EXT. TITLE SEQUENCE

Painted images of the Elizabethan age -

S/I CAPTION
A world divided by religious hatred.

The new Protestant faith is spreading.

Bodies burned on a pyre - men writhing under torture - a momentary half-recognisable face, gaunt and staring - FATHER ROBERT RESTON.

S/I CAPTION
The most powerful ruler in Christendom, Philip of Spain, has sworn to return all Europe to the Catholic faith.

Images of rival monarchs Philip and Elizabeth in court paintings: stiff, formal, imperious.

S/I CAPTION
Only England stands in his way: a weak impoverished nation ruled by a woman.

Finally images of God in judgement, as if speaking to his chosen servant.

S/I CAPTION
Philip prepares to obey the will of his God.

INT. PRIVATE CHAPEL, ESCORIAL PALACE, SPAIN - DAY

An ascetic-looking man dressed in black kneels in a small plain chapel, in virtual darkness. PHILIP II, King of Spain bows his head low, abasing himself before his God.

S/I CAPTION:

Escorial Palace, Spain, 1585.

Now, slowly, he raises his head. His eyes open, and we see there the glow of a new certainty. God has spoken to him.

PHILIP
(I hear. I obey. My Lord and my God.)
INT. HALLWAY/SALON, ESCORIAL PALACE - DAY

Philip walks rapidly down a long corridor that opens out into a broader hallway, moving from the darkness of the chapel into ever brighter light and more visible glory. On his face the far shining gaze of a man who now knows his mission. Silent servants press themselves to the walls as he goes by. Through the hallway to a grand salon. COURTIERS fall silent and bow as he passes. So into the grandest salon of all, where his magnificent court is gathered; among them his 12-year-old daughter, the INFANTA. As he enters, all kneel.

His eyes scan his ministers and courtiers, all kneeling, heads bowed before him. His gaze falls on one who wears the plain black robes of a Jesuit priest: Robert Reston, the face we glimpsed in the opening montage. He speaks to all.

PHILIP
(God has made his will known to me. The time for our great enterprise has come.)

The Jesuit looks up and his eyes too show a powerful but disciplined satisfaction. He murmurs softly to himself.

RESTON
At last.

Cathedral bells ring out. The cheers of a crowd are heard through the open windows.

The king passes out onto the salon’s first-floor balcony.

EXT. BALCONY, ESCORIAL PALACE - DAY

Hot sunlight. Philip stands gazing across the plaza at the great cathedral on the far side, as the bells ring out and the CROWD in the plaza below wave their hats and cheer. The Infanta is by his side. His MINISTERS cluster behind him. Lining the crowd on either side of the plaza stand columns of ARMED SOLDIERS: a formidable reminder of the king’s power.

Philip does nothing, but his presence intoxicates the crowd. As their cries swell, wave upon wave, the king’s eyes glow and he breathes in deeply, feeding on his people’s adoration.

EXT. THAMES - DAY

A ripple of light on the water. A blur of approaching colour.
The ROYAL BARGE is gliding towards us, slowly taking shape: its hull gaily painted, its canopy adorned with colourful fabrics, its banks of oars rising and falling, casting bright shards of shining water in the sunlight.

People passing on the river bank point and wave, smiling, cheering. They see the Queen now. They call out.

Two young men walking arm-in-arm stare more intently than any; but they do not cheer or wave. There’s something chilling in the way they track the distant figure of the Queen.

They are BABINGTON and SAVAGE.

Over this an insistent voice:

HOWARD (V.O.)
Why do you go among the people, majesty? I tell you plainly, you will be murdered! Every Catholic in England is a potential assassin!
INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

An agitated group is gathered in this room where the business of state is transacted. We catch glimpses of the Queen in their midst, preparing to leave, as her ministers try to persuade her of the seriousness of the situation: SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON, 30s, an ambitious courtier; LORD HOWARD, 50s, a weathered old campaigner; and standing back from the rest, watching from the side lines, SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM, the Queen’s veteran friend and adviser.

HATTON
Be warned by the atrocities in France! God-fearing Christians murdered by Papist cut-throats inflamed by hatred of the truth!

HOWARD
We know the Catholics take their orders from Spain. The Spanish speak openly of Mary Stuart as Queen of England in waiting.

ELIZABETH
(sharply)
Mary Stuart is a Queen cast out by her own ungrateful nation.

HATTON
With respect, majesty - a Catholic Queen. Your loyal Protestant supporters don’t understand why Mary Stuart lives under our protection, at our expense - very considerable expense -

ELIZABETH
Mary Stuart is my cousin. She is our guest. And she is under our control.

HOWARD
But while she lives, majesty, she is a beacon that draws our enemies’ eyes and hopes.

ELIZABETH
While she lives?

HATTON
She is the poison at the heart of England. The poison must be cut out.
ELIZABETH
You’d have me make a martyr of her. What is her crime?

EXT. THAMES - DAY

The Londoners on the river bank cheer and wave as the royal barge goes by.

HOWARD (V.O.)
Treachery, ma’am. All Catholics are traitors! Their loyalty is to the Pope of Rome.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)
How many Catholics are there in England, sir?

HOWARD (V.O.)
Immense numbers, majesty!

HATTON (V.O.)
We believe half the nation clings to the old superstitions.
INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

ELIZABETH
What would you have me do? ‘Cut out’ half the people of England?

HOWARD
We must act, majesty. Our inaction is taken to be weakness.

ELIZABETH
If any of my people break the law, they will be punished. Until that day, I wish them to be let them alone.

HATTON
Until the day they rise in rebellion! Majesty, we have proven reason to fear every Catholic in the land -

ELIZABETH
Fear creates fear, sir. I will not punish my people for their beliefs. Only for their deeds. I am assured that the people of England love their Queen. My constant endeavour is to earn that love.

EXT. ROYAL BARGE, THAMES - DAY

Londoners on the river banks wave and cheer. Elizabeth, seated on the royal barge, sees them with satisfaction. She gives an occasional slight inclination of her head in acknowledgement.

Elizabeth sits with her favourite seated beside her, her youngest and prettiest maid of honour, BESS THROCKMORTON. Walsingham sits facing them, looking sourly at the cheering spectators.

WALSINGHAM
The people are agitated.

ELIZABETH
What people?
WALSINGHAM
Your bishops are preaching that
God is showing his displeasure-
the Queen being still unmarried -
some are saying infertile -

ELIZABETH
What nonsense!

WALSINGHAM
Dangerous nonsense. Mary Stuart
has a son -

ELIZABETH
Why does everyone torment me with
Mary Stuart?
ELIZABETH (cont'd)

It’s not her fault that she’s next in line to the throne.
(to Bess)
Don’t hide your face.

She leans over to brush a stray lock of hair from Bess’s face.

WALSINGHAM
So long as you have no issue.

Elizabeth looks back at Walsingham.

WALSINGHAM
Produce an heir and there’ll be no more talk of Mary Stuart.

ELIZABETH
Isn’t it customary to obtain a husband before producing an heir?
(to Bess)
We shall have to look out a husband for you soon, Bess.

BESS
Not too soon, my lady.

WALSINGHAM
There are husbands to be had.

ELIZABETH
(to Bess)
Don’t you want to be married?

BESS
I’ll want the marriage if I want the man.

WALSINGHAM
Austria. France. Sweden.

ELIZABETH
Why stop there? Turkey has a Sultan. China has an Emperor.
(to Bess)
What sort of man do you want?

WALSINGHAM
I confine myself to the possible.

BESS
An honest man. With friendly eyes.
ELIZABETH
(to Walsingham)
That’s where you and I differ, Walsingham. I find the impossible far more interesting.
(to Bess)
And good legs. You’ll want good legs.

BESS
And sweet breath.

ELIZABETH
So that you can kiss him without choking.
(to Walsingham)
There must be any amount of princes in undiscovered lands across the sea. Find me an honest one of those.

INT. ST PAUL’S CATHEDRAL - DAY

The royal party enters the Cathedral. Elizabeth and Walsingham advance into the wide empty nave, followed by the Queen’s ladies and the guards. Bess is now back in her place among the ladies.

ELIZABETH
Ship builders are being recruited in Spanish ports at double wages. The sea wall at Dover is cracking. There’s no money to rebuild our defences. I don’t need advisers to tell me my business.

WALSINGHAM
They care for your safety, majesty. The threats to your person are real.

ELIZABETH
And they know very well that if I fall, they all come tumbling down after me.

She goes on to the steps at the foot of the altar, and kneels to pray. As she kneels she holds out one hand behind her, not looking round. Bess steps forward, and taking her hand, kneels and prays with her.
ELIZABETH
Let’s pray, Bess. May we have wisdom not to fear shadows in the night, and courage when the day of danger truly dawns.

ON ELIZABETH as she prays.
EXT THE TYGER, ENGLISH CHANNEL - DAY

Raleigh is standing on the prow of a war-ship as it cuts through the water toward the white cliffs of Dover. The ship and its sailors have been at sea for many months, and it shows.

Raleigh shouts to his Sailing-Master.

RALEIGH
Let England know we’re back, Mr Calley.

CALLEY
Master Gunner, run out starboard and tie-off. A broadside from the bow.

MASTER GUNNER
Run out and prime. From the bow number one gun, on my word — discharge! Two -- Three-- Four.

Canon fire echoes over the distant white cliffs.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - NIGHT

ON ELIZABETH - Imperfectly reflected in a mirror in the soft candlelight. Her ladies are putting her clothes away. Bess begins the process of stripping away her make-up.

Elizabeth studies her true face as it comes into view.

ELIZABETH
Lines round my mouth. Where did they come from?

BESS
Smile lines, my lady.

ELIZABETH
Smile lines? When do I smile?

With that she smiles, and sees Bess’s answering reflected smile.

ELIZABETH
Now you have smile lines too.
Her smile fades. She gazes at her now naked face, vulnerable in the mirror.

13A INT. QUEEN’S BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT

The royal bed, immense and ornate. Elizabeth lies here small, awake, and alone.

PHILIP

‘Elizabeth! The angels weep for you, Elizabeth! Why do you close your ears to the voice of your loving God?’

13B EXT. FOREST, SPAIN - DAY

Foresters at work felling great trees, working rhythmically, in pairs. From all round echoes the same sound, of axe on timber.

PHILIP (V.O.)

‘Elizabeth! You are leading the souls of your people to Hell! Turn back! Marry me, and save England!’ I spoke to her just as I speak to you now.

Now we see the royal carriage riding through mature forest, accompanied by a mounted entourage.

IN THE CARRIAGE - The king, Philip II, the Infanta and Father Robert Reston.

PHILIP

But she did not listen. She made me a speech about the virtues of virginity. Me! Virginity! She has brought this on herself.

Philip surveys the scene through the carriage window with a shudder.

PHILIP

Every tree that falls hurts me. I lose a part of myself. I am cursed with sensitivity. I feel too much.

We don’t yet know what the felling of the trees portends. But Reston does. To him, it’s a glorious sight.

RESTON

Your majesty has a merciful soul.
PHILIP
I sacrifice my country’s forests
to save the souls of a lost
nation. That is true mercy.
England is lost to darkness,
Father. I bring light.

WIDE NOW – We see the carriage and the royal party crest a
hill, and there is revealed an awesome sight: the forest
has been felled as far as the eye can see. Great piles of
cut timber dot the ravaged landscape. Everywhere men are at
work lopping branches from felled trees. Wagon teams haul
immense trunks away. Fires burn stacks of lopped branches,
and the smoke rises up into the empty sky.

IN THE CARRIAGE – On Reston’s face as he stares at the
fires. He speaks half to himself, out of the depths of his
own fanatical certainty.

RESTON
The light of purifying fire.

He turns and fixes the king with his intent gaze.

RESTON
My time has come, majesty.
(Beat)
Send me home.

13C EXT. CHARTLEY HALL- DAY
Establishing wide shot of chartley Hall.

14 EXT. CHARTLEY HALL, GARDEN - DAY
A small yapping Skye terrier is barking at a LAUNDRESS, who
is handing over a letter, folded small, to a sharp-faced
middle-aged French lady’s maid, ANNETTE. The laundress
curtseys and leaves.

15 INT. MARY STUART’S QUARTERS, CHARTLEY HALL - DAY
The terrier scampers ahead of Annette to its mistress, MARY
STUART, who sits embroidering a pink satin petticoat. She
is a handsome but bitter woman in her mid-thirties. Round
her stands her small retinue of three ladies and a
chaplain.

MARY
This is so pretty I’m inclined to
send it as a present to my dear
cousin Elizabeth.

She holds up the delicate work to show her ladies.
MARY (CONT'D)
It is an intimate garment, of
course. But even Elizabeth must
have the occasional intimate
moment.

Annette reaches her mistress and kneels before her, holding
out the letter.

ANNETTE
My Queen.

Mary lays down her needlework and takes the letter from her
and reads it for herself.

MARY
Our friends write to give us
hope.

ANNETTE
(low)
Soon England’s true believers
will rise up against the bastard
usurper Elizabeth, and slit her
throat, and throw her down to
hell.

MARY
That’s enough, Annette.
(But she loves it.)
Slit her throat? Please.

ANNETTE
And when the bastard usurper is
dead, my lady will be queen.

The chaplain gives a sharp cough of warning.

The Warden of Chartley Hall, SIR AMYAS PAULET, enters the
room. He is soberly dressed, but has charming manners, and
is clearly susceptible to his handsome ward. Mary turns to
him at once with a teasing smile.

MARY
Here’s my noble jailer, come to
smack my hand.

She holds out one hand to be smacked. The other hand holds
the letter out of sight.

MARY
Have I sinned again, sir?

PAULET
No, no, my lady. Unless beauty is
counted a sin.
PAULET (cont'd)

(Kissing her hand)

I come to pay my respects.

MARY

Oh, you jailer. I don’t trust you.

PAULET

Not jailer, my lady, please.
Warden. Protector. Friend. You are the Queen’s guest.

Mary signs to her ladies. One of them brings her the embroidery, discreetly receiving in exchange the hidden letter.

MARY

See how I pass my time in my lonely prison.

PAULET

Charming, ma’am. Distractingly charming.

She holds the intimate garment against her body. Paulet seems to be too fascinated by it to notice he is being duped.

MARY

Such a pretty undergarment. But for whose eyes?
INT. ARMOURER’S SHOP, LONDON – DAY

A pistol is being loaded: a fiddly process involving a powder horn, wadding, and an iron ball the size of a hazelnut.

ARMOURER (O.O.V.)
So what’s it for, my young friend? Not for shooting rabbits, I’m guessing.

SAVAGE
We live in dangerous times.

ARMOURER
We do indeed.

Savage moves close as if to study the loading process. We see the two of them talking from outside the window.

SAVAGE
(very low)
The conspiracy gains strength.
Tell our master one of the circle has already gained access to the court.

The Armourer nods. He hands the pistol to Savage. Savage takes it and leaves.

Immediately after, a man enters and walks up behind the now seated Armourer. The Armourer turns round.

RESTON
I ask for your forgiveness.

Moving with speed, he seizes the Armourer’s head, twists it to one side, and snaps his neck.

Reston walks quietly out of the store.

EXT. WHITEHALL PALACE – DAY

A crowd of eager SPECTATORS and WOULD-BE COURTIERS has gathered, held back by a line of guards, all hoping to attract the attention of the Queen when she appears. This is the route from the Presence Chamber to the Chapel Royal.
Every Sunday the Queen processes here, and crowds gather to see her. Two of Walsingham’s men, AGENTS 1 and 2, mingle in the crowd: faces we’ll see again.

Tom Babington stands unobtrusively at the back of the crowd. He carries a bag which may or may not contain a gun.

A bustle of activity, a ripple of anticipation – ‘She’s coming!’ – and the palace doors open.

BABINGTON’S POV: the crowd, the wall of BODYGUARDS, the cluster of COURTiers and LADIES, and in their midst, Elizabeth, almost completely masked as she passes by. Alongside the Queen, among her maids-of-honour, is Bess Throckmorton; behind her, Walsingham.

The people cheer, call out to the Queen, reach to touch her, fall to their knees.

CROWD
God bless your majesty - God love you! - See her sweet face!

Others in the crowd are shouting more militant sentiments.

CROWD
Hang the Papists! - Look out for traitors, Elizabeth! Mary Stuart is the whore of Rome!

Babington moves forward, easing his way to the front of the crowd. Nearby there stands another young man who is watching, not cheering: RAMSAY.

A WOMAN WITH A BABY pushes her way almost to the Queen, holding her baby before her.

WOMAN WITH BABY
Your blessing, majesty. My little one, your blessing.

BABINGTON’S POV- The Queen stopping to bless the little baby, smiling, putting out her hand to touch the baby’s head. The mother bobs a curtsey. The Queen moves on, with her entourage.

A sudden scuffle in the crowd. Babington turns to look.

A CLOAK SWEEPS THROUGH FRAME – dropping down to the ground – revealing as it passes the handsome smiling face of Raleigh, directly in the path of the Queen.

RALEIGH
A puddle in the way, majesty.

Elizabeth signs to the guards to stay calm. She stares at Raleigh, then she looks down at the cloak. No sign of any puddles. Bess Throckmorton watches, suppressing a smile.
Elizabeth looks back up, meets Raleigh’s eyes with a cool appraising gaze. Then she walks on over the cloak, shaking her head.

**ELIZABETH**

* A puddle...

The guards take up their positions once more. Bess throws Raleigh a quick smile as she follows the royal party. His answering shrug says: I tried. He picks up the cloak, and stands gazing after the Queen.

Elizabeth goes into the chapel, and the doors close behind her.

**ROYAL SERVANT**

The Queen is at her prayers!

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18A **INT. CHAPEL ROYAL – DAY**

The Queen at her prayers, her mind elsewhere; privately amused.

**ELIZABETH**

* A puddle...

18B **EXT. WHITEHALL PALACE – DAY**

Raleigh puts an arm round Calley.

**RALEIGH**

She spoke to me. You have to give me that.

**CALLEY**

Oh, I do. The Queen spoke to you. One word - but she spoke.

**RALEIGH**

Two words.

**CALLEY**

You’re made. A dukedom at the very least.

**RALEIGH**

Did you see the girl behind her? I’ve been at sea too long.

19 **INT. GREAT HALL, WHITEHALL PALACE – DAY**

The Great Hall is crowded with competing factions. A group of Spaniards, led by their Ambassador, DON GUERAU DE SPES, stand watching everyone else with haughty disdain.
An architect waits to present details of a building project. Petitioners wait vainly, in the hope of catching the Queen’s eye. Howard and Hatton are in attendance. Walsingham stands by the Queen’s side, briefing her in a low murmur for her ears only.

WALSINGHAM
Thousands are dying every day of famine in Ireland. Another rebellion is a distinct possibility.

A courtier is holding a portrait which he shows to the Queen.

COURTIER
Francis of Valois, majesty.

HATTON
Brother to the king of France, majesty.

WALSINGHAM
France is in religious turmoil. It would be unwise to engage with their instability.

ELIZABETH
(to Lord Howard)
You have the plans for the new docks?

HOWARD
Here, majesty.

Howard beckons the Architect forward to show his model. Elizabeth studies it. Walsingham murmurs on.

WALSINGHAM
We still need to keep France out of the arms of Spain.

ELIZABETH
Let me think on it.
(to Howard)
What if enemy ships should sail up the Thames? Can the docks be closed?

HOWARD
Not closed, majesty. But the gun positions here, and here, have full command of the channel.

The courtier displays a second portrait.

COURTIER
King Erik of Sweden, majesty.
ELIZABETH
What again?

WALSINGHAM
Still madly in love with you.

ELIZABETH
Still mad, you mean. (Looking around). Where’s Bess?

The courtier presents a third portrait.

COURTIER
Ivan, Tsar of all the Russias, known as “The Terrible.”

Walsingham merely shakes his head.
INT. ANTECHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Bess Throckmorton is late. She comes running through the crowd of lesser petitioner who wait in the hope of gaining access to the Queen. She passes Calley, the two native Americans, and a group of sailors holding large hampers. Raleigh is trying to persuade the doorkeeper to let him past.

DOORKEEPER
You’ll have to see the Lord Chamberlain, sir.

He indicates a portly man surrounded by petitioners, beyond the open doors to the inner rooms.

RALEIGH
How am I to see him if you won’t let me through?

DOORKEEPER
You must wait for him to come out, sir.

RALEIGH
And when will he come out?

DOORKEEPER
There’s no way of knowing that, sir.

The doorkeeper stands aside for Bess. She recognises Raleigh, and throws him a smile before rushing past.

RALEIGH
(as if to Calley)
I had less trouble than this boarding a Spanish ship! Everything is easier when you can kill people.

INT. GREAT HALL, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Bess curtseys before Elizabeth; who shakes her head at her.

ELIZABETH
Late again, Bess.

BESS
I beg your majesty’s forgiveness.

ELIZABETH
Given. Once.
BESS
The puddle man is outside, majesty.
Elizabeth takes Bess’s arm and turns with her to the portraits.

ELIZABETH
My suitors.

The Courtier has a fourth portrait.

COURTIER
The Archduke Charles of Austria, majesty.

HATTON
The younger brother of Maximilian II, the Holy Roman Emperor.

WALSINGHAM
A cousin of Philip II of Spain.

BESS
He’s rather sweet.

ELIZABETH
More your age than mine, Bess. How old is he?

HATTON
Young... I believe, majesty. An Austrian alliance would keep France quiet.

WALSINGHAM
And it would put Philip on a leash.

Elizabeth looks across at the Spaniards.

ELIZABETH
I become almost enthusiastic.
(to Hatton)
Send for him.
(to Bess)
Where is he, then?

Bess understands. She bobs and hurries to the door.

ELIZABETH
(to Walsingham)
How much longer do you think I can play this game?

WALSINGHAM
Virginity is an asset that holds its value well.

ELIZABETH
Diplomatically speaking.
Raleigh now enters with Calley, the native Americans and court servants carrying hampers.
One of the Spaniards recognises him and murmurs to the Ambassador; who speaks angrily to the Queen.

DON GUERAU
Majesty, this man is a notorious pirate.

ELIZABETH
Indeed?

Don Guerau points to the hampers.

DON GUERAU
Spanish treasure, stolen from Spanish ships. You will see.

Raleigh kneels before the Queen. Elizabeth gestures for him to rise.

ELIZABETH
Well, sir. Who are you?

RALEIGH
Walter Raleigh, your majesty.

ELIZABETH
Ah, yes. Raleigh. I’ve heard of your voyage. What’s your rank?

RALEIGH
A gentleman of Devon.

ELIZABETH
What do you want?

RALEIGH
The honour to be in the presence of my Queen, whose radiant beauty is the boast and glory of the English people.

ELIZABETH
Yes, well, here you are.

RALEIGH
I’m just returned from the New World, majesty. I have claimed the fertile coast in your name, and called it Virginia, in honour of our Virgin Queen.

Elizabeth raises her eyebrows.

ELIZABETH
Virginia? And if I marry? Will you change the name to Conjugia?

A royal joke. Her entourage laughs dutifully.
RALEIGH
I ask for your gracious permission, majesty, to return to the New World with your royal warrant, to found a colony under the laws and protections of England.

Elizabeth’s eye has fallen on the native Americans.

ELIZABETH
Who are they?

RALEIGH
Americans, majesty. They long to be your newest subjects.

He beckons Calley to lead Wanchese and Manteo forward.

ELIZABETH
Have they no ruler of their own?

RALEIGH
None to match England’s Queen.

Elizabeth gazes at the natives. She holds out her hand. Unaware that he’s meant to kiss the Queen’s hand, Manteo, takes it and shakes it. A gasp from the watching courtiers. But Elizabeth accepts the courtesy.

ELIZABETH
These gentlemen are welcome. See that they’re treated well.

Calley hurries them away before worse happens.

RALEIGH
I also come bearing gifts for your majesty, from the New World.

He beckons to the servants to bring the baskets. Don Guerau steps forward.

DON GUERAU
The fruits of piracy, majesty. The true property of the realm of Spain.

ELIZABETH
Let’s see, shall we? (to Raleigh)
What do you bring me?

RALEIGH
Mud, and leaves.
Members of the court share suppressed smiles.

ELIZABETH
 (amused)
 Mud and leaves?

Raleigh throws open the first basket. Don Guerau peers inside suspiciously. It does indeed seem to be filled with mud.

Raleigh takes out a potato beneath the Ambassador’s nose.

RALEIGH

He beckons forward the second basket, which is full of leaves. Again Don Guerau tracks his every move. He takes out a tobacco leaf.

RALEIGH

Now Don Guerau realises he’s being laughed at on all sides. He draws himself up with angry pride, wrinkling his nose.

DON GUERAU
 Forgive me, majesty, I find the air has become stale. I am sensitive to the smell of open sewers.

A glare at Raleigh, a bow for the Queen, and Don Guerau leads his Spaniards out.

ELIZABETH
 (to Raleigh)
 Continue.

With a broad smile, Raleigh gestures forward the third basket. This one really is full of gold. He takes out a gold coin and presents it to Elizabeth.

RALEIGH
 Gold. You spend it. Very satisfying.

Elizabeth examines the fat gold coin, with its image of Philip of Spain. She tries not to smile.

RALEIGH
 Courtesy of a Spanish ship, that found itself unable to complete its journey.

Elizabeth drops the gold coin back into the basket.
ELIZABETH
The fruits of piracy after all, it seems.

RALEIGH
Philip of Spain is no friend of England, majesty. The more gold I take from him, the safer you will be.

ELIZABETH
Well, well. A political pirate. A logic-chopping pirate.

RALEIGH
And your majesty’s most loyal subject.

She gives him a long look.

ELIZABETH
But not my best dressed.

(Beat)
Welcome home, Mr Raleigh.

She turns her attention back to Hatton and the portraits. Raleigh bows and withdraws, followed by his men. Walsingham follows.

INT. HALLWAY, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Raleigh comes out into the hallway with Calley by his side.

RALEIGH
What did you think of her?

CALLEY
Terrifying.

RALEIGH
But magnificent.

He moves on.

Raleigh’s eyes fall on Don Guerau, the Spanish Ambassador, passing near with his fellow Spaniards and a few English courtiers and ministers, including Hatton. Don Guerau stares at him.

The doors to the privy chamber open and the Queen’s ladies come swishing out in a tight chattering group, Bess beside her friend MARGARET.
MARGARET
‘Mud and leaves’! I nearly died!

BESS
‘Patata! You eat it!’

They giggle as they go by.

MARGARET
She liked him. I could tell.

BESS
Well, wouldn’t you?

They see Raleigh now, and the chatter ceases. The ladies come to a stop and curtsey. Raleigh gives a bow, his eyes singling out Bess.

RALEIGH
I’m glad to have the opportunity to thank you. Without your help, I’d still be in outer darkness.

BESS
I did very little, sir. You’d already caught the Queen’s eye.

RALEIGH
Then I thank you for the very little.

The ladies go on their way and the laughing chatter resumes, with many a backward glance at the handsome Raleigh. No one pays attention to a figure in the shadows, another of Walsingham’s men, AGENT 3.

EXT. WOOD - DUSK

Young Savage stands alone among trees, shivering, white-faced, half-mumbling, half-singing an endless prayer. He holds a pistol with which he means to kill himself. But he can’t do it.

SAVAGE
(singing)
Salve regina, mater misericordiae, vita dulcedo et spes nostra salve...

In a clearing nearby three men sit round a fire. They are young Catholic fanatics - Babington, Ramsay, and FRANCIS THROCKMORTON. A fourth man stands before them, his back to us, watching Savage. At first we don’t see who he is.
His weakness endangers us all. He can’t go on with us. And we can’t leave him behind.

Now the man turns and looks *intently at Babington*, and we see he is Robert Reston; no longer in the clothes of a priest.

**RESTON**
Who will help him?

**Babington rises. Reston nods his approval.** Babington goes off through the trees. Reston and the others follow a little behind.

**SAVAGE**
(singing)
Ad te clamamus, exsulaes filii Evae. Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle -

He sings on as Babington approaches him, seeming no longer to know what’s happening. Babington takes the pistol from his hand.

**BABINGTON**
Make your peace with God.

Savage stares, and suddenly realises what Babington means to do. Terror overwhelms him.

**SAVAGE**
No, Tom! Don’t kill me! I don’t want to die!

Now he’s blubbering with fear. Babington is shaken by this, and can’t shoot.

Reston begins to pray aloud.

**RESTON**
Si ambulam in medio umbrae mortis, non timebo mala -

The others join *in* with the words of the well-known psalm. Babington too joins in, now weeping.

**RESTON AND OTHERS**
Quoniam tu mecum es, Domine.
Virga tua et baculus tuus, ipsa me consolata sunt -

BANG! Savage falls dead.
INT. WALSINGHAM’S HOUSE - EVENING

Walsingham enters his private home, and gives his hat and cloak to his servant.

SERVANT
Visitor waiting, sir.

Walsingham frowns. He climbs the stairs to the door of his study. There, pacing nervously, is his younger brother WILLIAM, a middle-aged student. Walsingham’s scowl disappears. He opens his arms wide.

WALSINGHAM
William!

WILLIAM
Hello, Francis.

They embrace. Then Walsingham pushes him back to take a good look at him.

WALSINGHAM
You look terrible. Don’t they feed you in Paris? How are your studies? Learned the secrets of the universe yet?

WILLIAM
Not yet.

WALSINGHAM
These are dangerous times to be questioning the ways of God. You must take care of yourself.

WILLIAM
My needs are simple.

WALSINGHAM
You’ll dine with us? You’ll lodge with us?

His daughter MARY appears at the top of the next flight.

MARY WALSINGHAM
William!

She comes tumbling down and into his arms. She’s an eager innocent 20-year-old, much loved by her father.

WILLIAM
Look at you! All grown up.

URSULA, Walsingham’s wife, appears as Mary leads William up the stairs.
URSULA
William. This is a pleasure.

WILLIAM
I’ve been away too long, ma’am.

MARY WALSINGHAM
You come with me, William.

Mary and William go on into the family’s living rooms. Ursula meets her husband’s eyes.

URSULA
He’s not still a student, is he?

INT. LIVING ROOM, WALSINGHAM’S HOUSE – NIGHT

William is by the fire, listening to Mary playing the virginal and singing. Walsingham and Ursula are by the dinner table.

URSULA
Have you spoken to the Queen?

WALSINGHAM
I speak to her daily.

URSULA
You know what I mean. You’ve done enough. No man could do more.

WALSINGHAM
I can’t leave court yet. The Queen needs me.

URSULA
So you’re to die in harness like a pack horse, are you? And for what?

(calling)
Mary! William!

WALSINGHAM
These are difficult times–

URSULA
It’s always difficult times.

Mary joins them, her arm in William’s. Walsingham seizes the opportunity to change the subject.

WALSINGHAM
William, come and tell us all the new ideas in the University. Will the great breach in the church ever be healed?
WILLIAM
I doubt it, brother. Compromise is out of fashion. On both sides they say there can only be one truth, and one God.

URSULA
Sit, sit.

MARY
Here by me, William.

WALSINGHAM
What do they say in Paris of the Pope’s call for holy war?

WILLIAM
Many welcome it.

URSULA
I don’t understand why we must all hate each other.

WILLIAM
Truth will always hate falsehood, ma’am.

MARY
Why do we have to talk about war? Tell us your nice news, William. Are you married yet?

WILLIAM
(smiling)
Not yet.

MARY
Then we must find you a nice sensible English wife.

WILLIAM
No, no. I won’t be staying long. I must go back to my studies.

WALSINGHAM
Not too soon, I hope. Every man deserves a rest.

URSULA
Listen to him! When did you last rest, I’d like to know? (to William) He won’t listen to me. Not a thought for his health. You tell him, he’s your brother. He’ll die at his desk, out of sheer selfishness.
Walsingham shares a rueful smile with William that says, ‘Women, eh?’. They take their seats for dinner.

INT. GREAT HALL, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Elizabeth sits sumptuously gowned and jewelled at an ornately-dressed dining table, surrounded by her ladies, Bess among them; Walsingham discreetly in the background. They’re listening to a young Austrian make a formal speech of love. The AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR stands to one side, mouthing the words to prompt him.

The ARCHDUKE CHARLES is still a boy: sixteen years old, slight, pale, trembling with shyness. He struggles through his rehearsed speech.

ARCHDUKE CHARLES

Your majesty’s beauty is dazzling to my eyes. Your learning is famed throughout Europe. I see before me perfection in human form. Oh, Elizabeth! How blessed am I to stand in your fabled presence, warmed by your greatness as by the rays of the sun. Oh Elizabeth! To speak your name is to hear celestial music. May that sweet sound guide me through my life to come - Elizabeth! Elizabeth! I have travelled here, to this illustrious court, in the hope that our two great nations might be joined in love. But now that I am bathed in the radiance of your glory, I am overwhelmed. I am conquered. I die. Only your love, great Elizabeth, can restore me to life.

Courtiers exchange smiles at his efforts. The Spaniards sneer openly. But Elizabeth takes the charade with due gravity.

ELIZABETH

Your highness does me great honour. Shall we eat our dinner? It should prove almost as restorative as my love.

Raleigh enters the Great Hall, trailed by Calley, as the dinner gets under way. They join the much larger group who simply stand and watch. Royal meals are in part a spectacle for the court. A JESTER moves from group to group, playing pranks on the guests.
Raleigh is now dressed in court fashion, and looks very well; as the glances of several court ladies show. He catches Bess’s eye and they share a smile.

COURT LADY
So tell me, Mr Raleigh, in your sea battles - how do you sink an enemy ship? You shoot holes in its sides, I suppose.
RALEIGH
No, ma’am. A sunk ship is of no value. The object is to capture and command.

COURT LADY
And how do you do that?

RALEIGH
Surprise. Speed. Irresistible violence.

Calley, listening, rolls his eyes.

Elizabeth, at the table with the Archduke by her side, glances towards Raleigh, and sees him flirting with the court ladies. Then back to the young Archduke, who has hardly touched his food.

ELIZABETH
I think you’re not as accustomed as I am to eating in public. I have a secret.
(lowering her voice)
I pretend there’s a pane of glass — eine Glasscheibe — between me and them.

She moves one hand before her face, indicating an imaginary pane of glass. As she looks, she sees Bess staring at someone — follows her gaze — and is amused to find that the object of her attention is also Raleigh.

ELIZABETH
They can see me, but they can’t hear me, or touch me. You should try it.

She beckons to Bess.

ELIZABETH
Bess.

Bess comes forward.

ELIZABETH
(low)
He interests me. Talk to him.

BESS
Him, my lady?

ELIZABETH
Him.

Bess turns and looks across towards Raleigh, as he flirts with the court ladies.
Elizabeth turns back to her guest.

ELIZABETH
His highness is tired after his journey.

The young Archduke, frozen with shyness, sits staring before him, trembling as he frames a proper reply.

ARCHDUKE CHARLES
No man can be tired in the presence of so lovely a Queen.

Elizabeth speaks so only he can hear, in German.

ELIZABETH
(You play the game very well, my young friend. But don’t you sometimes feel an overwhelming desire to say what you’re really thinking?)

The Archduke’s eyes open very wide. He glances at Elizabeth, and sees on her face a conspiratorial smile.

ARCHDUKE CHARLES
(I daren’t even think what I’m really thinking.)

ELIZABETH
(You’re thinking, perhaps, that you would far rather be home.)

ARCHDUKE CHARLES
(You’re very wise, madame.)

He’s grateful to her, and his shy face shows it.

Raleigh is still being entertained by the court ladies.

COURT LADY
I adore the natives you brought back with you. I don’t suppose you could get one for me? They’re not dangerous, are they?

RALEIGH
That depends what you propose to do with them.

COURT LADY
I’d dress him up in mulberry-coloured silk and have him walk behind me, carrying my cloak.
Bess has now approached Raleigh.

BESS
The pirate is not too bored by
the vanities of the court, I
hope.

RALEIGH
A simple sailor, dazzled by the
bright lights.

Bess draws him away from the court ladies.

BESS
If you can bring yourself to
leave the dazzle of the bright
lights for a moment -
RALEIGH
Drawn away by the brightest light of all.

BESS
That can only mean the Queen.

RALEIGH
I don’t presume to raise my eyes so high.

They both look at the Queen. She’s watching Raleigh. He bows.

BESS
It seems you’ve presumed after all.

RALEIGH
It seems you’re determined to think the worst of me.

BESS
Tell me what it is you really want.

RALEIGH

BESS
In that order?

RALEIGH
Each leads to the next. The money will buy and equip ships for a return voyage to the New World. The success of my infant colony there will make me famous. The fame will bring me love.

BESS
It seems rather a long way round.

RALEIGH
There are benefits along the way. It is something, after all, to take a blank on the map and build there a shining city.

BESS
Which you will no doubt name after yourself.
RALEIGH
(smilin)
No doubt.

BESS
Well, then. I am answered.

RALEIGH
May I ask a question in return?

BESS
Of course.

RALEIGH
How am I to win the Queen’s favour?

BESS
Why should I tell you that, sir?

RALEIGH
I’ve little enough to offer, I know. But whatever I have to give - ask, and it’s yours.

Bess thinks for a moment.

BESS
My advice to you is, say what you mean to say as plainly as possible. All men flatter the Queen in the hope of advancement. Pay her the compliment of truth.

She gives him her hand. He kisses it.

RALEIGH
I don’t even know your name.

BESS
Elizabeth Throckmorton.

RALEIGH
A second Elizabeth.

BESS
Everyone calls me Bess.

She goes back to the Queen, as Elizabeth is rising to leave. She speaks to the company.

ELIZABETH
His highness the Archduke informs me that my charms overwhelm him. He will retire to his private quarters to rest.
This causes much amusement. Don Guerau sneers openly. The Archduke rises. All rise. The Archduke bows solemnly to the Queen, and leaves with his entourage. Elizabeth beckons to Walsingham, and speaks low to him.

ELIZABETH
He’s a sweet boy. I don’t want him hurt by your schemes.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

Bess is reading to Elizabeth. Elizabeth watching her, her mind elsewhere.

ELIZABETH
I suspect him of being a professional charmer. Am I right?

BEss
He is certainly charming, my lady.

ELIZABETH
There are duller professions. And what is it he hopes to gain by his charms?

BEss
He hopes for glory in his New World. He dreams of building a shining city.

ELIZABETH
Which I’m to pay for, no doubt.

(Beat)

You like him, don’t you?

BEss
It’s refreshing to meet a man who looks to a world beyond the court.

ELIZABETH
So it is. We shall let him come again.

INT. MARY STUART’S QUARTERS, CHARTLEY HALL - DAY

Mary Stuart holds her pet dog in her arms, listening to Annette, who kneels before her.
MARY
Dismissed? On whose orders?

She looks up at the laundress, who stands red-eyed and
snuffling, with a guard by her side.

MARY
Do stop snivelling.

ANNETTE
The Warden, my lady.

MARY
The Warden? My Warden?

As she speaks, Sir Amyas Paulet enters. Mary’s voice
becomes seductive.

MARY
What have you done now, you bad
man? Sent away my laundress? How
am I to have clean clothes? Or do
you want me to go about naked?

Paulet smiles at the notion of Mary naked.

PAULET
That was not my motive, ma’am.
Much though -
(Thinking better of it)
Your laundress was found to be
carrying letters in her washing.
Not her job, I think.

MARY
How am I to send my intimate
letters?

PAULET
Through me.

MARY
And you will read them.

PAULET
With respectful admiration.

MARY
Am I to have no privacy?

PAULET
No.

Beneath the charm, steel.

MARY
You disappoint me, sir.
PAULET
The Queen orders these measures for your protection.

MARY
The Queen! Am I not a Queen too? What if I wish to write a love letter? Is Elizabeth to be sent a copy? Is she so starved of lovers that she must feed on mine?

PAULET
The Queen grieved when your husband died, ma’am. As she grieved when your second husband died. And the third. If there is a possibility of a fourth -

MARY
Tormentor! Is that Elizabeth’s order too? That you torment and mock me?

She turns to go, but stops before leaving the room: bitter, haughty, not deigning to look back.

MARY
They say she’s a beautiful woman. Is she so very beautiful?

PAULET
I don’t presume to comment on the Queen’s person.

MARY
She’s called the virgin queen. Why is that, sir? Can it be that no man will have her?

Mary changes mood again, thinking it more politic to keep the Warden under her spell. She waves Annette and the laundress away.

MARY
My friend, forgive me. You are my friend, are you not?

PAULET
I am your servant, ma’am, and your admirer.

MARY
I shall send no more letters. I shall stay here quietly, in my prison. With you.
INT. ANTECHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

The same crowd of petitioners wait in vain for access to the Queen. The same door keeper. Raleigh enters, and this time the door keeper bows, and ushers him through the open doors.

Over this we hear Raleigh’s voice telling of his adventures:

RALEIGH (V.O.)
It begins with a journey. You must cross an ocean.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

Elizabeth listens attentively, her eyes looking far away into the distance, as Raleigh tells of his adventures.

RALEIGH
Can you imagine - can you feel - what it is to cross an ocean? For weeks you see nothing but the horizon. All round you. Perfect, and empty. Your ship is small - tiny - a speck in such immensity.

INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Walsingham is talking to Elizabeth about matters of state. We are on her face, and we can see that she hears nothing of what he tells her. Her mind is all on Raleigh’s voice.

RALEIGH (V.O.)
You live with fear, in the grip of fear - fear of storms, fear of sickness on board, fear of the immensity. What if you never escape? How can you escape? There’s nowhere to go. So you must drive your fear down, deep into your belly, and study your charts, and watch your compass, and pray for a fair wind - and hope.

INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - NIGHT

Now Elizabeth is with Raleigh again, listening as he goes on speaking to her, now directly.
RALEIGH
Pure naked fragile hope, when all
your senses scream at you, Lost!
Lost! Imagine it. Day after day,
staring west, the rising sun on
your back, the setting sun in
your eyes, hoping, hoping -

Sir Christopher Hatton enters.

HATTON
Majesty, the Archduke and the
court are waiting.

ELIZABETH
(sharply)
Let them wait!
(to Raleigh)
Go on, Mr Raleigh. You were
hoping.

Hatton bows and leaves, frowning.

RALEIGH
At first it’s no more than a haze
on the horizon, the ghost of a
haze, the pure line corrupted.
But clouds do that, and storms.
So you watch, you watch.

34

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS, WHITEHALL PALACE - NIGHT

Elizabeth dances with Raleigh. As they dance, his voice
continues over; and Elizabeth seems to be listening to him.

RALEIGH (V.O.)
Then it’s a smudge, a shadow on
the far water. For a day, for
another day, the stain slowly
spreads along the horizon, and
takes form - until on the third
day you let yourself believe. You
dare to whisper the word - land!

The music ends, and the dance finishes.

Elizabeth is seated now - it’s later in time. Raleigh is
speaking intently to her, and she is captivated.

RALEIGH
Land. Life. Resurrection. The
true adventure. Coming out of the
vast unknown, out of the
immensity, into safe harbour at
last. That - that - is the New
World.
A short silence. Elizabeth is absorbing what he has told her.

**ELIZABETH (V.O.)**
The Queen does not have a private life.

35 INT PRESENCE CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Elizabeth is on the throne. The Archduke Charles and his entourage face her. The court fills the room. Elizabeth makes her formal response to the young Archduke.

**ELIZABETH**
The Queen lives for her people. You will therefore forgive me, sir, if after much thought and prayer I decline your offer of marriage.

The Archduke, barely able to conceal his relief, turns to the Austrian ambassador.

**ARCHDUKE CHARLES**
(Can I go home now?)

Elizabeth inclines her head, trying not to smile.

**ELIZABETH**
(Go home, my friend. Don’t be in a hurry to grow old. Youth is so very precious.)

Elizabeth rises and takes the Archduke’s arm as they start to leave the chamber. Bess, in her wake, finds an opportunity to speak softly to Raleigh.

**BESS**
Well? Are you satisfied with the Queen’s favour?

**RALEIGH**
She listened as if she understood me.

**BESS**
Then I shall expect some gratitude.

**RALEIGH**
What do you want?

Their eyes meet, both aware of the current of mutual attraction.
BESS
I expect I’ll think of something.

Bess hurries after the Queen. The Austrian entourage is just leaving as the Queen turns.

ELIZABETH
Mr. Raleigh.

35A INT QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY 35A

Elizabeth and Raleigh walk together around the perimeter hallway, dwarfed by vast murals.

ELIZABETH
I like your immensities. Your ocean is an image of eternity, I think. Such great spaces make us small. Do we discover the New World, Mr Raleigh, or does the New World discover us?

RALEIGH
You speak like a true explorer.

ELIZABETH
I like you, Mr Raleigh.

RALEIGH
And I like you.

She stops and turns to meet Raleigh’s eyes. She’s not used to such direct replies. Bess is watching them.

ELIZABETH
You know, of course, that when I like a man, I reward him.

RALEIGH
I have heard that.

ELIZABETH
And what have you to say about it?

RALEIGH
Reward my mission, majesty, not me.

ELIZABETH
Is the mission not the man?

RALEIGH
Leave me free to like you in return. That can be my reward.
Elizabeth stares. This is a little too close to the truth.

ELIZABETH
Now you become dull.

35B EXT. WINDSOR GREAT PARK - DAY

Horses racing, hoofs pounding over the grass, manes flying -
Two riders hurtle between the trees, down a woodland ride, neck and neck-

Elizabeth and Raleigh are racing against each other, faces glowing, laughing, abandoned to the breakneck speed of the moment.

Raleigh is winning now, first by a head, then by a length. At the end of the ride he slows his horse to a walk.

RALEIGH
Mine!

Elizabeth shakes her head, unable to speak.

ELIZABETH (out of breath)
You have - the stronger horse.

RALEIGH
Yours carries the lighter load.

ELIZABETH
The Queen does not give way to others.

Raleigh stops his horse. Elizabeth rides on up to him and then past him. Raleigh secretly spurs his horse. The horse springs forward, ahead of her.

RALEIGH
Whoa! Whoa!
(at Elizabeth, reigning in the horse)
Forgive me, majesty. My horse doesn’t know his place yet

Elizabeth looks at him, amused, intrigued.
ELIZABETH
Have you ever known your place, Mr. Raleigh?

She urges her horse forward, forcing Raleigh to catch up.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
I’m surprised you’re not married yet.

RALEIGH
I’m a sailor, majesty.

ELIZABETH
And can sailors not be lovers?

RALEIGH
(with a smile)
Must lovers be husbands?

ELIZABETH
Ah, I see. You like love better than marriage. That I understand.

RALEIGH
Your majesty is not eager to be married?

ELIZABETH
When I marry, I marry for my country.
(looking at Raleigh)
When I love, I love for myself.
(pause)
You have had many loves, I think.

RALEIGH
(with a smile)
Some...

ELIZABETH
You’ve yet to meet your equal?

Raleigh hesitates. She understands him.

RALEIGH
I would want someone who knows me as I am.

Now it is Elizabeth who hesitates. He understands her as well.

ELIZABETH
You want a friend, not just an equal. You want someone to share your joy when you’re happy.
ELIZABETH (cont'd)
Someone to cry with when you’re sad. Someone to talk to when there’s nothing to say. Someone to find by your side when you wake in the night. Someone who remembers what you once were, when you’ve grown old.

She turns to him with a smile.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Ah yes. I know all about it. There. I’m rested now.

She turns her horse around in the direction from which they came. Raleigh follows.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
We can be something to each other, I hope, Mr. Raleigh.

She spurs her horse, and suddenly she’s racing away, back across the park to the distant band of mounted courtiers and Queen’s ladies, including Bess. Raleigh spurs his horse to follow, also fast, but this time careful to keep a distance behind.

As they near the courtiers, Raleigh splits off. Bess watches as Elizabeth turns and looks after him as he rides away.

36 INT. BESS’S BEDROOM - NIGHT
Bess creeps out of her bedroom, pulling on a cloak.

37 INT. WHITEHALL PALACE - NIGHT
Bess makes her way down the dark palace corridor, stepping over sleeping courtiers as she goes. Margaret watches her from the shadows.

38 EXT. LONDON ALLEY - NIGHT
Cloaked and hooded, Bess passes quietly down an alley, stepping over more sleeping forms. London’s homeless.

She finds a door, checks a note she holds, glances round to be sure no one sees her, knocks and enters.

39 INT LONDON HOUSE - NIGHT
A man closes the door behind his visitor. Bess shakes off her hood. It’s George Throckmorton, one of the conspirators. They embrace.
BESS
George! What’s wrong? Is your father alright?

THROCKMORTON
He’s old. He won’t live long now. Thank you for coming, dear Bess.

BESS
I was worried. You must send me no more letters. You know what would happen if I was caught.

THROCKMORTON
I need your help.

BESS
Do you need more money?

THROCKMORTON
My father is a tired old man. We don’t want to hide like this anymore. We both want to get back to court.

BESS
You are known Papists.

THROCKMORTON
The Queen loves you. Speak to her.

BESS
I cannot betray the Queen.

THROCKMORTON
You are not betraying her. My father and I will embrace the new faith.

Bess is suspicious and starts to leave.

BESS
Don’t put me in danger like this.

THROCKMORTON
Cousin Bess, we’ve known each other all our lives. I would do nothing to harm you.

BESS
I’m sorry.

THROCKMORTON
If they catch us, they will kill us. Our lives are in your hands.
INT. HALLWAY, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

A group of the Queen’s ladies make their way down the hallway, Bess among them. The others are gossiping in low whispers as they go. Bess is silent with anxiety.

Then she looks ahead, and her face fills with fear. Walsingham is coming down the hallway towards them. The ladies curtsey. He nods, and throws a glance at Bess. The ladies move on.

Bess looks back. Walsingham is also looking back, and seems to be watching her.

INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Bess hurries ahead of the others through the Privy Chamber to the Queen’s private quarters.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

Bess passes ladies organising the Queen’s wardrobe. She finds the Queen laughing with Raleigh – not alone, but unusually informal.

ELIZABETH
Don’t tease me, Mr Raleigh. There’s nothing I’d like to do more.

RALEIGH
So why don’t you?

ELIZABETH
Alright, then. I will.

He blinks: caught by surprise.

ELIZABETH
See! You lie! You don’t want me on your ship at all. (turning towards Bess) You’re a liar!

Elizabeth now takes in Bess.
ELIZABETH
Would you like to go to sea, Bess?

BESS
Majesty?

RALEIGH
I’m afraid that’s not possible. Women bring bad luck on board ship.

ELIZABETH
Oh, do they?

RALEIGH
Lock up a hundred men in a space smaller than this room, for months at a time – Men have needs. A beautiful woman like you would drive us all mad.

ELIZABETH
(amused)
Men have needs?

Once again Elizabeth meets Raleigh’s eyes. Then she breaks away, feeling the contact is dangerous.

ELIZABETH
Then let them stay on land and see to their needs.
(to Bess)
Mr Raleigh is eager to sail away to his infant colony, Bess. We must persuade him to stay a little longer, mustn’t we?

42A  INT. HALLWAY, WHITEHALL PALACE – DAY 42A *

Raleigh is leaving. Walsingham has been waiting for him. He falls into step beside him.

WALSINGHAM
Mr Raleigh. A word of advice. The Queen chooses to show you favour. You naturally wish to take advantage of that. (Beat) Don’t ask for too much.

RALEIGH
You think all I want is money.

WALSINGHAM
I hope all you want is money.
RALEIGH
You think I’m a cynical adventurer, with little breeding and less education. You’re wrong. I’m a cynical adventurer with little breeding and an excellent education.

WALSINGHAM
I begin to see why the Queen likes you.

INT/EXT. LONDON HOUSE - NIGHT

A soft knock on the door. Francis Throckmorton goes to the window and looks out.

THROCKMORTON’S POV - In the street outside, a woman with her head covered.

He unbolts the door.

THROCKMORTON
Bess?

Two men burst in and seize him. They are Agents 4 and 5. Beyond, the woman - not Bess - is hurrying away.

Throckmorton struggles. A single sharp blow, and he folds to the ground.
REPOSITIONED AS SCENE 35B
45  INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

Multiple images of Elizabeth, naked. Strange misty refracted glimpses of her face, her body.

A bath of steaming hot water has been placed in the Queen’s private quarters, and screened by mirrors. The Queen is in the bath, being washed by her ladies.

Bess Throckmorton has the job of holding the Queen’s hair out of the water as she’s washed. She strokes the soft tresses as she holds them, unaware that Elizabeth can see her in the mirror.

Then she looks up and catches Elizabeth’s eyes, and stops in confusion.

ELIZABETH
  No, don’t stop. I like it.

Bess returns to her gentle caresses, and Elizabeth to her thoughts.

ELIZABETH
  Is it true, Bess? That I’ve never known the simple pleasure of being liked for myself?

BEES
  I hope you believe that I like you for yourself, my lady.

ELIZABETH
  Is anybody ever liked just for themselves? Are you? I doubt it. Men like you because you’re pretty. And because you have the ear of the Queen.
BESS
No doubt, my lady.

ELIZABETH
Him too. He likes you because he wants my favour. You do realise that?

BESS
Yes, my lady.

ELIZABETH
And the other thing too, of course. But all men want that. Male desire confers no distinction.

Bess strokes Elizabeth’s hair in silence. Then she sees Elizabeth gazing at her in the mirror.

ELIZABETH
I envy you, Bess. You’re free to have—what I can’t have. You’re my adventurer. Don’t be afraid. It’s all over so soon.

INT. TORTURE ROOM - DAY

A man who looks like a shop assistant sits grabbing a quick lunch. He’s the TORTURER. Nearby on a blood-stained bench lies a huddled half-naked figure, trembling uncontrollably. It’s Francis Throckmorton. He’s neither manacled nor guarded. His body is so broken it’s not necessary.

Walsingham enters. The torturer jumps to his feet. Walsingham goes to Throckmorton. He gazes at him, shaking his head. He’s getting too old for this dirty business.

WALSINGHAM
Still nothing to tell me, Mr Throckmorton?

Throckmorton struggles to lift his head.

THROCKMORTON
My soul will go free soon.

WALSINGHAM
I know about the Enterprise. I need names. But if you won’t help me, perhaps your father will.

He signs to the torturer. The torturer goes into an adjoining cell.
WALSINGHAM
He’s been questioned, as you have. I do have to know, you see.

The torturer and a guard enter, dragging between them the broken but living body of OLD THROCKMORTON.

THROCKMORTON
No!

Old Throckmorton looks up, eyes blank with suffering.

THROCKMORTON
Enough! You want a name, I’ll give you a name.

WALSINGHAM
Well?

Walsingham comes close to hear. Throckmorton chokes out something we don’t hear, but the torturer hears, and his eyes open wide.
INT. HALLWAY, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Elizabeth passes down a hallway at a brisk pace, Hatton by her side, her ladies hurrying behind her.

HATTON
Another letter has come from Mary Stuart, majesty. Asking to meet you.

ELIZABETH
Filled with declarations of love?

HATTON
As always.

ELIZABETH
If she wants my love, let her deserve it. Refused.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Elizabeth enters her private quarters, now moving with regal dignity once more, but the flush on her cheeks gives her away. Her ladies follow.

There stands Raleigh, waiting for her.

ELIZABETH
Mr Raleigh. I’ve kept you waiting.

RALEIGH
You have more important concerns than me.

ELIZABETH
There is always other business. But I have been waiting too.

Walsingham enters.

WALSINGHAM
Majesty.

Elizabeth turns on him with a frown of irritation.

ELIZABETH
Yes, Walsingham?

WALSINGHAM
The traitor has talked, majesty. The traitor Throckmorton.
A flash of fear in Bess’s eyes.

ELIZABETH  
(to Raleigh)  
Forgive me, sir. As you see, my  
time is not my own.

Elizabeth moves away so that Walsingham can talk to her in confidence. She listens to his murmured words, and anger shows on her face.
EXT. TORTURE ROOM - DAY

The torturer, now off duty, is standing in the open doorway to empty his bladder. He’s unlacing his britches, when he hears footsteps approaching behind.

TORTURER

Harry?

The torturer begins to piss, with evident pleasure.

TORTURER

You’ll never guess what I heard -

A knife at his throat. A quick slash.

The killer, Agent 3, waits one more moment, to be sure the job is done. The torturer slumps, still standing, against the wall.

Agent 3 slips away.

On the flag stones, blood trickles down to mingle with the urine.

INT. WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Now there are guards everywhere. The whole palace is on heightened alert.

Elizabeth sweeps out of the Privy Chamber into the Great Hall, accompanied by the Spanish Ambassador on one side and Walsingham on the other. Her entourage scuttles behind.

ELIZABETH

What do you know of the Enterprise of England, Ambassador?

DON GUERAU

The Enterprise...? Forgive me, your majesty...

ELIZABETH

It’s a plan for the invasion of my country. Two armies landing on the coasts of Sussex and -

WALSINGHAM

Norfolk.

ELIZABETH

And Norfolk. Mary Stuart is to be set free, and placed on the English throne.
ELIZABETH (cont'd)
I am to be assassinated. Does any of this sound familiar?

DON GUERAU
I know nothing of any invasion plans.

ELIZABETH
I refer to this plan as the Enterprise of England. It should more accurately be called 'la Empresa di Inglaterra', because it's a Spanish plan. The plan of your king, my one-time brother-in-law, Philip II, to attack my country.

The Ambassador decides the best form of defence is attack.

DON GUERAU
Attack? It is my country that is under attack! Your so-called pirates attack our merchant ships daily! Do you think we don't know where their orders come from? The whole world knows that pirates sail up the Thames all the way to the royal bed!

ELIZABETH
(exploding)
You will leave my presence, sir! Go back to Spain! Tell Philip that I don't fear him, or his priests, or his armies. Tell him if he wants to shake his little fist at us, we're ready to give him such a bite he'll wish he'd kept his hands in his pockets.

Don Guerau sees no point in further pretence. He speaks with pride and contempt.

DON GUERAU
You see a leaf fall, and you think you know which way the wind blows. But a wind is coming, madam, that will sweep away your pride.

He bows and turns to go. Elizabeth’s words blaze after him.

ELIZABETH
I too can command the wind, sir. I have a hurricane in me that will strip Spain bare, if you dare to try me!
Shivering with rage she turns round, and there’s Raleigh. Her fury overflows onto him.

ELIZABETH
What are you staring at? Lower your eyes! I am the Queen!

She sweeps past him without a further glance.

ON RALEIGH - Watching Elizabeth go. A shake of his head. Enough.

EXT. SHIPYARD, SPAIN - DAY

Immense stacks of cut timber as far as the eye can see. Skeletons of new ships, big ships, rising in the great yard. Hundreds of ship-builders at work.

This is what the forests were felled for: a brand-new fleet is being built.

Tiny figures in the wide scene: the royal party appears. Philip has come to see progress for himself. As he and his entourage tour the construction site, one of his ministers briefs him on the latest developments in England.

SPANISH MINISTER
(It can’t be denied that we’ve lost the advantage of surprise. A large part of our plans has come into their hands.)

PHILIP
(The Jesuit is still at liberty?)

SPANISH MINISTER
(We understand so, majesty.)

PHILIP
(He knows his business. We’ve lost nothing.)

The workmen kneel to Philip as he passes.

PHILIP
(Tell the carpenters to go on working. No one is to stop for me. The fleet must be ready to sail in a month.)

SPANISH MINISTER
(Impossible, majesty!)

PHILIP
(If this is God’s work, God will make it possible.)
SPANISH MINISTER
(Only a miracle -)

PHILIP
(A miracle, then. Let it be
done!)

INT. CAPTAIN’S CABIN, TYGER - DAY

CLOSE ON pen and paper - a letter being written in haste.
Raleigh at a ship’s table littered with charts. He’s
writing a letter to the Queen.

Calley enters.

CALLEY
Visitor for you, sir.

EXT. DECK, TYGER - DAY

The Tyger is in dock. Raleigh emerges from his cabin to
find Bess waiting for him.

RALEIGH
The Queen has sent you to me.

BESS
Yes -

RALEIGH
Tell the Queen that I will
trouble her no more. As soon as
my ship’s repairs are complete I
will ask permission to sail.

BESS
The Queen asks me to assure you -

RALEIGH
I need no assurances. I’m no
courtier and never have been.
I’ve lost my appetite for playing
games that it seems I’m too
stupid to understand.

BESS
That is unfair -

RALEIGH
You call me unfair!

BESS
Let me speak!
Raleigh is taken aback by Bess’s sudden anger.

**BESS**
The Queen shouts at you once, and you sulk like a child. I thought you more of a man than that. And I thought you a better friend to the Queen. Her every move is watched by a hundred eyes. Assassins plot to kill her. Enemies prepare to overwhelm her country. And you say she’s playing games?

Raleigh is watching her as she speaks, and he’s impressed. Anger suits her.

**RALEIGH**
Very well. What is my Queen’s command?

**BESS**
Go to her, sir. As her friend.

---

52  INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY  52

Elizabeth is pacing, disturbed, Raleigh’s letter open in her hand.

The doors open. Raleigh enters. Elizabeth waits for the servants to close the doors behind him. Holds up the letter.

**ELIZABETH**
You ask permission to go.

**RALEIGH**
Yes, majesty.

**ELIZABETH**
You plan to return to the New World. To your colony. For two, or three, or four years.

**RALEIGH**
If your majesty grants me your royal warrant.

**ELIZABETH**
That is a long time.

**RALEIGH**
There’s nothing left for me to do here. At sea I know what I’m to do, I know the risks, I know the rewards. Here -
A shrug. What can he do?

ELIZABETH
But you’re quite wrong. You are needed here. I have decided to appoint you Captain of my personal guard.

RALEIGH
Captain of your - !

ELIZABETH
Kneel.

He kneels. She taps him on the shoulder with one hand.

ELIZABETH
Rise, Sir Walter Raleigh.

He rises, but keeps his eyes on the ground.

ELIZABETH
Well? You may express your gratitude.

RALEIGH
This is too great an honour.

ELIZABETH
If it’s such an honour, why are you staring at your boots?

RALEIGH
You know why.

He raises his eyes, but he still doesn’t look at her.

ELIZABETH
Now you stare at the wall. Am I so old and hideous that you can’t even look me in the face?

He turns now, and looks her in the face.

RALEIGH
Why do you talk like a fool when you’re anything but a fool?

This stops her in her tracks. For a moment she can’t trust herself to speak. Then:

ELIZABETH
My friend, forgive me. I’m a vain and foolish woman. At court it’s all a game. I like to be admired. I require it. I grow accustomed to it. But it’s all - nothing.
ELIZABETH (cont’d)

You come here as if from another world, and I - You have real adventures, you go where the maps end. I would follow you there if I could, believe me.

Raleigh looks long into her eyes. If anything, he admires and loves her all the more now.

ELIZABETH

The storm clouds are gathering, my friend. Please don’t leave me now.

53 EXT. GALLOWS - DAY

CLOSE ON Throckmorton as the noose is tightened round his neck. His face is ravaged by the tortures he’s endured, but he holds his head high, ready for death. Round him an unseen crowd bays for blood.

CROWD (O.S.)
Hang! Hang! Hang!

RESTON (V.O.)
Lord have mercy on the soul of your servant, who gives his life for your eternal truth...

54 INT. SECRET ROOM - DAY

A candle-lit cellar, where Reston and the conspirators pray for the condemned man, heads bowed.

Babington bursts in.

BABINGTON
Francis is about to die! We must act!

RESTON
He enters heaven as a soldier returns home victorious from war.

BABINGTON
Why don’t we strike? What’s he dying for? Is this part of your plan?

Reston puts his hands on Babington’s shoulders and gently but irresistibly forces him down to pray with them.

RESTON
Lord, be with us as the end approaches.
RESTON (cont’d)

We will not fail in our duty. We look beyond death, to eternity.

55  EXT. GALLOWS - DAY

Throckmorton drops. His body flails. His neck breaks. A roar of bloodlust from the crowd.

55A  (RENUMBERED- SEE SCENE 51A)

55B  INT. PRIVATE CHAPEL - NIGHT

Bess is on her knees before the simple altar, her head bowed in prayer.

Raleigh enters through the rear doors. He stands in silence, watching her as she prays. He hears her sigh.

He takes a step towards her. She hears, startled. Turns and sees him.

BESS
Oh! It’s you!

RALEIGH
I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to disturb you.

BESS
My prayer’s done.

She rises to her feet.

RALEIGH
Something has distressed you.

BESS
And I thought I prayed in silence.

RALEIGH
So you did.

She turns away, unable to look him in the eyes.

BESS
A man was hanged today. A Papist.
I knew him well. He was my cousin. He died because I gave information. I gave information to prove my loyalty. Because I was afraid.
RALEIGH
That’s necessity. That’s the
world we live in.

BESS
He told me he wanted to change.
Become part of the new England. I
was afraid that he was lying to
me. But what if — what if it was
true?

He sees the horror in her eyes, at the thought that she has
sent an innocent man to his death. Tears rise to her eyes.

BESS
What if I was his last hope? What
if I was the one person he
thought he could trust?

RALEIGH
If you knew him well, you will
have sensed the truth.

BESS
I thought so.

RALEIGH
He was hoping to use you. You did
what you had to do.

She can no longer hold back the tears.

RALEIGH
There, now.

He wipes away a tear from her cheek. In desperate need of
comfort, she throws herself into his arms. He holds her
close as she sobs.

RALEIGH
We’re all mortal, Bess. We do
what we can.

He strokes her cheek. She meets his eyes, filled with
gratitude. She takes the hand that touches her face and
moves it to her lips. She kisses it, still holding his
eyes. He draws her back into his arms, and they kiss.
Suddenly they’re kissing eagerly, greedily, their long pent-
up passion released at last.
A brewer’s wagon, pulled by two dray horses and carrying beer barrels, crosses the ancient bridge over the moat and pulls up by the gates.

The brewer, a big ugly man called BURTON, looks down at the GUARDS. Beside him, taking care not to draw attention to himself, sits Ramsay.

BURTON
Morning. Another filthy day on God’s stinking earth.

GUARD
Morning to you.

It’s a familiar ritual. The guards search the wagon.

Burton, standing outside, rolls the barrels through a trap door and down a chute into the cellar, where they are caught by the CELLARMAN, and stacked. Another GUARD stands and watches.

BURTON
Last cask!

The cellarman takes it, then closes the trap door. The guard watches as the cellarman empties the beer barrels into open vats; leaving the bungs on one side. The barrels are then thrown on a fire.

CELLARMAN
Nothing but beer. Satisfied?

CLOSE ON the bungs, unnoticed on a side shelf.

A FEMALE HAND picks up one of the bungs. Fingers probe. A cavity opens. Inside, tightly folded pages.

Annette, Mary Stuart’s maid, walks calmly up to the GUARD outside the doors to her mistress’s apartments. She nods at him, and he unlocks the doors, letting her through.
INT. MARY STUART’S QUARTERS, CHARTLEY HALL - DAY

Once inside, Annette abandons her calm manner, and hurries through the apartment.

ANNETTE
Madame! Madame!

Mary Stuart comes to meet her. Annette removes the crumpled papers from her undergarments. Mary crosses herself, takes the letter to a lamp, and devours it with eager eyes.

MARY
(to herself)
The gentlemen are ready. It will be soon now.

ANNETTE
Blessed Mother of God pray for us!

MARY
Bring me pen and paper, Annette. They wait on my reply. Hurry, now, hurry!

EXT. RIVER/DEE’S HOUSE - DUSK

The moon seen through a sextant.

A strange figure stands on the flat roof of a riverside house, studying the night sky. He’s tall, with a long pointed beard and a skullcap: the famous magus DR JOHN DEE.

A hiss and splash from the night river. He turns to look. Out of the mists and shadows comes the lights of an approaching barge.

ON THE ROYAL BARGE - Elizabeth and Walsingham, wrapped against night chill, being rowed up river. Over this, lines led from the next scene:

ELIZABETH (V.O.)
Well, Dr Dee. Here I am again, back to consult the wisdom of your charts.

INT. DEE’S HOUSE - DUSK

The finest library in England. The greatest array of scientific instruments. Part study, part laboratory, part magician’s lair, Dr Dee’s house is crammed with the evidence of his wide-ranging curiosity.
The magus sits at a table before an astrological chart, while Elizabeth and Walsingham look on.

DEE
The alignment of the planets is most unusual this year. Mars is due to take the ascendant three days after the anniversary of your birth - your majesty was born on September 7th - and I see that twelve days before the anniversary of your birth -

He transfers his attention to a different, astronomical chart.

DEE
- there will be a full moon - the moon which -

He moves back to the astrological chart.

DEE
- governs the fortunes of all princes of the female gender.

ELIZABETH
Princes of the female gender.

DEE
I mean to say, a prince who is also a woman.

ELIZABETH
Yes, Dr Dee. I am following you. So what does it all mean?

DEE
It means the rise of a great empire, majesty. And it means convulsions, also. The fall of an empire.

Elizabeth listens, a faraway look in her eyes. She knows nothing of the planets, but she feels it deep within herself: her moment of destiny is near.

ELIZABETH
Which empire is to rise, and which is to fall?

DEE
That I can’t say. Astrology is, as yet, more an art than a science.
Walsingham has been idly examining the scientific instruments. He speaks now as if his question is casual.

WALSINGHAM
Nothing more, Dr Dee? No more specific calamities that we can guard against?

ELIZABETH
He means, Will I be assassinated?

WALSINGHAM
Queens are mortal.

Dr Dee smiles as he gently contradicts him.

DEE
Elizabeth is mortal. The Queen will never die.

ELIZABETH
You see, Francis? This is a mystery.
(to Dee)
He has no patience with mysteries.

WALSINGHAM
What I don’t know, I can’t use.

DEE
And yet mysteries have power. Have you not learned that?

ELIZABETH
Francis. Leave us for a moment.

Walsingham leaves. Elizabeth turns to Dr Dee. Now for a short private moment the Queen becomes a woman.

ELIZABETH
And the private life of this prince of the female gender, Dr Dee? What do the stars foretell there? Or is this too a mystery?

DEE
These are matters of state, majesty.

ELIZABETH
Do the stars not foretell matters of state?

DEE
For such a prediction, I must look in a different chart.
He means her face. He murmurs to himself as he studies her features, reading her character.

DEE
Wonderful... Out of such suffering, to have forged such strength... You will need all your strength in days to come... And love... So much love...

But as he looks, he finds something more that disturbs him.

DEE
But you doubt yourself, my child... I've not seen fear in your face before.

ELIZABETH
Have I reason to fear?

DEE
Something has weakened you... There is danger, yes... Your strength lies in your spirit. Nothing else matters. There are hard days coming. You must trust the power of your spirit.

Elizabeth is shaken by these words. Dee turns to look out once more at the night sky.

DEE
But I'm no prophet. I see no more than the shadows of ghosts.

ELIZABETH
An art, not a science. I understand.

EXT. THAMES - DUSK

The royal barge returns down the night river. Elizabeth sits in silence, gazing into the darkness, deep in her own thoughts.

INT. RALEIGH’S HOUSE - DUSK

Raleigh and Bess make love.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - NIGHT

Elizabeth stands before a long mirror, alone in her dressing chamber, illuminated by lamp light.
She wears a plain shift. She loosens the ties of her shift and lets it fall to the floor, leaving her naked.

She gazes at her own naked body in the mirror.

INT. SECRET ROOM - NIGHT

Reston sits at the table, writing by candle light. Burton the brewer enters. Reston leaps to his feet, very tense.

RESTON

You have it?

Burton hands him the letter. Reston opens it and reads it at speed. Then he hands it to a man we don’t see.

RESTON

What do you think? There must be clear and valid authority.

He gazes at the unseen man, waiting on his verdict.

WILLIAM (O.O.V.)

No. It won’t do.

Reston nods agreement. He returns to the table and dashes off a letter, muttering as he does so.

RESTON

We wait on a direct order.

He completes the note and gives it to Burton.

RESTON

One more journey, my friend. Then -(fiercely)

consummatum est! It is finished.

INT. BESS’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bess lies restlessly asleep. Suddenly she gives a start and wakes. She stifles a scream with her hands. On the far side of the room, sitting watching her in silence, is Walsingham.

BESS

Please! I’m innocent! I’ve always been a loyal servant of the Queen. I’d never betray the Queen, never -

WALSINGHAM

But you have, my dear. And you do. We both know that.
Bess knows he means her affair with Raleigh. Now she’s too terrified to speak.

Walsingham rises.

WALSINGHAM
Keep me informed, and all will be well. I don’t like surprises.

He leaves.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

DANCING MASTER
Jump!

The dancing master is instructing Bess in the dance called La Volta, watched by the Queen, her ladies and courtiers. A trio of musicians plays a jaunty tune.

DANCING MASTER
(to Bess)
When I push like this, my lady, give a jump into the air.

ELIZABETH
Let him throw you round, Bess. You can trust him.

The dancing master spins Bess round and lifts her up into the air. Her feet fly out as she spins. It’s a bold, even risqué dance, and the onlookers laugh to see it.

DANCING MASTER
And round - and round - and round - and down!

He lowers Bess to the ground. She loves it. As the spinning begins again, Raleigh enters.

ELIZABETH
La Volta, Mr Raleigh. The jump. I require all my ladies to learn it. You see how fearless Bess is.

Raleigh watches Bess dance.

RALEIGH
You like your ladies to jump at your command?

ELIZABETH
Sometimes. Do you think that wrong?
RALEIGH
No, no. You’re the Queen. You are to be obeyed.

ELIZABETH
To tell you the truth, Mr Raleigh, there are times when I’m tired of being always in control.

RALEIGH
Nonsense.

ELIZABETH
What?

RALEIGH
You don’t mean a word of it. You eat and drink control.

ELIZABETH
Do you say so?

The exercise ends. All clap.

ELIZABETH
Bess, you must try a dance with Mr Raleigh. He’s eager to show us his skill.

RALEIGH
No skill at all, majesty. I don’t know the steps.

ELIZABETH
Oh, it’s very simple.

She goes to Bess to demonstrate, holding her by the waist.

ELIZABETH
You stand like this, with your hands firmly clasped here — and when she jumps, on the eighth step, you swing her round — once, twice, three times — and you’re back to the beginning. What could be simpler?

DANCING MASTER
Your majesty knows the dance better than I.

ELIZABETH
So come, Mr Raleigh. Take your position. I am to be obeyed.

RALEIGH
As your majesty wishes.
Raleigh takes his place with Bess.

ELIZABETH
Hold her tight. I don’t want her dropped.
(to the musicians)
Play!

The dance begins again. Bess jumps, and Raleigh swings her round and round, finding the knack after an awkward start. Elizabeth watches, smiling, nodding to the beat. She can see the faces of the dancers; and so long as she controls the intimacy between them, she’s excited by it.

Walsingham enters and stands by her side, watching.

ELIZABETH
(low)
Leave her alone, Walsingham. I want both of them left alone.

SCENE RENUMBERED- SEE SCENE 67A

INT. MARY STUART’S QUARTERS, CHARTLEY HALL - DAY

Mary Stuart is praying, but under cover of her bible, she is writing a secret letter. Sir Amyas Paulet enters, with three men. Mary closes the letter in her bible.

MARY
Am I a danger to England even when I pray?

PAULET
As always, ma’am, my concern is for your safety.

MARY
I pray for my cousin Elizabeth. Do you think she prays for me?

INT. SECRET ROOM - DAY

Mary’s latest letter is now in Reston’s hand. Babington and Ramsay sit staring at Reston. This time the Jesuit is pleased. He reads the letter aloud to the unseen man.

RESTON
‘If our forces are in readiness, both within and without the realm, then your Queen commands you to set the gentlemen to work.’
(with quiet steely satisfaction)
I think we have it.

He hands the letter over. For the first time we see who it is: William, now revealed as one of the conspirators. William reads the letter for himself.

WILLIAM
(nodding agreement)
This is the spark that will set England ablaze.

Reston takes out pistols, and hands one to Ramsay, one to Babington.

RESTON
We’ve been patient long enough.
Let God’s work begin.

INT. STUDY, WALSINGHAM’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Walsingham is at work at his desk. A knock on the door. Walsingham does not look up from his papers.

William enters, wrapped in a cloak, one hand concealed.

WILLIAM
It’s me. William.

WALSINGHAM
(still not looking up)
Where have you been? We haven’t seen you for days.

WILLIAM
I met up with some old friends.

WALSINGHAM
From Paris, no doubt.

WILLIAM
Yes.

WALSINGHAM
And now you’ve come back.

He looks up at last.

WALSINGHAM
Do you know, I can still remember the day you were born?

He smiles, but there’s sadness in his eyes.
I was eleven years old. And you, this helpless bundle. I looked at you in your crib, with your little wrinkled face, and I loved you from the first. I vowed then to look after you. I watched you grow up with your head in the clouds, always a dreamer. I couldn’t follow you there. And now I’ve failed you, haven’t I? Forgive me if I haven’t loved you enough.

Clink. Something falls from William’s hand to the floor. His face has gone grey.

Did you really think I didn’t know?

On the floor - a dagger.

William opens his mouth to answer, but no sound comes out. Walsingham raps twice on his desk. The door opens, and Agents 4 and 5 enter.

Was it for money? At least tell me you got a good price.

William shakes his head.

What then? What would you murder your own brother for?

Eternal life.

Walsingham stares at him. A great sadness building.

Eternal life. The bribe no man can refuse.

OMITTED (INCORPORATED INTO SCENE 71)

CLOSE ON Elizabeth, surrounded by courtiers and bodyguards, as she processes from the Presence Chamber to the Chapel Royal. As before, the way is lined with eager supplicants.
CLOSE ON Babington and Ramsay, forcing their way through the crowd to the front line.

Elizabeth disappears from view into the Chapel.

ROYAL SERVANT
The Queen is at her prayers!

The chapel doors begin to close.

BABINGTON
Now!

Ramsay hurls himself forward, shouting -

RAMSAY
God for Mary! England’s true Queen!

The guards run to seize him, opening up a momentary space -

Babington sprints through it for the closing chapel doors -

INT. CHAPEL ROYAL - DAY

Babington bursts into the chapel, sees a line of ladies kneeling, masking the figure in front of the altar - he pulls out a pistol -

BABINGTON
Elizabeth!

Elizabeth turns and rises to confront the assassin’s gun. Babington stares at her, hypnotised by her fearlessness. Then he pulls the trigger.

Bang!

Elizabeth still stares at him. She’s unhurt.

Babington lets out a cry of anguish, and crumples to the ground. Elizabeth stares on into space, frozen by the moment, magnificent.

INT. MARY STUART’S QUARTERS, CHARTLEY HALL - DAY

Mary paces impatiently in her room, trailed by her little dog. She hears the sound of bells. Joy floods her features.

Pounding feet. She turns to see Sir Amyas Paulet hurrying towards her, through a gate in the wall.

MARY
You bring news?
PAULET
The Queen has been attacked -

MARY
Yes?

PAULET
The assassin seized -

MARY
Yes?

PAULET
The Queen unharmed -

MARY
Unharmed?

PAULET
And you, ma’am, are under arrest.

He has led up to this deliberately, and now stands smiling at her utter confusion. The man who looked like a fool has been playing his own game all along.

MARY
Me? What has any of this to do with me?

Paulet makes a sign. Burton the brewer comes through the gate: Walsingham’s man after all.

PAULET
That’s the trouble with intrigue, isn’t it? With so many secrets, you can never quite tell who’s on who’s side, until the game ends.

He takes the hollow bung out of one pocket and admires it.

PAULET
My own invention. Theatrical, but effective. My master has every letter you’ve written.

MARY
Your master?

PAULET
Walsingham.

Now she knows it’s over. She begins to weep.

MARY
Traitors. I’m surrounded by traitors. Who am I to trust? *
She picks up her little dog, weeping bitterly.

MARY
Only my little one...

INT. PRISON - DAY

Walsingham has a lamp in his hand. He moves slowly along a passage, bowed down by a sense of failure.

He directs the light of his lamp through cell bars onto a face. The Jesuit. Reston looks back, unafraid.

WALSINGHAM
Ready to die, I see, Jesuit.

RESTON
I have done what I was sent to do.

WALSINGHAM
Why was the gun not loaded?

Reston doesn’t answer. Walsingham gazes at him a moment longer. Then he moves the lamp along. There, shackled and white-faced, sit Babington and Ramsay. Walsingham studies their faces.

Walsingham carries his lamp down the passage and shines it into the next cell. Here lies a man in chains, huddled on the floor. He looks up as the light falls on him. William.

Walsingham looks down on the pitiful sight.

WALSINGHAM
What was the Jesuit sent to do?

WILLIAM
To kill the Queen. You know it. You know everything.

WALSINGHAM
Not quite everything.

WILLIAM
I’ve told you all I know. Go ahead and kill me. Take what’s left of me. I don’t care any more. All my life you’ve had everything and I’ve had nothing. So finish it. There’s a better world waiting for me. We’ll all be judged in the end, brother. Even you.

Walsingham gazes down on this pitiful show of pride.
WALSINGHAM
You’re no martyr. You weren’t
even much of a murderer. Go back
to France. Back to your dreams.
Never let me hear of you again.

Walsingham turns away. As he goes we see what he won’t show
William: that the hurt of the betrayal is almost more than
he can bear.

He goes back up the passage. As he passes Reston, the
Jesuit calls out softly.

RESTON
Send me home.

78 INT. ESCORIAL PALACE, SPAIN - DAY

Philip sits listening intently, staring into space, the
Infanta by his side. Don Guerau de Spes is briefing him.

DON GUERAU
(They have letters in Mary
Stuart’s own hand. All England
cries out for her death.)

Philip nods as he listens. All goes to plan. He turns to
the Infanta.

PHILIP
(My dearest, how would you like
to be Queen of England?)
INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Elizabeth sits deep in thought, Bess by her side. Shadows all round.

ELIZABETH
They say she’s taller than me.
Her hair is chestnut in colour. *
Her eyes are hazel. They say *
she’s beautiful. But people lie. *
They say I am beautiful. *

A dismissive shrug. Clearly she does not think herself beautiful.

BESS
She plotted to kill you.

ELIZABETH
Yes, it’s true. I’ve read her letters. I too was a prisoner once. I’ve feared for my life. I’ve done terrible things - just to live.

BESS
So do we all.

ELIZABETH
I can be merciful. But she protests her innocence, and that is a lie. Why will she not admit she has wronged me?

BESS
She’ll go on lying til you cut out her traitor’s heart.

Elizabeth stares at her in surprise.

ELIZABETH
You used to be gentler, Bess.

BESS
I used to be quieter, majesty.

INT. GREAT HALL, FOTHERINGAY CASTLE - DAY

Mary Stuart sits before her accusers in the Great Hall of this sombre castle, her new prison. She wears black, but she is proud, composed, and beautiful. She is faced by a commission of lords, appointed to try her.
MARY
Who are you to sit in judgement on me? By what authority do you condemn a Queen? God alone has made me what I am. He is my only judge. Raise your law above God’s law, and what law remains? In your vanity and ignorance you set loose the monster of misrule. You know neither who you are nor what you do. But I know who I am. I die as I have lived – trusting in the mercy of my God – a Queen.

81 INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE – NIGHT

Elizabeth raging at Walsingham.

ELIZABETH
Must die? Mary Stuart must die?
Where is it written? Who dares to give orders to the Queen?

WALSINGHAM
Majesty, this is no time for mercy –

ELIZABETH
Don’t preach at me, old man. Look at you! You can hardly stand. Go home to your wife. Go home to your bed.

WALSINGHAM
The law must have its way.
ELIZABETH
The law is for common men, not
for princes.

Walsingham sees there’s no point in persisting. He bows and
withdraws.

82 INT. HALLWAY, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Raleigh comes hurrying towards the Queen’s quarters. Bess
sees him approaching and comes out to meet him. They speak
low, not wanting the ever-present guards to hear them.

BESS
Thank God you’ve come. I’ve never
seen her so distressed. She’s
been alone in her rooms since
morning. She’ll see no one.

RALEIGH
Has she asked for me?

BESS
No. But she needs you. I know she
does.

Raleigh takes Bess’s hand in his, discreetly.

BESS
Go to her.
83     INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Elizabeth sits alone, deep in thought.

Raleigh enters, and comes before her. She doesn’t look round, but she knows it’s him.

RALEIGH
My Queen.

ELIZABETH
My friend.

Still she doesn’t turn to him.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
Did Bess bid you come? Have you too come to tell me I must murder a Queen?

RALEIGH
No. You don’t need me to instruct you in your duty.

ELIZABETH
My duty? Was it my father’s duty to murder my mother? I would be loath to die so bloody a death.

RALEIGH
Since when were you so afraid?

Now she looks at him.

ELIZABETH
Yes, I am afraid. I am always afraid.

Raleigh looks back at her in silence for a long moment. Then -

RALEIGH
You fear your soul will be touched. Royalty is close to immortality. Kill a Queen - and queens are mortal.

ELIZABETH
You understand me well.

RALEIGH
We mortals have many weaknesses. We feel too much. Hurt too much. And all too soon, we die. But we do have the chance of love.
Elizabeth closes her eyes.

ELIZABETH
Do we? Do we really?

She nods, her eyes still closed.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
I owe England my life. Don’t ask
for my soul.

INT. MARY’S QUARTERS, FOTHERINGAY CASTLE – NIGHT

Mary Stuart at supper, feeding titbits from the table to her little dog.

Sir Amyas Paulet enters. Mary sees at once from his face that he brings grave news.
MARY
Your face tells me. It’s decided.

PAULET
Tomorrow morning. At eight.

Annette, her maid, bursts into wailing sobs. Mary herself goes very still. She’s starting to carry out her final strategy.

MARY
Please don’t cry.

85
INT. GREAT HALL, FOTHERINGAY CASTLE – DAY

The great timbered hall of the castle has been specially prepared for the execution. A stage has been constructed in the centre, and around the stage are chairs upon which DIGNITARIES and MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT are already sitting.

The block dominates the stage. Beside it, the hooded EXECUTIONER with his axe. The DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH in his clerical robes.

There are more chairs in the body of the hall, occupied by members of the public. They are all waiting for the performance to begin.

Mary enters.

The people crane their necks to see her. She doesn’t disappoint. She is wearing a black velvet gown, her luxurious auburn hair tied in a bunch. Her LADIES, following her in procession, show signs of weeping and distress, but Mary herself glides to the platform with a regal bearing.

On her face there is a look that is almost ecstatic.

86
INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS, WHITEHALL PALACE – DAY

Elizabeth, alone. She knows what’s happening. She can’t rest or be at peace. She tries to sit, then paces, becoming more and more agitated.

87
INT. GREAT HALL, FOTHERINGAY CASTLE – DAY

As Mary mounts the stage, the executioner kneels.

EXECUTIONER
Forgiveness, your grace.
MARY
I forgive you with all my heart,
for now, I hope, you will make an
end of all my troubles.

She stands, smiling still, and holds out her arms to let
her ladies disrobe her.

88 INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY
Now deeply distressed, Elizabeth suddenly bursts out of the
Privy Chamber into the great Presence Chamber, tears
welling into her eyes. Bess close behind her.

She hardly notices the people around her, until she sees
Raleigh.

ELIZABETH
I want it stopped!

89 INT. GREAT HALL, FOTHERINGAY CASTLE - DAY
Mary’s black dress falls to the ground, revealing
underneath a petticoat of dark red silk - the colour of
martyrdom. There is a collective gasp from the spectators.

90 INT. GREAT HALL, WHITEHALL - DAY
Elizabeth is hysterical, shouting in Raleigh’s restraining
arms.

ELIZABETH
No! It must be stopped!

91 INT. GREAT HALL, FOTHERINGAY CASTLE - DAY
Mary kneels, puts her head on the block.

MARY
Into your hands, O Lord, I
commend my spirit.

She stretches out her arms as a signal. The axe comes down.

92 INT. GREAT HALL, WHITEHALL - DAY
Elizabeth cries out, as if the axe has fallen on her neck.
Then she sinks sobbing to the ground, supported by both
Raleigh and Bess; and for a moment, the three are united in
a single embrace.
EXECUTIONER (V.O.)
God save the Queen!

INT. GREAT HALL, FOTHERINGAY CASTLE - DAY
ON THE FACES of the awed spectators. We see, FOREGROUND, the scarlet-clad torso of the executed Mary. A gasp of horror from the spectators. The dead woman’s skirts are moving.

Out from under her skirts creeps her little dog. The dog looks round, not understanding, and whimpers softly.

Annette takes the dog into her arms.

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBER, ESCORIAL PALACE - DAY
The sound of cheering crowds outside in the plaza calling out the one Spanish word: ‘War! War! War!’.

Philip enters from the balcony, walking briskly, holding the Infanta by the hand. He comes to a stop before his assembled ministers. His eyes shine.

PHILIP
*(A sweet and Christian lady lies martyred, slain by a- Godless- childless- BASTARD! Blood must pay for blood! We have just and holy cause! I call the legions of Christ to war! Elizabeth! Blood-soaked virgin Elizabeth! You will pay with your country- your throne- and your life!)*

INT. HALLWAY, WHITEHALL PALACE - NIGHT
ON WALSINGHAM - As he walks through the palace.

WALSINGHAM (V.O.)
Forgive me. In my weakness and my vanity, I have failed you.

INT. PRIVY CHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY
Walsingham on his knees before Elizabeth, abasing himself in shame. Elizabeth is in control once more.

ELIZABETH
How have you failed me? What am I to forgive you for?
Philip of Spain is a God-fearing man. He cannot make war without just cause. He sent the Jesuit to kill a Queen. But not you.

Not me!

The Jesuit’s mission was to draw Mary Stuart into the murder plot. He knew I was reading her every letter. He waited until she wrote the words that sealed her guilt.

Now Elizabeth gets it.

And I ordered her execution. I murdered God’s anointed Queen. And now God’s most dutiful son makes holy war to punish me.

Forgive me, majesty. Let me go.

Elizabeth hardly hears him any more. She realises the end game is upon her.

Yes... Go...

Walsingham leaves. Elizabeth never even looks at him. She’s looking into the distance, preparing herself for what must now come.

The great Standard of the Armada, bearing the image of the Virgin, is carried into the cathedral.

Philip follows, leading a column of Spain’s noblest GRANDEES and PRINCES of the church.

The ARCHBISHOP sprinkles holy water onto the Standard, and makes the sign of the Cross over it.

Exurge, domine et vindica causam tuam. Amen.

Philip kneels to kiss the blessed Standard – which is then thrust aloft again, into the vast spaces of the Cathedral.
And at once there is a great outpouring of emotion, the congregation applauding, many weeping at the sight.

INT. QUEEN’S PRIVATE QUARTERS - NIGHT

Elizabeth is alone, pacing slowly, reading a book - the Consolation of Philosophy, by Boethius. She reads, pauses, looks into the far distance; then reads and walks again.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)
‘Think you that there is any certainty in the affairs of mankind, when you know that one swift hour can destroy the greatest among us?’

She turns, and there is Raleigh. She holds up her book.

ELIZABETH
Boethius.

RALEIGH
The Consolation of Philosophy.

ELIZABETH
Thank you for coming at this late hour.

She closes her book and puts it away.

ELIZABETH
We’re at war. Who knows when we’ll meet again. If we’ll meet again.

RALEIGH
May the Lord God preserve England’s Queen.

ELIZABETH
The same God in whose name Philip wages his holy war. Philip is a righteous man, and righteous men love to destroy. They burn whole worlds to make them pure, and leave behind - ashes.

RALEIGH
He’ll not burn England.

ELIZABETH
He may. His Armada is invincible, they say. If London falls, I fall. If England is lost, I am lost.
RALEIGH
Never!

ELIZABETH
Never? It’s night. My thoughts turn dark. Don’t you ever think that one day, perhaps one day soon, you too will die?

RALEIGH
The closer I come to death, the more I want to live. The hungrier I am for life.

His defiant energy breaks Elizabeth’s morbid mood.

ELIZABETH
You’re right. We must live while we can.

RALEIGH
Why be afraid of tomorrow? Today’s all we have, and all we know.

ELIZABETH
Today. Tonight.

RALEIGH
Now.

They hold each other’s eyes.

ELIZABETH
I wish -

But she can’t say it.

RALEIGH
I’ve never known a woman like you.

ELIZABETH
In some other time, in some other world, could you have loved me?

RALEIGH
I know only one world. In this world, I have loved you.

Elizabeth smiles a small smile.

ELIZABETH
Then there’s... something you could do for me - something I’ve not known for a very long time - if you felt so inclined -
Raleigh intuits what she wants. He comes closer as she speaks.

**ELIZABETH**

Something not to be spoken of afterwards - to be forgotten - but just for now -

She lifts her head to his. She meets his eyes.

**ELIZABETH**

A kiss?

He takes her in his arms, and they kiss. One kiss to hold all that might have been, all that they both know can never be.

When at last they part she turns away from him, head bowed, eyes still closed, holding on to the sweet moment.

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100 **EXT. LISBON HARBOUR - DAY**

CLOSE IMAGES as the Armada standard is carried in procession to the flagship, and hoisted into position on the ship’s towering prow. Cannons fire a booming salute.

As the standard billows in the breeze, beyond it we see the forest of masts that make up the great Armada.

101 **INT. ANTECHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY**

The palace is galvanised by the invasion threat. Armed men go by at the double, passing servants hauling out trolleys bearing valuables, as the court prepares for the worst.

Raleigh and Howard stride fast across the Guard Chamber, the first of the sequence of great rooms. They are deep in war talk.

Bess appears ahead, and beckons him to a secluded corner.

**RALEIGH**

Bess, I’ve been ordered to my ship -

Bess stops his mouth with one finger.

**BESS**

I’ll be quick. I have something to tell you. But I ask for nothing. Is that understood? Your life is your own. Nothing will change.
RALEIGH
What is this, Bess?

Two court officials hurry by. Bess lowers her voice.

BESS
I’m -

Her hand touches her waist.

RALEIGH
You’re pregnant?

BESS
No one knows. My plans are made. I shall ask the Queen for permission to leave court. I shall live quietly in the country with - with my child. The Queen must know nothing.

Raleigh stares at her, stunned. More people are passing. This is no place for displays of strong feeling.

RALEIGH
Where will you go?

BESS
To my mother’s house.

RALEIGH
You can’t go!

BESS
I’m a ward of the Queen. I can’t court a man without her permission. I can’t marry without her permission. As for having a child -

Another official passes by.

RALEIGH
When were you planning to leave?

BESS
As soon as I’m allowed.

Raleigh finds himself caught in an impossible situation. His internal struggle shows itself in the twists and jerks of his body.

RALEIGH
Am I not to see you again? What’s to become of the child? Bess -
BESS
Hush! We’ve no choice. You know it as well as I do.

RALEIGH
All I know is nothing’s as it should be.

BESS
Please listen. You once said to me, ‘Whatever I have to give, ask and it’s yours.’ Do you remember?

RALEIGH
Of course I remember.

BESS
I ask that you forget me. Go to your ship. Do your duty. Forget me.

Raleigh gazes at her, deeply moved.

RALEIGH
Oh, Bess...

The Queen’s ladies come hurrying by. Margaret calls to Bess as they go.

MARGARET
Bess! We’re summoned.

BESS
I’m coming.
(to Raleigh)
Goodbye.

She runs after the ladies.

Raleigh walks slowly after them down the hall. On his face a new look forms. He knows now what he’s going to do.

EXT. SEA – DAY

An empty horizon.

Then, on the very line of the horizon, the ghost of a movement. Far away, too small to make out, something is coming.
INT. ELIZABETH’S BEDCHAMBER, WHITEHALL PALACE - NIGHT

Elizabeth starts up in bed, calls out in sudden fear.

ELIZABETH
Air! I must have air!

Her servants hurry in, and open the window.

Elizabeth goes to the open window and breathes in deeply. She looks up at the moon.

RALEIGH (V.O.)
With this ring I thee wed. With my body I thee worship...

INT. PRIVATE CHAPEL - NIGHT

Raleigh and Bess are being married in secret by a PRIEST. The only witness is Bess’s fellow maid of honour Margaret. Raleigh makes his vow tenderly and lovingly, his eyes on Bess throughout.

RALEIGH
... and with all my worldly goods I thee endow.

He places the ring on her left thumb.

RALEIGH
In the name of the father -

He moves the ring to her forefinger -

RALEIGH
And of the Son -

To her index finger -

RALEIGH
And of the Holy Spirit.

And finally onto her ring finger.

RALEIGH
Amen.

INT. MAP ROOM, WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

A room in which a map of Europe is inlaid in the floor. A table strewn with maps stands in the centre. Elizabeth is imperious, back in control.
ELIZABETH
This Spanish Armada is at sea
carrying an army of ten thousand
men.
   (indicating on the map)
The Duke of Parma has fifteen
thousand men on the French coast.

WALSINGHAM
They plan to cross the Channel in
barges, under the protection of
the Spanish fleet, and sail up
the Thames.

ELIZABETH
But they don’t yet have enough
barges at Calais. We have a
little time.

WALSINGHAM
   (surprised)
That is so.

ELIZABETH
Our forces defend the Thames
entrance at Tilbury. How many
men?

HATTON
We have three, possibly four
thousand, majesty.

WALSINGHAM
If the Spanish fleet reaches
Calais in strength, the combined
armies will be beyond our power
to resist.

ELIZABETH
Therefore, the Spanish fleet must
not reach Calais.

HOWARD
Majesty, this vast Armada will
surely smash through our naval
defences. We must be prepared for
the worst.

107 INT. WHITEHALL PALACE - DAY

Elizabeth walks briskly through the great public rooms back
to her quarters, with Walsingham by her side and her
entourage following behind.
WALSINGHAM
How did you know about the
numbers of the Dutch barges,
majesty? I don’t recall supplying
you with that information.

ELIZABETH
You may observe, Walsingham, that
I don’t see my way with only one
eye. Nor do I hop along on only
one leg. Why then would I rely on
only one source of information?

She sweeps into her quarters. Her ladies, waiting there,
jump up in haste. She scans them.

ELIZABETH
Where’s Bess?

Her eyes come to rest on Margaret. She sees that Margaret
knows something.

ELIZABETH
Where is she?

108 EXT. THE LIZARD, CORNWALL - DUSK

We are on the very tip of England.

A watch-tower has been built, and next to it a large beacon
of wood. A YOUNG MAN is minding the watch.

He stares out to sea, catching sight of something. Over the
rim of the world has appeared the long line of the Spanish
fleet, like a floating wall, black and menacing.

He runs down the steps from the tower. He lights a bundle
of sticks and thrusts them again and again into the beacon.

The beacon catches fire. As the flames rise into the sky,
so a second beacon erupts into flame on the next headland.
And then a third on the next, a fourth on the next, a
fifth, disappearing around the coastline.

109 INT. WHITEHALL PALACE - DUSK

Doors burst open and Elizabeth comes storming out, barely
containing a powerful rage.

ELIZABETH
Bess! Bess Throckmorton!

Bess comes running from the far end.
BESS
Here, my lady!

ELIZABETH
Tell me! Is it true? Are you married? Are you with child? Are you WITH CHILD?

Bess stands before her with her head bowed.

BESS
Yes, my lady.

Elizabeth falls on her with uncontrolled rage, striking out at her, beating her about the head, shrieking out the words that so inflame and wound her. Bess takes the blows in silence.

ELIZABETH
You traitress! You dare to have secrets from me! I am your Queen! You ask my permission before you rut — before you marry — before you breed! My bitches wear my collars! Do you hear me? How dare you be with child!

Walsingham comes hobbling up.

WALSINGHAM
Majesty, please! Dignity — mercy —

But Elizabeth is too far gone. She turns on him, eyes blazing.

ELIZABETH
This is no time for mercy! That’s what you said to me. I don’t forget. But you showed mercy, Walsingham! Go to your traitor brother, and leave me to my business!

Walsingham turns white. Elizabeth is back berating Bess.

ELIZABETH
Is it his child? Tell me! Say it! Is the child his? Tell me! Say it! Is it his?

Bess responds to the Queen’s hysteria with dignity.

BESS
Yes, my lady. It is — my husband’s child.

Her gaze reaches beyond the Queen. Elizabeth turns.
Raleigh has come up to them unnoticed. He has seen and heard all. He speaks to Elizabeth quietly, sadly.

RALEIGH
This is not the Queen I love and serve.

Elizabeth stares at him. He meets her eyes. His gaze is so unflinching that slowly the madness drains out of her. When she speaks next, she is her proud self again.

ELIZABETH
This gentleman has seduced a lady under my care. This lady has married without my consent. These are offences punishable by law.
(to Walsingham)
Arrest him.

110 OMITTED

111 EXT. ENGLISH COAST - DUSK

From way up high we see beacon after warning beacon bursting into flame, the light from them describing the contours of England.

As they rush on, they suddenly divide, some continuing along the coast, others racing inland.

112 RENUMBERED- SEE SCENE 112B

112A INT. DEE’S HOUSE - DUSK

Dr Dee watches as Elizabeth prowls his cluttered rooms, releasing the tension that has swelled to bursting point within her.

ELIZABETH
The fall of an empire, you told me. Did you mean the English empire? Because by God, England will not fall while I am Queen!
If that’s your prophecy, sir, prophesy again!

DEE
You want me to tell your majesty only what your majesty chooses to hear?
ELIZABETH
I will not be a toy of the fates!
Have I not faced an assassin’s bullet and lived?

She turns to Dr Dee and sees his quizzical gaze on her, and she lets her rage pass.

ELIZABETH
Just tell me there’s no certainty. The shadows of ghosts, you said. Any outcome is possible. Give me hope.

DEE
The forces that shape the world are greater than all of us, majesty. How can I promise you that they’ll conspire in your favour, even though you are the Queen? But this much I know. When the storm breaks, each man acts in accordance with his own nature. Some are dumb with terror. Some flee. Some hide. And some spread their wings like eagles and soar on the wind.

Elizabeth understands. She draws herself up, finding now the self-belief she needs for the battle to come.

ELIZABETH
You’re a wise man, Dr Dee.

DEE
And you, madam, are a very great lady.

ELIZABETH
My lords, I can offer you no words of comfort.
ELIZABETH (cont’d)
If this Armada succeeds there will be no more freedom in our land, and England will be no more. We cannot be defeated.

113 EXT. SEA – DAY
The unending line of Spanish ships advances over the water. Still far away, but scary in power and reach.

RALEIGH
What news? Is the fleet at sea?

SERVANT
Yes, sir. May God preserve them.

114 INT. TOWER OF LONDON – DAY
Raleigh lies awake and fully dressed on the bed in his prison room. The room is furnished for a gentleman, but the walls are thick and the windows barred.
The door opens, and a servant brings in a tray of food. Raleigh sits up.

RALEIGH
What news?

SERVANT
The Spanish are off Portland.

RALEIGH
And the fleet?

SERVANT
Still at Plymouth, joined by Drake and all the rest.

RALEIGH
(bitter)
All but me.

115 EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL – DAY
The white cliffs of England, seen from the Channel.

INTO FRAME sweeps a SPANISH ENSIGN, streaming from a mast. And another, and another. Mast after mast, straining sails, shivering ropes, and the FLAGS of the enemy – flying from the top-gallants of a hundred ships – so near to England now that they seem to have been planted already on England’s white cliffs.
INT. ST PAUL’S CATHEDRAL - DAY

The Queen, Sir Christopher Hatton, Walsingham and her entourage, all now heavily armed, enter the great vaulted nave of St Paul’s. As they make their way towards the altar, Elizabeth issues commands.

ELIZABETH
The bells are to ring in every church in the land.

Hatton bows to show he has received the order.

ELIZABETH
Labourers are to leave the fields and take up arms. The harvest must wait.
Hatton bows and leaves. Elizabeth continues up the nave, now followed only by Walsingham. She turns to him with another order.

ELIZABETH
Release all prisoners. England is their country too.

She moves forward again. Walsingham follows, waiting, knowing there’s more. Elizabeth turns to him one last time.

ELIZABETH
Release Raleigh. He is forgiven... As I too pray to be forgiven...

Walsingham leaves. Elizabeth goes forward to stand before the altar alone.

ELIZABETH
Leave me. All of you.

The remainder of her entourage bow and withdraw. Elizabeth goes on down the nave to the altar, and there, at the foot of the steps, sinks to her knees. She does not bow her head.

ON ELIZABETH - Alone in the great space, staring at her God as at an equal.

PAN UP to the blazing coloured light of the stained glass window -

INT. ESCORIAL PALACE - DAY

DOWN from high windows to see monks praying for the success of the Armada. Their chant has a driving war-like rhythm, that carries over the following scenes.

INT. ESCORIAL PALACE, SPAIN - DAY

SPEED TRACK down a palace corridor, urged on by the beat of the chant, into Philip’s cell.

TRACK IN to the flame of a single candle: its bright heart seems to be the source of the pounding chant.

EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL - DAY

The chant powers on.

SHIPS’ BOWS slice the water, racing towards us.
INT. PHILIP’S CELL - DAY

ON PHILIP as the chant drives on, murmuring his own prayer.

PHILIP
Tu es Deus qui facis mirabilia
solus. Notam fecisti in gentibus
virtutem tuam...

INT. TOWER OF LONDON - DAY

CLOSE ON RALEIGH - A Royal Official has just handed him a letter. He reads it and then looks up.

RALEIGH
Tell the Queen I will join my ship.

EXT. ENGLISH CAMP, TILBURY - DAY

The chant continues -

TRACKING THROUGH English troops to the Queen’s tent -

EXT PLYMOUTH HARBOUR - DAY

The English fleet sets sail and leaves Plymouth harbour.

INT. QUEEN’S TENT, TILBURY - DAY

The Queen’s advisers mill round Elizabeth. Walsingham is seated in the background.

ELIZABETH
Are our ships at sea? Has the fleet left Plymouth? That can’t be so hard to know.

ADMIRAL WINTER enters, out of breath, clutching the latest reports.

ADMIRAL WINTER
The enemy has been engaged, majesty.

He reads as he speaks. The news is not so good after all.

ADMIRAL WINTER
A brave action. Two ships lost.

ELIZABETH
With what gain?
HATTON
The enemy continues to advance.

EXTERIOR ENGLISH CHANNEL - DAY

FOREGROUND - Floating wreckage, and the bodies of English sailors. Beyond, the long line of the Spanish fleet, advancing, firing. The Spanish ships are monsters, much taller than the English ships.
Lord Howard bent over a mass of charts with his commanders round him: HAWKINS, DRAKE, FROBISHER and Raleigh. The boom of Spanish cannon shakes the air. Flashes of fire light the faces of the English officers.

DRAKE
We must attack! What choice do we have?

HOWARD
We’re decisively outgunned, Drake. We are losing too many ships. We must defend the coast.

DRAKE
(studying the chart of the Armada’s progress)
There has to be a way of getting inside this crescent formation.

RALEIGH
Our ships may be smaller but they’re nimbler. We should use the strengths we’ve got.

HOWARD
I tell you, we’re out-gunned. Do you want to lose the whole fleet?

RALEIGH
Break their formation and we have a chance.

HOWARD
We can’t get near them.

Elizabeth among her advisers. An air of mounting panic.

WALSINGHAM
The Spanish are barely a day away, majesty.

HATTON
It would be wise to withdraw to safer ground.
WALSINGHAM

I beg you to appreciate the gravity of the situation, majesty. There is very little time.

Elizabeth turns on him, calm and defiant.

ELIZABETH

Then we must act.

126

EXT. ENGLISH CAMP, TILBURY - DAY

A low distant beat as we TRACK THROUGH the English camp. The soldiers are a citizen army, no hardened professionals. We pass a troop busy sharpening their pikes; an older soldier in quiet prayer; a band sharing drinks; a youth rubbing down a horse.

Now they hear the distant beat approaching. One by one they look up, surprised, uncertain.

Now they hear it loud and clear: the beat of an army on the march.

CLOSE ON tramping feet. An advancing force. Horses’ hooves beating the ground.

ON THE SOLDIERS’ FACES - Staring, half afraid, half expectant - then filled with a surge of sudden hope -

SOLDIERS’ POV - English flags rising over the low brow of the hill.

127

EXT. HILL ABOVE THE ENGLISH CAMP - DAY

In the midst of the advancing array of banners and flags, riding a white horse, dressed in silver armour, holding a silver staff - Elizabeth - transformed into a goddess of war.

The thousands of gaping soldiers sink awe-struck to their knees.

ON ELIZABETH as she surveys her rag-tag army. The army lets out a cheer.

The Queen cries out to her army, her voice echoing in the chill air.

ELIZABETH

My loving people! We see the sails of the enemy approaching. We hear the Spanish guns over the water.
ELIZABETH (cont’d)

Soon now we will meet them face to face. In that encounter, England lives, or England dies. I am resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live or die amongst you all!

A cheer from the men.

ELIZABETH
While we stand together no invader shall pass. Let them come with all the armies of Hell, they will not pass.

The crowd gives another mighty cheer.

ELIZABETH
So let us sound the advance and go forward, together, you and I. I myself will be your general, judge and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field.

When this day of battle is ended, we meet again in heaven, or on the field of victory.

The greatest shout of all.

SOLDIERS
Aye!

INT. DEE’S HOUSE – DUSK
Dr Dee studies his charts.

INT. PHILIP’S CELL – DUSK
Philip sits staring at the flame of the candle. The whole world waits.

EXT. ARK ROYAL – DUSK
A ship’s lamp sways in the window. A sailor notes the movement.
SAILOR

Wind change!

High in the rigging above, a sail flaps and bellies in a new direction.

The sound of a rising storm.

131 INT. QUEEN’S TENT, TILBURY - DUSK

Elizabeth looks around her as the tent shudders in the rising wind.

132 EXT. SPANISH SHIP - DUSK

The vast Armada is being buffeted by the storm, but still it comes on. The sea is in turmoil, lightning streaks across the darkening sky.

SPANISH OFFICER
(Drop Anchor!)

2ND OFFICER
(Our orders are to stay in formation.)

SPANISH OFFICER
(If we don’t drop anchor, we’ll be smashed on the rocks!)

133 EXT SPANISH SHIP - DUSK

Spanish sailors furl the sails, haul in ropes. An anchor crashes into the sea.

134 EXT. ARK ROYAL - DUSK

Raleigh and Drake hurry along the deck in the whipping wind and spray. Drake is watching the Spanish fleet, and shouting above the noise of the storm.

DRAKE
They’ve dropped anchor. These Spanish monsters can’t handle our English seas.

RALEIGH
We have the wind in our favour. Do we go?

DRAKE
We go.
Drake embraces Raleigh. Action at last.

DRAKE (CONT'D)
God speed, my friend. And don’t forget to jump.

INT QUEEN TENT, TILBURY - DUSK

The tent is full of commotion, soldiers and ministers come in and out.
ADMIRAL WINTER
Under whose orders is he acting?

HATTON
He was told not to risk any more ships of the fleet.

Elizabeth is distant from the general hubbub.

136  EXT THE TYGER - DUSK
Raleigh at the helm of the Tyger gazing intently ahead. Before him, the might of the Spanish Armada. Behind him, men move down the ship with barrels, pouring pitch over the decks. Calley lights a torch and hands it to Raleigh.

137  EXT. SPANISH SHIP - DUSK
Spanish sailors watch in horror as the spreading flames of the fire-ships move inexorably toward them.

138  EXT. SPANISH SHIP - DUSK
A Spanish officer reacts to the danger and shouts commands.

SPANISH OFFICER
(Raise anchor! Quickly! No - cut the ropes! Cut the ropes!)

Ropes are slashed by flailing axes and cut away from the capstan.

139  INT PHILIP’S CELL - DUSK
Philip stares in horror at the flickering candle. The far-off sound of the storm wind.

140  OMITTED

140A  INT. QUEEN’S TENT, TILBURY - DUSK
Elizabeth’s entourage look at the maps stretched out on the tables. Hatton enters.

WALSINGHAM
How many Spanish ships are burning?

Hatton murmurs a figure.
WALSINGHAM
Not enough.

ON ELIZABETH- Staring out, as if to sea.

ELIZABETH
One empire will rise, and one will fall...

141 EXT THE TYGER - DUSK
Raleigh on the prow of the Tyger as it sails towards the Spanish fleet. He holds a flaming torch, and calmly surveys his target. He lights the fuses on the prow and tosses the torch behind him. The pitch on the deck bursts into flame. He runs to the side of the ship and scales down the rigging.

142 EXT. SPANISH SHIP - DUSK
Chaos and panic amongst the Spanish sailors as the fire-ship approaches. Men wildly fire off their muskets and the cannons boom.

143 EXT. TYGER - DUSK
Cannonballs crash into the side of the flaming Tyger. Certain now of the ship’s course, Raleigh finally leaps into the water. *As seen from underwater, Raleigh swims away from the ship.*

144 EXT TYGER - DUSK
The prelaid fuses amongst the Tyger’s cannons ignite, as the Tyger smashes into the side of the Spanish ship. From beneath, we see the hulls collide.

145 EXT SPANISH SHIP - DUSK
The Tyger’s cannons explode causing devastation on the Spanish deck. Sailors run for cover. A horse rears and jumps over the side.

146 EXT ENGLISH CHANNEL - DUSK
From underneath, men leap into the water. A horse swims past, lit from flames above.
146A  EXT ROOFTOP, JOHN DEE’S HOUSE - NIGHT  146A  *
John Dee stands on his roof, looking at the sky through a *
sextant.

146B  EXT. ADMIRAL’S CABIN, ARK ROYAL - DUSK  146B  *
Raleigh, singed and wet from his exploits, is with Drake in *
the cabin.

       RALEIGH  *
       How many ships are burning?  *

       DRAKE  *
       Four.  *

       RALEIGH  *
       Not enough.  *

He turns his face towards the coast of England. He speaks *
as if to her, a quiet heart-felt prayer.

       RALEIGH (CONT’D)  *
       May God be with us all tonight.
INT PHILIP’S CELL - DUSK

The candle flickers. A clap of thunder, and the candle goes out.

EXT HILL ABOVE THE ENGLISH CAMP

Elizabeth looks out to sea. The wind roars, the clouds race, the lightning flashes.

EXT ENGLISH CHANNEL - DUSK

Images of the beginning of the destruction of the Armada: Philip’s portrait is covered by water inside a sinking cabin; a Madonna statue floats; a Spanish battle flag burst into flame.

OMITTED

RENUMBERED- SEE SCENE 147A

EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL - NIGHT

Raging waves, black sea. The howl of the storm, the rending of breaking timbers, the screams of drowning men. Somewhere out there, tiny in the vast seascape, the Armada is being smashed into oblivion.

EXT HILL ABOVE THE ENGLISH CAMP- NIGHT

Elizabeth stands there drinking in the tempest, the wind lashing her clothes and hair, but she loves it, lives it, breathes it. This is her storm - her victory.

INT. CHAPEL, ESCORIAL PALACE - DAY

The space that echoed before to the chants of war is silent now.

Philip and the Infanta come down the nave. Philip’s face is set, expressionless.

Philip reaches the steps at the foot of the altar. He goes down on his knees. Then he drops further down, to abase himself on the hard stone floor. The cardinals turn their backs to him.

The Infanta remains standing beside him, impassive, staring at nothing. She throws down her Elizabeth doll.
A low sob from Philip.

153A EXT HILL ABOVE THE ENGLISH CAMP- NIGHT

Elizabeth triumphant in the roaring wind.

154 EXT ENGLISH COAST - DAY

From inside a cave looking out to sea, a scene of devastation. Dead Spanish sailors have been washed up amongst planks, barrels and a torn Spanish ensign.

A long scream of pain -

155 OMITTED

156 INT. BESS THROCKMORTON’S BEDROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON BESS - Screaming in pain. A final spasm passes through her. She sinks back.

The cry of a new-born child. She hears, and her exhausted face lights up with a radiant smile.

157 INT. WALSINGHAM’S BEDROOM, LONDON - DAY

Walsingham lies in bed, his eyes closed. His wife Ursula and daughter Mary in the background. He’s dying.

Elizabeth has come to him. She looks down on him with deep concern.

ELIZABETH
Francis. My old friend.

158 EXT. PARIS STREET - DAY

An anonymous man - Agent 3 - walks down a shabby Paris street. Stops before a small anonymous house. Knocks.

159 INT. PARIS HOUSE - DAY

The anonymous man is let into the house by a figure we don’t yet see. He looks round the room. A fire burning in the grate. English books on the table. A half-eaten meal.

AGENT 3
I come from your brother.

Now we see who he speaks to: William.
WILLIAM
What does he want?

AGENT 3
He asks your forgiveness.

WILLIAM
My forgiveness?

On William: he stares. Then he understands. Fear brings sudden tears to his eyes.

A gasp. Walsingham’s man has plunged a knife into his heart.

160  INT. WALSINGHAM’S BEDROOM, LONDON - DAY

Walsingham speaks to his Queen with difficulty.

WALSINGHAM
I have served your majesty - in all things...

ELIZABETH
I know it, old friend. Don’t leave me now.

Walsingham’s eyes open. A weak smile.

WALSINGHAM
You don’t need me any more. Permission - to go -

Elizabeth looks tenderly down on him, shaking her head.

ELIZABETH
You always did do as you pleased, whether I wanted it or not. I’ve no doubt you’ll do as you please now.

He lets his eyes close. She stoops down and kisses his cheek.

161  INT. RALEIGH’S HOUSE - DAY

We see Raleigh from behind. He’s holding something, and dancing slowly about, and crooning a low song, in the oddest way.

Beyond him, half-glimpsed, an inner room, where Bess is resting on a bed.
Now in his solitary dance Raleigh turns, and we see he’s holding a new-born BABY BOY. He kisses the baby’s little bald head, and sings his wordless song.

Footsteps outside. The door opens, and a royal servant enters, followed by other servants and guards.

ROYAL SERVANT
Her majesty the Queen!

Elizabeth enters, in formal style. She stands and takes in the scene - Raleigh holding his baby son - the room beyond - Bess rises at once and comes through to make her curtsey to the Queen. Elizabeth seems not to see her.

A regal wave at the servants and guards. They withdraw.

Elizabeth stalks round the room. No reason to suppose her displeasure has passed.

ELIZABETH
When was the birth?

RALEIGH
Four nights ago.

ELIZABETH
The mother is well?

RALEIGH
Thank God.

Now Elizabeth turns to Bess, and their eyes meet. The Queen puts out her hand and touches Bess lightly on one cheek. A silent forgiveness.

ELIZABETH
And the child?

RALEIGH
My son is well.

Now for the first time she looks at the baby.

ELIZABETH
Your Elizabeth has a child. You must be proud.

RALEIGH
Yes.

Elizabeth moves away, unable to bear seeing the baby.
ELIZABETH
And fulfilled?

RALEIGH
As any man can be.

Elizabeth looks at him in silence for a long moment.

ELIZABETH
And do you still dream of your shining city, your New World?

RALEIGH
More than ever.

She turns to go. But before she reaches the door, she stops.

ELIZABETH
I’d like to give your son my blessing.

RALEIGH
I would be honoured.

Elizabeth takes the baby in her arms. She holds him carefully. She finds herself more moved than she had expected. She bends her head over him, and turns her back on Raleigh.

Raleigh watches and waits. And waits.

ON ELIZABETH: her cheek pressed to the baby’s head. Her eyes closed.

ELIZABETH (V.O.)
I am called the Virgin Queen. And yet I have many children... You are all my children. There is no jewel, be it never so rich a prize, which I put before this jewel: I mean, your love. I want no more wars. England is enough for me. I want no lordship over your souls. Only a free people can love.
(Beat)
And in your love - is my life.

END TITLES