

046 HERALD

Any in possession of Jesuit
writings shall be charged with
treason! Burn them! Burn them all!

FIRE RAGES AND MUSIC CRESCENDOS AND FADES TO...

9 INT. QUEEN ELIZABETH'S BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT.

THE ROOM IS STILL. THE FIRE TRANSITIONS TO A LOW
CRACKLE. OUTSIDE: FAINT WIND AND THE OCCASIONAL
HOOT OF AN OWL. IT'S DEEPLY PRIVATE.

Side 1
START >>>

047 QUEEN ELIZABETH

(reading to herself)

"If an army should rise against
you, we would sooner yield our
bodies to their steel, than join
them and wield our swords against
the blood of our fellow Englishmen.
What kingdom is worth such a price
that should cost the soul of a
single innocent?"

(then, exhaling)

Words sharper than any dagger. And
yet... Written with such grace. He
would have me doubt myself. Doubt
this throne. My Parliament. My
advisors... My Church...

A long silence.

048 QUEEN ELIZABETH

(barely a whisper)

...And I do.

SHE CRUMPLES THE PAMPHLET.

049 QUEEN ELIZABETH

But I cannot yield. If I should
bend, I shall undoubtedly break.
Parliament would see a woman, not a
monarch. A Tudor, softened. A
sovereign seat, no longer secure.
Where strength wanes, conquest
whispers.

SHE MOVES TOWARD THE WINDOW, LOOKING OUT.

050 QUEEN ELIZABETH

They cut off my mother's head.
Would they not do the same to me?
If they had the chance.

SHE PACES BRIEFLY IN HER ROOM.

051 **QUEEN ELIZABETH**

I know the prayers. I know the
Latin. I know laws. I know the
weight of the blood guilt. But
mercy is a luxury I cannot afford.
Not with Rome plotting and Spain
lurking, not with traitors
whispering at every turn. Behind my
Crown, behind my fury, a woman sits
here and wonders. But the world
demands a Sovereign, and Sovereigns
do not weep.

SHE INHALES SHARPLY, STEADIES HERSELF.

052 **QUEEN ELIZABETH**

If Southwell crosses my shore...
Then God have mercy on him...
Because I cannot.

<<< END

10

EXT. LONDON STREET - NIGHT

LATE NIGHT LONDON AMBIANCE. A DISTANT BELL
CHIMES, FOOTSTEPS ECHO. WIND RUSTLES CLOAKS.

A SECRET KNOCK ON A DOOR. ONE-TWO. PAUSE. ONE.
THE DOOR UNLATCHES SOFTLY.

053 **CATHOLIC GUARD**

Yes?

054 **ROBERT**

De Profundis clamavi ad te, Domine.

A DOOR CREAKS OPEN. FOOTSTEPS INSIDE. THE DOOR
SHUTS QUICKLY BEHIND.

055 **CATHOLIC GUARD**

You made it.

FOOTSTEPS AS ROBERT ENTERS A WARM ROOM.

056 **PRIEST**

Robert Southwell! God be praised!

057 **CATHOLIC GUARD**

We feared you were still in France,
or worse, intercepted.

058 **ROBERT**

No. I am here now. By God's grace
and a few clever disguises.