

The Reformation

PLAY 6:

Elizabeth I.

Elizabeth I is having a conversation with a trusted courtier and adviser.

Characters:

Elizabeth I

Courtier



Elizabeth I: Now let me think. With *Bloody Mary*, my darling sister, out of the way, I better try to settle all the religious problems and bring peace to our troubled England!

Courtier: What do you plan to do, your majesty?

Elizabeth I: I definitely need to make England Protestant again!

Courtier: Yes, I agree. If you want to keep your throne England cannot be Roman Catholic.

Elizabeth I: Absolutely. In Roman Catholic eyes I am illegitimate. The Roman Catholic Church does not recognise the marriage of my mother, Anne Boleyn, to my dear father Henry VIII.

Courtier: Parliament can help you and make you, instead of the Pope, the head of the church in England.

Elizabeth I: Good idea! I will be made the Supreme Governor of the Church. And from today I reject the power of the Pope! From now on England will be Protestant again!

Courtier: And how shall we get all the people to accept these changes?

Elizabeth I: Uhm? First of all, everyone has to go to the new Protestant church services. People who refuse to go shall be called recusants. And recusants will be fined for not going to church. But don't be too harsh on them. I believe that everybody will eventually get to know and like the new Church of England. Hopefully this will make England stronger.

Courtier: I will do as you command, your majesty.

≈ 2 years later ≈

(Elizabeth I is having a conversation with her trusted courtier.)

Courtier: Your Majesty, the Pope is still trying to keep the Roman Catholic faith alive in England.

Elizabeth I: What has he done now?

Courtier: He has just published a Bull, saying that...

Elizabeth I: What do you mean "a Bull"?

Courtier: A Bull is a Roman Catholic announcement of great importance - it is an official letter. Well, as I said, the Pope has just published a Bull, saying that Roman Catholics do not owe any loyalty to you, your majesty.

Elizabeth I: To me? Elizabeth I, Queen of England?

Courtier: Yes, your majesty.

Elizabeth I: On what grounds?

Courtier: Well, because the Pope still says that you are an illegitimate child of Henry VIII and therefore an illegitimate queen.

Elizabeth I: So, the Roman Catholic Church still does not recognise the fact that my mother, Anne Boleyn, and father, Henry VIII, were married!

Courtier: No, your majesty. And what's more, the Pope also said that Roman Catholics should try to make Mary, Queen of Scots, who is a devout Catholic, the queen of England!

Elizabeth I: Outrageous! Those in England who still have the Roman Catholic faith may try to overthrow me!

Courtier: Yes. And to keep the Roman Catholic faith alive the Pope and king Philip II of Spain are paying to have young Englishmen trained as Roman Catholic priests.

Elizabeth I: This must be stopped immediately! We need to become harder on all Roman Catholics - even if it means that they may face torture and death. The Roman Catholic Church is a major threat to my position as queen.

Courtier: I agree, your majesty. And, don't forget, England and Spain are enemies at the moment. The young Roman Catholic priests, trained by king Philip II of Spain, may even be used as spies! They may be traitors, your majesty! I suggest that they need to be caught, tortured and executed.

Elizabeth I: Very well, then. Do whatever you have to, to get rid of these traitors!

≈ The end ≈

- LGW. Irvine -