

GLORIANA

ACT I, SCENE 1: BETH'S BEDROOM

(Early afternoon. Contemporary times. Beth is on her "throne", deep in thought, as Trigolid enters)

BETH: Ah, sweet Trigolid. What news hast thou to soothe our weary soul?

TRIGOLID: None, fair queen. If thine enemies are to be believed, thou hast no soul. Therefore, no news can soothe what does not exist.

BETH: But what of our friends? Our friends must acknowledge that we have a soul, be it ever so weary. What of Raleigh?

TRIGOLID: He is too enamored of thy ladies in waiting to love thee.

BETH: And Burghley?

TRIGOLID: A wolf in sheep's clothing. I would count him rather amongst those who love thy cousin, Mary.

BETH: Then sing thee the news of our friends, who are our enemies.

TRIGOLID: Nay, fair queen. Your spies have long since informed thee of their misdeeds.

BETH: Does Trigolid value his head where it stands, or does he hope to have it grace the point of a pike at the city gates?

TRIGOLID: Nay, thy loyal Trigolid values his head as it now appears, empty, but firmly squared between his worthless shoulders.

BETH: We shall make your labor light. Sing us songs only of Mary, Raleigh and Burghley.

TRIGOLID: Very well, sweet queen.

(He bows, deeply and comically, before starting.)

TRIGOLID (cont'd):
Now Mary's is an ancient line,
her kingdom's very rich.
But when she quaffs down brandywine
she's just a common bitch.

Trying to keep prying eyes
away from her faux pas,
covering up with pretty lies
and breaking the Queen's laws.

She's sung this tune for many years
while living her two lives.
Treason flows from ear to ear
and spreads like pox-borne hives.

(Beth claps in delight while Trig takes a bow.)

Doth it meet with thine approval, my queen?

BETH: Yes, yes, it pleases us mightily. What of Raleigh? Doth thy
well go dry?

TRIGOLID: Thine eminence inspires me as the sun dost the flower.

Sir Walter Raleigh, knight so bold.
He wields the king of cocks!
And if the truth be ever told,
Walt suffers from the pox!

He traveled far across the sea
and broughteth back tobacco.
A wonder and a filthy weed
he smokes where 'ere he goes!

A noxious smell he brings with him,
smoke clouds about his head.
If truth be told, it chokes the Quim
who tumble to his bed.

(Trig bows as Beth claps enthusiastically.)

BETH: Pray tell, my Trig...does he truly wield the "king of cocks"?

TRIGOLID: Aye. It was told to poor Trigolid in confidence, by Lady Margaret.

BETH: Margaret? Raleigh was sparking Margaret?

TRIGOLID: Yes, my queen. Like a prize stud doth a mare.

BETH: Well, well. Proceed to your next victim... Lord Burghley, my oldest, most trusted counselor.

TRIGOLID: Oldest, yes. Most trusted... nay, he does not deserve that sobriquet.

Burghley is the Queen's chief man.
With her, his prospects brightened.
But power is like holding sand
and so his fingers tightened.

He plays both sides against themselves,
my queen is in the middle.
And as they fight like maddened devils,
sly Burghley plays the fiddle.

His tools of trade are lies and schemes
while flattery is his watchword.
He'll fill your head with pretty dreams,
then backstab with his broadsword.

BETH: Thou dost describe my oldest counselor to perfection.

TRIGOLID: Thank you, fair queen. But, how now? How dost thou care to spend thy day?

BETH: We shall have visitors.

TRIGOLID: Then steel thy soul, dear queen, for whence they come, anon.

(Walt and Mary enter. Mary is obviously intoxicated, but is trying to appear sober. Seeing Beth, Walt stops, unsure of what to do, then awkwardly bows. Mary watches him, giggles, attempts to curtsy, but falls backwards, and is unable to get up.)

BETH: Ah, our dear, sweet cousin, and our goodly knight, Raleigh. Sir Walter, where is your gallantry? Did you not once place your own cape on the street to save our feet from the mud?

WALT: Uh, I left my cape at home. Come on, Mary, up you go. *(He helps her up.)* Well, here we are.

TRIGOLID: He dost thou no service with his lack of respect, my queen.

(Walt and Mary are unaware of Trig and do not hear his dialogue.)

BETH: To be sure. Sir Walter, did you leave your manners in the New World, along with that lost colony of missing souls?

WALT: Your Majesty, please forgive me, Your Majesty...uh, one cannot gaze too long at the beauty of the sun without forgetting one's self.

BETH: Hmm. That is better. And does our cousin find her lodgings in the Tower to be satisfactory?

MARY: Tower? *(Walt nudges her)* Oh yes, yes of course.

(Walt smiles at Mary in approval and pats her.)

TRIGOLID: See how he favors her? What matter of mischief is this?

BETH: *(aside to Trig)* He tries to curry our favor by showing affection to our cousin. *(to Walt, irritated)* Your reputation with the ladies of our court is well made, Sir Walter, but must you paw at our cousin in our presence?

WALT: What? No...no, Your Majesty, but...what reputation?

BETH: We will speak plainly, then. We refer to your constant sparking of the ladies of our court.

WALT: Sparking? What is that, your Majesty?

BETH: You choose to play the fool, good sir?

WALT: Please, just tell me about this sparking...

BETH: Nay, we would have you tell us of Lady Margaret!

WALT: Margaret?

MARY: Little Margie next door? What's this all about, Walt?

WALT: *(aside to Mary)* Nothing, this Lady Margaret is part of her fantasy life. She names her hallucinations after people she knows. I'm Walt, so I'm Sir Walter Raleigh, You're Mary, so you're Mary Queen of Scots. She got the name Margaret from Margie, that's all. Maybe if you laid off the booze, you'd get the picture.

MARY: I...I don't know what you're talking about.

BETH: *(to Trig)* But what game do they play, so familiar with one and the other?

TRIGOLID: Methinks the hand of Burghley sits upon this sport.

BETH: Say you so, Sir Walter? Has Lord Burghley whispered into your ear, and that of our cousin?

MARY: Lord Burghley?

WALT: You mean...does Your Majesty mean Dr. Burger?

BETH: Nay, not a physician, though he is a blood-sucking leech. Did Burghley not arrange this audience?

WALT: Yes...yes, that's right, Your Majesty. It was Lord Burghley's idea that we should see you today.

BETH: *(aside to Trig)* Let us continue to unwind the spool. *(to Walt and Mary)* We are now ready to hear your petition. Tell us what you seek, and speak plainly, not in riddles.

WALT: Well, Your Majesty...it isn't so much what we want, but, what you need.

BETH: You dare to so advise us on such matters!

MARY: We're just worried about your health, dear... I mean, Your Highness.

WALT: That's right, Your Majesty...we are concerned with your health.

TRIGOLID: This is a clever tack. Beware, my queen.

BETH: We thank you both for your concern. You may rest easy and know that your queen is in her prime, and that her health has never been better.

WALT: I speak not of the health of your body, but of the health of your soul.

TRIGOLID: God's blood! He is a papist!

BETH: No, this man knows no God. *(to Walt)* Doth Sir Walter dare to instruct us in religious matters, of which he knows little?

WALT: Yes, yes...we know of Your Majesty's love of the church. But what we speak of is...the torment, the strain that the throne places upon you.

BETH: And so you and Burghley would place this Scottish drunk upon our throne? Treason, sir!

MARY: I am not a drunk! I.....I just like a little drinkie-pooch once in a while.

BETH: And you, sir? What say you to our charge?

WALT: Forgive me, Your Majesty. You misunderstand. We have no interest in your throne. We only hope to ease whatever troubles your mind.

BETH: The two that stand before us are the only problems that plague our soul!

MARY: Dear...Your Highness...we've only ever tried to help you, you know that?

BETH: Plotting to steal our throne is help? Sparking Lady Margaret and others like her is help?

TRIGOLID: With such helpmates, thou need'st no enemies, sweet queen.

WALT: Your Majesty...I am just your humble servant, who wishes nothing else than your well being.

MARY: We just want you to get well, so we can be one, big, happy family.

BETH: Speak not to us of family! Was it not our own father who sent our mother, Anne Boleyn, to the block?

MARY: But...can't we all just get along...Your Majesty?

BETH: Enough! Tell us exactly what your petition calls for. Be not bashful, for your words will not hang you any higher than they already have.

WALT: We just want...things to be normal, Your Majesty.

MARY: Yes. Normal.

BETH: Normal? Is it normal for a Queen of the Scots to be pickled in her own juices from cock's crow to evening's end? Is it normal for the fairest knight of our realm to be hopping from bed to bed like a flea jumps from brute to brute?

MARY: I am not pickled in my own juices!

WALT: Yeah, and the Pope ain't catholic.

TRIGOLID: See how he makes light of the papists!

BETH: Aye, he seeks to curry favor with us.

MARY: Fine. But I'm not drunk, only...over stimulated by all of this.

WALT: Over stimulated by Wild Turkey. Isn't that what you drink?

BETH: (*aside to Trig*) Turkey? What is this turkey?

TRIGOLID: A strange fowl from the Americas. Raleigh doth accuse her of bestiality, in sport.

MARY: Anyone would agree that a woman in my...situation would be entitled to an occasional drink.

WALT: What "situation?"

MARY: You know very well.

TRIGOLID: Strong spirits have addled her mind. She speaks as if they are wed.

BETH: Aye, truly. It is her mind that needs caring for, not ours.

WALT: I've always been faithful to you, Mary.

MARY: Is that right? Then what about her, about...what she said?

WALT: Didn't I tell you that's just part of her fantasy life?

MARY: Is it? She sits up here all day and night. All she has to do is look out the window to see what's going on.

BETH: We don't have to see! Our spies see for us!

WALT: Understand, Mary? It's all just part of her pathology...

BETH: What say you?! Speak to us directly, Sir, if you value your head!

WALT: I was just telling...the Queen of Scots, that your spies owe Your Majesty an apology, for surely they are in error about myself.

TRIGOLID: He doth call me a liar, My Queen.

BETH: Is that so? You dare to cast aspersions upon our oldest and most trusted friend? Aye, he may be a base knave.....

TRIGOLID: Thank you, fair queen.

BETH: ...base though he may be, we have the highest confidence in our own, sweet Trigolid. What say you to that?

MARY: Trigolid? Oh, dear.

BETH: Aye, Trigolid.

WALT: Mary...what about Trigolid?

MARY: I'll tell you later, when Dr. Burger...Lord Burghley is here.

BETH: Speak you then of Burghley? What must you say to him, that you cannot say to us?

WALT: Just that...he will be disappointed to discover that he is no longer your most trusted counselor...he was your oldest and most trusted counselor, was he not, Your Majesty?

BETH: Most trusted? Nay, that title belongs to our oldest confidant, the base, but noble Trigolid, whom we trust with all our heart.

MARY: He's there, right now?

BETH: God's Death, woman! Has the brandywine left you naught to see with?

WALT: Of course, of course he's there, he was just whispering his counsel into Your Majesty's ear.

BETH: True enough. His words are often for our ears, alone. Unlike Burghley's, that oft times have different meanings for the different ears they fall upon.

WALT: Your Majesty, do you still value what Lord Burghley has to say?

BETH: We value his words, for often they are a perfect reverse barometer of what is the truth. Know you that he comes hence?

MARY: Why, yes. He should be here any minute.

BETH: How so do you know?

MARY: Well...

WALT: What she means to say, Your Majesty, is that we saw him on our way here, and he told us he would also be coming to see you.

BETH: Say you so? Hmm. *(aside to Trig)* Dear Trig, the plot does thicken. The fox is out of his hole.

TRIGOLID: Then hold thy cards close to thine imperial bosom, for the fox indeed comes to call.

(Burger enters. Unlike Walt and Mary, he is immediately comfortable in his role, and plays it with gusto. He enters, bowing to Mary and Walt, and deeply and dramatically bowing to Beth.)

BURGER: The greatness of Your Majesty is exceeded only by her beauty. The sun bows in defeat to the glory of Majesty's soul, as the cult of Gloriana, held dear by the people of her realm, grows each day.

TRIGOLID: These words pour forth like honey from a beehive.

BETH: Aye, and like honey, they hide the bee's sting. *(to Burger)* Thank you, Lord Burghley, for your kind words, be they ever so rehearsed. What say'st thou to our friends...our cousin, and the good knight?

BURGER: Ahh, sweet Mary, Queen of Scots. More beautiful than the flowers of the Scottish heath.

MARY: Oh, my.

BURGER: Sir Walter...stalwart, brave knight, conqueror of virgin forests...

TRIGOLID: There be none left in this realm, methinks.

BURGER: ...how do you, sir?

WALT: Fine, fine, thank you. We were just telling the Queen...

BURGER: *(interrupting)* We do not "tell" the Queen anything, good knight. We merely present our petition, and if it suits her so to listen, then we are so graced.

BETH: And the petition that you present today, is it thine alone, or does it also carry the mark of Mary and Raleigh?

BURGER: (*adroitly changing the subject*) Does her Majesty wish to hear the fate of that infamous fleet, the Spanish Armada?

BETH: Thou hast news, then?

BURGER: Yes, I have news.

BETH: Then pray tell us, good Lord, for we have wasted many a night's sleep with worry over our prospects.

BURGER: (*dramatic, taking the stage*) Our brave sailors used their long range guns to advantage and many Spanish ships were holed, and many Spanish souls sent to Hell. Fire ships were sent in, and the Spanish were forced to cut their anchors, and so were scattered. A change in wind allowed the Armada to flee north, with heroic Drake and Howard in pursuit as far as the Firth of Fourth. The remnants of the doomed Spanish rounded the Orkneys, but the Lord God on High sent a gale to meet them, and they were beat against the rocks. A complete and total victory, Majesty, for the greater glory of thy throne, and the true Church!

BETH: Victory! We shall open up the treasury to shower upon their heads!

TRIGOLID: Aye, my queen, it is great and wonderful news, but dost thou not wonder how Burghley became so intimate with the details of the battle just fought? And what of Mary and Raleigh...they seem struck dumb.

(*Mary and Walt are puzzled, not knowing how to play this.*)

BETH: Sweet Trig, we do not question the bearer of such marvelous tidings. Thank you, Burghley, for thy goodly narrative. We wish it to be set to paper, and proclaimed throughout the land.

BURGER: As you wish, Your Majesty. But there is yet another matter that I beg to attend. Is my queen is disposed to hear my petition?

BETH: Yes, yes, of course we are so disposed. Proceed, Burghley.

BURGER: Your Majesty, we are concerned with the problems and worries that plague your soul.

TRIGOLID: Hark, my queen, in truth, he is in league with the others.

BETH: Our soul is our own concern, Lord Burghley, and its peace is a matter between us and our confessor. Or would you add that duty to thy list of titles, as well?

BURGER: No, no, of course not, Majesty. But it troubles us mightily when Your Majesty speaks of the burden of her offices.

BETH: And how dost thou know that we suffer so, Lord Burghley?

BURGER: That in worry over the prospects of thy realm, the gift of blissful sleep has been denied to Your Highness.

TRIGOLID: Aye, sweet queen. But what head hast ever worn a crown and not paid such a price?

BETH: True, true enough! What of it, Burghley?

BURGER: What of what, Your Majesty?

BETH: You dare to play the fool, as do these others?

BURGER: I...no, not at all.

BETH: You heard not what he spoke?

BURGER: Who?

MARY: Trigolid... Trigolid said something.

(She winks conspiratorially at Burger.)

BURGER: Trigolid?

MARY: *(still winking, and tapping her head)* Yes, Trigolid...

WALT: *(also winking)* He's right there, beside her throne.

TRIGOLID: (*referring to the winking*) They seem to suffer some affliction of the nerves, Majesty.

BURGER: Oh, of course. Trigolid. How... foolish of me. Uh, what exactly did he say, Your Majesty?

BETH: That the price of wearing a crown is, at the least, many sleepless nights. What sayst thou to that?

BURGER: That has been true in the past, Your Majesty, but it no longer need be.

BETH: You speak of the peace of death, after Mary has stolen our throne.

BURGER: No, Your Majesty, of course not. I speak of a wonderful elixir brought back from the Americas by Sir Walter. The perfect balm to ease your worries. Is it not so, Sir Walter?

WALT: Oh...oh, yes, yes, Your Majesty. A magical potion given me by, uh, Chief Mugwump, head medicine man of the, uh...Firestone nation.

BETH: Those savages simply handed it over to our fair knight?

BURGER: No, no... of course not. But that story is best told by brave Raleigh himself, is it not, Sir Walter?

WALT: Yes, well...the truth of the matter is, I was kidnapped by... Chief Mugwump's daughter, Tiger Lilly. I was held for ransom, but the colonists couldn't raise it. They were going to kill me, bash my brains in with their tommyhawks, but at the last second, Tiger Lilly, who'd grown...friendly, threw herself on me, pleading for my life. Chief Mugwump spared my life, and in exchange for...being good to Tiger Lilly, he gave me the potion.

TRIGOLID: A fantastical story, my queen, made credible only by Raleigh's ravishment of the Indian Princess.

BETH: Aye. Tell us, good knight, did you then spark this Tiger Lilly?

WALT: Only to save my life, our Majesty.

TRIGOLID: And this cat hath many lives to save, doth he not, fair Queen?

BETH: Quite so. And what name does this elixir have?

WALT: Well, uh...you mean its Indian name?

BETH: Yes, and it's Christian, as well.

WALT: Well...they called it, uhhh...

MARY: Pocahontas.

WALT: Yes, that's right...they call it Pocahontas.

BURGER: Which means, in their barbaric language, "that which soothes the soul."

BETH: And by what name does it go in Christendom?

BURGER: We have named it Halcyon Dolomite, Your Majesty, which means, in the Latin, "that which brings peace."

TRIGOLID: Beware, my queen, that it bringeth not the peace of death.

BETH: Aye, Trig, we are so warned. But perchance it is just what they say, then we would welcome a respite from the cares of our office. *(to Burger)* Dost thou have some of this potion with you?

BURGER: Aye, Your Majesty, I have some right here.

BETH: Then produce it forthwith.

BURGER: Yes, Your Majesty.

(Bowing deeply, he hands a single pill to Beth, who examines it, warily.)

BETH: A tiny bolus, to be sure.

BURGER: Tiny, but potent, Your Majesty.

BETH: Aye, and there's the rub. What think'st thou, Trig?

(She shows it to Trig.)

TRIGOLID: It carries an inscription, my queen.

BETH: H-A-L-D-O-L.

BURGER: Aye, Your Highness. Haldol. Shorthand for Halcyon Dolomite. It is simply taken by mouth, with water.

MARY: I'll go get a glass.

WALT: Make sure that's all you get.

MARY: Oh, don't be silly.

(Mary exits.)

TRIGOLID: She seems eager for the errand, sweet queen. Perchance she will partake of some spirits, cleverly hidden, while she fulfills her task.

BETH: Aye, her thirst for John Barleycorn exceeds her thirst for Raleigh, we think.

WALT: You do know your...cousin, don't you, Your Highness?

BETH: As well as I know our good knight. Deny you still deny your sparking of the Lady Margaret? Do not lie further to us sir, for your head lies in peril.

WALT: Well...it's not like you think...

BETH: Speak plainly, sir! Have you, or have you not, known the Lady Margaret?

WALT: Well... *(looks towards Burger, who nods for him to continue)* Yes, yes of course, I know her, but, do you mean in the biblical sense?

BETH: Damn it all, man! Speak the truth, or this audience is finished!

BURGER: For God's sakes, tell her what she wants to hear...we're nearly at a breakthrough!

WALT: Well...yes. I have been...involved with Lady Margaret.

TRIGOLID: As the plow is involved with the field, my queen.

BETH: Indeed. And did you find this a sweet furrow to lay seed to?

BURGER: Don't stop now! We've come too far.

BETH: What say'st thou, Sir Knight?!

WALT: I ...I quite enjoyed it, Your Majesty.

BETH: Of course you did. It's your nature.

(Mary re-enters, acting very giddy.)

MARY: Here's the water!

(hands it to Burger)

WALT: And how much did you have to drink, Mary?

MARY: Why, none...I'm not thirsty.

WALT: I didn't mean water, Mary.

MARY: Why, Walter...you know we don't keep liquor in the house.

WALT: I know you have it hidden.

(Walt stares at her with a dirty look at she turns guiltily away.)

BURGER: *(to Mary and Walt)* Please, now is not the time, we're almost there.

BETH: Almost where, my lord?

BURGER: Forgive me, Your Majesty, but sometimes I confuse the petty squabbles of lovers with the affairs of State.

BETH: Need we remind our oldest counselor that romance and politics are often one and the same?

BURGER: Yes, Your Majesty, that is true. But back to the matter at hand...the potion.

BETH: Ah, yes. *(to Trigolid)* Summon the Royal Taster.

BURGER: I can assure Your Majesty that it's perfectly safe.

BETH: We are sure that it is perfectly safe for our taster. Summon him, anon.

TRIGOLID: I will summon him, but he will not respond, my queen.

BETH: What? How dare he not!

TRIGOLID: Because, Your Majesty, he has succumbed to the hazard of his employment.

BETH: Poisoned, then?

TRIGOLID: Nay, fair queen. It is the gout. A thousand servings of candied fruits set before Your Majesty have lain him crippled in his bed.

BETH: Blast us for having a glutton as our Royal Taster! Who then? Burghley?

BURGER: Well, you see, I...

BETH: What of Mary, or Raleigh?

TRIGOLID: Nay, Your Highness. If poison it be, they has no doubt taken the antidote in anticipation of this turn of events or damn my eyes!

BETH: Then damn it all! Bring the water hence, Burghley, and we will have at it.

(Burger gives the water to Beth. As she starts to take the pill, Trig knocks the water out of her hand, snatches the pill.)

BETH: Trig!

(Trig takes the stage, while Mary, Walt, and Burger stare at Beth, and commune among themselves.)

TRIGOLID: Better your worthless old Trigolid than Your Majesty....

(He swallows the pill.)

BETH: Trig, no!

TRIGOLID: Worry not, my queen, for while I await the effect of the potion, I will sing you a song.

(very dramatic)

While Trigolid awaits his fate
He ponders those before him.
Will they fall before the weight
of plots hatched by their quorum?

(Trig starts to stumble about dramatically, holding the back of his hand to his brow.)

Oh! Sweet Queen! The game is up.
The three there always knew
'Twas poison that was in the cup
I bid you now adieu.

(With that, Trig twirls dramatically and falls flat on his back, arms outspread, seemingly dead.)

BETH: Trigolid!!!

(She rushes to him, cradling his head in her lap. The others are aghast, they don't understand what's going on. Beth screams at them.)

BETH: Goddamn your souls! You'll all be drawn and quartered before evening vespers!

WALT: What.....?

BURGER: My queen...Beth...please, let us help you...

BETH: Help? I'll help you...straight to Hell! Guards!!!

(She collapses onto Trig, weeping.)

BURGER: She's having a psychotic break.

MARY: It's Trigolid...

BURGER: Who is this Trigolid?

MARY: Her imaginary friend.

BURGER: You mean, like a childhood imaginary friend?

MARY: Yes. From when she was a tiny little girl. His name was Trigolid.

WALT: I thought she grew out of that before she started grade school.

MARY: It seems...she never did. And now, he's done something to upset her.

WALT: Just what we need. Damn!

(Beth has been weeping profusely over Trig, but Walt's exclamation catches her attention.)

BETH: Yes, Goddamned you are! You evil, unholy trinity...

BURGER: I think we'd better leave.

BETH: ...you devil spawn from the black pit of Hell...

MARY: Will she be okay?

BURGER: She's not violent, just angry...

BETH: ...festering cankers of disease infested bowels!

WALT: Yeah, let's get the Hell out of here.

(As they exit, Beth screams at them.)

BETH: Fly, you black cowards! You cannot hide, we will find you, wherever you are! Guards...Guards!!! *(Her attention shifts back to Trig.)* My poor, sweet Trig... my oldest, dearest friend. Remember when you first came to me, I was but a child, in my nursery...and from that moment on, no one could make me laugh, no one could share the secrets of my soul, as did my own Trigolid. They tried to send you away, but I wouldn't let them. I hid you for years, and when I became queen, I summoned you to court, against their wishes. But now, they have murdered you! If only I could bring you back, I would commission Shakespeare himself to write an epic play to the glory of Trigolid.

TRIGOLID: *(still lying down)* And would Trig be portrayed in a manly fashion, astride a snow white charger?

BETH: *(still consumed in her grief)* Yes...

TRIGOLID: Would he embark upon a noble quest, to seek the Holy Grail, and stir the good in all men's hearts?

BETH: Of course...

TRIGOLID: And would fair damsels, such as, for instance, the Ladies Edwina and Roxanne, offer him succor and comfort, when he returned from his quest?

BETH: Yes, yes...all of my ladies in waiting would be at his disposal, to do with as he wished.

(Trig sits up, arms spread.)

TRIGOLID: Then here I am! Tah-dahh!

BETH: Trigolid!!! You've come back to me!

(She hugs him, sobbing with joy for several beats, before "remembering herself." She gets up and returns to her 'throne.")

BETH: It seems as if you have returned to the land of the living. Tell us, Trig, what was the exact effect of the potion upon you?

TRIGOLID: Well, my queen... *(spits out the pill into his hand, holds it up.)* Nothing.

BETH: Ahh, clever Trig. But to what purpose hast thou played this part? Acting such as this hath not been seen even at the Globe.

TRIGOLID: Aye, and they were shocked to see the potion prove fatal. Not the outcome they expected, to be sure. Your worthless Trigolid suspects, then, that its qualities are as they say, those of a soothing balm.

(He hands her the pill.)

BETH: Then, Burghley doth not lie?

TRIGOLID: Nay, my queen, he doth not. But his purpose, and that of the others, remains hidden.

BETH: We must find it out, anon. Then, perhaps, we may taste this bolus. In truth, we are tempted to feel the cool hand of this potion upon our brow.

(She holds out the pill and Trig snatches it.)

TRIGOLID: Nay, my queen!

BETH: Trigolid! How dare you!

(Trig kneels before her, holding his head out as if on the block.)

TRIGOLID: My queen, before you separate Trig's empty head from his worthless shoulders, hear him out. It is for the people that I speak...

BETH: The people?

TRIGOLID: Aye, the people in whose hearts my queen lives, who require a kindly, feminine presence, that replaces what was ripped from their bosoms by the great Henry.

BETH: Ahhh! The Virgin Mary.

TRIGOLID: Aye, and now the people have...

BETH: ...The Virgin Queen.

TRIGOLID: Aye. The people love their queen as they did her, and likewise, they are in awe of Your Majesty.

BETH: They best be in awe of one whose virginity was miraculously restored to her.

TRIGOLID: We live in an age of miracles, Majesty. And the greatness of Gloriana is one that the people must have.

(She holds out her hand, and Trig returns the pill.)

TRIGOLID: My queen is wise and will do what is best for her and her people.

BETH: Aye. We will, sweet Trig. After we learn the secret desires of our visitors.

TRIGOLID: The rack, then?

BETH: Nay, we shall grant them one more audience. "All the world's a stage, and all the people players." The play is in their hands, and we will see if they have written themselves into a tragedy.

(Lights down. End of Act I, Scene 1.)

**ACT I, SCENE 2: A SHORT TIME LATER.
THE CROMWELL'S LIVING ROOM.**

(Walt, Dr. Burger and Mary are seated. They are dressed in contemporary clothing.)

WALT: You threw me off with that Spanish Armada stuff, you know that? What the heck was that all about?

BURGER: Just a little contingency I had prepared in case I ran into resistance. It nearly worked, I might add.

WALT: It didn't, though, did it? She still hasn't taken the medicine.

BURGER: We made progress.

WALT: Progress? She's upstairs in her bedroom, wrestling with the invisible man, and cussing us out in Elizabethan English. That's progress?

BURGER: Yes. We've discovered how deeply attached Beth is to the Elizabethan era.

MARY: You sounded so knowledgeable about that, oh...what did you call it?

BURGER: The Spanish Armada.

MARY: Of course, the Spanish Armada. You knew so much about it.

BURGER: Thank you.

WALT: I have to admit, she nearly went for it.

BURGER: That was a blow by blow account, all true. As we've learned, her delusion is based mostly on historical fact. To insert ourselves into the delusion and be accepted as her peers, we have to play it straight.

MARY: I just think it's wonderful that Beth's doctor is so well informed.

WALT: Yeah, you're a regular Renaissance man, Burger. How come a shrink like you knows so much about this kind of stuff?

BURGER: This stuff, as you say, was my passion in college. My undergraduate degree was in English history.

WALT: So how does that translate into medical school and psychiatry?

BURGER: My senior thesis was on the psychopathology of the Tudor Dynasty, Elizabeth in particular. I maintained, and still do, that Elizabeth was so caught up in her cult of Gloriana that by the end of her life she was convinced she was a virgin, despite a decades long affair with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. The research piqued my interest into the diseases of the mind, particularly, delusions.

MARY: Why, this is just amazing!

WALT: What's amazing?

MARY: The coincidence. That Beth's doctor, who is going to cure her of the delusion that she is Queen Elizabeth, just happens to be an expert on Queen Elizabeth!

BURGER: Umm, Mrs. Cromwell...I was brought into this case precisely because I am an expert on the Elizabethan period.

MARY: Oh.

BURGER: Well...enough about me. Tell me more about her imaginary companion, this...Trigolid.

MARY: Trigolid? Oh, my. Yes, that was the name of Beth's little friend.

WALT: I thought she gave that up before she learned to tie her shoes.

MARY: She never did learn to tie her shoes, Walt.

WALT: What? So how do they stay on her feet?

MARY: Oh, Walt...you just never paid any attention...

WALT: Why should I? That kid's been a disaster since the day she was born.

MARY: Walt's always been too hard on her.

WALT: It's not my fault that kid's always been weird. She never even smiled when she was a baby...most babies smile, don't they?

BURGER: Did she have anything to smile about?

WALT: Believe it or not, we were very happy back then.

BURGER: Is there any reason why you can't get back there?

WALT: Yeah. The reason's sitting upstairs playing power politics with the Spanish and the French. Do you know what it's like living with the Queen of England? And another reason is Mary's drinking problem...you've seen what I have to put up with.

MARY: I do not have a drinking problem!