

Part Three



MARY



Some Queens of England

or

The Tudor Comedy

Part Three

Characters of Part Three :

King Edward VI
Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset
Thomas Seymour, his brother, admiral
Duke of Northumberland
Guilford, his son
Jane Grey, his daughter-in-law
Princess Elizabeth
Her maid
Catherine Parr, married to Thomas Seymour
Princess Mary
Her maid
A page
Lord William Cecil
Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury
Lord Reginald Pole
King Philip II of Spain
Horace, an old attendant
A courtier
Peter,
Patrick,
Sir Arthur, and
Sir Charles, citizens of London
Lords, soldiers and guards

The stage is England from 1548 to 1558.

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PART THREE

Act I scene 1. Westminster

(King Edward sits on his throne; Somerset by his side.)

Edward But why may I not see my sisters?

Somerset They do not want to see you, your majesty.

Edward I can not understand that. Do they no longer love me? Are they able to see me if they would want to? Answer me, uncle!

Somerset Certainly there is nothing to compel their absence. Nothing stops them from seeing you but themselves.

Edward I fail to understand them. They loved me always, and they know my love for them is without the faintest impurity. They took care of me so well at my father's death, and there was none whose presence at my coronation was more welcome. Send for them, uncle, I pray. My loneliness of office is hard to carry without them.

Somerset I shall send for them, your majesty. *(exit)*

(re-enter Somerset with Northumberland and Jane Grey.)

I met this duke and lady outside your very door, your majesty. I believe the duke of Northumberland has come to present lady Jane Grey to your majesty.

Northumberland So I have, majesty. This is your cousin Jane Grey.

Edward Are you my cousin, Jane Grey?

Jane Grey I certainly am.

Northumberland Kneel to him, Jane.

Jane Grey Humbly I commend myself to my liege and royal sovereign. *(kneels)*

Northumberland Do you like her, prince?

Edward Since she is my cousin I shall love her as my own sister. Rise, lady Jane, and stay at my court. I want to play with you.

Northumberland If your majesty pleases, that is impossible.

Edward Why?

Northumberland She is married, and her husband is awaiting her at Oxford.

Edward Bring him here some day, your lordship. I would like to meet him as fain as I would have your son's beloved stay.

Northumberland I promise your majesty you shall see him anon. Come now, Jane Grey. You have been presented. *(They begin to go out.)*

Jane Grey May I see the King again?

Northumberland You certainly may whenever you are humoured thereto.

Jane Grey He was the nicest king I've ever met. *(exeunt)*

Edward Are you still here, my uncle? I thought you were going to bring my sisters to my side.

Somerset So I am, your majesty. *(exit)*

Edward My uncle is all I have. I fear him most of all men, and yet I have to turn to him for guidance, for he is the only one I know who cares for me, or at least seems to care for me, since I appear to be forgotten by my sisters. Elizabeth and Mary, cruel alienated sisters, so blissful and comforting company once, and now so bitterly and grievously disunited from me; what has come between us? When shall I see you again? Will you ever stem the flow of my pungent tears again? Shall I ever again laugh because of your soothing company? I have never known any angels but you. Return, oh, return, sweet sisters! Your miserable king and little brother is coughing, waiting for you to assuage his sufferings by merely letting him enjoy your presence once more before he dies.

(retires, being hardly able to remain on his legs.)

Scene 2.

Elizabeth But why may I not see my brother?

Maid The mighty duke of Somerset forbids you.

Elizabeth What right has he to forbid me paying a visit to my own King, who in addition happens to be my little brother, and who undoubtedly needs my assistance in his difficult state as a monarch?

Maid He says the King is too weak to see you and wants no one's presence save his uncle's.

Elizabeth The duke lies. And I am worried. Has Mary been to see him since his coronation?

Maid I know not, princess. Mary is a catholic and not very popular with the dukes at present. I think she stays at...

Elizabeth Of course she hasn't been to see her brother; how stupid of me to believe such a thing. Poor Edward! If only there was something I could do to reach him. I know he needs me! I know it! (*enter Catherine Parr*)

Oh, Catherine, my mother, help me to the court! I must see the King! The tyrant the duke of Somerset secludes him from the world, from his people and even from his family. The King will die if I may not see him. Catherine, o sweet my second mother, is there anything you can do?

Catherine No, my child, there is nothing I can do.

Elizabeth But are you not married to the Lord Protector's brother, the lord Seymour?

Catherine He disdains me, Elizabeth, and he is opposed to his brother the duke. He is a strange solitary man who wants to be alone with his capriciousness. He will hate me any day, and he hates his brother; there is nothing, Elizabeth, I can do to ease this terrible condition of life at the moment.

Elizabeth Your words dishearten me. I am lost. The King is lost. Edward will pine away, for he knows no one loves him but his sisters. And what may the duke instruct him to think about his sisters? Nay, I will not think upon it. Oh, how terrible political life is!

Catherine Come, Elizabeth, let us have supper. You shall think no more of what ails the country, and think the more of your private joy and comfort. Come, Elizabeth.

(*enter suddenly lord Seymour*)

Seymour Eh, ladies? Is supper ready?

Catherine It is, my lord husband.

Seymour Good for you, Catherine. I would have thrashed you otherwise. Go before us, Catherine; we will follow. I have a word to speak with Elizabeth.

(*exit Catherine*)

What an old despicable crow she is! They say she tortured king Henry to death; now I torture her to death, and I enjoy it.

Elizabeth You forget, my lord, that the King was my father, and I dislike your depreciative speech about my second mother.

Seymour (moving forward) And you, Elizabeth, forget that I am the master of this house and may throw you out any day.

Elizabeth You wouldn't dare!

Seymour I would dare, if I didn't love you.

Elizabeth What kind of absurdity was that?

Seymour I love you, my fair princess. I am honest in saying so.

Elizabeth You make me laugh, my lord. But Catherine is waiting...

Seymour Let her wait. Let me kiss you.

Elizabeth Nay, my lord.

Seymour Just one kiss.

Elizabeth (forces him away) My lord, you are disgusting! Away from here! The supper is getting cold.

Seymour You are never too cold for me, Elizabeth. I shall be your wooer. I shall marry you one day.

Elizabeth And your lady?

Seymour I shall divorce her for your sake.

Elizabeth With your lordship's pardon, my lord is an old disgusting ridiculous fool who but makes me laugh.

Seymour Then you are a bore.

Elizabeth No, only in the sanest of my minds. Eroticism is only foolish idleness and the expression of a sickly lack of character. (*walks out on him.*)

Seymour I will move your heart yet, princess. Your pride shall fall before my love. You'll be mine one day, Elizabeth, and I shall make you the Queen of England. (*exit*)

Scene 3.

Mary Any news from court?

Maid None, princess.

Mary Either you are hated by the world or forgotten. Heard you anything of the King?

Maid Nay, princess, but there were rumours about his illness.

Mary I love him, but yet I long to see him die. My life is void except of blackness, my spirit is dead but for the wish and desire of the throne. Yes, I desire the throne, for that is all in life I have to look forward to. Besides, it would be fun to convert this subverted country and once again submit it to Rome: my father's infinite labours to make it heretic and the present violent protestantic surge shouldn't be too difficult to demolish.

Did you hear about the gravity of his illness?

Maid Nay, my princess.

Mary He has always been at the brink of death. Perhaps he is dead tomorrow; perhaps he dies after an age; both are probable. I know not when he dies, but whenever he dies he is welcome to. For as long as he and his protestantic oppressors live, I am hated, abhorred and practically dead. A ghost is Mary; she never was anything more but longs to becoming so. – What news else from London?

Maid None, princess.

Mary But you must have heard something more of the King.

Maid The Protector protects, or rather guards him day and night, they say, good princess.

Mary Yes, I know. Elizabeth has not been permitted to see him.

Maid Why?

Mary That is not for you to ask a princess, but for me to ask you. Do you know why?

Maid No, your royal highness.

Mary Neither do I. Not that I am eager to see him, but it is a funny sort of prohibition. – You may leave me, maid. (*exit maid*)

It may be heartless and almost inhuman for me to wish the King was dead, but he is not my brother. He is the son of a whore, while I was born of a Queen. Her divorce from my father was never legal and never acceptable to any laws of nature, earth or heaven. We have the same father but not the same blood. Life as it is is no pleasure, but the possession of the throne might give me some leisure. Die, Edward! Please me, just for once! Die soon, and have done with it! You'll only gain by it: everyone is well aware of your atrocious sufferings. Free yourself, Edward, and you

shall free not only me but also old solemn catholic England. Oh England, how I long to civilize you and make you the best servant there is to the best masters there is: Rome and Spain. Any sovereignty is better than no proper order, and the malady of England is this dangerous and protestantic freedom. Be strong and brave, o valiant England, and take on the papal yoke, and in the course of time you will be grateful only, ty myself, to Rome and to the fatherland of virtue, the uncompromising Spain. There is no liberty without disorder and no freedom without chaos, while desirable peace and order only comes from ruthless discipline.

Scene 4. The Court.

Edward (coughs) My state as king consumes me. My strength fails me more day by day; I am more ruled than a ruler, and soon I will be as worthless as any begging orphan. Uncle Edward, are you there? *(coughs)*

Somerset I am, your majesty.

Edward My fever is too high to permit me to stay any longer here today. Help me to my bed, please, dear uncle.

Somerset But your majesty, the duke of Northumberland is coming today to present to you his son and lady Jane Grey.

Edward I am sorry, uncle; I cannot receive them. *(coughs and faints)*

Somerset Oh, my poor child! I had no idea your state was so serious. My God! Let me help you, boy, to comfort and rest, which God knows you need and deserve indeed. Oh lord; let not the King die! Not yet! *(carries out king Edward. Returns soon.)*

Is this what my life has developed into? Will I be the bane of my own beloved king? I have kept away his sisters for the sake of power; I have nourished and maintained him only for the same purpose; will he now die because of my loyal support? O frightful destiny! What have I done to deserve your cudgel? Have I not guided England well? Have I not done all I could to salvage this ancient realm from the tyranny of Rome and fatalistic religion? What have I not done for the weal of England, the future and all the people entrusted to my care? *(enter a page)*

Page Your grace, I bring you some bad news.

Somerset What has happened?

Page Your brother, lord Seymour, has tried to kidnap the King and is screaming to all England that the princess Elizabeth is his wife and the only lawful Queen.

Somerset What scandalous news is this? Why is he acting such an idiot?

Page I know not, your grace.

Somerset He must have gone mad, or worse, lost his head completely by getting drunk with love for the most impossible person in the realm, thus compromising both his wife, the former Queen of England, the princess Elizabeth and his whole family including my own. This is worse than madness. It is total stupidity. – Is his majesty in safety? Has the sudden rebellion of this ignorant idiotic brother of mine been quenched?

Page It never had time to rise, my grace.

Somerset Thank heavens! And the King is quite safe?

Page He is, my lordship.

Somerset Thank God for his mercy! O Lord, I thank thee! Where is my brother now?

Page He is kept in custody by the King's guards.

Somerset Let them take him to the Tower! That's the only proper place for such presumptuously misdirected ambitions! Power is but handled with intelligence, and without cleverness a fool almighty is forever lost. My brother has been asking for a kingdom as a salary for outraging a princess. That is blackmail, not politics. For his

unexampled foolery he must be most severely punished! That is all, page. You may leave.

Page I will bring your message, my lord. (*exit*)

Somerset My own brother a traitor? Life is worse than I thought, and destiny is dealing me one blow after another. This is not the first rebellion against the King but indeed the worst. My own brother! Shall I execute him? No, I can not. I will not cut off Cain's head, though I ought to, being Abel. What would the previous king have done? He would mercilessly have banished my brother's entire family. I can not be as inhuman as that, can I? Nay, it is impossible to reason on this matter; I shall let the King decide, and whatever his decision may be, I shall submit myself to it. My own brother! How could you do such a thing? I am able to forgive your assault against me; but I shall never be able to digest the fact that you have tried to bring the country to ruin by making a drive at the King and misusing his own sister. To me, my brother, you are dead as a fraternal personage; and I care not whether the King decides you to definitely die or no. Whatever your fate may be, you are dead to me.

Scene 5.

(*Enter Elizabeth from one side, William Cecil from the other.*)

Elizabeth Where are all my servants? What has happened?

Cecil Good princess, relax, and prepare yourself for the worst.

Elizabeth Who are you?

Cecil Sir William Cecil, madame, at your service any time but not just now. Your servants have all been taken away.

Elizabeth Why? What have they done? Has a sudden God's damnation suddenly hit this house since it is as silent as death and its people and maids all scattered? I must have an explanation to all this, lord Cecil, whether the heavens have tumbled down or no.

Cecil And I shall give it, princess. But I warrant my news and explanation are not agreeable to your ear.

Elizabeth Let's hear it anyway!

Cecil Madame, the day before yesterday your patron, the lord Seymour, luckily failed in his plotted plan to abduct the King.

Elizabeth My lord Seymour a traitor?

Cecil Indeed, your highness, so he proved himself to be. As a natural consequence his estate and entire household must be committed or acquitted after proper trials.

Elizabeth What will happen to him?

Cecil Your highness, he will most probably be beheaded.

Elizabeth Oh! (*sits down*)

Cecil Your highness, your concern for him is alarming. You are among the first and weightiest suspects, the lord Seymour having named you as his best friend.

Elizabeth He is no such thing to me, nor was he ever!

Cecil It pleases us to hear so, your highness. He also called you graver matters...

Elizabeth Inform me all!

Cecil You shall presently be over-informed by approaching lords sent here to hear you. But before then I shall try to tell you the worst. You are believed to be, your highness, an ambitious princess, eager not only for the prosecuted lord's love, but even for the crown.

Elizabeth Preposterous!

Cecil It may be so. But prepare yourself now, your highness. I hear the knights approaching. Answer their judicial queries plainly and simply, and beware of giving yourself away. Say no more than you have to, stick to basic but complete answers to their questions, answer no more than you are being asked for, and stay calm. Here they are, your highness. Personally I will be your secret friend, since your demeanour speaks but of your innocence.

(enter guards and lords)

a lord Her royal highness the princess Elizabeth, daughter of the late king Henry VIII?

Elizabeth She is here, my lords. What is your want?

Lord We are inquiring into the matter of lord Thomas Seymour's high treason and must by order of his majesty question you presently. May we hear you, princess?

Elizabeth Proceed. Come what may, I trust your errand is serious and sincere since the King has ordained it. I stand at your disposal; you may treat me as you will.

Lord Merely a few questions, your highness, are we to have answered truthfully and carefully. They may be unpleasant and even painful, but...

Elizabeth Let's hear them!

Lord Our first query, princess, is, exactly what do you feel about lord Seymour?

Elizabeth I feel nothing at all about him, gentlemen.

Lord Has he ever courted you, treated you as somebody more than a gentlewoman or even made advances to your person?

Elizabeth He has always treated me well, but never too well.

Lord Thank you, your highness. Did you know anything about his plans?

Elizabeth What were his plans?

Lord Have you heard anything about his hatred of his brother?

Elizabeth I knew he didn't like his brother, but I wouldn't say he downright hated him.

Lord Well answered, your highness. I think this trial soon shall be over.

Elizabeth The sooner the better.

Lord We understand that, good princess. Now, to our next question: has Lord Seymour ever spoken in your presence about the King your brother?

Elizabeth Nay.

Lord Good. What do your servants feel about his being?

Elizabeth The same as I, I warrant: nothing.

Lord Madame, forgive our intrusion. Our business now is done, and we shall leave you in peace. Good afternoon, princess Elizabeth!

Elizabeth Good afternoon, my lords. Am I acquitted?

Lord Not yet, your highness, but soon we shall bring you our verdict.

Elizabeth The sooner the better.

Lord Precisely, your highness. *(exeunt lords and guards)*

Elizabeth Only a short time has elapsed since my beloved mother, my father's last betrothed, the lady Catherine passed away. Still far from recovered from that great and awful loss, my existence loses all ground and firmity by this sudden fall of my patron the Lord Seymour. He has courted me often; in silence I admit it, and often he has been atrocious about it, but never did I fall. I could not deceive my mother so, and I shall never fall to common baseness. I never guessed he was great enough a madman to aim at the ruin of the rule and the overthrow of the King my brother and the Lord Protector! It is scandalous and tragic that all this could happen in England, as if this nation had not been torn apart enough already in the past! *(enter William Cecil)* Back again? So soon? What is the council's verdict?

Cecil Your highness, you are found innocent, and so have all your servants.

Elizabeth Ha-ha! I knew they wouldn't touch me!

Cecil Compose yourself, princess. Hear all my words first.

Elizabeth So I shall. Carry on.

Cecil Lord Seymour will probably be bereft of his life and head one of these days. The loss of his brother and that disappointment will probably soon break down the Lord Protector. Princess, if you love peace and natural order, visit not London nor Westminster.

Elizabeth You know the conditions of the government better than I do, and I shall heed you.

Cecil And, princess, if anything should happen in London to the Protector or the King, take care of the duke of Northumberland! He alone can be a threat to your life in the future. That is all, your highness. I bid you farewell.

Elizabeth Wait, lord Cecil! May I see you again? Will you bring me some news occasionally?

Cecil If it pleases you, I shall return here as soon as it is safe again for you to appear at court.

Elizabeth I long for that day. I have not seen the King since his coronation. The Seymours have kept me imprisoned here. But I must keep you no longer, lord Cecil. Farewell, and give my fondest regards to the King.

Cecil So I shall, if I may see him, which is not altogether certain.

Elizabeth Is he so carefully guarded by the hawk the Protector?

Cecil He is, your highness, though I shouldn't say so. Our conversation has long since flooded all permissible borders. Farewell now, your majesty. Lord Cecil is your servant. *(exit)*

Elizabeth Farewell, my good lord. *(to herself)* You brought me a tempest but expertly disposed of it leaving only your honesty behind. I shall trust you in the future, lord William Cecil, if there is a future expecting me, which I strongly doubt. After all, I have a sister, whose catholic shadow more darkens the future than my light ever will cast light upon it. Poor Edward, my darling brother! All thoughts of my own royal state lead my contemplations back to you. Shall I ever see you again alive? I doubt it now more than ever. Yet I will continue to hope. If the imperious Lord Protector follows his fallen brother to the grave, I shall be the first one to hurry to London to drag my feeble beloved brother to his feet. But too much has happened today. I must say good-night, or else my wearied mind will go astray. *(exit)*

Scene 6.

Somerset My brother is dead and lost; my king no longer trusts my good intentions; all people hate me bitterly, and personally I am void of all excitable stuff. What is to become of us? I regard my situation, the present, the future as hopeless; there is nothing left to believe in, nothing left to trust and cherish; there is nothing left in life but death.

I have murdered many innocent people. I know it, but I can't regret it. They were murdered not by me but by the Lord Protector for the government's sake. The Lord Protector now is dead. I bear his name but am but his waning shadow. England, oh England, I tried to master you. Forgive me if I failed.

My King, my little beloved handsome Edward, forgive me if I patronized you. Excuse a tyrant's bloody ambition to be tyrannical. Tyrants, only, know what it is to be a tyrant: it is to gain everything including the highest pitch of courage, fearlessness and proud satisfaction, and then to lose it all and have nothing left but one's own weak and useless, petty worthless and penniless forfeited brain and body, spent together with one's irretrievable forlorn soul.

Death, I wait for you. I am expecting any moment knights with halberds to come and fetch me to my execution. I regret nothing. The King has asked if I repent, but there is nothing I should repent. Any man would have acted as Edward Seymour did had he been put in the same shoes as Edward Seymour. No man would have succeeded better than I, and none would have succeeded worse either, for all men are basically human. It is human to try one's luck with fate, to make a giant effort to succeed, and it is equally human to fail. Misery awaits us all, and especially those of us who prove themselves quite human.

The rest I say to God in the form of pious innocent prayers. (*prays*)

(*enter archbishop Cranmer with guards*)

Cranmer My lord Somerset, the King is wondering if you have repented.

Somerset I have repented nought.

Cranmer Then the Tower is expecting you.

Somerset So it will be expecting you, Thomas Cranmer, the day your ambitions no longer suit the monarch's game.

Cranmer I do not game with the King.

Somerset Neither did I. The King gamed with me, though.

Cranmer You made yourself a player who mistook the King for something like a chess-piece, but he was human.

Somerset So am I like you a human being only, and we are all three completely powerless against our game, for not until it is too late, we realize, that our sole competitor has all the time been death, who always wins infallibly.

Cranmer Farewell, Somerset.

Somerset Live well, archbishop, in the game of inhumanity against humanity. God save you from that game so that you might escape it.

Cranmer Do not comfort me. I ought to comfort you.

Somerset I anticipated you. Farewell. (*exit with guards*)

Cranmer Farewell, ambitious but honest duke. You grew to become an ornament to the state when you lost your ambitions. We regret that you had to go further than that and lose all. But winners must lose all, or else there would be no more winners. The game of life has to go on: to win what others won before you is the meaning of it; and like those who lost it before you to let you win it, you must lose it also to let others win it. Only he who loses all was worthy of his winnings. Now the duke of Somerset is gone; who will take his place? Only a man as ambitious as he could take it over, and I believe the man to be the mighty duke of Northumberland.

Act II Scene 1.

Northumberland My son, you shall be King some day.

Guilford King Guilford the First? You are joking, my father.

Northumberland You are joking with me to say so. I intend to make the most of the sick King's favours and make your lady Jane Grey Queen after king Edward's death.

Guilford You are ambitious, my father.

Northumberland To be ambitious is to be alive.

Guilford Bit isn't it dangerous? How many earls before you have not lost their heads for insisting to be ambitiously alive?

Northumberland Dozens of incompetent earls, I agree, but I am not incompetent.

Guilford What makes you imagine so?

Northumberland My blood, my sense, my wit, and my outstanding excellence in all sports. I shall prove myself the best man in England yet.

Guilford Good luck, my father, but do not expect any help from me.

Northumberland Avaunt, my son! You are incompetent, wherefore I need you not. Go to your books and read your tales of antiquated chivalry; that's all you're good for. The throne shall be mine one day without your help and without anyone else's. The King loves me, son, the King loves me!

Guilford (aside) What an ape! What a creature! What a disgusting father I have! Has he learned nothing from the career of the duke of Somerset? Has the tragedy of ambitions, so often repeated, taught him nothing about ambitions? Evidently not. Therefore I shall keep out of his way, and if he loses his head attribute it to nothing but his own judgement.

Northumberland What are you muttering, son?

Guilford I was merely thinking.

Northumberland Go and think in your own closet, stupid! Thought is ambition's gravest foe. Begone, therefore, son, and leave me in peace with my splendid future expectations! (*exit Guilford*)

My son is a silly ass, a thick-headed bull, a meaningless philosopher who is good for nothing. Yet I intend to put him on the stage as the royal consort of Queen Jane Grey, who shall be guided by those puppet strings which I will tie to my fingers and pull to make the nation jump in my uniquely competent direction!

Scene 2.

Edward Am I dying? Am I dying, Archbishop?

Cranmer Be brave, my son. We will do our best to preserve you from dismal death.

Edward Where are my sisters? Are they not here to see me even when I am dying?

Cranmer You are not dying, my son. You shall live yet for many a decade.

Edward You lie, Archbishop! I know that I am dying! I know that you all know that death is taking me away from life. Help me, somebody! Rescue me from the claws of death! I must not die yet.

Cranmer No, you must not die, majesty.

Edward My lords, listen. This is my last wish. Obey me, hark me, and follow my last command. When I am dead, the lady Jane Grey shall be Queen.

One lord (aside to another) Preposterous!

The other (aside) The King can't be serious!

Edward I hear you, gentlemen! Oh, treason, treason, treason! I am not dead yet! Long live my successor the lady Jane Grey!

Northumberland She shall be Queen, your majesty.

Edward Yes, my lords, she shall. Be ruled by the duke of Northumberland when I am gone.

Lords We shall, your majesty.

Edward Oh, I fear this sudden death. Is there nothing anyone could do about it? I was never mature enough to be a king, but I am even more immature to be ruled by death. Oh God! (*dies*)

Cranmer The fair young childish unwell and unhappy King is now dead, my lords. My duke of Northumberland, we are ready to receive your step-daughter in office.

Northumberland Good, Archbishop. Presently I shall inform her of the fact that she is now the next Queen of England. I shall bring her to you anon. (*exit*)

Lord My lord Archbishop, what really was the King's illness?

Cranmer He was not ill. He was merely weak and suffered in addition from an inward menace which is unknown to us.

Lord No physic could cope with it?
Cranmer Physics, science, medicine, drugs, herbs and witchcraft; all was in vain.
As old Menander said: Loved by the gods dies young. Gentlemen, let us pray.
(*All kneel and pray.*)

Scene 3.

Elizabeth Northumberland wants me to join him. Jane Grey is crowned, the old fat goat gluttons and wallows in his repugnant triumph, but the people will have nothing of him. They all cry for Mary. Everyone has forgot the matter of Mary's monstrous faith; all they want is Queen Mary, glorious Queen Mary. Therefore I will join Mary. I love this people and will sooner be guided by them than by a blasphemous preposterous old vain and half-mad duke. Farewell, protestantism, and welcome, chaos and catholic Mary! I must follow the stream and attend to fashion, for if I do not, how could I ever become its chief designer? It is beyond doubt, and everyone expects it, that Mary will do her worst as a regent; consequently I am England's only hope. I must bear with black catholic Mary, or else I could never bear with England. Until I am ready to bear England on my strong woman's back, welcome, slavery, and let me suffer well. Harden me, teach me to cope with the worst, break my heart and honour if you want to, but make me good enough for England. All I want is to serve this people well, and until I am ready to do it: fate, educate me! I challenge you to discipline me in the hardest and toughest of schools for the most exacting of works: the travail of coping with a nation. Lord Cecil! (*enter lord Cecil*)

Cecil My princess!

Elizabeth Take me to Queen Mary. I shall accompany her to London and give my support at casual battles with ignoble Northumberland.

Cecil I shall bring you to Woodstock, where Mary's forces are heading at the moment. There you will unite and then together proceed towards London.

Elizabeth Mary shall know that I am her prostrate servant. I shall do everything for her: grow catholic, accompany her in her masses, wear black garments, and serve her in whatever adventures she may serve England with. I shall undergo everything necessary and spite the blackest fortune in order to favour a future spring of England. Come, my good lord William! To Woodstock!

Scene 4.

Northumberland What voices do I hear from the square? Mary, long live queen Mary, they shout. A ghastlier sound never reached my ears. Are they completely ignorant about that their Queen is Jane Grey, my son Guilford's wife? Alas, what will become of this people? (*Enter a lord*) Do you bring me some news?

Lord I do, your highness.

Northumberland Glad tidings?

Lord I am afraid not, your honour.

Northumberland Let me hear them. Free them from thy tongue however ghastly they may be.

Lord Your army, my lord, is scattered and blown to pieces, like by the wind.

Northumberland Was there no battle?

Lord There was no real battle, my lord, only frivolous fights. Your commanders are all on their way to their homes, if they have not joined your enemies.

Northumberland This news is my ruin.

Lord The princess Mary will enter London tomorrow. Her sister is riding by her side.

Northumberland Elizabeth has joined her, eh? Out, disheartening messenger! Leave me in peace with my utter frustration. (*exit lord*)

No one cares one bit about the Queen I've crowned. All willingly forget their country's mightiest duke, most willing friend and humblest servant. Shall I stand this? Is this this nation's reward for my honest and diligent service? The people will kill me now. Mary, the catholic ambitious hawk, will hang me or burn me. That is the world's sense of gratitude. My predecessor, the duke of Somerset, now dead, almost made his land disintegrate. I, a far-fetched earl, bothered to put it all together again. Being worthy of reward, I crowned my daughter-in-law and made her Queen. Now they will burn her and me too. The catholic bitch will probably burn every protestant in the country. Nay, I understand not life. It is a nightmare which you can do nothing about. And yet I tried to do something about it, and I believe my effort was not in vain.

(*enter lord*)

lord My lord, the Queen has disappeared.

Northumberland Has Jane disappeared?

Lord Aye, your highness. She is fled, no one knows where.

Northumberland Perhaps I ought to try that too. But nay. I can understand her. She is young, I am old. She wants to live, naturally; to me life is a matter of indifference. I shall not bother much about escaping what awaits us all. Was there anything more?

Lord The people compose songs and psalms to the glory of their queen Mary.

Northumberland Out, relentless news-bringer! Out, I say! (*exit lord*) They never even spoke my little Jane's name; now they laud the name of a woman who probably shall prove as wicked as the blackest crowned witch in history. Out, brief light! I tried to master thee but see thee now followed by a denser darkness than I ever believed could emerge on this dark and hopeless stage which is the tortured, dying, meaningless world. (*retires*)

Scene 5. Enter Mary, Elizabeth and others.

Mary At last this bloody country is mine! Chancellor, summon my Parliament! We shall break up the Church! Elizabeth, if you'll not be converted immediately to the only proper faith, I'll have burnt at the stake!

Elizabeth But, sweet sister, I'll become a faithful catholic most willingly!

Mary Quiet! I am no longer your sister but your majesty the Queen! Kneel to me! Kiss this dirty slipper! (*Elizabeth obeys and stoops to kiss her sister's foot.*) Ha-ha! Look at her! How wretched she is! I know not, Elizabeth, whether you are earnest in your desire to become catholic or merely guileful, but whatever you are, I'll see to it you'll become irrevocably catholic forever. Take her away, lords, instruct her, make a true catholic out of her, and exorcise her, if necessary, of all her protestantic demons, follies and morbid corruptions. Elizabeth, you'll make the firmest and most relentless catholic in England, or you'll die, like all heretics!

Elizabeth (aside) I will be taught by you only as long as you are to be taught by, for every woman knows her best teacher is her instincts. (*lords and priests go out with her.*)

Mary And now, my lords, to business! Where is his grace the archbishop of Canterbury?

Lord He is watched at his apartments, madame.

Mary Good. Take him without further delay to the Tower!

Lord Yes, your majesty.

Mary He shall have the draughtiest and coldest of cells! See to it!

Lord I will, madame. (*exit*)
Mary And where is his grace the duke of Northumberland?
Lord Our soldiers caught him trying to escape together with his daughter-in-law, the usurper Jane Grey.
Mary Take them both to the Tower! (*aside*) They shall be beheaded soon. Oh, how I love playing the tyrant! All my life I have been victimised by this country, this world, this people; all my life I have sought revenge, and at last it now lies within my reach. Before I am finished every bloody protestant of England shall be brought to cinders. My highest wish is to see every protestant in the world in ashes, spread by the wind all over the place, from pole to pole. Reginald Pole!
(*enter Sir Reginald Pole*)
Pole Your majesty!
Mary You shall be my next archbishop of Canterbury,
Pole (overwhelmed) Your highness!
Mary – if you well perform your duties first.
Pole I will do, your majesty, whatever you command me to.
Mary I want to marry.
Pole What husband is your choice?
Mary I want Spain to be my lord and husband. Prince Philip is the object of my looks. Future archbishop, see to it!
Pole I will, your majesty. (*exit*)
Mary (after some pause) I must have Spain to chastise England with, for only in that black impenetrable state is there a perfect instrument for extirpation of all undesirables: the glorious invulnerable inquisition.

Act III scene 1.

Elizabeth My lord Cecil, what might be the cause of your honouring me with a visit? Might it be good news?
Cecil Unfortunately, your royal highness, I bring only the worst thinkable news. That is the only reason for my coming. Your sister Mary's sly proposal to Philip has succeeded. England is now becoming a part of Spain. Mary will befriend you more than ever but only in order to find substantial reason for getting rid of you. At any time now you may be arrested.
Elizabeth And is my sister doing well?
Cecil She is at her best and in perfect health. She is looking forward to begetting her first child with Philip. That is all, your royal highness. If she knew that I were here she would instantly decapitate me.
Elizabeth Then you must stay no longer. Farewell, my loyal servant. (*Cecil leaves.*)
What next? I am not even safe in isolation. But someone's coming.
Soldiers (knocking on the door) Is anybody home?
Elizabeth I am afraid there is.
Soldier (entering) You have a right to be afraid. Our orders are to escort you to another safer home.
Elizabeth What home is that?
Soldier The Tower.
Elizabeth Why?
Soldier The Queen wants perfect control of who is visiting you and why.
Elizabeth So there are no accusations against me?
Soldier None whatever as yet.
Elizabeth I must have a permission to speak with my sister.

Soldier You have that permission. Our orders are to first of all escort you to Her Majesty. *(the soldiers escort the princess out)*

Scene 2. At Mary's court.

Soldier She is here now.

Mary Show her in. *(Elizabeth is entered.)*

My darling little sister! Let me hug you with a kiss! *(embraces her and kisses her.)* How cold and rigid you are. Is there no warmth and sisterly love left in your body? I thought you were my sister. But you are. My darling sister, I have asked you here in order to give you one last chance. Will you stoop to my will, abandon all your liberal sympathies and become a perfect catholic?

Elizabeth But I am a perfect catholic. You made me one by force.

Mary But you never embraced the only proper faith with full conviction. You follow the holy mass with indifference, you never go to confession, and your eyes are ever burning with subdued opposition whenever anything of holiness is mentioned. You must abandon all devilish thoughts and whole-heartedly become one of us.

Elizabeth I repeat that I already am most completely a catholic and nothing else.

Mary So you refuse to cooperate.

Elizabeth I do cooperate completely. You own my soul. What more do you want?

Mary You are a most unskilful hypocrite. You haven't given us your soul, and when you say you have you lie most shamefully. You try to play a part, your words are but a torpid mask, and behind this unconvincing masquerade there is a sly and obstinate Elizabeth who in her heart is still a protestant just like her promiscuous parents. Elizabeth, I have to offer you an ultimatum. If you do not renounce the devil totally forever, that is all protestantic sympathies, you will be committed to the Tower.

Elizabeth There is no devil to renounce.

Mary What did you say?

Elizabeth What I said was, that there is no devil to renounce. There is only God, and I am not going to renounce Him.

Mary Lo! The devil speaks! God has no contact with any human being except the Pope and possibly my husband. Only the devil communicates with ordinary human beings. Hence, if you have any contact with either God or the devil it must be the devil. Come on now, sister! Be reasonable and renounce the devil!

Elizabeth I renounce the devil.

Mary You do not sound completely enthusiastic nor at all convincing. You have to renounce him thoroughly!

Elizabeth My sister, enough of this nonsense. I don't believe in any kind of devil nor in any evil. I just believe in God.

Mary Then you are no catholic!

Elizabeth I am what I am, and nothing can be done about it, for I will still remain just what I am.

Mary My sister, don't compel me to have you executed. You are my only sister and my only problem. All other matters are resolved, I and Philip own the world, England has become completely catholic, and only you keep standing outside this our consummate order of things. Why are you so obnoxiously stupid?

Elizabeth My sister, I have nothing else to say. I would only repeat myself if I did.

Mary My court, you witness all the unreasonableness of this creature. We have given her a fair and final chance, and she has refused to avail herself of it. Take her to the Tower. She is lost and no longer our sister. No, I have never even had a sister. If I once had a sister she is dead, and I deny her legitimacy. This tramp without

descendancy has no place in the royal quarters of Westminster. Take her away!
(Elizabeth is taken away.)

My sister, you have proved now that you never will become my loyal subject. Still I can not execute you, because I know that you are still a virgin. You are the only stainless human being I know in existence, and there is no morsel of a case against you. Although you are not a catholic in your conviction you embrace the faith most formally, which frees you from all imaginable charges. Nor do you make it easier for me by cringing to me rather than become a martyr. If you had made any kind of resistance you would have been dead long ago.

The only possible solution to this problem is that I conceive a son. If I beget one, there is no problem left, and the protestantic ghost will be defeated. And only if I have this longed for son I will dare execute you without cause or reason. Philip!

Philip (enters) Yes, my dear?

Mary Love me, Philip! All the welfare of the world depends on your loving me! We must have children! Or else the catholic church will be lost in England!

Philip My beloved, you know well how much I love you. Do not worry. Sooner or later God will give us a son. The world is formed according to His will.

Mary He is not the one to give me children! It is you!

Philip My dear, do not become hysterical, and don't exaggerate! The world is God's, not ours. (leaves)

Mary That wooden man will never give me any children. I would not conceive a bastard even in the harem of the Turkish sultan! Such a prince at least would give me some or other kind of love. This Spanish hermit does not think of anything except his God of impotence! (leaves in fury)

Horace (the old attendant) I hope indeed she will not ever have a child, just for the sake of those poor children who might then be hers. For if she had a child with Philip, such a child would carry with her the incurable stamp of misfortune, just like her hopelessly fanatical and godforsaken parents do.

Scene 3. The Tower.

(Elizabeth is moved to her prison. Lord Cecil catches up with the armed company.)

Cecil Your highness! All England is only waiting for your signal! In your name stands an underground army waiting only for your word to take off the heads of Philip and the bloody Mary.

Elizabeth Be quiet, your honour. Someone can hear you. Be patient. No war signal is ever to be given from me. Be you all as quiet as I am, have patience without end and wait. I pray you, guards, take me along. I will not partake ever in a civil war.

Cecil Your sister Mary hardly leaves us any choice. She has no scruples and no sense, infuriates all England, has decapitated all the best friends of your father's, even cousins like Jane Grey, no more than seventeen years old and innocence incarnate, with her father, our Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk. I must earnestly insist, your highness, – a rebellion now could never fail.

Elizabeth Avaunt, base tempter! Will you have us both beheaded before dawn? There is no patience in Mary, she has for that reason gone too far long since, has made her government impossible and most unpopular and can but be defeated by our patience. That is also our only possibility of safe survival. Give that word to all your secret armies, let them save their blood and limbs for better future use by going home, since whatever follows in the future must be better than this present dismal day.

But who is this I see in this abhorrent prison? Could this old lice-bitten beggar in these rags be our archbishop Thomas Cranmer?

Cranmer That is whom I used to be. You are correct. Now is my soul and life's long work like this decrepit sick old body torn in dismal rags. But what might you be doing here, my favourite and bravest princess? Are you also quite condemned by bloody Mary?

Elizabeth No, archbishop Cranmer, I am only here to pay a visit, certainly imprisoned but occasionally only and without expecting further punishment.

Cranmer Then there is still some hope left for our lost and starving nation. Mary's days will reach a certain end which will be a most certain anti-climax, like all monomaniacal failures in history, the never-ending comedy to be guffawed at since it never will consist of anything else than laughable failures in infinite repetition, for man is an incurable fool who never learns a lesson, wherefore he is nothing but a chronical comedian. Only you have never laughed at others' failures since you don't commit mistakes as fain as others do.

Elizabeth You know me well, archbishop Cranmer.

Cranmer And I think we know each other.

Elizabeth These atrocious Tower guards drag me away from your beloved presence.

Cranmer That is how my final contact with my country is bereft me. Formerly the bishops and the cardinals were all the bloody crooks of this our world. I tried as archbishop of Canterbury to be the opposite, and therefore you find me here in the Tower dismally imprisoned by catholic bishops and cardinals. It only serves to serve the church if you by serving the church serve no one but yourself. Thomas Cromwell found that out but made a failure since he tried to serve the King, and now the church is gone. Her freedom is now chained, and like myself her whole identity will burn to cinders at the stake. I will be burnt tomorrow, and she will finally be beheaded at Queen Mary's last most bloody moments, for she will not spare our church from her politics, the most shameful circus in the world and the most ridiculous. If only we could tame man's natural capacity for ruthlessness, the world politics would no longer be the ruin of humanity as the most shameful circus of the world but merely a most ridiculous comedy of errors. But such a disarmed comedy I will not have the pleasure to experience until I am bereft of my last piece of property – my share in life itself with all its wonderful eternity of human and divine universality.

Guard (to lord Cecil) My lord, you have to leave. I fear that you have seen too much.

Cecil Cruel guard! You shut me out from all the light there is in England.

Guard Light? In these dark Tower dungeons without the tiniest aperture?

Cecil The lady that you took away was England's only moment of brief light.

Guard You mock me, Sir. All lights that enter in the Tower are forever quenched. That's the purpose of the Tower. No one comes in here except to stay in here forever after having turned into a corpse and that most voluntarily.

Cecil Do you not know, guard, that the lady whom you just imprisoned was Elizabeth, the heir to England's crown and throne?

Guard There are no names here in the Tower. This is the core of all the national bureaucracy where nothing is allowed except anonymity. One bishop here, one queen over there, a pious princess here, a chancellor in there, they be soon all the same, completely equal as torn lice-bitten beggars ending up quite apathetic and indifferent as corpses. If you, Sir, have a name and want to keep it, leave immediately and never venture to come back. It is for your own good, Sir, that I now drive you out. (*drives him out.*)

Queer eccentrics enter here sometimes indeed! Good riddance I say to some of them! In here is only death, and light is only with those fooling madmen who prefer the life of sunshine and natural liberty outside. I call them fooling madmen when they fail to recognize their happiness. In here there is no happiness except among the

rats and lice and crawling things of dampness, which are expert at together gnawing quite the souls of prisoners to death through unescapable pneumonia, if the victims do not freeze to death forgetting all their feelings of identity as winter enters with the creeping cold of frigorific frost. They usually go down to death long before winter, since the cold in here is such, that every dew-drop freezes quite to stone-hard ice long in advance before the fatal stroke of winter comes.

Scene 4. The Tower.

(The cell of Princess Elizabeth. She stands by the wee window looking out.)

Elizabeth The Tower. That's the truth of England. Dirty dungeons. Jails and bars, hard gratings, cold damp stone walls, black and dismal knights and guards in every nook and crannie. Not a finger can be moved but someone does observe it and forbids it. Nothing is allowed. You can do nothing, and you may do nothing. Prisons – that's the truth of power, monarchies, and all the states in Europe. No one rises gloriously to power but a hundred people pay for it by being led to prison, where they smother. Hard cruel world, misguided by its every guide! Who said those words: "The way to learn the true condition of a country is to learn the true condition of its shut up prisoners". Oh, huge imposing black and dreary walls, apart from you my only company are all these creeping lice! Sweet sunshine, blessed are all those who may enjoy your light, and they don't know how graced they are. Oh, what a bliss to course in nature, running barefoot on your golden fields! To hunt the deer, the stag, the swine, to ride about on merry mares in dark green labyrinths of forests, hills, deep valleys, mountains and a river hindering the course. To sail out with a caravel of those who father built, to conquer all the seas, to master alien continents and battling for them with great storms and hurricanes! To sink, perhaps, but always to survive. To war with heathens, infidels and black heretics, and to take a powerful revenge on all those dreary black pedantic horrifying catholics, who turned this England to a flaming pyre, to a hell for innocents, while they themselves, all devils, laughed in heaven which they plundered, drinking, boozing and carousing. What a life a show like that would be! But I am speaking shamefully. To punish evil with more evil is the greatest evil. Why did Mary put me here? What did I do to her? I just did nothing. Why is it forbidden to live well in peace, to eat good food in comfortableness, to quietly enjoy the beauty of this humdrum life, to love philosophy, the silence, loneliness, oneself and all the lovability of our existence? Why may no one ever live in peace? The more you love retirement, philosophy, yourself, the universe and peace, the more men bother you and torture you and drag you most persistently to hellish things which they bename reality. If certain individuals are capable of managing without that hard reality and do so happily, why may they not? Why must they be dragged down at any cost from their felicity? What harm is there in certain people having what I call a certain sense of beauty? Must the rest, the mob, the soulless mass of ignorant unthinking workers, necessarily fare ill because a few fare well? No, God has never meant it so. He made the paradise in order that good worthy men should find it and enjoy it. Those who lack the sense of spiritual qualities and insight have themselves to blame for ignorance and no one else. Where wisdom is in want it must be sought, and he who wants it but ignores the seeking of it is a case of hopelessness to be ignored.

The sum of humanism is tolerance, that irresistible divine constructive everlastingly expansive child of civilization. Dark intolerance is the sick mark of superstition, bigotry and prejudice, that active ignorance which it is our duty to eliminate the power of. But why did ignorance and superstition ever get established in a firm position of oppression? That is something for the learned to discuss in a safe

distant future where the name of Satan nevermore is mentioned nor the mere idea even taken seriously. Beauty, tolerance, good food, good comfort, culture, art, good peace, philosophy and humble kindness, those are some good truthful names which constitute a better God than all the hells and heavens, purgatories, cults and angels and weird rites which always have confused the minds of men. The only sane authority in history was common sense, that factor should be crowned as king forever, and all things irrational should be assigned to childish dreams of definite unseriousness. But quiet down, my thoughts: an actor must not keep the stage alone too long. *(drums are heard from a distance)*

But what drums are those thundering out of this dark silence of the grave? Who has been executed, or who has been buried now alive? *(enter lord Cecil)* Lord Cecil!

Cecil My most royal princess, you are free.

Elizabeth What are you saying?

Cecil You are free.

Elizabeth You must be bluffing, or you simply are not real. I fail to understand you and can even less believe you.

Cecil Mary's schemes have failed. She can no longer justly hold you prisoner, for Thomas Wyatt has refused to lie before the face of God and thereby make you his accomplice.

Elizabeth Did she plan such outrage?

Cecil They kept torturing the man until his blood was almost emptied to the last drop from his body. He is dying now a martyr pure and innocent for truth.

Elizabeth Sir Thomas Wyatt dying?

Cecil They will kill him so that the established crooks of this catholic government may stay a little longer in position. It is the old story once again: one is sacrificed, so that the many may survive.

Elizabeth So that is why the drums are rolling? *(runs to the small window)*

O my God! They bring him forth! They place his head now on the block! *(the drums grow louder)* The executioner is ready, and his axe is raised. It falls! *(she looks away)* Another noble family is extirpated by Queen Mary. Thomas Wyatt's father was a poet greatly honoured and appreciated by my father and my mother. Mary, this was sacrilegious!

Cecil I am afraid that what is done is irrevocable. It is no use to linger with a tearful eye by the most bloody sight of such an heinous crime.

Elizabeth His memory must be revered and honoured like Sir Thomas More's. Why do we live if not to be remembered by our progeny? Those young ones who forget the greatness of their dead will die themselves too early without honour.

Cecil So be it.

Elizabeth But why did he rebel?

Cecil He could not stand a future looking too unfairly catholic and Spanish.

Elizabeth Then he had a reason good enough for dying, and he made a great example.

Cecil Don't forget that you are free, madame, with all your future.

Elizabeth Thomas Wyatt liberated me.

Cecil Yes, Thomas Wyatt died to save his mistress.

Elizabeth Let us then get out of here and wait in safety for the fall of my poor sister Mary, who turned out to be so miserable as a tyrant. Rotten apples never do hang very long in reasonable trees. Lord Cecil, do you follow me and all my purposes?

Cecil I do indeed but not without a silent critic's reservations. I will follow you in all your courses but will stick with constancy to my own conscience above all.

Elizabeth That's good. Pray, guard me well and criticize me carefully. I must needs have that constant urgent watch. My blood is of that same capricious quality which marks the blood of Mary, our father was a butcher like herself, so I will need a

guardian of conscience. Only criticize me, though, with truth and never only for the sake of words or entertainment.

Leave me now in peace until my sister finally is gone. She must be going now already, since she does not grant the Englishmen a heart. Thereby she only strangles her own heart, but no one can endure a life without a heart. I guess she must be dead soon for that reason.

Keep in touch when she has given up her folly. At that moment I will come to you, for then I shall be needing you.

Cecil I thank you, royal princess.

Elizabeth No, lord Cecil, I thank you. *(They walk out into the light.)*

Scene 5. Queen Mary's court.

Mary The Church is incapable of love. She can not make children, so she can not make love, and that's the tragedy of catholicism. We catholics are virtuous but barren like my mother. We have failed in England, and the only reward for my endeavour is ingratitude and all the people's hatred beside this dreadful nickname they have given me which will cling to me for all eternity. I have nothing else to do in life now but to die a victim to my own ambition, my religious effort and my self-consuming passion, which was never shared by Philip. I have started many wars but never won a victory. My life sums up in a confession of my utter defeat against God, who never allows any human being to rule the world alone. I destroyed all competition, which turned into my defeat, for not even king Philip of the mighty Spain would love a woman who was totally possessed by power. *(retires)*

Philip (enters) My father subdued all the world and gave it all to me for my inheritance, and now I see it capsize from infection of a universal tiredness and spleen. My wedded queen is barren like a desert, and my family will soon be extinct. The world my father gave me for inheritance is running out between my fingers, and that is apparently the law of heritage. What you create must die with you, for God can not maintain the vain constructions of mortality. God is creator, not a labourer or gardener or servant. I did not create my empire myself, and therefore I was never worthy of it. I must therefore lose it all. Testamentation is a vanity; you can not rely on others to take over what you gave your spirit. Each man must completely on his own build up his empire and his life's work. The fellow who is not creative is not capable of management. My busiest task in life has been to celebrate my masses and to say my constant prayers, that is how I cultivated my eternal life, but this most troublesome and awkward world, which I did nothing to deserve, must fall, because my father, who created it, is dead.

O God, what is the meaning of our lives when all our holy church traditions are as futile as thin air? The present age gives nothing for Saint Augustine, for Bernard of Clairvaux, Saint Francis or the "Summa Theologica" of Thomas from Aquino. In this new world the Church is no more up to date with her demand for piety, asceticism and virtue, which I shockingly experienced above all in this most hard and alien nation, which I married into but which never wanted me. No Spaniard can thrive in this cold stale phlegmatic and too naturally liberal free-thinking country. God is silent here in England to my urgent prayers, he is altogether silent here like all the bones of all the graves of all humanity forgotten by all human memory. It seems to me that God is dead like all the corpses gathered by the ruthlessness of history from this so miserably hopeless world of comfortless and starving multitudes of forlorn madmen born to darkness, dying ever like the shadows of an ever waning dusk.

Page (entering) Your majesty, the Queen is ill and asks for your company.

Philip Tell her that I would most unwillingly satisfy her wish.

Page Your majesty, such an answer would break her heart.

Philip Then break her heart. You have my full permission. I must leave this godforsaken country now, because Spain needs me, (*aside*) and there I might rediscover God. Let Queen Mary die without me. Maybe that will shorten her sufferings. I am tired of the stinking sentimentality of sick women. If they can't be positive, then let them be, and if they must complain, let them alone with it, and if they ail, just let them. Every person is responsible for her own fate and can't get help from others with it. Tell her that I have returned to Spain. (*page leaves.*) I will leave at once. Let's get the hell out of England. (*exit*)

Mary (behind the scene, screaming) No! (*a pause*) It cannot be true!

(*enter in night-gown, dishevelled and haggard, holding her stomach because of pains, etc.*) He can not forsake me! O Philip, beloved husband! Are you such a coward, then, that you dare leave me while I'm dying? Ah! (*screams for pain*) Ah! (*wallowing on the floor from pains.*)

Page (enters) Your majesty, you can not be here on the floor at such a distance from your bed.

Mary What fate would suit me finer than to lie here in most torturous convulsions almost naked? What do I deserve if not this very business? Ah! (*screaming from pain*) A curse on all my government! God damn my ugly matrimony, which bestowed on me nothing but cysts and tumours! Damnation over England, which only hated me to death! I curse that bloody Philip who abandoned me! God damn that rotten Spain and all the papal sacrilegious church! Damnation over all humanity! I hope all people will destroy each other, perishing in everlasting wars of false religions! That is all humanity deserves: flagitious unhumanity! Ah! (*screams*)

Page Your majesty, it is not fitting... it is not appropriate...

Mary I know! I am not appropriate for England! I am not suitable! Then let me die! That's my ultimate desire! Ah! (*writhing in pain*)

(*the page makes a sign, a number of servants appear to take care of the Queen, who is carried out.*) Leave me alone! Let me die alone in peace! Let me just die before I have managed to execute all England! (*she is carried away with her pains.*)

Scene 6. London town.

A fashionable square with many people of all kinds.

(*enter a courtier*)

courtier Hello, friend Peter! Have you heard the news?

Peter What news? (*The courtier whispers something in Peter's ears. Peter shines up.*)

That's news indeed! The sun is here again now after having been too far away for far too long an absence! Now we may at last breathe fresh delicious dustfree air again! I must at once go tell my friends the news! (*leaves courtier*)

Hey, Patrick! Have you heard what I have heard?

Patrick That depends on what you've heard. What have you heard? (*Peter whispers in his ear.*) Don't you call her a Queen! She was no more a Queen than I am bloody Mary's lover! But it certainly is news, and I will tell my friends about it. (*Peter disappears in the crowd.*) Say, how do you do, Sir Arthur! Have you heard the news from court?

Sir Arthur I have not, and I will not, for the reason that I am quite sick of everything that comes from court. No news is good news when it comes from wretched Mary's court.

Patrick But this will gladden you. (*whispers in his ear*) Or won't it?

Sir Arthur I don't know. An evil ruthless mad fanatic Queen is dead but will but be replaced by yet another evil ruthless mad fanatic Queen. You mark my words! They will come true! No Queen is fit to rule a country. Only Kings are good for purposes

of power. But this news, although it comes from court, I certainly will further and inform my friends of.

Hey, Sir Charles! How do you do!

Sir Charles Sir Arthur! How are you this morning?

Sir Arthur No better than on any ordinary day, but truth is something one should ever be as silent and abstruse about as mice about their robbéd cheese, for speaking of it does not ever make truth any better or the slightest bit less hopelessly diseased. In social company, therefore, and for the sake of good relations, one should never say how matters stand indeed. But I have some quite fresh and rosy information for your well brought up discreet, discriminating and discerning ear, if you will lend it to me.
(whispers in Sir Charles' ear)

Sir Charles This is grave and hefty news. The nation has long needed it, and hearing it at last will make it soar to heaven with delight, for pleasant news it is indeed for senseless English crowds who do not know that Queens, no matter how they are as Queens, are human beings also even they. Let's tell lord Cecil this important piece of news. – Lord Cecil, have you heard the news?

Cecil What news?

Sir Charles The Queen is dead.

Cecil Is that the reason why the sky today is blue and bright and smiling of delight? Is that the reason why our town today looks bright with joy and eager with the thirst for work and action? Smiles our Father in his heaven on this country suddenly with kindness, after endless years of terrible oppression? Are you certain it is true?

Sir Charles The only pleasant truth I've heard in all my life.

Cecil To court, then! I must see with never lying eyes that bloody Mary finally is dead, for if it be a joke or lie, life can not be more cruel.

Sir Charles Let the blue sky be your witness with this booming seething national delight which marks the mind of every Londoner today! Can you look any English person in her eyes today and disbelieve that bloody Mary finally is dead?

Cecil It seems to me as if we finally have found ourselves.

Sir Charles That is the proof! Let our identity as Englishmen newborn today be satisfying and enough as evidence!

Cecil Undoubtedly this miracle of history, of faces and of national mentality speaks more than truth.

(to the audience) The nightmare now is over, and in thousands Englishmen and Londoners will cheer by Mary's sealed up coffin. Let us now forget all evil that was done, and let's instead look forward to the light of future and its fairest bud the virgin Queen. May she now constitute the contrary of all that we have suffered during twenty-five long cruel unending years of crisis caused by the undisciplined loose passions of the house of Tudor and nine queens, among which eight at least fell victims.

Now with speed to blessed brave Elizabeth, who certainly by now ought to have learnt some wisdom after all those madnesses produced by her own family.

(exit)

THE END.