

021 QUEEN ELIZABETH

The vine is a holy thing. In
scripture, the vine is Christ. The
church. The nation.

(turning slowly)

So what, then, is a sterile vine?

A pause.

022 LORD BURGHLEY

(quietly, timidly)

Your enemies say you, Your Majesty.

023 TOPCLIFFE

Reprehensible!

024 **WALSINGHAM**

It is a phrase gaining favor among
the Recusants. They see your reign
as fruitless, barren of divine
sanction. They mean to cut you
down. Replace you with one more
fertile for their cause.

025 QUEEN ELIZABETH

More obedient to Rome, you mean.

026 **WALSINGHAM**

Yes.

An eerie silence washes over the room.

027 QUEEN ELIZABETH

There's more?

028 LORD BURGHLEY

They also use this phrase to sway
Protestant minds and to view your
womb as sterile...

029 QUEEN ELIZABETH

I am not barren!

030 LORD BURGHLEY

Of course, not, Your Majesty.

031 **WALSINGHAM**

It is a traitorous claim!

THE SILENCE LINGERS AGAIN AS THE FIRE CRACKLES.

032 QUEEN ELIZABETH

Destroy sterile vine?

(MORE)

Side 1
START >>>

QUEEN ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
(venomous)
The fools who think it shall feel
every *prick* of this vine's thorns.

A pause.

033 QUEEN ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
As for my cousin, the Duke of
Norfolk...

034 LORD BURGHLEY
Yes, Your Majesty?

035 QUEEN ELIZABETH
Imprison him! But only after
Topcliffe teaches him a lesson in
the Tower.

036 TOPCLIFFE
With *pleasure*, Your Majesty.

SHE PACES TOWARD HER DESK.

037 **WALSINGHAM**
Forgive me, Your Majesty. But it is
not enough to imprison him.

038 QUEEN ELIZABETH
Excuse me?

039 **WALSINGHAM**
We cannot show *mercy* for treason.

040 QUEEN ELIZABETH
He is my cousin, Walsingham.

041 **WALSINGHAM**
He is a *traitor*, Your Majesty. If
he is allowed to live, what does
that say to your enemies?

042 QUEEN ELIZABETH
I can't just-

043 **WALSINGHAM**
Destroy Sterile Vine. Destroy you?
We must find every man who has
uttered this phrase... Every
woman's hand that has stitched
it... Let them learn what it is to
threaten the crown.

<<< END

SUSPENSEFUL MUSIC TRANSITIONS US TO...