

Artifice and Art

Speech Script

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'Tis ten to one this play can never please'
(Henry VIII, Shakespeare)

SPEECH 1

Queen Elizabeth 1 addresses a group of eminent playwrights
Windsor Palace, 1572

My appointment as Queen of this glorious country has
been God's doing, / and his work is marvelous in our eyes.
// I ought not to be rash, it seems, in speech, but / we most
certainly believe that God has directed our hearts to this day.

Men of our company, / we have been persuaded by some that
are careful of our safety, / to take heed how we commit
ourselves to armed multitudes, / for fear of treachery. We see
their knavery! Those enemies that wish to destroy the
Protestant faith!

We will not therefore /state this argument too nicely. This
gathering of the minds is to acknowledge the religious war at
hand and the constant threat of the Popish servants who dare
to invade the borders of this realm.

A final resolute action from those opposed to this invasion
which, gentlemen, / has finally led us to your good company,
/ must take place in a form most unique. Our opposition, /
when executed, will finally end the religious tension and
prevent Popish manifestation, a threat to our realm.

We stress only, that all in attendance maintain an attentive ear
to these words bearing much preponderance, / as this missive
must travel ever so swiftly/ to our loving people's minds.
Gentlemen, / I have been infected by my country's love

We come amongst you at this time, not to display any
elements of extortion, / but rather to speak clear and true in
the eyes of our God. Our words must not be manifested
plainly. Au contraire! Our words must be woven into your
poetic execution!

All your poetic arts and theatric force (when finally staged
and performed) / will clearly deliver to all, this entire
religious war involving our enemies, / Spain and her Armada.
Such works shall amalgamate a hearty element of my good
nature / and glorify the Protestant state. Fear of this invasion
shall soon enter the heart of those that this news has been
revealed.

Our people are an audience of listeners and we strongly
assure you, / that with your poetic justice a success, / their
minds shall soon become aware of this threat surrounding all
opposed to the Popish Church.

We must all, however, /take heed how we weave such
religious ambitions of the Protestant faith to our people.
Therefore, / your artful presentation must present this in its
most intricate persuasive form! This shall be done so our
words may not slander the church/ whose ruler God hath
made me.

Playwrights, / I have inherited a tattered realm. An undying
dissension between the Catholics and Protestants of England,
/ tears at the very seams of our troubled society. At present, /
a particular source of contention has become prominent
among all our subjects and our advisers. We strongly fear that
the traitors belonging to the Popish Church and all its loyal
followers/ will soon attempt to replace the Protestant state as
we know it, // the Protestant faith that we have so nurtured for
our people. This faith / we have rebuilt with our own sweat
and blood.

We have become increasingly aware that action must be
taken carefully in order for the Protestant Church to remain
the superior force. Those that have been working against our
rule /// beware.

For although holiness be the first and most requisite quality
of a Christian // Let tyrants fear. ¹I may have the body of a
weak and feeble woman, / but I have the heart and stomach of
a king, / and a king of England too/ and think foul scorn that
Parma or Spain or any prince of Europe, / should dare to
invade the borders of my realm. We shall not be tortured by
such threats!

I have adhered to this position most tenaciously and
wholeheartedly and refuse to witness my abode torn to shreds
by those that dare ignore the laws of our God. We will dare
not destroy what we have created throughout and beyond
these palace walls. Displaying caution, however, we must not
become a product of foul scorn, / as the loyalty and adoration
of people is at stake. Parma and Spain are my greatest rivals.

¹ Quote 'Elizabeth's Noble Speech to her army'. (Retrieved via
www.google.com/search/Elizabethfamousspeeches)

Attempts to remove your Protestant Queen must be prevented. For my will is as strong as theirs, //and my kingdom is as great!

We exist in a world where all known arts are politically intended. In order for the Protestant faith to remain most powerful of all religions, / your Queen must gain the respect which only a female wearing the royal coat can request. For a woman's voice, / no matter how true //...is never heard. My need is for the people of England to see my position in the same light they would a man, / to accept and admire the nature of my rule and religious intentions.

Religion is the ground on which all other matters ought to take root. I intend to transform this diseased state that hath been exposed to the undying strength of Popish rule. Our desire is for the people to acknowledge your Queen as a credible military and political leader of a country exposed/ to religious rebellion.

We hereby warn you all, that any playwright found performing seditious or heretical views or opinions which are in opposition to the crown, / shall be duly tortured for that act of treachery.

Our desire is for a man to manipulate and cautiously weave all through a work of art so rare devised, / that even the most common of people shall recognise what hath been intended, / and finally know what lies so deep within the borders of our realm.

For if you know the virtue of your work, / the worthiness of
your work / and your honour to your work, / you would then
not part with your work.

We need a subject to advocate this task who will actively
demonstrate a gallant demeanour, / and one who may endure
fear, / but who then performs with a sense of honour when
most required. For a man without courage / shall not stand
before the eyes of God, / before the eyes of his Queen / and
before the eyes of his people. Finally, / I entreat you to
discuss with all at your side, the ways in which your artful
minds can weave like endless golden twine, / all of which we
have spoken of.

My people shall hear your poetry and knowingly remember
each verse. Therefore, / not doubting your obedience, / we
shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of our
God, / of our kingdom, / and of our people. Make Haste! Let
your message creep into their ears like the sound of sweet
music!

‘Religion is ground on which all other matters ought to take root’

(Queen Elizabeth I on religion, 1583)

SPEECH 2

Sir Thomas Kyd addresses a group of eminent playwrights

Outside the palace walls, 1572

*‘We hereby warn you all, that any playwright found
performing seditious or heretical views or opinions which are*

in opposition to the crown, / shall be duly tortured for that act of treachery'.

We shall never be merry when we hear such music! This is the hand which, / with a vow'd contract is belock'd. Frailty thy name is woman!² The bitterness of her words sours ripe grapes! Thou hast spoken like thunder to my ears!

The odious strife of words begins here. Fellow playwrights, / this speech must be executed hastily for this indubitable concern with the previous words that have just been discharged/ for our unprepared shoulders. Our shoulders, once free from this burden have now been molded for an evil sculpture. Fellow playwrights, / we have been asked to deny our beliefs and willingly conform to the blackness of an unworthy other /just like a peaceful dove drowning in the darkest of lakes which had never touched sunlight.

A weaker woman treads not the earth. Were this the Queen's day to come, // I should wish it dark.

What must we do now? Must we submit? For God's sake lead us from this dirt infested ground that hath been created for our unprepared feet,/ for this appears to have pleased all within those palace walls, but the ones that have been subdued within its evil frame.

By heaven, methinks it were an arduous dive to delve into such matters where unworthy control will triumph over all purity, all art. Let this world no longer be a stage to feed evil in a lingering act.

² *Hamlet*, Act I, scene ii

To whom can we complain? O perilous mouths that bear in them all that is evil! Yet hath she in her such a mind of selfishness? This woman hath created a trap through her greed, by which, / if we are not successful in resisting, / shall only be greeted with in a most horrible death for us all.

However, gentlemen, if we do indeed conform to her untimely order, /we shall be pouring the most hateful of persuasive potions into the minds of those most innocent and most unable for brewing it. Like poison, our words shall flow, / killing all that is true and all that stands in its path.

This shall twist and knot the minds of whom she is planning to destroy. Our minds must stay clear with all that is true in order for our souls to rest. How words cannot begin to express our purpose, / for I pity those I do not know, / all those blinded by this order and so very unaware of the sheer severity of it. Merciful Heaven!

This gnarled oak steals branches from our hearts, / like veins with the strain of too much blood being destroyed by sickness. We must stay and face either bloody consequence. For whichever path we choose, path of conforming or defying, /we have been condemned to a wound that cannot be healed. Such is this woman's lightness; our hands with this heavy burden have been left undoubtedly for spreading poison that this woman's mind desires to spread amongst all with the strong and swelling evil of her conception.

May sweet heaven keep our honor and unfold this evil, for I feel some vile consequence hanging over my aching head, a strife which cannot be moved like an all tangled piece of

twine impossible to unweave. Must we need die if our choice denies her purpose?

All that remains for us to decipher, is either bloody path. But soft, if there was a path that would not obstruct either consequence, that in turn would freely deceive our opposition or leave our minds free of guilt//... shall we encounter it?

A plan which, followed with caution, would reduce our swollen minds to ease. If such a needy plan should be suspended, our Queen's 'noble' intentions would not dare penetrate the minds of the innocent we so desperately aim to save, /but in turn would condemn her /'nobility' to an end allowing our religious grounding to remain close to our hearts, solid and true.

Gentlemen, we shall obey our feeble master/mistress commands and suit our work to fit the Queen's hasty expectations.

Methinks that this shall expectedly please our master and in turn we shall all gain her most desired respect, admiration, and above all /her trust. Once gained my fellow gentleman, we may humbly inquire as to which direction will lead us to the most rewarding path.

I say, we attack her next command poetically leading to a peak in her weakness where her judgment and words shall not in turn be respected and admired,/ but contrarily, questioned and possibly discharged. Our poetry will be a constant battle against her, where soon, / even the most common of men shall doubt her ability to rule solitary as a woman.

The Queen believes that if we do not act obediently to her desires, the act shall be an act filled with nothing but blatant treachery! Treachery? Our master believes that by weaving our poetic nature into the minds of those unable to oppose, as a well devised tool we can somehow penetrate all her 'noble intentions' into the minds of those that have no choice but be affected. Our Queen is nothing more than a heavy weight of weakness, bringing this country to the knees of another religion that had hoped to have perished with Henry. A woman that has all but us /persuaded by her/ seductive realm.

This gentlemen, reveals the weaker gender and I daresay, the weaker species. We shall take part in this battle of manipulation. It grieves me how we shall risk our lives in doing so... But I fear... there is no other remedy.

For now I, bereft of every joy that life can yield, must do what is true. We shall all take part in this battle between that which is good, and that which is evil, // with this unique weaving of lies and truth. Gentlemen, / while I live, / I shall now not fear no other thing. Make haste!

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