

006 CLERK (CONT'D)

Now enter, the Queen's prosecutors,
Richard Topcliffe, Francis
Walsingham, and Lord Burghley.

A PAUSE AS FEET SHUFFLE IN.

007 CLERK (CONT'D)

And the defendant, Robert
Southwell.

CHAINS CLINK AS ROBERT IS DRAGGED TO HIS SEAT.

WALLA: A FEW PEOPLE GASP AT ROBERT'S STATE.

START >>>

008 JUDGE

Robert Southwell, you stand here
accused of high treason. You are to
be judged on the Statute by which
to be a priest is in itself
treason. And the court asks that
the citizens present bear in mind
the wise grounds on which the
Statute has been enacted. As long
as a priest is at large in England,
Her Majesty's life is not safe.

(BEAT)

Will the clerk now read the Bill of
Indictment?

009 CLERK

Robert Southwell, you are arraigned
here as a traitor to the Crown.
You, being a subject of the Queen,
became ordained as a priest of the
Roman Catholic Church, and
therefore, by your words and
actions, set allegiance to the
Bishop of Rome above loyalty to
your sovereign, Elizabeth, Queen of
England. And in said practice, you
conducted a Catholic Mass at the
Bellamy residence on the 26th of
July, 1592. How do you plead?

010 ROBERT

I confess I am a Catholic priest,
and I thank God for it, but I am no
traitor. No law can make it treason
to be a priest.

011 JUDGE

You must answer the whole
indictment, Mr.

(MORE)

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Southwell, and either confess it,
or say, Not Guilty.

012 ROBERT

I do not deny that I was at the
Bellamy residence, but I never
intended, as God Almighty knows, to
commit any treason to the Queen or
to the State. Only to minister the
Sacraments to those that seemed
willing to receive them.

013 **JUDGE**

Mr. Southwell-

014 ROBERT

Not guilty of any treason.

015 **JUDGE**

Very well. How will you be tried?
By God and by your country?

016 ROBERT

By God and by you, I would say. For
I would not lay upon my country the
guilt of my condemnation.

Topcliffe, frustrated, interjects:

017 TOPCLIFFE

We are not to try you. You are to
be tried "by God and by the laws."

018 ROBERT

By God, I will be tried, Topcliffe,
but not by the law. For the law
here is contrary to the law of God.

019 WALSINGHAM

If you refuse the trial, it shall
be a sufficient condemnation.

020 ROBERT

Ah, good Sir Walsingham, I am
loathe that these poor men, the
jurors, should be guilty of my
inevitable death. But if this is
the only answer that you shall
accept, then I will be tried by God
and the country.

021 JUDGE

Do you wish to challenge any of the jurors before they are sworn in, Mr. Southwell?

022 ROBERT

I will challenge none.

023 JUDGE

Then I welcome the prosecution to the floor.

<<< END

MUSIC UNDERSCORES THE OPENING STATEMENT.

024 LORD BURGHLEY

These indictments shall be proven easily, as it seems Mr. Southwell, despite claiming innocence, has not denied any of the indictments brought against him. Mr. Southwell having acknowledged himself to be a Catholic priest, and thanking God for it, you need not any further proof. He need not confess that he was made a priest since the first year of Her Majesty's reign, for he was not yet born when her Majesty began her reign.

(a pause, sarcastic)

How old are you, anyway?

025 ROBERT

I think that I am near the age of Our Saviour who lived upon the earth thirty-three years.

026 LORD BURGHLEY

(clearing his throat)

For a third point, you have already admitted you were at the Bellamy residence to administer the sacraments. Did you not know The Statute that has made this same act treason?

027 ROBERT

I know the statute. But it is impossible to make any such law agreeable to the word of God.

028 LORD BURGHLEY

Mr. Southwell, you once again let slip a word, that I must insist the jury acknowledge.

(MORE)