

CD 1

ACT ONE

1 Prelude

Scene 1

Outside a tilting ground, during a tournament (Essex, attended by Cuffe, is listening to the proceedings within. Cuffe, at an opening in the wall, reports on what he can see.)

Chorus (off)

2 What champion rides?
Is it Mountjoy?

Cuffe

He throws the gauntlet down!

Essex

Who throws the gauntlet down?

Cuffe

He takes it up!

Essex

Who takes it up?

Cuffe

My lord Mountjoy.

Essex

Oh, if his luck were mine!

Chorus

He mounts in hope,
with joy we cheer!
Mountjoy!

Cuffe

They both salute the Queen.

Chorus

Hail!

Essex

Why do they cheer?

Cuffe

My lord, they love the sight of him.

Essex

I hear they do.
If only I were he!

Chorus

Our joy mounts up,
our hope, Mountjoy!

Cuffe

They're in the lists, about to charge!
They charge! A glancing blow —
will you not watch, my lord?

Essex

If I should watch
I could not bear to see
Mountjoy prevail.

Chorus

Strike anew,
strike once more!
Strike anew, Mountjoy! Our joy!

Cuffe

They wheel and turn,
he parries with his shield.
A giant thrust! He reels!

Essex

Say that he falls,
say that Mountjoy falls!

Chorus

Our hope falls, our hope falls, falls!
Mountjoy, our hope sustain!

Cuffe

He does not fall! He does not fall!
Again he wheels for the charge.
Once more they ride.

Essex

This time he falls!
This time he's down!

Chorus

Strike now, Mountjoy!
Mountjoy! Mountjoy!

Cuffe

My lord, he's down!

Essex

Who's down?

Cuffe

With one great blow
against his iron breast
the other is unhorsed!

Essex

I cannot bear, cannot bear his luck!

Cuffe

Mountjoy, Mountjoy has won!

Chorus

Our champion now,
we cheer Mountjoy! Mountjoy!

Cuffe

There now, the mob has all gone wild
because Mountjoy has won!

Essex

Mountjoy has won!

Chorus

Mountjoy! Mountjoy!...

Cuffe

Now he makes his humble duty
before the Queen in strength and beauty!

Essex

His the place that should be mine!

Chorus

Dismounts with joy,
salutes the Queen!

Cuffe

He takes a golden prize
now from the royal hand.

Essex

Ah!

Chorus

Mountjoy!

Cuffe

To the Queen like one they are turning.

Chorus

Green leaves are we,
red rose our golden Queen,
o crownèd rose among the leaves so green!

*(Mountjoy emerges from a tent, accompanied by
a page, to whom he hands the golden chessman
just presented to him by the Queen, together
with a crimson ribbon.)*

Mountjoy

Boy, bind upon my arm
this my reward.

Page *(obeying)*

My lord!

Mountjoy

I'll wear it as a charm.
No sooner said than done.

Essex

3 'Twas you, my lord Mountjoy,
that won the crowd?
It was. I know it. And I know
easy applause is loud.

Mountjoy

My friend, I boast not.

Essex

No, you need not!

Mountjoy

Need not?

Essex

What meaneth, may I ask,
that bauble on your arm?

Mountjoy

It is a golden queen at chess...

Essex

[You find in that your happiness?
Mere luck I must despise!

Mountjoy

... the Queen herself as prize
gave me in great goodwill.

Essex

Mere luck I must despise!
A favour now for every fool! *rep.*

Mountjoy

Take back those words! *rep.*

Essex

Not !!
A favour for a fool, I said!

Mountjoy

Unsay it, then!

Essex

Not !!

Mountjoy

Unsay it, then!

Essex

Not !!

Mountjoy

Unsay it!

Essex

Nay!

(They draw their swords and fight. A fanfare is heard; Essex, turning at the sound, receives a slight wound in the left arm. His page binds a scarf around it. Preceded by trumpeters, a procession emerges from the tilting ground. The crowd follows it. Essex and Mountjoy kneel as the Queen appears, attended by Raleigh.)

Queen

- [4] Heaven, what have we here?

A wound! My lord of Essex bleedeth!
(having seen that the wound is not grave, turning to Raleigh and speaking ironically)
 One lord weareth a favour,
 the other weareth a wound!
 How now?

Chorus

One lord another supersedeth,...

Queen *(turning to Essex)*

You did not get that mark in sport!

Chorus

... rivals for a lady's favour!...

Queen

- [5] The Earl of Essex hangs his head,
 hath lost his tongue, forgot
 his courtliness as well. Beware!
 I'll not be crossed!
 We'll have you both to know
 an ancient rule: at court
 no man may strike a blow
 for any cause at all.
 Hearken, my lord Mountjoy:
 what penalty should fall
 on noble lords who strive
 like ostlers in a brawl?
 Explain yourselves!
 I'll have the gist!
 Your Prince commands!

Chorus

Her Majesty will hear their case.

Queen

I command you!

Essex

- [6] The honour done him by your Grace
 he came and flaunted in my face! *rep.*
Mountjoy
 The honour done me by your Grace
 hath been dishonoured in this place! *rep.*

I flaunted nothing...

Essex

A dolt am I, to be deluded?

Or craven I, to bear abusings?

The royal presence must subdue...

Mountjoy

You intruded!

Meek am I, to hear accusings?

The royal presence must subdue...

Queen

Halt!

Essex, Mountjoy

[... my rightful rage!]

Queen

In Heaven's name be dumb!

E'en when fishwives wrangle

they must make an end of words.

Chorus

The Queen will have them
 know their place!

Queen

Raleigh, what think you
 of these pettish lords?

Chorus

Sir Walter takes them both to task.

Raleigh

As your Highness commands,
 let me, of riper age, tell what I see.

- [7] Both lords are younglings, both
 in glory would appear:
 'stay', quoth the first one,
 'what dost thou here?'
 'Pride,' doth the other answer,
 'brings you, my lord, too near.'
 These two are rivals, like
 the blue fly and the bee:
 'buzz,' quoth the blue fly,
 'hum,' quoth the bee,
 'how can this busy body
 take precedence of me?'
 When head and heart are hot,
 then tongue and hand are wild:
 so, Ma'am, it looks to me.

Essex, Mountjoy (*aside*)

I curse him for his insolence,
and some day I will hurl him down.

Queen

- 8 Raleigh, your wit flies free,
we find your judgement mild.
Approach, my subjects both,
and hear my judgement now.

Chorus

Like Solomon, the wisest Prince, our Prince
her wisdom to her judgement brings.

Queen

Anger would be too strong
against this youthful sparring:
my ruling hear ye both:
forbear from graver warring!

God's death, we need your arms!
Pray you, good lords, defend us,
our kingdom and our people
against the foes would end us.

Fail not to come to court
in fine or dirty weather,
I'll not neglect you —
but see you come together!

Rise both, my lords, and see
how these good folk respect you:
spurn not their trust; remember
your Princess will protect you.

Essex, Mountjoy

She'll not neglect us
if we will come together.

Mountjoy

Our quarrel over, I engage
myself to be his friend.

Essex

The wisdom of our Queen
hath made us brothers,
who this day were foes.

Cuffe, Raleigh

Fail not to come to court
in fine or dirty weather.

Queen

Spurn not their trust,
your Princess will protect you.
See how these good folk,
these folk respect you:
spurn not their trust,
remember, I will protect you.

Raleigh

All honour to our Queen, who calms
the stubborn knights-at-arms, *etc.*
Each heart from now be dedicate
unto this wise Princess.

Essex

The wisdom of our Queen
hath made us brothers.
If Gloriana gives me armies to command,
my banner will emblazon lasting love.

Mountjoy

Our quarrel over, I engage
to be his friend.
A loyal homage is a lasting love.
In one that offers life to her,
his homage is a lasting love.

Cuffe

In thankfulness your servant,
I stand in a lower place,
obeying such a monarch
raiseth a man's esteem, *etc.*

Chorus

Fail not to come to court
in fine or dirty weather:
she'll not neglect them
if they will come together.
To our great Queen,
our Queen,
thanks we now give.

Essex, Mountjoy, Cuffe, Raleigh

Our lives are in your hand,
Queen of this island region!
Your life is guarded
by ours as by a legion
we vow this day.

Chorus

The wisdom of our Queen
hath made them brothers
who this day were foes, *etc.*

All (*except the Queen*)

Long may she keep this realm
from war and war's alarms!

(*Essex and Mountjoy kneel at the Queen's feet.*)

Chorus, Cuffe, Raleigh

Green leaves are we,
red rose our golden Queen,
o crownèd rose among the leaves so green!
o crownèd rose, *etc...*

Queen

And now I give you both
my hand, for your obedience.

Essex, Mountjoy

Your Majesty, a subject kneels
to thank you for your grace.

Chorus

... O crownèd rose
among the leaves so green.

Queen

- [9] My lords, your quarrel's reconciled,
and now I end this audience.
Let trumpets blow!

Essex, Mountjoy, Raleigh

Let trumpets blow!

Queen, Essex, Mountjoy, Raleigh

Lead on!

(The procession reforms and proceeds.)

Scene 2

A private apartment at Nonesuch

*(The Queen is alone with Cecil. She is seated;
he is standing.)*

Queen

- [10] Too touchy and too hot,
they fought like boys.
Too touchy, too hot.
Lady Rich, Penelope,
what did she say or do
when she heard of the fight?

Cecil

My lord of Essex is her brother;
my lady was much concerned.

Queen

Concerned for both?

Cecil

Madam, rumour declares
Mountjoy and Lady Rich are closely fond.

Queen

'Tis true, I know: 'tis true:
the dark Penelope!
To have a brother and a lover fight
would banish all tranquillity.

Cecil

The touchier of the two

received the wound.

Queen

'Twas right someone should take
our Essex down,
or he might grow unruly,
and unruled.

Cecil

The Earl will not be schooled,
will never learn restraint.

Queen

My pigmy elf, ah! 'tis for that
I love the lordly boy!

Cecil

Ah, Madam, Madam, pray take care!

Queen

- [11] Hark, sir! This ring I had at my crowning:
with it I wedded myself to the realm.
My comfort hath been
that my people are happy:
happiness theirs
because you are discreet.
I seek no husband:
but good Master Ascham
in my infancy taught me
love's better than fear.

Cecil

And caution is better,
sweet Highness, than ruin,
than rashness and ruin!
O Princess, whom your people love
as their protector,
long and long my noble father served you:
o let me serve you now, recite
the precept that my father taught!

- [12] The art of government
is in procrastination and
in silence and delay:
blazing bonfires left to burn
will soon consume themselves away.
Of evils choose the least:
great foes will tumble down in time,
or wither, one by one.
He that rules must hear and see
what's openly or darkly done.
All that is not enough:
there comes a moment when to rule
is to be swift and bold:
know at last the time to strike —
it may be when the iron is cold!

Queen

Your Princess thanks you, trusty elf.

Cecil

- 13** Now if I may obtrude myself,
the new ambassador from Spain —

Queen

Is at the old one's tricks again!
With one care ended, others are begun.

Cecil

The newest is an old care
now renewed.

Queen

What new old care is this?

Cecil

Word has been brought
the King of Spain designs
a new Armada to be sent —

Queen

How soon?
How nearly can they guess,
our faithful eyes and ears?

Cecil

Perhaps before the spring.

Queen

God's death! What men,
what money must be thrown
into the maw of cannon!

Cecil

Madam, we are in the hands of God.
He at a breath can melt the steel of Spain:
we can but watch and wait.

Queen

We can but watch and wait.

(A stir at the door. Essex's page enters.)

Page

My lord of Essex!

(Essex enters, kneels and rises. The page leaves.)

Queen

Welcome, my lord. Sir Robert here,
so wise in counsel, will return anon.

(Cecil bows himself out.)

Cousin, I greet you.

Essex

Queen of my life!

Queen

Ah, Robin!

Essex

Queen of my life!

Queen

Cares of State eat up my days.
There lies my lute;
take it and play.

Essex *(taking up the lute)*

- 14** Quick music is best
when the heart is oppressed;
quick music can heal
with dancing, by night and by day.
Hallaloo, hallalay...

Quick music is best
for the pipe or the strings;
quick music can heal
with dancing, the pleasure of kings.
Hallaloo, hallalay...

Queen

Too light, too gay:
a song for careless hearts.
Turn to the lute again,
evoke some far-off place or time,
a dream, a mood, an air
to spirit us both away.

Essex

- 15** Happy were he could finish forth his fate
in some unhaunted desert, where, obscure
from all society, from love and hate
of worldly folk, there might he sleep secure;
then wake again, and give God ever praise,
content with hips and haws and brambleberry;
in contemplation spending all his days,
and change of holy thoughts
to make him merry: where, when he dies,
his tomb might be a bush
where harmless robin dwells
with gentle thrush;
happy were he!

Queen

Robin, a melting song: but who
can this unworl'dly hermit be?

(Essex continues to strum on the lute.)

Essex

It might be any man,
not one you know.

Queen

'Tis a conceit, it is not you.

Essex *(laying aside the lute)*

16 Queen of my life, I cannot tell.

Queen

You man of moods!

Essex

I know it well!

Queen

Victor of Cadiz!

Essex

Loser of esteem!

Queen

Leader of armies!

Essex

Follower of a dream!

Queen

Now up, now down,
and cautious never!

Essex

But to one passion constant ever!

Queen

To advance in fortune,
as becomes a man.

Essex

To advance in favour,
as a suitor longs.

Queen

Do I not favour thee,
promote thy pride
and right thy wrongs?

Essex

Sovereign most loved —

Queen

O heretofore,
though ringed with foes,
I only bled with arrows of the spring,
my sense was only wounded by the rose:
and I too then could sing.
But years decline and go:
video et taceo! Video et taceo!

Essex

What solace more can I disclose?
Better than tears the faithfulness I bring.
What my heart holds, only thy heart knows,
and I too now can sing:
are tears a sign to show
that we shall reap but as we sow?
Ah, Madam, than your voice with me
no song is sweeter.

Queen

Then rejoice with me!
I am a woman, though I be a Queen,
and still a woman, though I be a Prince!

Essex

Then let me dare assert
the man I am, avow
mine humble duty is
far more than duty now.
Call me not malapert
if from thy feet I start
a subject, who declares
a more than subject heart —

Queen

Robin, no more!
Blow not the spark to flame —
*(pointing to the silhouette of Raleigh, suddenly
visible through a thin curtain)*
Look, my lord, we are not alone!

Essex

The jackal lurking by the wall,
how vain his hope the lion will fall!

Queen

Be less impetuous, my lord.

Essex

The jackal waiting in the night,
he keepeth long his evil spite.

Queen

You wrong Sir Walter Raleigh there.

Essex

Raleigh, Cecil, seek to ban
my claim to Ireland, if they can.
I am the man to conquer Tyrone —
for God's sake let me go!

Queen

Your plainings I can ne'er refuse...

Essex

For God's sake let me go!
I am the man Tyrone to overthrow,
I am the man.
Sweet Prince, for God's sake let me go!

Queen

... Your plainings I can ne'er refuse...
Robin, I must spare your presence:
the business of the kingdom waits.
Make your adieu!

*(She strikes a bell. Raleigh's shadow disappears.
Essex kneels, and she gives him her hand to kiss.
The page appears and Essex bows himself out.)*

Queen

- [17] On rivalries 'tis safe for kings
to base their power;
but how their spirit longs
for harmonies and mellowings
of discords harsh,
of real and phantom wrongs!
(thinking of Essex)
If life were love and love were true,
then could I love thee through and through!
But God gave me a sceptre,
the burden and the glory —
I must not lay them down:
I live and reign a virgin,
will die in honour,
leave a refulgent crown!
(In a rapt, exalted mood, she kneels and prays.)
O God, my King, sole ruler of the world,
that pulled me from a prison to a palace
to be a sovereign Princess
and to rule the people of England:
thou hast placed me high,
but my flesh is frail:
without Thee my throne is unstable,
my kingdom tottering, my life uncertain:
O maintain in this weak woman
the heart of a man!
Errors and faults have beset me
from my youth,
I bow myself before
the throne of Thy grace:

forgive me and protect me,
O God, my King,
that I may rule
and protect my people in peace.
Amen, Amen, Amen.

ACT TWO**Scene 1**

*The Guildhall in Norwich
(The Queen is on progress through the city,
attended by Essex, Cecil, Raleigh and Mountjoy.
She is listening to the conclusion of an address
by the Recorder in the presence of a crowd.)*

Recorder

- [18] ... And therefore, most gracious Empress,
the citizens of Norwich must always pray
for Your Majesty's royal person,
whom God now and ever, preserve,
to His good pleasure and our great comfort.

Queen

I thank you, Master Recorder.
You have spoken to me
from the faithful hearts
of my people of Norwich,
and I would have them know
that they may have a greater or wiser prince,
but they shall never have a prince more loving.

Citizens

Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

*(The Recorder approaches the Queen, who gives
him her hand to kiss. In attempting to kneel
before her, he stumbles. She helps him to rise.)*

Queen

Good sir, your homage hath nearly proved your
undoing!

Recorder

Madam, Madam, forgive me.
My bones are old;
my heart is old,
but not too old to beat,
and if my knees would bend
I would be kneeling at your feet.

Queen

God's blessing on your heart,
continue there.

Citizens

Behold! Behold!
Never was a prince more loving!

Recorder

Madam, it is our hope
you may be pleased to see
a masque, here new devised
to honour you, with song and dance.

(The Queen signifies her consent and is conducted to a chair.)

Essex (aside)

Tedious orations,
dotards on their knees —
I for one could yawn myself to death.

Cecil (aside)

To be on progress with her Majesty,
is that no honour to you now, my lord?

Essex

An honour, yes, but like a chain
that holds me back.

Cecil

That holds you back, from what?

Essex

When will the Queen decide
her Deputy for Ireland?

Cecil

The masque begins.

19 THE MASQUE

(Facing the Queen and her attendants is a fanciful leafy bower. The Spirit of the Masque is at the centre of the bower, while the Semi-chorus of the Masque is grouped around it.)

Masquers

Melt earth to sea, sea flow to air,
and air fly into fire!
The elements, at Gloriana's chair,
mingle in tuneful choir.

Spirit of the Masque

And now we summon from this leafy bower
the demi-god that must appear!
'Tis Time! 'tis Time! 'tis Time!

(From the bower springs forth a sunburnt and heroic-looking young man representing Time. He carries a bag slung from one shoulder. Time dances.)

Masquers

Yes, he is Time,
lusty and blithe!
Time is at his apogee.
Although you thought to see
a bearded ancient with a scythe,

No reaper he
that cries 'Take heed!'
Time is at his apogee!
Young and strong, in his prime:
behold the sower of the seed!

Queen (aside)

And Time it was that brought me here...

Essex

And Time hath yet to bring me
what is due.

Spirit of the Masque

Time could not sow unless
he had a spouse to bless
his work, and give it life —
Concord, his loving wife!

(From the bower steps forth Concord, a young woman of placid beauty. She dances.)

Masquers

Concord is here
our days to bless
and this our land to endure
with plenty, peace and happiness.

Concord and Time
each needeth each:
the ripest fruit hangs where
not one, but only two
can reach.

Spirit of the Masque

Now Time with Concord dances
this island doth rejoice:
and woods and waves and waters
make echo to our voice.

(Time and Concord dance together.)

Masquers

From springs of bounty
through this county
streams abundant
of thanks shall flow!

Where life was scanty
fruits of plenty
swell resplendent
from earth below!

No Greek nor Roman
queenly woman
knew such favour
from Heav'n above
as she whose presence
is our pleasure:
Gloriana
hath all our love!

Raleigh (*aside to Mountjoy*)

My lord, hath time brought concord now
between the Earl of Essex and yourself?

Mountjoy (*aside to Raleigh*)

Again we are good friends.

Raleigh

He loves me not.

Take with a grain of salt, I beg you,
his abuse of me. I beg you.

Spirit of the Masque

And now, country maidens, bring a tribute of
flowers
to the flower of princes all.

*(A troop of young girls step lightly out from
the bower and dance.)*

Masquers

Sweet flag and cuckoo-flower,
cowslip and columbine,
king-cups and sops-in-wine,
flower-de-luce and calaminth,
harebell and hyacinth,
myrtle and bay, with rosemary between,
Norfolk's own garlands for her Queen!

Spirit of the Masque

Behold a troop of rustic swains,
bringing from the waves and pastures
the fruits of their toil.

*(A troop of Rustics and Fishermen dance forward
from the bower.)*

Masquers

From fen and meadow
in rushy baskets
they bring ensamples
of all they grow:

in earthen dishes
their deep-sea fishes;
yearling fleeces,
woven blankets;
new cream and junkets,
and rustic trinkets
on wicker flasks,
their country largess —
the best they know!

Spirit of the Masque

Led by Time and Concord,
let all unite in homage to Gloriana,
our hope of peace, our flower of grace.

(A final dance, in which all the performers join.)

Spirit of the Masque and Masquers

These tokens of our love receiving,
o take them, Princess great and dear,
from Norwich, city you are leaving,
that you afar may feel us near.

Queen

[20] Norwich, we never can forget,
where Time and Concord sweetly met.
Good folk, we thank you from our heart,
and in your time may concord ne'er depart.

Citizens, Spirit of the Masque, Masquers

Behold! Behold!
Never was a Prince more loving.
O crownèd rose among the leaves so green!
Hurrah! Hurrah!

Essex, Mountjoy, Cecil, Raleigh, Recorder

Long live our rose,
our evergreen!

Citizens, Masquers

Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

Scene 2

*The garden of Essex House in the Strand.
Evening
(Mountjoy, alone)*

Mountjoy

[21] A garden by a river at a trysting
is perfect in the evening for a pair,
yet if one for the other long attendeth,
delay falls like a frost upon the air.
But anguish is exquisite in waiting,
and who, with hope aflame,

who feeleth chill?
and oh, who can say,
when waiting endeth,
there is more joy in hunting
than the kill?

(Lady Penelope Rich appears.)

Lady Rich

Mountjoy, I am here, here at last,

Mountjoy

My dark Penelope!

Lady Rich

... I am here
for a stolen hour by the Thames:
and stolen love demandeth
crafty stratagems!

Mountjoy

An angel wedded to a brute!

Lady Rich

But could an angel so deceive?

Both

- 22 Let us walk in the paths of pleasure
and forget the nagging world outside.

Mountjoy

My rare one, my ruby, my treasure,
my stealthy, my secret one, my own!

Lady Rich

Thy words are honey-dew to me;
I never hear their like from my lord.

Mountjoy

I'll give thee more than words.

Lady Rich

And more than words I will return thee.

Mountjoy

Come to the fountain, my Penelope.

Lady Rich

Yes, I will come with thee.

Mountjoy, Lady Rich

And watch our two reflections kiss.
There in the water we shall see
the double image of our single bliss.
Waters, like mirrors, have no memory
of any strange encounters they reflect.

(Essex and Lady Essex appear. They do not see Mountjoy and Lady Rich.)

Essex

- 23 Whatever step I take
the Queen will bar my way.

Lady Essex

The Queen knows your valour!

Essex

She knoweth not
how quick my patience ebbs.

Lady Essex

A subject must obey.

Essex

Caprice, rebuff, delay —

(Essex and Lady Essex move out of sight.)

Mountjoy

Your brother weareth sorrow like a mask.

Lady Rich

He feels his strength unused.
With a great army he would sail
to Ireland, to attack Tyrone.
And he will mope or storm until
the Queen hath let him go.

Mountjoy, Lady Rich

A garden by the river in the evening
is doleful for a man ill at ease,
with enemies whose envy is more somber
than cold unfathomed hollows of the seas.

Essex *(reappearing with Lady Essex)*

Caprice, rebuff, delay —
far more than enough to bear!

Lady Essex

In time she must relent.

Essex

In time! In time I'll break her will!
I'll have my way!

Lady Essex

Robert, beware!
You might be heard!

(Lady Rich and Mountjoy come out of the shadows.)

Lady Rich

Brother,...

Mountjoy

Essex,...

Lady Rich, Mountjoy

... you might be heard
by other ears than ours.

Lady Essex

Penelope! My lord Mountjoy!

Essex

On my own ground,
[24] with my own voice,
to my own wife
I dare indict
council and Queen,
and Heav'n itself —
Lady Essex
No, my good lord,
you do blaspheme!

Essex

'Tis them I hate,
and Cecil first,
the hunchback fox;
Raleigh I curse,
the Queen I blame! *etc.*

Mountjoy, Lady Rich

My lord, we know you have
reasons and rights, *etc.*

Lady Essex

No! my good lord,
you do blaspheme, *etc.*

Essex

By Heav'n, my voice deserveth to be heard!
My birth and rank alone
should make me first preferred.
How long am I to wait?
The Queen shall know
delay may turn a sweet affection sour.

Lady Rich

Call on the stars above
to give us one great hour
and the force to shape our fate,
[I with the power of love,
you with the love of power,
we can seize the reins of state!]

Lady Essex

O be cautious, I implore you!
These are treasonable words!
Danger is all about us,
danger to all we love.

[O be cautious, I implore you!

Essex, Mountjoy

The Queen is old, and time will steal
sceptre and orb from out her hand.

Lady Rich, Essex, MountjoyThe Queen is old, *etc.*

Ours to decide
what other head
shall wear the crown; ours to maintain
our hold upon the helm of State.

Lady Essex

O pray be cautious, I implore you!
We have great enemies.

Lady Rich, Essex, Mountjoy

Yet not so great as our resolve
ourselves to rule the land, *etc.*

Lady Essex

Pray be cautious, I implore!

CD 2**Scene 3**

*The great room in the Palace of Whitehall at night
[1] (An orchestra is playing in the gallery. Courtiers
and their ladies are dancing a pavane. When it
ends, dancers and onlookers converse.)*

Dancers and Onlookers

[2] Pavanes so grave and dignified...
Slow and solemn...
The very harbinger of State...
Too slow for the young...

*(Essex and Lady Essex enter, followed by
Mountjoy and Lady Rich. Lady Essex is more
splendidly dressed than any other lady present,
and at once attracts attention.)*

Lady-in-waiting

In homage to the Queen, no doubt,
My Lady Essex is so fine tonight.

Lady Rich

In homage to the Queen,
To her lord, my brother,
To honour all of us:
And how my lady shines!

Mountjoy

Frances, bright star of night,
All eyes to you are turning.

Lady Essex

Robert would have me blaze
In all this gaudiness.
But will the Queen approve?

Essex

Earl Marshal of England, I require
My lady to appear in state
Befitting her rank and beauty.

(A tabor in the gallery sounds at a signal from the Master of Ceremonies.)

Master of Ceremonies

May it please you to dance a galliard!

- [3] *(A galliard is danced, in which Essex and Lady Essex take part and in which Lady Rich is partnered by Mountjoy. As it ends, the dancers and onlookers converse.)*

Dancers and Onlookers

- [4] Courtly dancing the heart rejoices...
Graceful gliding...
Brave looks, noble, noble measure...
Nothing is lacking but the Queen...

(The Queen enters and is received with deep bows and curtsies. She catches sight of Lady Essex and looks her up and down.)

Queen

On hot nights and for stately moods
Pavanes and galliards are all very well.
Tonight the air's chilly,
So let us warm our blood
By dancing high in the Italian mode.
Command there a lavolta!

(The tabor sounds as before.)

Master of Ceremonies

May it please you to dance lavolta!

- [5] *(They dance a lavolta, the Queen showing great energy and spirit. As it ends, the dancers and onlookers exclaim with animation, fluttering fans and mopping their faces with handkerchiefs.)*

Dancers and Onlookers

- [6] Lusty leaping! Jump for joy!...
Leg over leg, as the dog went to Dover...
Gay go up, and gay go down...
And the cow jumped over the moon!...

Queen

High stepping rejoices the sinews
And for a long life the wise decree
A free and frequent sweat.
The ladies will change their linen!
And presently I will rejoin you.

- [7] *(The Queen goes out, followed by the ladies who have been dancing, among them Lady Essex. A tiny Morris Dancer, his face blacked, dances in to entertain the company during the absence of the ladies. After his dance, the ladies return one by one. The last to return is Lady Essex, who hurries in now wearing a plain dress.)*

Lady Rich

- [8] Frances, so plain now?
So late and so breathless?

Lady Essex

While I was changing
my new court dress vanished.
The maid came running, saying
it was nowhere to be found.

Lady Rich

Some prank has been played on you —
Ah!

(The Queen suddenly returns, unheralded and unattended, wearing Lady Essex's missing dress, which is much too short for her. She looks grotesque.)

Queen

- [9] Well, ladies, how like you
my new-fancied suit?
(The ladies look at one another in uncertainty and amazement, and curtsy to the Queen. The courtiers bow and shrink back. Posturing like a mannequin, turning this way and that, the Queen moves slowly towards Lady Essex.)
My new-fancied suit!
Ah, now, my lady,
and what think you?
Too short, is it not?
And becometh me ill?

Lady Essex (distressed and embarrassed)

May it please Your Majesty —

Queen

It pleaseth me not!
If, being too short,
it becometh not me,

I have it in mind
it can ne'er become thee
as being too gaudy!
So choose we another!

*(As the Queen stalks out slowly, amid bowings
and curtseys, Lady Essex turns away and
hides her head in her hands.)*

Essex, Mountjoy, Lady Rich
(approaching Lady Essex)

10 Good Frances, do not weep.

*(All three repeat this comforting phrase many
times during the following exchanges.)*

Essex

The Queen upon herself hath brought shame...

Lady Rich

Envy and pride inflame the Queen.

Essex

Shame on herself and not upon my lady here.

Mountjoy

My lady, in whatever garb
your sweet grace is clad,
no man on earth dare cast
a slight, or slighting look
upon an inch of it.

Essex *(cutting in)*

True, my friend,
but no man has done so.

Lady Rich

Oh see what comes of being ruled —

Essex, Mountjoy

By a king in a farthingale!

Lady Essex

My friends, take care:
her sudden rage is over now —

Essex

Who last year struck me with her hand
before her Council!

Lady Essex

She is the Queen!

Essex

Who taunts my wife before her Court!

Lady Essex

She is the Queen!

Essex

No spiteful woman ever born
shall with impunity do this!

Lady Essex

Robert, take care:
she is the Queen!...
And as the Queen hath her conditions.

Essex

Conditions! Conditions!

Lady Essex

Robert, take care.

Essex

Her conditions are as crooked as her carcass!

Lady Rich, Lady Essex, Mountjoy

Ah!

Master of Ceremonies

My lords and ladies, make way
for the Queen and her Councillors!

11 *(A march. The Queen, now in her own clothes,
returns in state, preceded by pages and attended
by Cecil, Raleigh and other Councillors.)*

Raleigh

12 My lord of Essex,
I am commanded by the Queen
to summon you hither to her presence
that you may hear a matter of great moment.

*(Essex approaches the Queen defiantly, then
abruptly kneels. Cecil hands the Queen a paper.)*

Queen

My lord of Essex, Knight of our most noble
Order of the Garter, Earl Marshal of
England, our trusty and well beloved Cousin.
Here in the presence of our Council,
of the Captain of our Guard, and our Court
assembled, here we acquaint you
that by our Letters Patent you are this day
appointed Lord Deputy in Ireland.

Essex

Ah!

Queen

You are to conquer the rebel Tyrone,
 who encourageth our enemies in Spain
 and grievously wasteth our substance.
(handing the paper back to Cecil)
 Go! Go into Ireland, and bring back
 victory and peace, victory and peace! Go!
(She extends her hand, which Essex kisses fervently.)

Chorus

- 13 Victor of Cadiz, overcome Tyrone!
 Overcome Tyrone!
 All Spain will cower
 when the rebel falls!

Cecil *(aside)*

Exalted high among his peers,
 he may at last more steeply fall.

Raleigh *(aside)*

So now he has his way,
 so goes he to his fate, etc

Queen

There, Robin, there, Robin, go! Go!

Chorus

Victor of Cadiz, etc.

Lady Essex *(aside)*

At last the Queen
 drives all his cares away.
 The load that I have borne
 is not so grievous now.

Lady Rich *(aside)*

Returning soon, oh soon,
 he will hold the kingdom in his hand.

Mountjoy *(aside)*

Returning soon, oh soon,
 with armies at his back,
 he then will hold
 the kingdom in his hand.

Chorus

Go, warlike Earl,
 go, warlike Earl, for Gloriana!

Queen

England and England's Queen
 entrust their hopes to you!
 Go, Robin! Go, Robin!
 England's Queen entrusts her hopes to you!

Lady Rich, Mountjoy

Returning soon, oh soon,
 with armies at his back...
 Robert will hold the kingdom in his hand!

Lady Essex

At last the Queen
 drives all his cares away...
 My load is not so grievous now.

Cecil, Raleigh

Exalted high among his peers,
 he may at last more steeply fall...
 Essex may at last more steeply fall.

Chorus *(joining later)*

Victor of Cadiz, overcome Tyrone!
 Come back in triumph
 to these shouting halls.

Essex

Armed with the favour
 of our gracious Empress,
 I am arm'd like a god.
 My resolve and duty
 are my helm and sword,
 the hopes of my countrymen
 are my spurs.
 And so into Ireland I go,
 to break for ever those rebel kerns.
 With God's help I will have victory,
 and you shall have peace.

Queen

Tomorrow to your charge:
 tonight we dance.
 Strike up the music!

Master of Ceremonies

May it please you to dance a coranto!

Queen

Robert, your hand!

- 14 *(Essex leads the Queen in a coranto; other couples follow.)*

ACT THREE**Scene 1**

An ante-room to the Queen's dressing-room at Nonesuch. A curtain at the back. Early morning (Maids of Honour converse among themselves.)

Maids of Honour

First Group:

- 15 What news from Ireland?

Second Group:

Delay, delay: a sorry farce!
 The summer wasted, then a truce.

First Group, echoed by Second:

We thought by now to see the rebel's head
laid at the Queen's feet.

Her darling Robin hath betrayed her hopes.

Second Group:

The Queen knows more than we.

First Group:

Knows everything: they say
she used to have a dress figured from neck to
hem with eyes and ears...

Second Group joins in:

With eyes and ears...

Both Groups:

Ah, she is wary and wise
in the ways of the world!

Second Group:

Those tiring-maids are mighty slow.

First Group, then Both:

As a woman ages
she needeth more artifice
to deck her fading bloom!
You'll come to it yourself!

*(The Queen's Lady-in-waiting enters in
some agitation.)*

What now?

Lady-in-waiting

What now? Is the Queen dressed?

There's a great stir below!

Horsemen in haste and urgent words,
running footsteps and panic fear!

I fear bad news

or some complot against the Queen —

Maids of Honour

16 O God, what's this?

*(Essex bursts in, wild-looking and travel-stained,
his hand on his sword. The Maids of Honour
recoil, alarmed. The Lady-in-waiting steps forward
to meet him and to try to restrain him.)*

Lady-in-waiting

My lord!

Essex

Is the Queen up?

Is the Queen yet dressed?

Lady-in waiting

My lord —

Essex

I must see the Queen!

Lady-in-waiting

My lord, forbear a while:

the Queen is not yet dressed.

Essex

I cannot wait!

Lady-in-waiting

The Queen, my lord, cannot receive you now!

Essex

She must!

(as Maids of Honour try to bar his way)

Ladies, prevent me not!

*(Stepping forward, Essex sweeps the curtain
back, disclosing the Queen seated at her
dressing-table, wearing an old, plain dressing-
gown. Two Tiring-Maids are standing beside her,
helping her to dress. Her red-gold wig is on a
stand before her, among the paraphernalia of the
toilet. Without it, she looks old and pathetic, with
wisps of grey hair hanging round her face. She
has a looking-glass in her hand which she puts
down directly she sees Essex.)*

Queen

17 My lord of Essex!

*(She waves away the Tiring-Maids, the Maids of
Honour and the Lady-in-waiting. They curtsy and
withdraw.)*

Robin!

Essex (kneeling)

Queen of my life!

Queen

What brings you here?

Essex

My love and duty.

Day and night from Ireland I pressed on.

I had to see and hear you:

Madam, forgive me!

Queen

But what must I forgive?

Because you catch

an ageing woman unadorned,

you can be called unkind.

But the years pursue us,

and the rose must feel the frost;

and nothing can renew us

when the flame in the rose is lost!

(with a tragic gesture, indicating her appearance)

You see me as I am.

Essex

Not less in majesty.
O give me leave to speak!

Queen

Oh pray, be brief: the day's not yet begun.
Because you're here
when larks alone have right of audience:
because you stand
besprent with mud and hollow-eyed:
because you're here
you must have need to speak.

Essex

Because the gale,
the gale of the world has caught me:
because the world
is full of lying tongues —

Both

Because the world
must know the truth of things at last —

Essex

Madam, give me leave to speak —
you will forgive.
Tyrone I have bound to a truce,
but foes beset me now
here in England, at home.

Queen

What foes are they? Declare!

Essex

Madam, my foes are yours.
My place is at your side.

Queen

My foes are over there!
Tyrone is still untouched!

Essex

Ah, but the truce —

Queen

Were you not required
to break his power down?

Essex

Madam, at your command —

Queen

Is it at my command
that you are here?

Essex

That I am here —

Queen

proves you unfit —

Essex

Unfit!

Queen

Unfit!

Essex

Proves me unfit!

Queen

Ay, and more —
proves you untrue!

Essex

I, trusty in arms,
the first to defend you,
am I to be taunted?
Oh care, oh heaviest care!
Against me, me,
they have turned even you!

Queen

You have failed in my trust,
you have left a wound
in a heart too fond...

Essex

[A wound in a heart...
then let me heal you!

Queen

A wound in a heart too fond,
[in my heart, in my heart, my heart!

Essex

Ah, Queen of my life!

Queen

[Dear name I have loved,
o use it no more!
The time and the name
now belong to the past:
they belong to the young,
and the echoes are mute.
Happy were we!

Essex

O put back the clock
to the birth of our hope!
The chime as it rang
told the hour when you gave
of your grace, when I sang,
when my heart was the lute:
[happy were we!

Queen

Ah, Robin, go now!
Eat, drink and refresh you.
Go, Robin, go, go!

(The Queen takes up her looking-glass in her right hand, and extends her left to Essex. He kisses it, and goes slowly out, casting a long look back at the Queen. The Lady-in-Waiting returns, followed by the Maids of Honour and the two Tiring-Maids.)

Lady-in-waiting

My lord was early and abrupt.
Deign, Madam... allow our hands
to adorn our Sovereign in peace.
Come, Madam, come, come.

(As the Tiring-Maids complete the Queen's toilet, the Lady-in-Waiting and the Maids of Honour, grouped around the dressing-table, sing the "Dressing-Table Song.")

Lady-in-waiting

- 18** Lady, to your dressing-table
turn again, and there descry
beauty resting, beauty gazing
in her own admiring eye.

Maids of Honour

Gazing in the glass or glancing
like Narcissus on his knees,
beauty lives by her enhancing
and adareth what she sees.

Lady-in-waiting

Tint with powder, touch with tincture,
lightly bind a wilful curl,
fix about the waist a cincture,
in each ear a moony pearl.

Pearl and ruby gleam and glisten,
pearl and ruby gleam and glisten,
dews bespangle open roses,
golden gauzes, sunrays dazzle
all beholders!

Maids of Honour

Lady, at your dressing-table
with your ladies around you, gaze
like a goddess in a fable
at the glory of our days!

(The Queen, now dressed, waves her attendants away then rises majestically to greet Cecil as he enters.)

Queen

- 19** Your presence is welcome, good elf.

Cecil

Burst in upon betimes unmannerly,
was not your Majesty alarmed?

Queen

What fear is, I never knew.
But as we have authority to rule,
so we look to be obeyed.
But why is he here?
Tell me! Tell what you know!
What say our faithful eyes and ears?

Cecil

- 20** Tyrone is still a rebel,
and Ireland not yet ours.
Not ours, but might be Spain's,
might easily be France's.
For want of forthright action
he forfeited his chances.
And now it is September,
too late for new campaigning.
And now he's here in England,
with hangers-on unruly,
armed, and out for trouble.
Madam, I see a certain danger.

Queen (echoed by Cecil)

- 21** Think of the waste!...
Count up the cost!...
Our orders defied!...
There an idle force,
here a rebel heart!...
In the eyes of the world
we now look a fool!

Cecil

But for a time!

Queen (echoed by Cecil)

Now is the time for the curb!...
For the hand on the rein!...
I trust him no longer,
here is my command!

Cecil

Raleigh awaits your command.

Queen

- 22** From this hour my lord of Essex
must be kept under guard.
My Lord Deputy hath defied me;
he flouted my orders.

The Earl Marshal of England
is himself a rebel:
with his malcontent following
brought back from Ireland
he endangers my country.
Close watch must be kept.
Close watch!
Ah, my faithful elf, it has come to this!
I have failed to tame my thoroughbred.
He is still too proud;
I must break his will
and pull down his great heart.
It is I who have to rule!

Scene 2

*A street in the City of London
(In front of a tavern a blind Ballad Singer sits with
some old men around him and a young gittern
player at his side. A small Boy, who acts as his
runner and brings him the latest rumours, runs
across the road and whispers in the Ballad
Singer's ear.)*

Old Men

23 News! Give us the news!

Ballad Singer

To bind by force,
to bolt with bars
the wonder of this age
they tried in vain, they could not curb
the lion in his rage.
Great need had he
of liberty,
and now hath bounded from his cage.

First Group of Old Men

What can he mean? What can he mean?...

Second Group of Old Men

Essex is out, at large!

All

O now we shall see
his followers arm,
and aldermen bolting
their doors in alarm!

*(The Boy runs out. A rabble of Boys approaches
and then appears, led by one or two armed men
of Essex's following and a drummer.)*

Boys

Now rouse up all the City
and join our gallant army
by noble Essex led:

and join us in our duty,
make Cecil and make Raleigh
both shorter by a head!
March along with us! March! March!
(as they march off again)
Now rouse up all the City, etc.

First Group of Old Men

What rabble is this?

Second Group of Old Men

Are they rebels or mad?

All

Mere idlers and louts
out to trouble the peace.

Ballad Singer

Whenas the lion roams at large
and rageth fierce abroad,
then follow lesser brutes, a mob
that know him as their lord.

By day or dark
like dogs they bark
and snatch the leavings from the board.

Old Men

Poor ravening knaves!
A boy runs mad
when for its bread his belly craves.

*(The sound of drums and voices is heard as
Essex's followers seek to enlist the support of
citizens to his side with cries of 'Saw! Tray! Saw!
Tray!' As the tumult fades away the Boy runs in
again and whispers in the Ballad Singer's ear.)*

Old Men

News! Give us the news!

Ballad Singer

The raveners grow bold, give tongue,
all thirsting after prey,
With noise they keep their spirits up,
as well indeed they may.

They can't foresee
what is to be,
the dreadful danger in their way.

Old Men

In mortal peril they must go.

*(Cuffe, attended by young rebel officers, appears,
sword in hand, to harangue the crowd.)*

Cuffe

Citizens of London,
the Earl of Essex calls you!

Followers

Hear the drums calling, calling;
his enemies are falling!

Old Men

Nay, let him call! Let him call!

Cuffe

Remember Cadiz,
but Spain is still intriguing!

Followers

With plots and underminings,
and evil designings!

Old Men

He's right!... He's wrong!
He's right!... He's wrong!

Housewife *(at a window above)*

Hey! Be off with your bawling!

Followers

Down with the Council!

Cuffe

Let Essex save the Queen
from her false advisers!

Houswife

Hear the ass braying, braying!

Cuffe

To arms with Essex!
(with Followers)
To arms for England!

Housewife

To arms? To the gallows!
Thou rowdy! Sow's ear!
Thou slubberdegullion...

Cuffe

The Queen is old,
her power fails.
Essex must guard the crown!

Old Men

That we should live into a season
when openly men practise treason!

Housewife

... Slubberdegullion!
Thou eel's foot! Rowdy cockerel!
Thou pickthank!...

Cuffe

Old fools!
you still have time to learn
that those who deviate will burn.

Housewife

... Mongrel! Stool-pigeon! Thou!...

Followers

Will burn!

Housewife

Yah!

Willy Wet-leg, you won't burn!

Cuffe

Slattern, I'll have your blood!

Followers

Come, forward!

Cuffe, Followers

Forward, forward, forward! March!

Housewife

I'll damp your courage!
*(leaning out of the window and emptying a
chamber pot over them as they march off)*
Take that, you wastrel!

Cuffe, Followers *(breaking into a run)*

Ah!

(The onlookers laugh.)

Ballad Singer

Proud man goes strutting forth to slay,
and brags with might and main,
but Goodwife Joan will jeer at him
till Pride itself is slain:
it is her lot
to keel the pot
and mock the hero home again.

Housewife, Old Men

It is my (her) lot
to keel the pot
and mock the hero home again.

*(As the Housewife shuts her window, the City
Crier with his bell is heard approaching.)*

City Crier

Oyez! Oyez! In the name of the Queen!
Be it known that
Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex,
erstwhile Lord Deputy in Ireland,
having risen against
the Crown and Realm of England,

is this day proclaimed TRAITOR.
Any man giving him aid, by word or deed,
will be guilty of TREASON.
(continuing on his way)
Oyez! Oyez! In the name of the Queen...

First Group of Old Men

Essex a traitor!

Second Group of Old Men

Guilty of treason!

First Group of Old Men

There's trouble ahead!

Second Group of Old Men

There always is!

All

The Queen, the Queen,
what will she do?

Ballad Singer

In all his pride the lion roared
and sought whom to devour,
but he mistook the time to spring,
mistook his pride for power.
Down in the dust
soon fall he must,
for dire is the day, and dread the hour.

Old Men

He asked for trouble
and trouble has come.
Trouble has come
and heads must fall...
We told you so!

Ballad Singer *(giving the Boy a coin)*

Here, Harry boy, a groat —
fill your belly, wet your throat.
There's work for you, my boy!
Work! Work! Work!
(The Boy runs off.)

Scene 3

*A room in the Palace of Whitehall
(Cecil, Raleigh and other members of the Council
are gathered following the trial of Essex.)*

Raleigh

²⁴ The trial now being over,
the traitor's malice ended —

Councillors

Essex is guilty and condemned to die!

Cecil

Councillors, take notice of my warning;
beware of one thing yet!

Raleigh

Of what? Of what?

Councillors

Essex is guilty and condemned to die!

Cecil

That is our verdict. In the Tower
he awaits the day.

Raleigh

Wednesday is the day appointed!
He will see no later day!

Cecil

Beware of one thing yet.
The Queen may yet defer the deed.

Raleigh

The day, but not the deed.

Councillors

Essex is guilty and condemned to die!

Cecil

She long delayed to seal the doom
of the Northern Earls
and the Queen of Scots...

Councillors

Essex is guilty and condemned to die!

Cecil

... She may, she may delay once more,
or even spare his life.

Raleigh, Councillors

Never! Essex can she not forgive...

Cecil

She may delay once more,
or even spare his life.

Raleigh, Councillors

Essex can she not forgive, etc.

All

Essex is guilty and condemned to die!

(The Queen enters. All kneel.)

Queen

Let me hear the verdict.
Are you all agreed?

Cecil

May it please your Majesty,

the verdict was unanimous.

Raleigh

After trial the court has found
the Earl of Essex guilty of treason,
of treason guilty.

Councillors

Guilty of treason
and condemned to die!

Queen

To die a traitor. Ah!

Raleigh

Wednesday is the day appointed.
Wednesday, Wednesday.

Councillors

Guilty of treason and condemned to die!

Raleigh *(proffering the death warrant)*

Only awaits your royal hand
to ratify his doom.

Queen

I will not sign it now!
I will consider it.

Cecil

Madam, I humbly pray,
do not defer this dreadful duty,
or the people will doubt
if the traitor is guilty
or the Queen is safe.

Queen

Cecil, no prating to me of my duty!
Silence! The Council's dismissed!

*(Cecil, Raleigh and the Council bow themselves
out. The Queen begins pacing up and down.)*

I grieve,
yet dare not show my discontent;
I love,
and yet am forced to seem to hate;
I am, and am not;
freeze, and yet I burn;
Since from myself my other self I turn.

(Raleigh steps boldly into the room.)

Sir Walter, what now?

Raleigh

Three persons, in humble duty
crave audience of their Sovereign.

*(Lady Essex — her face half veiled — enters,
supported by Lady Rich and followed by Mountjoy.)*

Lady Essex, Lady Rich, Mountjoy *(variously)*

Great Queen, your champion in a prison cell
lies languishing. We come to plead for him,
to intercede for him,
beseech your pardon,
urge your need for him
whose love and valour
may still serve you well.

Mountjoy *(leading Lady Essex forward)*

To ask your mercy, Madam,
the Countess bows her head and kneels.

Lady Essex

Too ill advised, he greatly erred;
but let the father of my children live!

Queen

Hearken, it is a Prince who speaks.
A Prince is set upon a stage
alone, in sight of all the world;
alone, and must not fail.

Lady Essex

If he must die,
I plead for my children, his!

Queen

Frances, a woman speaks.
Whatever I decide —
I have yet to name the day,
to sign his breath away,
his, that betrayed his Queen —
whatever I decide,
your children, Frances, will be safe.

*(Lady Essex makes another obeisance, covers her
face with her veil, and steps back.)*

Mountjoy

His sister, Madam, begs to speak.
Deign to hear her pleading.

Queen

What! Tears from those bold eyes!
Tears from my Lady Rich!

Lady Rich

- 29** The noble Earl of Essex
was born to fame and fortune,
yet not his rank alone
hath made his greatness known.

Queen

I gave him honour, gave him power —

Lady Rich

Greatly hath he served the State,
and armies follow him through fire.
Madam, you need him:
let his greatness be!

Queen

He touched my sceptre —
then he was too great to be endured.

Lady Rich

Still great he would have been
without the grace and favour of a Queen!
Still great!

Queen

Woman! How dare you plead
for a traitor's life,
you, an unfaithful wife!

Lady Rich

No traitor he! Not he!

Queen

Justice hath found him so!

Lady Rich

Be merciful, be merciful, be wise!

Queen

Be dutiful, be still!

Lady Rich

He most deserves your pardon —

Queen

Most insolent, you dare presume!

Lady Rich

Deserves your love!

Queen

Importune me no more! Out!

Lady Rich *(beside herself with rage)*

God forgive you! God forgive you!
God forgive you!

Queen *(to Raleigh)*

Give me the warrant!
I will sign it now!

(As the Queen takes up the pen to sign the warrant, Lady Rich screams and throws herself into the arms of Mountjoy. The Queen signs the warrant and hands it back to Raleigh, who bows himself out. As Mountjoy leads Lady Rich and Lady Essex away, the room becomes dark and the Queen is seen standing alone in a strong light against an indeterminate background. Time and place are becoming less and less important to her.)

Queen

- 30** I have now obtained the victory over two things
which the greatest princes cannot at their will
subdue: the one is over fame; the other is over a
great mind. Surely the world is now, I hope,
reasonably satisfied.

In some unhaunted desert —

The Voice of Essex

I am thrown into a corner like a dead carcase and
you refuse even to hear of me, which to traitors
you never did. What remains is only to beseech
you to conclude my punishment, my misery and
my life.

Queen

There might he sleep secure...

(Cecil appears standing near the Queen.)

Cecil

The King of Scotland, may he not be told
your Majesty's pleasure?
Will it not please your Majesty
to name the successor to your throne?

Queen

I can by no means endure a winding-sheet
held up before mine eyes while yet I live.

(Cecil bows and retires. The Queen stands alone.)

Queen

I have ever used to set the last Judgment Day
before mine eyes, and when I have to answer
the highest Judge, I mean to plead that never
thought was cherished in my heart that tended
not to my people's good.
I count it the glory of my crown that I have
reigned with your love, and there is no jewel

that I prefer before that jewel.
 Neither do I desire to live longer days than that
 I may see your prosperity:
 and that's my only desire.

(Distant cheering. Near the Queen appears a deathlike phantom of herself. It approaches and fades.)

Queen

Mortua, mortua, mortua,
 sed non sepulta!

(Cecil appears near the Queen.)

Cecil

To content the people, Madam,
 you *must* go to bed.

Queen

The word 'must' is not to be used to Princes!
 Little man, little man, you durst not have said it,
 but you know I must die.

Cecil

I wish your Majesty long life.

Queen

I see no weighty reason
 that I should be fond to live
 or fear to die.

(Cecil disappears. The Queen is alone.)

Chorus *(unseen)*

Green leaves are we,
 Red rose our golden Queen,
 O crownèd rose among the leaves so green!

(As the sound fades the Queen is slowly enveloped in darkness.)

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