly contradicting him) The Queen made sure of her Kingdom's peace. (She adds in a gentler tone) It is the woman loves you.

DUDLEY: (Bitterly) The woman and the Queen are ever at odds! Would God I were your equal!

ELIZABETH: (Still gently) Are you not my equal in love? I had thought so.....

DUDLEY: (Throwing off his bitterness) No! I am far beyond you there!

ELIZABETH: (Smiling) Maybe. I grudge it not...At least you are my equal in danger. Our wish to marry brings us always some new danger. Yet we have passed through Traitor's Gate, Robin, and our enemies did not prevail! We fight together for our happiness. Take heart of that...

(She holds out both hands to him in a gesture of good comradeship. He takes them as he would a comrade's hands)

DUDLEY: Ah, dearest warrior!

CURTAIN
ACT IV

SCENE: The Queen's private apartments at Whitehall.

TIME: Some months later. It is early in the morning.

DISCOVERED: ELIZABETH and CECIL. She is richly dressed despite the early hour, for presently she will go to morning chapel, and that is always a ceremonial affair, the Court attending her. CECIL also wears rich garments, though his coat, as usual, is of the older fashion, and furred. She is seated at the long table which is strewn with papers and, near at hand, some official documents. CECIL is standing before her, watching her as she sign her name to one of these.

ELIZABETH: (Pushing the signed document towards him and holding her quill suspended) There! I pray God that's the last!

CECIL: It is, Madam.

(She flings her pen aside with a sigh of relief, then glances inquiringly at him as he stands gazing down at her signature)

ELIZABETH: Why do you stare so, Master Cecil? Is not all in order?

CECIL: (Rousing) Certes, Your Grace, in perfect order. I was but gazing at your signature. The beauty of Your Grace's script is ever a new marvel to me.

ELIZABETH: (Complacently) Yes, I write a very beauteous hand. 'Twas Master Roger Ascham learned me.

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1 Roger Ascham (1516-1568), English scholar and writer. He was Elizabeth's tutor from 1548 to 1550.
CECIL: A noble teacher for a noble pupil, Madam.

ELIZABETH: He was used to call me his "noble imp."

Dear Master Ascham! (Then she becomes suddenly all alert)
Sit down, Sir William. How oft must I tell you to sit?

CECIL: (As he sits himself with an apologetic bow)
Your Majesty is most indulgent to her old servant.

ELIZABETH: I must have a care for your rheumatics
though you flout them. (Her eyes begin to dance, though
her voice and face remain grave) You received last night my
gift of a hedgehog stewed in rose-water?

CECIL: I did, indeed. My grateful thanks were entrusted
to Master Bowyer. Did he not tender them to your Grace?

ELIZABETH: Aye, now I recall, he did. I have heard
that a hedgehog so stewed is a mighty physic against rheu-
matism.

CECIL: So 'tis said, your Grace.

ELIZABETH: (Her whole face now sparkling with mischief)
And did you..........eat it?

CECIL: (His habitual composure a little disturbed,
and stammering slightly) A whole hedgehog.......for a man of
my meagre diet.......is....is a large dish, Madam. I ......I
tasted it.

ELIZABETH: (With one of her rich bursts of laughter)
And a foul taste it had, I warrant! But even to taste the
vermin shows that you love your Queen. (She tweaks his ear
gently, pats his cheek, then springs up, taking again into
her hands the document which she had just signed) Would I
had signed this paper for the imprisonment of bigger game
than two rascally priests! You have no proof as yet against
Quadra?

CECIL: None as yet, Madam. He declares that the mere
suspicion against him has caused his present illness.

ELIZABETH: Think you the old fox is really ill or only
feigning?

CECIL: Who can tell, your Grace? But Durham House is
still closely watched.

ELIZABETH: (Observing him shrewdly) And there is no
new trouble brewing?

CECIL: (Hesitating) Your Majesty......
ELIZABETH: Sir William! You are withholding something from me! What is it? Speak!

(CECIL rises, moves a few steps from her, and then turns back)

CECIL: My confidential agents have just brought me news of rioting and dissension in many parts of the realm.

ELIZABETH: For what cause?

CECIL: This question of the Catholic Church Council at Trent.... The Catholics have spread word that your Majesty will send Catholic Ambassadors to that Council. The Protestants are saying that Lord Robert persuaded you to do so.

ELIZABETH: Here is a devil's snarl! Were Philip to write now approving my marriage 'twould but feed this fire!

CECIL: Nay, your Grace, were he to write reasonably about religious differences.....

ELIZABETH: (Cutting him short) Would you mock me? When hath Philip ever been reasonable? Tell me what measures you have taken against these outbreaks.

CECIL: Those whom I have appointed throughout the realm to guard your Majesty's safety are in charge. Still I am gravely anxious.... There is great unrest here in London. Some unforeseen event... some fresh rumor may bring matters to a dangerous crisis.

ELIZABETH: (Vehemently) This time those whom we suspect shall go to the Tower -- proof or no proof!

(Before CECIL can reply the BLACK ROD throws open the door of ceremony announcing:)

BOWYER: The Right Honourable, the Lord Robert Dudley!

(DUDLEY enters and kneels to kiss the Queen's hand. She raises him quickly)

ELIZABETH: What's to do, Lord Robert? News are writ all over you! Bad news?

DUDLEY: That will be as your Majesty reads them. The Countess de Feria\(^2\) has just landed in England.

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\(^2\) The Countess de Feria was the former Jane Dormer, a lady-in-waiting to Queen Mary. She married the Count de Feria who was Philip II's pompous ambassador before Bishop de Quadra was sent over.
ELIZABETH: This is ill news indeed. She was ever my enemy. Now she is twice my enemy. Where is she?

DUDLEY: This will displease your Grace doubly. Despite his illness Bishop de Quadra has received her.

ELIZABETH: Ha! She comes to plot with him! They plot against me in my own Kingdom! By God's bones! Theirs should be broken on the wheel! How learned you this?

DUDLEY: From the Bishop's chief secretary. Being too ill to come himself, he has sent Monsignor Gomez to crave an audience with your Grace....for Madam de Feria. Will you see him? He asked me to say further that.......

ELIZABETH: (Violently cutting him short) No! Even at second hand I'll hear no word of her!

CECIL: Your Grace..... if I may speak advisedly.......

ELIZABETH: (Getting command of herself) You never speak otherwise. Say on.

CECIL: Then...Your Majesty permitting..... May not the Countess be sent here in some sort..... as an envoy on King Philip?

ELIZABETH: What! Send my enemy as envoy?

CECIL: Your secret enemy, Madam.

ELIZABETH: 'Tis true.....she ever worked underground against me. Perchance she and Philip think I have not guessed their secret.

CECIL: Such is my hazard, your Majesty.

DUDLEY: (Eagerly) Sir William is right, Your Grace. For what Gomez asked me to say further was this: That the Countess craves an audience with your Grace on matters near to the King of Spain and..... to your Grace's heart.

ELIZABETH: (To CECIL) Think you that Philip may have sent her instead of the letter to Quadra?

CECIL: I do, your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: Then the message will be as evil as the messenger. (After a slight pause, coming to a sudden decision) However, I will see her. Pray you, Lord Robert, send word to Monsignor Gomez of my consent. (DUDLEY, after bowing low, goes to the door right and gives the message to the BLACK ROD. While he is doing this, ELIZABETH exchanges a few words with CECIL) You must remain with me for this.
audience . . . . . and Lord Robert too. There's prudence for you!


ELIZABETH: All cats hope for cream!

DUDLEY: (Returning from door right) Your Grace, if I may add a few words . . . .

ELIZABETH: (Nervously irritable) Add them, but make your sum short!

DUDLEY: Then, your Majesty, from what Henry Sidney has told me . . . .

ELIZABETH: Henry Sidney will tell anything that suits his end!

DUDLEY: But this time . . . .

ELIZABETH: (Whirling on him) And so will you! God only knows what you have told Protestants and Catholics each in turn! 'Tis this caffering of yours with both sides has made Jane False-face3 bold enough to face me!

DUDLEY: (Sulkily) I have but used diplomacy with both sides . . . . as your Majesty bade me do. You also . . . .

ELIZABETH: Silence! They are coming. (As she speaks she motions CECIL to lead her to her Chair of State. She seats herself with her most royal manner) Now, the cat may look at the Queen, but take care to keep her distance! (She motions CECIL and DUDLEY to either side of her chair, CECIL on her right hand)

BOWYER: (Throwing open the door right) The Countess de Feria!

(JANE DE FERIA enters, curtseying profoundly as she does so. She acknowledges the bows of CECIL and DUDLEY by a gracious bending of her head. As she approaches nearer to ELIZABETH, she cursiveys again, even lower than before. She is a dark, very beautiful young woman a few years older than ELIZABETH. There is force and slumbering fire in her long eyes. At times she glances sidewise from them without moving her head then quickly hails them. The fashion of her dress is

3 Jane Dormer, the Countess de Feria.
Spanish. She lowers her eyes, as she sinks almost to the floor in a third curtsey when she comes to the chair in which ELIZABETH is seated)

ELIZABETH: Well, Madame de Feria?

THE COUNTESS: (Murmuring the words) Your Gracious Majesty.........

ELIZABETH: My graciousness you may judge of later on. Who sent you to me? And on what errand?

THE COUNTESS: His Majesty, King Philip, knowing of our fond girlhood........

ELIZABETH: Ha! (It is an exclamation of sheer derision)

THE COUNTESS: (Disconcerted for a second, recovering quickly) Your Majesty spoke?

ELIZABETH: No. My Majesty thought aloud. 'Tis a thing that comes upon me unaware. Go on.

THE COUNTESS: His Majesty has entrusted me with a great honour, Your Grace.......With certain brotherly good wishes and ideas from him to Your Majesty......... (She pauses, glancing at CECIL and DUDLEY, with a look swift as light, yet veiled)

ELIZABETH: Well? Why do you balk, Madame de Feria?

THE COUNTESS: Your Majesty, King Philip hoped that your Majesty would grant me.......as his private messenger.......a private audience.

ELIZABETH: (Smiling unpleasantly) Well? Here are two of my chief Privy Councillors, and the head of that council in Sir William Cecil. What want you more of privacy than that?

THE COUNTESS: If such be your Majesty's wish.........

ELIZABETH: Such is my will!

THE COUNTESS: Then, your Majesty, what I have to say from King Philip touches on your proposed marriage with Lord Robert Dudley.

ELIZABETH: And what have you to say from King Philip? To the point!

THE COUNTESS: There are divers points, your Majesty.
ELIZABETH: Ha! I knew it! Divers conditions that he would make, are they not?

THE COUNTESS: His Majesty bade me say that his chief aim is directed to the service of the Lord.....

ELIZABETH: (Breaking in with her jibe) To the service of the Lord Jesu, I take it? Not to the service of the Lord Robert?

THE COUNTESS: (Unblenching) To both, your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: My good brother-in-law Philip was ever a pious politician. On with it!

THE COUNTESS: His Majesty has at heart the maintenance of religion....

ELIZABETH: As the people of the Netherlands can testify! Poor wretches! 'Tis pity he will not permit them to go to hell in their own way. What more have you to tell me?

THE COUNTESS: His Majesty earnestly desires the settlement and pacification of England.......

ELIZABETH: He is most kind! My Catholic subjects in England are not of a mind to help him!

THE COUNTESS: Rumors to that effect have much disturbed King Philip, your Majesty. Some may be guilty he thinks, but not all. He hopes your Majesty will liberate the chief Catholic clergy and nobles that you now imprison here.

ELIZABETH: King Philip was ever of a hopeful disposition regarding his own wishes. I have this very morning signed warrants for the imprisonment of two scoundrelly priests. Their offence.....a most treasonous one.....was the drawing of horoscopes for me, their Sovereign, and for Lord Robert.....horoscopes of a scurrilous purport. Think you King Philip would have me release them?

THE COUNTESS: Oh, no, your Majesty! The Catholic Church itself deals harshly with contumacious priests.......

ELIZABETH: Lord! What a strutting word! Contumacious! You were ever fond of big words, Madame. Those priests are damned villains! There is the plain English of it, and the plain Spanish, too!

THE COUNTESS: Bishop de Quadra.......

ELIZABETH: Ha! Now the nut is cracked, we come to the kernel!..... A rotten one 'tis said!
THE COUNTESS: Your Majesty, the Bishop is ill with
grief and anger because of the accusations against him. In
God's sight he protests his innocence.

ELIZABETH: (In her hardest manner) So protested the
wolf with the blood of the lamb on his chops!

THE COUNTESS: (With spirit) Your Majesty! King Philip
has too much sagacity to send an unworthy ambassador to your
Majesty's court!

ELIZABETH: There you are again with your puffed up
words! ....... "Sagacity!" King Philip has good wits I grant
you, but slow, slow! They never overtake the event till it
is past. Leave Bishop de Quadra and go on with King Philip's
message. What else would he have? What other.......trifles?

THE COUNTESS: His Majesty bade me say that he would
lend all his influence towards your Majesty's marriage with
Lord Robert, providing your Majesty agreed to liberating
the Catholics from prison; to giving full toleration to Cath-
olic worship, and.....and to sending Catholic Bishops and
Ambassadors to the Council of the Church at Trent.

ELIZABETH: (Giving JANE DE FERIA a scathing look)
Did Philip, with all his sagacity, look for me to accept such
conditions? Did he think I, a Protestant Queen, would sub-
mit England to the rulings of a Catholic Council?

THE COUNTESS: There had been well-founded news in
Spain that your Majesty would receive the Papal Nuncio.

ELIZABETH: What! The sagacious Philip gave credence
to such a thing! That I, Elizabeth, would receive the Pope's
representative! On the question of submitting England to
this Catholic Council? To the Pope?

THE COUNTESS: (Faltering a little for the first time)
King Philip thought that your Majesty had seen that...........
that the approval of his Holiness the Pope would secure you
more firmly in your great position...........

ELIZABETH: I am Elizabeth, Queen of England by the
Grace of God, not by the Grace of the Pope!

THE COUNTESS: (M ade bold by desperation) Yet I and
others have heard your Majesty say that you were as good a
Catholic as any...........

ELIZABETH: And so I am, short of submitting to your
Pope. As long as I sit where God has placed me, on the
throne of England, England shall never be ruled through me,
by Rome! Enough! As my good brother-in-law, I am willing to be a good sister-in-law to King Philip. As to giving toleration to Catholic worship in my Kingdom, I have already given it and give it. But as to freeing such prisoners as are in prison for high treason, whether Protestant or Catholic, no! As to receiving the Pope's Nuncio, no! And again No! And do you tell King Philip this as starkly as I say it, No!

THE COUNTESS: (Really frightened now) Alas, your Majesty! The Abbe Martinengo, the Papal Nuncio, started for Flanders some weeks ago ...... to sail from there to England ........

ELIZABETH: (Springing to her feet) God's Blood! This ends it! Go back to King Philip, Madame de Feria, and tell him that with or without his approval, I shall marry whom I choose! Lord Robert, escort King Philip's messenger back to Monsignor Gomez and Bishop de Quadra! Sir William, I look to you to see that the Nuncio does not set foot in England. Farewell, Madame de Feria. As the Sovereign of England, I send King Philip greetings. (CECIL has evidently been dismayed several times during this scene but cannot interfere. ELIZABETH rings her golden bell, the BLACK ROD throws wide the great doors, right. The COUNTESS DE FERIA curtsies to ELIZABETH, and withdraws backward, curtseying again as she goes. She is accompanied by DUDLEY. As CECIL is about to follow, ELIZABETH stops him. The doors are closed. Coming close to CECIL and speaking in a lowered, yet expectant voice) How far is it to the place where Monsignor Gomez awaits her?

CECIL: Not far, Madam.

ELIZABETH: Good! That woman is a devil of cunning, Sir William. Though I loathe her, I can see, being no fool, that she has allurement for men.

CECIL: Not for this man, your Majesty. I like her as little as I like a snake.

ELIZABETH: And so she is a snake! ............ Some men might prove an easy prey for so wily a snake-woman........ (She seeks to cover her meaning by adding) Doubtless King Philip counted on her snake-y magic to encoil even me!

CECIL: He little knows you, your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: Nor ever will. (She moves away from CECIL, then back again, her manner agitated) I read your thoughts! They are mine too! I have been rash and unwise in my words to Jane de Feria!

CECIL: Perchance somewhat rash, your Grace.
ELIZABETH: And unwise! Unwise! I was too hot with wrath to consider.

CECIL: But now that you do consider.......

ELIZABETH: I will not retract. No, I will not retract! But I can smooth over. Pray you make clear to her -- as from me -- that I meant only to reject the religious conditions of King Philip's approval. Say that in all other respects I will like well to have his approval.

CECIL: I will do so, Madam.

ELIZABETH: Then go now, go quickly. Smooth this out.... and stop the Nuncio from landing in England.

CECIL: (Bowing low) He shall not land, your Majesty.

(As he starts to withdraw, the doors right are again thrown open, and the BLACK ROD announces:)

BOWYER: The Right Honourable, the Lord Robert Dudley!

(DUDLEY enters with elation in his look and bearing. His whole manner has changed from sullenness to exaltation, ever since he heard the words of ELIZABETH, "Tell King Philip, that with or without his approval, I shall marry whom I choose." As the doors right are closed again, after CECIL has gone out, DUDLEY starts eagerly towards her)

DUDLEY: (As he goes towards her) Elizabeth! This is our day of days!

ELIZABETH: (Motioning him to stop and speaking in a frosty voice) Where are your manners, Lord Robert? Left behind with Jane de Feria?

DUDLEY: (Stopping short, much taken aback) What have I done? How have I displeased you?

ELIZABETH: (Still more coldly) 'Tis the custom of this court, and of all mannerly courtiers, to bend the knee to their Sovereign on entering her presence.

DUDLEY: (Beginning to get angry, too) The crooking of the knee is easy, but the crooks of your temper are hard! (He drops on one knee before her, and she looks down on him with a strange expression, but does not bid him rise. When he attempts to kiss her hand, she withdraws it)

ELIZABETH: My hand comes not second to that of Jane de Feria!
DUDLEY: God patience me! Would you have had me uncivil to the woman?

ELIZABETH: Civility is one thing, tender gallantry is another!

DUDLEY: Tender gallantry! Great God! You know I hate dark women! 'Tis too much to bear even from you!

ELIZABETH: Yet you must bear it, Master Doi-1. You must kneel there till I bid you rise, and hear all that I have to say!

DUDLEY: (Wrathfully) Should God smite me with deafness, I would praise him.

(ELIZABETH suddenly thrusts both hands into his thick, clustering locks, and with a quick movement bends down his head)

ELIZABETH: (As she does so) There! Once, in such a devil's temper as you're in now, you told me you would carry your head high till it rolled from the block. I have bent it for you before then! You may rise.

DUDLEY: (Getting to his feet and controlling himself with a great effort) A right Queenly act! And most becoming towards one whose only guilt is too much love for your ill-tempered Majesty!

ELIZABETH: (As usual repenting quickly her harsh treatment of him) 'Twas the way you pranced in that angered me.........like a victorious war-horse breathing "Ah-ha!" And you gave me such a pistolling look, too, as though to say, "Now 'tis fixed! Stand and deliver love!"

DUDLEY: (Who always knows that exact moment to yield and meet her more than half way) Was it any wonder I felt victorious? After those great words of yours, that with or without Philip's approval, you would marry whom you chose?

ELIZABETH: They were rash words.......too rash...... It was but Philip's religious demands that I defied.......I have sent Cecil to say so.

DUDLEY: You draw back.......again?

ELIZABETH: Only to make sure of our future.

DUDLEY: I cannot follow the twistings of your mind! What has happened to turn you?

ELIZABETH: Has not Cecil told you of his fears?
DUDLEY: No, I have not seen him alone today. But he is always fearful....What new fear is this?

ELIZABETH: He has had ill news this morning. There has been rioting and disension. Our enemies are busy again. He fears chance may bring dangerous trouble.

DUDLEY: (Slowly and doubtingly) If this danger be real......yet......... (He turns to her impetuously) Always when your mind is fixed for us, Cecil unsettles it! .....Secretly he is against our marriage!

ELIZABETH: You are unjust! It was I, myself, who saw I had been wrong.

DUDLEY: Forgive me. I spoke out of a sore heart.

ELIZABETH: My heart, too, is heavy........

BOWYER: (Opening doors of ceremony) The Most Honourable, the First Secretary!

(CECIL enters, his face troubled)

ELIZABETH: (Going eagerly to meet him) Your news! Your news!

CECIL: I have given orders that will stop the Papal Nuncio from landing, your Grace. 'Twas too late to stop the report of his coming. 'Tis being said also that your Majesty and Lord Robert will receive him.

ELIZABETH: Vengeance of God! This is the work of Quadra and Jane de Ferial My vengeance too, shall find them! What else? Go on.....go on.......

CECIL: London is in an evil mood.......

ELIZABETH: Is the mob out?

CECIL: No, your Grace. But I like not the humour of the people.

ELIZABETH: (Regarding him shrewdly) That is not all that troubles you.......speak!

CECIL: Alas, your Majesty, I have still more ill news for you.....I bring you a letter of Quadra........

ELIZABETH: What! The letter Philip was to write him? (She holds out her hand for the letter, but CECIL, who is feeling under his coat for it, speaks again before giving it to her)
CECIL: 'Tis not a letter from King Philip to Bishop de Quadra, your Grace, but one from Bishop de Quadra to the King. (He withdraws the letter)

ELIZABETH: (Almost snatching it from him) To the King? Give it to me! (As she unfolds the paper she exclaims:) This is not Quadra's handwriting! What is the meaning of this?

CECIL: 'Tis a translation, your Majesty, and a copy.

ELIZABETH: God's death! You let the original go out of your hands?

CECIL: (Firmly) Your Grace, when you have read that letter, I feel sure you will agree with me that neither King Philip nor Quadra should learn of its being intercepted.

(ELIZABETH, with an impatient gesture, begins to read the letter)

ELIZABETH: (After she has read a few lines, her eyes blazing with rage) The twice damned, anointed Judas!

DUDLEY: What is it? What is it? Do not keep me on the rack!

ELIZABETH: Near then. (She begins reading aloud from the letter) "The Catholics are so incensed against Lord Robert for the double-dealing he has practiced against them and their religion......." (She breaks off to exclaim angrily to DUDLEY) Did I not tell you so? (Then goes on reading aloud) ....And so scornful of the Queen....... (She breaks off again) Nay Satan find new torments for them! (Continues reading) "Of the Queen who would take a......a wife slayer for consort, that on her wedding day they will rise throughout England as one man! All is planned, provided for and in order....." (She breaks off breathless with rage)

DUDLEY: (Starting to speak) By God! I......

ELIZABETH: Wait! There is more. Listen to this! This is the way that Quadra keeps his promise to further our marriage with Philip! (Reads from letter) "I entreat your Majesty therefore, to realize that your future possession of England depends on the lawful possession of Robert Dudley by the enamoured Queen....." God's wrath! His possession of England! The purple fox has lost his brush in his own trap! I shall whisk it in Philip's long, sour face! This letter shall not be held back! It shall go to Philip with one from me! (As she speaks she thrusts the letter into a pocket among the folds of her gown)

CECIL: Your Majesty! I implore you....Do not write.
Give me back that letter......

ELIZABETH: No! I have decided. His possession of England! Am I one to be ruled by threats? My marriage shall take place when I will, despite twenty Spains and all the rebels in the Kingdom!

CECIL: I beseech your Majesty! Your chief thought has ever been for your people......

ELIZABETH: Rebels are not my people! Such of my people as are staunch are for this marriage!

DUDLEY: Aye, the English people are with us!

CECIL: Your Grace, in God's name believe me. All has changed.

ELIZABETH: Then I will change it back! I will..... What's that? (She breaks off suddenly as the noise of an approaching crowd is heard, dulled by the closed windows) The mob is out! What are they shouting? Open the window! (She takes a step forward listening intently)

(DUDLEY and CECIL, speaking at the same time:)

CECIL: God forbid!

DUDLEY: (Trying to lead her back from the window) Your Grace! Come away. Stones may be flung.

ELIZABETH: (Freed from DUDLEY's hand, then speaking in a loud, clear voice) Master Black Rod!

(BOWYER enters)

BOWYER: Your Majesty?

ELIZABETH: Open the window!

(BOWYER does so, then draws aside to wait for further orders. When the window is opened, the shouted words can be plainly heard. THE MOB is now under the windows of Whitehall)

THE MOB: No popery! No popery! Down with Quadra! Down with Quadra's friend! Down with Robert Dudley! Down with the would-be King! Down with King Robert! Down with Dudley! Down with Dudley!

(ELIZABETH stands rigid, listening. Suddenly she turns to BOWYER)

ELIZABETH: Master Black Rod, send word to the Captain
of my Palace Guard to disperse those ruffians. Should they prove violent tell him 'tis the Queen's command that they charge with bare steel!

BOWER: I will, your Majesty. (He withdraws. ELIZABETH stands as before listening. The clamor increases. A stone crashes through one of the windows)

DUDLEY: For God's sake, do not stand so near!

CECIL: Aye, for His sake and for England's! Come away!

ELIZABETH: (Not moving) No. I await the charge of my Palace Guard! Ah! 'Tis on! (From below is heard the clatter of the charging guard and cries of "Ware steel!" The shouts change suddenly. There are cries of terror, of panic. The shouting grows gradually fainter with distance as the mob takes to its heels. A groaning can be heard as of some wounded. ELIZABETH's look of triumph changes to one of concern. She turns from the window, saying in a somewhat shaken voice:) That was horrible! But it had to be....... (She regains her former mood and goes on fiercely) So will I deal with all rebels! I will waver no more! I will fix my wedding day! Let the Catholics rise! My army shall quell them!

CECIL: (In a voice of great dejection) Your Majesty will loose a civil war?

ELIZABETH: To suppress rebellion is not to make war!

CECIL: Armed suppression leads to war.

DUDLEY: (To ELIZABETH) Were I head of your army 'twould be but a short war!

ELIZABETH: (Troubled) I had not thought of war. Yet., if there were no other way......

CECIL: Your Majesty would plunge England into bloodshed?

DUDLEY: The blood of traitors should be shed!

CECIL: By the headsman's axe, my Lord. Not by civil war. (He appeals to ELIZABETH in a voice of great distress) Your Grace..........

ELIZABETH: (More and more troubled) I must think this out...............I must think. I must think.......... (She turns from them and begins pacing to and fro, her hands clenched at her sides, her brows drawn together in painful
brooding. Then, abruptly she comes up to CECIL) Sir William, rage shall not master me again today. Here is that vile letter. (As she speaks she takes it from her pocket and gives it to him) I will do nothing in haste. Pray you go now and see how things are tending.

CECIL: (Bending his knee to kiss the hand she holds out to him, in a voice shaken by emotion) God bless and guide your Majesty!

ELIZABETH: (Moved also) Amen. (She rings her golden bell. The doors right are opened, and CECIL hastens through them. Before they can be closed again, she speaks to BOWYER) Master Black Rod, send word to the Captain of the Palace Guard that the Queen commands his attendance.

BOWYER: (In a shaken voice) Your Majesty......he...he...

ELIZABETH: Well, sir?

BOWYER: (Blurting it out) Your Majesty, the Captain is dead.

(ELIZABETH stands horrified. DUDLEY hurries to her)

ELIZABETH: God's mercy on him......How chanced it?

BOWYER: A stone flung by one of the mob, Your Majesty.

ELIZABETH: My poor Captain.... I liked him well. Close the doors. (BOWYER goes out closing them. ELIZABETH turns away as if all at once exhausted and lets DUDLEY support her to a chair beside the table. She sinks into it and leaning her head on her hand, says brokenly:) All has been in vain....all.....all....

DUDLEY: (Who has been watching her anxiously and who senses her meaning only too well) Elizabeth! Do not say so! Do not think it!

ELIZABETH: Ah, Robin.... Whereas I was blind, now I see. With my people turned against us, how can we marry?

DUDLEY: You have said that rebels are not your people. Will you submit to them?

ELIZABETH: I will not risk a civil war.

DUDLEY: (Vehemently) It is Cecil's cowardice that holds you!

ELIZABETH: (Rousing and speaking with her old spirit) It needs none to hold me from destroying my Kingdom! Cecil
is no coward. He thinks first of England....as I do.

DUDLEY: Yet you will not crush rebellion!

ELIZABETH: There will be no rebellion unless we marry.

DUDLEY: (Forgetting all etiquette in his mounting despair) This is the end then? Answer me! Is it the end?

ELIZABETH: It must be.

DUDLEY: (Bitterly) If you had ever loved me.....

ELIZABETH: (Breaking in on him with passionate reproach) You know well I love you! You know well what this costs me!

DUDLEY: (Taking her in his arms) Then do not pay the cost! Act and save it!

ELIZABETH: (In great conflict of spirit) I cannot risk a civil war! (She withdraws from him and says with fresh determination) I will not risk it!

DUDLEY: (His self-control forsaking him more and more) You will risk nothing for our happiness?

ELIZABETH: (Stopping short to confront him) Nothing, say you? (She looks at him strangely) Have I known you so little? You, that have been as my right hand? Are you my liegeman, or my lover only? Have you no longer any care for England but to serve your ends?

DUDLEY: (Hotly) Now you insult me! Have you no longer any care for me apart from England?

ELIZABETH: (All ablaze) You shame yourself and me to speak so! For you as for me England comes first of all!

DUDLEY: (Utterly reckless) It is you come first for me, -- then England!

(ELIZABETH, worn out by her struggles with herself, with CECIL, with DUDLEY, becomes suddenly all the Queen)

ELIZABETH: (Drawing herself up with magnificent royalty) I am England!

(DUDLEY gazes at her in silence for a few seconds, then taking in the finality of her words, falls to his knee before her, and clasping her hand in both his own, bends down his head upon it. She places her other hand upon his bent head and
stands looking down at him, with a look of deep sorrow, yet of steadfastness)

CURTAIN
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*All unpublished notes, manuscripts, and letters, unless otherwise specified, are from the Amelie Rives collection at Alderman Library of the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.*
VITA

Robert Walker Hungerford was born in Morristown, New Jersey on February 12, 1943. His family moved to Alexandria, Virginia soon thereafter, where he attended the city schools until graduation. Mr. Hungerford then enrolled in the University of Richmond and was awarded the Bachelor of Arts Degree in English in August of 1965.

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