A crowd gather around a central space marked out by a rope (placed by the USHER). At the centre is a raised throne on which sits QUEEN ELIZABETH. Enter the MESSENGER from the crowd, carrying a scroll and a package, looking flustered and anxious.

MESSENGER [Coming through the crowd] Is the Queen’s Secretary here? Have you seen the Queen’s Secretary? [Looking around frantically] Gentlemen, can you bring me to Mr Secretary?

USHER [stepping forward] The Queen’s Secretary is not here. What business have you with him?

MESSENGER Well Madam, I have letters that concern her Majesty’s service.

USHER Then you had best stay till he comes. He was here just now and will be again, if you have the patience to wait.

MESSENGER Wait? The matter requires such haste that I dare not for my life wait anywhere till I have delivered the letters. Without doubt this is business that especially concerns the Queen’s service.

USHER What a fuss is here with you! If the letters concern the Queen, why should you not deliver them to the Queen? [Gestures to the Queen] You see she is present, and you cannot have a better opportunity, if the intelligence be so important and concern her, as you say.
MESSENGER [Despairing] I cannot tell what I should do. They concern the Queen’s service indeed, but they ought to be delivered to one whose place it is to receive them.

USHER Queen’s service? Listen, man, to what you say! I know not what you think, but all the world knows that she does herself the best service. [Pauses, reflects] Though I confess (for Honour’s sake) all great Princes must have attendants for their business.

MESSENGER Well, I am half persuaded to deliver the letters into her hands. But madam, they come from the Emperor of China in a language that she understands not.

USHER Why, you are so very simple! Though it may be so, many princes (like the Turkish Sultan and the rest) do always send a translation withal in Italian, French, Spanish or Latin, and then all is one to her.

MESSENGER [Incredulous] Does she understand all these languages and never crossed the seas?

USHER Are you a messenger, and have ridden so many miles and met with so many men, and yet you have not heard that she speaks and understands all the languages in the world which are worthy to be spoken or understood?

MESSENGER It may be she understands them well for a lady, but not as well as secretaries should do.

USHER [Interrupting] Pah, what do you know of secretaries?
MESSENGER Is it possible that a Lady born and bred in her own Island, having seen only the confines of her own kingdoms, should be able without interpreter to give audience and answer to all foreign ambassadors?

40 USHER [Dismissive] Yea we have seen that so often that it is here no wonder. But to make an end, look upon her. What do you think? [Gestures towards the Queen] Do you see her? Say truly, did you see ever more majesty or more perfection met together in one body? Believe me sir, for wisdom and government she is as inwardly perfect as externally wonderful.

45 MESSENGER [Cautious] Oh madam, why now I must back away, as you have so daunted my spirits with these words ‘majesty’ and ‘government’. You know majesty never likes presumption, and a governor may choose to hang a messenger if he be too saucy! No, I learnt a better lesson at school: they taught me ‘it is not good to trifle with divinity’. Farewell good lady, I will go to one of the secretaries.

USHER Ah, you simple man, you are the most willfull creature alive. Do you not know that besides all her perfections, all the earth hath not such a generous prince? For all is one, come gentleman, come servingman, come ploughman, come beggar - the hour is yet to come that ever she refused petition. Will she then refuse a letter when it comes from so great an emperor? No no, do as I bid thee. I should know something, who have been a lady in waiting these past fifteen years. Draw near her, kneel down before her, kiss your letters, and deliver them.

MESSENGER Well, God bless me and God save her, and let God’s will be done. I am half persuaded and I will test my destiny. [Moves to the throne, bows low, and addresses the Queen] Fair Queen, here are letters from the Emperor of China, who salutes you, and I never saw your match neither in the East
Indies, nor in the West, nor in any country where there is man or beast [he elaborately kisses the letter and hands it (via the USHER) to the Queen. He then backs away two steps and bows, looking down.]

QUEEN ELIZABETH [Opens and reads the letter] I, the all-powerful Prince Taicosama, peerless Master of the World, Emperor of all the Kings of China, great king of Coray, Tambano, Bungo, Giamaco, Xumoto ... blah blah blah ... To the sublime star of the north, Elizabeth Queen of England, of France, of Ireland, of all the Islands of Normandy, of Wight, and of Man etc etc etc ... The victorious Empress of Time, of Fortune, and of Love; the miraculous beacon of Nature for all the universe.

Although all the Princes of the West have through their Ambassadors pleaded for alliance with me, I have turned them all away. However, as soon as I heard the name of the glorious Queen of England I was so captivated that I am resolved to give you the first and supreme rank in this my realm, and offer to all of your subjects safety of passage and freedom of commerce. I send a gift as a sign of our love. From our golden port of Cantonfu, on the tenth of the first moon, the year of the creation of the World, 25,000. [The MESSENGER and the USHER clap politely]

QUEEN ELIZABETH [Looks initially confused by this last number, and then down to the MESSENGER, who is still kneeling] Well ... The gift? [The MESSENGER Produces the package, which he opens to reveal a sumptuous orange cloak covered in eyes and ears. He gives it to the USHER who shows it to the audience.]

QUEEN ELIZABETH [Satisfied and regal. The USHER kneels.] They send me the eyes and ears of Fame – ‘she who is seen and heard across the globe’. So now my renown stretches from the new worlds of the west to China in the farthest east. My subjects carry our goods into seas that until now were never known by English ship, and return with the rarest silks, the
finest porcelain and the purest spices. We are most blessed, and shall send to them the greatest gift – our true religion. [To the MESSENGER] We shall procure suitable gifts to let your master know we are well pleased.

[Finish – the MESSENGER and the USHER clap, ELIZABETH bows, then general applause.]