

Reformation Playlist

Deanna Smid

1. Martin Luther, I presume?
2. Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Intrepid Joyce Lewes
3. Theodore Beza's Fruitful Poetry
4. Anna Bullinger and the household of faith
5. A whole new world for the Huguenots

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The Picture of xxij. godly and faythfull Christians, apprehended
about Colchester, prisoned together in one band, and so with thre
leaders at the most, brought vp to London.



1. Martin Luther, I presume?

Characters:

Morton Lufer
Lufer's wife
Martin Luther
Katie Luther
Assassin 1
Assassin 2
Pub patron 1
Pub patron 2
Pub patron 3
Pub patron 4

The year is 1521, and Martin Luther has been condemned as a heretic by the Holy Roman Emperor. The Edict of Worms has allowed any person to kill Luther without penalty, and it is a crime to give him food or shelter. One common German shoemaker, though, seems oblivious to the political and theological upheavals in his country. This man is Morton Lufer, who leaves his wife at home (once again) to visit the pub after a long day of work. At the pub, Lufer is constantly bothered by strangers who mistake him for some other person: a man by the name of Martin Luther. All he wants to do is drink and gamble in peace at the pub, but poor Lufer has a very different evening in store for him. Will he ever return safely to his wife? And does he want to?

Scene 1: Outside Morton and Helga Lufer's house. Morton is alone on stage, and Lufer's wife is heard from off stage.

Morton: Wife, I'm off to the pub!

Lufer's wife: Again? Morton, why don't you stay home tonight?

Morton: And do what? I want to drink lager and play games with my friends.

Lufer's wife: We have lager at home.

Morton: And games?

Lufer's wife: We could play a round of pochspiel.

Morton: Nah, I think I'll be off to the pub.

Lufer's wife: Why don't you take me with you?

Morton: Who will take care of the children?

Lufer's wife: Hansel and Anna are asleep. They will be fine on their own for an hour or two.

Morton: That doesn't sound safe to me. You should stay with them to make sure that brigands and ne'er-do-wells don't have a chance to break into our home.

Lufer's wife: We have nothing of value to steal!

Morton: [walking away] I couldn't catch that, my dearest.

Lufer's wife: Take me with you!

Morton: See you in the morning!

[Morton exits the stage]

Lufer's wife: Morton Lufer, either come back here or take me with you!

[Morton re-enters, onto a pub scene]

Morton: Well, well, there are a lot of strangers in the pub tonight. No matter, I'll start with a lager. A man can drink lager with any man, friend or stranger. [He sits at a table, next to Pub Patron 1]

Morton: It's a chill night tonight, stranger. I will be happy to let a lager warm my bones.

Pub Patron 1: And so it is, sir.

Morton: The name's Morton Lufer.

Pub Patron 1: Martin Luther! What an honour to meet you! I've been following your bold call for reformation in the Roman church. Ever since you nailed those theses to the church door, the Roman church has been quaking in its heretical boots.

Morton: Theses? Reformation?

Pub Patron 1: All of Germany, nay, the world, has been stirred by your courageous actions.

Morton: Well, I'm just a cobbler. I make incredible leather shoes, but I wouldn't call that a courageous action.

Pub Patron 1: Ah, Martin Luther, you are too modest.

Morton: I see the problem here. My name is Lufer, Morton Lufer. I am cobbler from this town, and certainly not some theses-writing hero.

Pub Patron 1: Sure, sure, Mr. Lufer. I know all about the Edict of Worms.

Morton: The Edict of Worms?

Pub Patron 1: Yes, the Emperor has allowed anyone to kill you, without consequence. How you must suffer, Martin.

Morton: No really, my name is Morton. And I'm a cobbler. Look! I made these shoes myself! I can make this sort of shoe in many different styles and colours, and for a modest fee, I can add laces, a buckle, or a taller heel. Whatever you like.

Pub Patron 1: Don't worry, Mr. Luther. I can keep your secret.

Morton: I have no secrets to keep, and my name is Lufer. Lufer!

Pub Patron 1: [To Pub Patron 2] Friend! Come and join us.

Pub Patron 2: I would be happy to share a lager with you.

Pub Patron 1: Never mind the lager. Look at who is sitting with me.

Pub Patron 2: I don't think we've met.

Morton: My name is Morton Lufer.

Pub Patron 2: Martin Luther!

Pub Patron 1: Exactly!

Morton: No, no. Listen carefully: Mor-ton...

Pub Patron 1 and 2: Mar-tin...

Morton: Lu-fffffher.

Pub Patron 1 and 2: Lu-ththththther.

Morton: Argh!

Pub Patron 2: What an honour to meet you, Mr. Luther.

Pub Patron 1: That's what I said to him, too.

Morton: And I'll say it again, my name is Morton Lufer.

Pub Patron 2: I can understand that you would want to hide your identity. You are certainly unpopular in some circles. Why, the Emperor has made it a crime for anyone to feed or shelter you.

Morton: That sounds quite incredible, but it wasn't me! I make shoes. And to be honest, I'm not even all that good at it. My wife is constantly telling me that I should have been a farmer.

Pub Patron 2: Haha, Mr. Luther. You have a reputation for being a man of high humour.

Pub Patron 1: Your wife? Do you mean Katherina von Bora?¹

Pub Patron 2: Oh, I have heard great things about her. Wasn't she a nun who escaped her abbey by hiding among fish barrels on a covered wagon? And didn't she refuse many offers of marriage because she wanted you, only? And doesn't she run all of your business operations at the former monastery where you live? Doesn't she breed and sell cattle, operate a brewery, and run a hospital? Isn't it said that she wakes up every morning at 4:00 am because of all of her duties?

Morton: No, my wife's name is Helga, and she's the daughter of a stable master. She's nothing special, really.

Pub Patron 2: Nothing special?

Morton: No, I mean, all she does is take care of the household. She buys goods for the children and I, she makes warm clothing for winter, she wakes up early to make food for the family, she knits blankets and sews quilts, she makes shirts that she sells in the market, and she takes care of our real estate transactions. She also hosts a Bible study in our house. But I'm the one who works.

Pub Patron 1: Katherina von Bora does all of that? So the stories are true!

Morton: Helga. And it's not much at all. Look, I make shoes! [he shows his shoes again]. Have you ever seen leather stitching so precise? And look at the quality of the leather! I only use the best. My prices are very reasonable, too.

Pub Patron 2: Yes, yes. We will keep your secret. Wink, wink, right Mr. Luther?

Morton: Lufer! [he pushes back from the table] I think I shall find my lager elsewhere. [He walks to another table. While he is in the pub, Patron 1 and 2 follow him with their eyes, looking proud, and whispering to each other from time to time]

[*Morton sits at a table, alone, until Patron 3 approaches him*]

Patron 3: Is this seat taken?

¹ Martin and Katharina married in 1527.

Morton: Please, sit.

Patron 3: I've been travelling for hours this day, and it's a pleasure to stop for a drink, conversation, and maybe a game.

Morton: Do you play Pochspiel?

Patron 3: Indeed I do!

Morton: Then shall we play?

[*Patron 3 and Morton roll dice, and Morton wins*]

Morton: Aha! And the first round goes to Morton Lufer!

Patron 3: Martin Luther!

Morton: Morton Lufer, and shall we play another round?

Patron 3: Indeed not! I never play this game at all, and I'm surprised that you would try to trick me like this.

Morton: Trick you?

Patron 3: To think that I am playing Pochspiel with Martin Luther.

Morton: It's Morton Lufer, and why would that be a problem?

Patron 3: Aren't you opposed to gambling of all sorts?

Morton: We haven't laid a wager yet, and why do you think I'm opposed to gambling?

Patron 3: Didn't you say, "Money won by gambling is not won without sin and self-seeking sin"?

Morton: That doesn't sound like me.

Patron 3: I'm sure that I read that in one of your books.

Morton: Books? Friend, you seem confused, I haven't written any books. I'm a cobbler.

Patron 3: So you didn't write, condemning someone, "He had been absent from sermons for a whole month, and held, as it were, an open mart of gambling and dissipation"?²

² From a letter to Farel, 1539.

Morton: I'm quite sure I didn't.

Patron 3: But....Oh right! Of course you didn't! That second one must have been John Calvin.

Morton: John Calvin?

Patron 3: Yes, Mr. Luther. I'm sorry I confused you with him.

Morton: It's Lufer, and you don't have to call me mister. Morton is fine.

Patron 3: Oh, I wouldn't dare to call you Martin, Mr. Luther.

Morton: It's Morton Lufer. I'm not much for writing. I prefer making shoes, playing Pochspiel, and drinking.

Patron 3: Oh, you do have quite a reputation for drinking. Didn't you say, "Whoever drinks beer, he is quick to sleep; whoever sleeps long, does not sin; whoever does not sin, enters Heaven! Thus, let us drink beer!"

Morton: I'm sure I didn't, but that sounds like it was written by someone I would like to meet.

Patron 3: Oh Mr. Luther, you are so funny.

Morton: I'm not finding any part of this funny. In fact, I think I shall move on to find others who might be more interested in Pochspiel. [*He moves to another table. Patron 3 keeps following him with his eyes, as Patron 1 and 2*]

Morton: [to Patron 4] Sir, are you going to say anything about theses, about a woman named Katherina, about my interest in gambling, or about John Calvin?

Patron 4: I'm just here to drink, and maybe sing some songs later in the evening.

Morton: Excellent. I will join you in the drinking and the singing.

Patron 4: Delighted. I'm a stranger to this town, so it's a pleasure to share my drink.

Morton: A stranger, eh? There seems to be a lot of strangers in town today.

Patron 4: It must be because of the meeting of the peasants.³

Morton: I don't know anything about that. I once went to a meeting of the cobbler's guild, but I mostly mind my own business.

³ Before the Peasant's War.

Patron 4: And what is your name, new friend?

Morton: My name?

Patron 4: Yes, your name.

Morton: It's...Morton.

Patron 4: Morton! How nice to meet you.

Morton: It's Morton!

Patron 4: Yes, I heard you the first time, Morton.

Morton: Oh. Ha. People have been mishearing my name all evening, and confusing me with some other fellow.

Patron 4: Oh? Who do they think you are?

Morton: I'd rather not say.

Patron 4: Fair enough. Shall we get back to the drinking? [*They drink in silence for a moment*].
Morton! Where have I heard that name before?

Morton: Oh no, not again.

Patron 4: I think my uncle has a good friend named Morton.

Morton: Really?

Patron 4: Yes, he is a butcher, or cooper, or cobbler, or something.

Morton: I'm a cobbler!

Patron 4: I wondered about that. I noticed your shoes immediately. Could you be my uncle's friend? What is your surname?

Morton: It's Lufer.

Patron 4: Martin Luther?

Morton: Morton Lufer.

Patron 4: Martin Luther, I am so pleased to make your acquaintance. Wow, will my wife be impressed when I tell her that I shared a drink with Martin Luther.

Morton: You've shared a drink with lowly Morton Lufer, a cobbler from this town.

Patron 4: I guess I shouldn't be surprised that you're here. After all, you must be on your way to the peasant's meeting.

Morton: Nope.

Patron 4: Tell me, what are you going to say to the angry peasants?

Morton: Look, I don't know this Martin Luther chap, and I'm sick of hearing his name. Didn't you say that you wanted to sing?

Patron 4: Of course, Mr. Luther. I didn't mean to offend you. Why don't you sing *your* song?

Morton: Do you know my favourite song?

Patron 4: Of course! We all do. It's becoming quite a classic.

Morton: Huzzah! [*he stands on his chair and addresses the whole pub*] I'll start the singing, and you can all join in. Even though the pub is full of outsiders tonight, I'm sure all German lager-loving people know this one!

[*He begins "Ein Prosit," but the rest of the pub starts murmuring and looking uncomfortable*]

Morton: [*notices the awkward silence and falters to a halt*] Why aren't you singing along?

Patron 4: Ah, Mr. Luther?

Morton: Lufer.

Patron 4: That isn't your favourite song.

Morton: Oh really? And what is, pray tell?

Patron 4: We'll sing the first verse. [*Patron 4 starts singing "A Mighty Fortress," and he urges the rest of the pub patrons—and the audience—to join in*]

1. A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
our helper he amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great,
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.

Morton: I don't know it, but it sure is catchy.

Patron 4: You are too modest, Mr. Luther.

Morton: That's it! I am going home. I've had enough of this Martin Luther business. [*He strides to the door, but Martin and Katie are entering and blocking the doorway*].

Morton: Please stand aside, strangers, I'm leaving this pub.

Martin: Already? The night is yet young.

Katie: And there's no need to call us strangers. I'm Katie and this is Martin Luther.

Morton: MORTON LUFER! My name is Morton Lufer, not Martin Luther.

Martin: Of course, because that's my name.

Morton: Martin Luther? You're Martin Luther?

Katie: He definitely is.

Morton: You're the man who called for reformation in the Roman Catholic church, who nailed theses to some door, who is under sentence of death by the Edict of Worms, who has some amazing wife, who is opposed to gambling, and who wrote a catchy hymn.

Martin: You are too kind.

Morton: And you, you must be Katherina von Bora.

Katie: Please, call me Katie. And do you have a wife?

Morton: Yes, Helga. I'm going home to her now.

Katie: She isn't here with you?

Morton: Of course not. She never goes out with me at night, even though she wants to sometimes. She's too busy making clothing, knitting, quilting, reviewing her business transactions, preparing food, and studying the Bible. But why are you here? Why is a famous theologian in a pub?

Katie: Sir Doctor is living at Wartburg Castle right now, translating the Bible into Greek. But he doesn't hear any "real" people speaking German. He wants the Bible to be in the German that ordinary people speak at home, in the market, and in pubs.⁴

⁴ Luther lived at Warburg in 1521.

Morton: You're translating the Bible?

Martin: Yes, I am. I believe everyone should be able to read the Bible in his own language.

Morton: The whole Bible?

Martin: The whole thing.

Morton: How far are you now?

Martin: I've just finished with Proverbs.

Morton: That's my least favourite book, along with Ruth and Esther.

Katie: Why?

Morton: It's a book for girls. All that stuff about the godly woman? Bah.

Katie: I'm not sure that our friend Philip...

Martin: Philip Melanchthon

Katie: ...Would agree. He wrote a lovely commentary on that chapter: He says, "Faith can never be idle, and in male and female does the work proper to each...Peter enjoins [women] to be of a modest and gentle spirit, that is, to be chaste and yet not peevish, serious and not irritable. Virtually the same duties are taught in [Proverbs 31]: to have the fear of God and faith, to be chaste, diligent in taking care of the household, and generous toward the poor."⁵

Morton: Who could find a woman like that? I mean, take my Helga for instance... *[he stops and thinks. Martin and Katie are silent while they watch him with amused and encouraging smiles. Morton eventually comes to the realization that Helga is, indeed, a woman just like the one described in Proverbs 31]*

Morton: *[to Martin and Katie]* Excuse me. I must go.

Katie: Where are you going?

Morton: *[already on his way across stage, calls over his shoulder]* To my wife! *[He takes a few steps away from the pub, humming the tune of "A Mighty Fortress", and just then two assassins emerge from hiding and stand in front of him].*

Assassin 1: Martin Luther?

⁵ From Melanchthon, *Nova Scholia*. Translated by Al Wolters.
<https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/bitstream/11375/13603/1/fulltext.pdf>

Assassin 2: Prepare to meet your Maker.

Morton: What? Why?

Assassin 1: We have been sent by Mary to kill you for the havoc that you have wrecked on the Roman church.

Morton: Mary? Do I know her?

Assassin 1: Mary, by the Grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith.

Assassin 2: I thought we were sent by Emperor Charles V.

Assassin 1: Is that right?

Assassin: I'm quite sure.

Morton: Either way, you've made a mistake. My name is Morton Lufer.

Assassin 1: Exactly! And killing you is our mission, Martin Luther.

Assassin 2: Ready your soul! [*he rushes at Morton. In the struggle, Morton relieves him of his sword and knocks him down*].

Assassin 1: You may have defeated my comrade, but you shall not be lucky with me. [*He rushes at Morton, but Morton knocks him down as well. As he is sinking down to the ground, Assassin 1 groans to Assassin 2*]: We should have attacked him together.

Morton: You won't take Morton Lufer for granted again.

[*Martin and Katie, noticing the struggle, rush out of the pub and join Morton*]

Martin: Morton, what happened?

Morton: They were sent for you, Martin.

Katie: By whom?

Morton: Mary of England or Emperor Charles V. They weren't quite clear on that point. I think it was Charles V.

Martin: But Morton, how did you manage to defeat them? From the look of your shoes, I thought you were a cobbler.

Morton: That's right, I am a cobbler. I am a wizard with a needle [gestures to the sword].

Katie: And you are sure that you are unharmed?

Morton: Yes, and so are these men [*gestures to the assassins*]. They might have sore heads for a while, but they will be fine.

Martin: You are a good man for sparing them, Morton.

Morton: I am a good man.

Assassin 1: [*groaning and reaching out to Morton*] Martin... [*Morton pokes him with the sword*].

Assassin 2: [*groaning and reaching out to Morton*] Luther... [*Morton pokes with the sword*].

Martin: [*giving Morton a reproving look*] Blessed are the merciful...

Morton: I only stabbed them lightly! I guess I'm a work in progress. But Martin, you must be careful. There are those angry enough to want you dead.

Martin: I have friends in very high places, Morton.

Katie: And weren't you going somewhere?

Morton: Of course! [*He runs off stage, calling*] Helga, I'm on my way home!

Exeunt.

2. Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Intrepid Joyce Lewes

Characters:

Mrs. Joyce Lewes
Mr. Thomas Lewes
Messenger

John Foxe
Agnes Foxe
Sheriff
Executioner
Mob 1
Mob 2
Mob 3

Setting: Mary, Queen of England, is seeking out Protestant believers, who are suffering greatly in prison, in fires, and in various other persecutions. One man, John Foxe, is gathering stories of such persecution, and is recording all sorts of horrors and injustices. One of his stories is of Joyce Lewes, a woman who converts to Protestantism, contrary to the wishes of her volatile husband. When a messenger from the local bishop tries to fine Mr. Lewes, he assaults the messenger and sends him on his way. His actions are of no avail, though, for a year later, Joyce Lewes is executed after months in prison. John Foxe and his wife, Agnes, witness the horrific burning.

Scene 1: The home of Joyce and Thomas Lewes. Joyce is sitting and knitting, and Thomas is standing.

Joyce: Husband, won't you sit down?

[Thomas paces back and forth]

Joyce: What is bothering you?

Thomas: You always used to be such a good wife. You went to church, you didn't complain, and you stayed silent.

Joyce: And may God forgive me.

Thomas: I never should have let you visit John Glover. He has filled your head with nonsense.

Joyce: Is it nonsense to read the Bible and understand it?

Thomas: You have gone to his house, alone. What will the neighbours think of such scandalous behavior?

Joyce: Mr. Glover is an honourable man, and I an honourable lady.

Thomas: You listen to him rather than listen to me.

Joyce: I listen to God!

Thomas: Then why do you forsake the holy water and the mass?

Joyce: Mr. Glover opened my eyes to what the Bible itself teaches about the mass, that accursed idolatry.

Thomas: Accursed idolatry! You will not utter those words in my house!

Joyce: You can drag me to church, but you can't make me participate in those so called "sacramentals." Where, husband, does the Bible teach the use of holy water? And where does it say that the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ is insufficient for our salvation?

Thomas: You know I have never read the Bible. And why should I? I go to church and do what the Bishop tells me to do. You have to be careful, Joyce. You know what happened to our neighbour, Mr. Saunders.

Joyce: I know. When I saw that pious man burned at the stake, I wondered if he might be right. And that's why I went in search of the truth of the gospel.

Thomas: Are you ready to die over transub...transubst...

Joyce: Transubstantiation? And yes, I would die.

Thomas: Well, you won't take me with you.

Messenger: [*entering on stage and calling out in a loud voice*] Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lewes!

Thomas: Yes? What is it?

Messenger: I have been sent to deliver notice of a fine levied against you.

Thomas: A fine? For what charge?

Messenger: [*reading from the citation*] Because she despises the holy water and the sacraments of the church, Mrs. Joyce Lewes has been cited for contempt of Roman Catholic doctrine. Mr. Thomas Lewes is therefore charged a fine of one pound.

Thomas: One pound? I am not a rich man. Wife, you have ruined me.

Messenger: You must pay the fine at once, or you will both be imprisoned.

Thomas: At once, eh? I don't think so. [*he pulls out a dagger, rushes to the messenger, and holds the dagger at his throat*] You know what you can do with that citation? You can eat it!

Messenger: Help! Help!

Joyce: Husband, stop this!

Thomas: No one can hear you. Eat it!

Messenger: I beg you, have mercy.

Thomas: Eat!

[*The messenger eats the paper*]

Thomas: Ah, that looks like a dry mouthful. Wash it down with this water. [*He holds a goblet to the messenger's mouth and forces him to drink, making him choke on it*]

Thomas: And now go back to your masters and tell them that Mr. Lewes will not pay for the disobedience of his lady wife. [*The messenger runs away*]

Joyce: What has come over you, husband?

Thomas: [*still brandishing the dagger*] And you, wife, you will no longer cause me grief. You will go to church, you will anoint yourself with holy water, you will take the sacrament, you will honour the priests, and you will keep your mouth shut.

Joyce: If these things were in the Word of God, I would with all my heart receive, believe, and esteem them.

Thomas: If thou wilt believe no more than what is warranted by Scriptures, thou art in a state of damnation!

Joyce: Husband, your words are as impure as they are profane.

Thomas: [*striking her*] You will do as I command!

Messenger: [*looking fearful, returns*] Er, Mr. Lewes...

Thomas: What is it, you scoundrel?

Messenger: The...uh...Bishop has commanded that you and your wife appear before him at once.

Thomas: And the fine?

Messenger: The Bishop said nothing of a fine.

Thomas: That's better. We will accompany you at once. [To Joyce] Wife, come with me.

Joyce: I gladly obey. [*She moves towards her husband, but he rushes over to her, grabs her by the hair, and pulls her offstage at a quick pace*].

Exeunt

II

[*John Foxe and Agnes enter. Setting: the home of John and Agnes Foxe*]

[*John immediately sits and picks up a book, reading*]

Agnes: John, I must speak with you.

[*John continues reading*]

Agnes: John!

[*John continues reading*]

Agnes: John, would you look at me!

John: [*looks up, distractedly*] Hmm?

Agnes: John, I'm worried about you.

John: There is no need, my love.

Agnes: But you aren't sleeping well, and when you do sleep, you twitch and cry out. I'm afraid that writing your book is making you unwell. And when you're not writing, you're reading. Always reading!

John: That might be so, but I must continue with my writing.

Agnes: But why?

John: Christians are being imprisoned, tortured, and killed, Agnes. Someone must record what is happening here.

Agnes: But what if Queen Mary finds out?

John: I cannot fear what she will do to me. It cannot be worse than what has been happening to those faithful English believers who refuse to bow to the tyranny of the papal mass.

Agnes: Tell me, John, are you doing this because you feel that God is calling you somehow? Because you were born in the same year that Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door?

John: I've told you many times, Agnes, that that cannot be a coincidence. I must continue with my task. Luther himself suffered terribly from persecution. He was banished from his own country for years, and often lived in fear of his life. Luther said at the Diet of Worms, "I am tied by the Scriptures," and so am I.

Agnes: And what about the Roman Catholics who were killed under the reign of good King Edward?

John: [vehemently] The Popish church can write its own book!

Agnes: And the title...

John: Yes, *Acts and Monuments touching things done and practiced by the prelates of the Romish Church, especially in this realm of England and Scotland, from the year of our Lord a thousand unto the time now present. Wherein is lively declared the whole state of the Christian Church: with such persecutions, and horrible troubles, and have happened in these last and perilous days. Faithfully gathered and collected according to the true copies and writings certificatory, as well of them that suffered: as also of the others that were the doers and workers thereof.*

Agnes: If you're going to do all of this work, can't the title be a bit catchier: What about... Foxe's Book of Martyrs?

John: I cannot put my own name first. It would be unseemly.

Agnes: But John, you have been so distant recently. You ignore me and the children, more than you usually do with all of your bookishness. And I found this! [*She passes him a sheet of paper*].

John: Yes, what of it?

Agnes: It's a list of names. Of women! Why are you thinking about other women?

John: It's for the book, Agnes.

Agnes: [*snatching back the paper*] Prove it. Who is this... Helen Stark.

John: She was a Scottish woman drowned for not praying to the Virgin Mary. They took her suckling child from her breast, put Helen in a sack, and drowned her.

Agnes: And Anne Askew?

John: Burned at the stake when she refused to recant.

Agnes: Joan Waste?

John: Burned at the stake. She was only twenty-two, and blind from birth.

Agnes: Elizabeth Cooper?

John: Tortured and then burned at the stake. She screamed when she felt the flames, so the man burning beside her held her hand and comforted her as they both died.

Agnes: And Rose Allin?

John: Officers of the Popish church entered her parent's home at night. Because her mother was ill, Rose was holding a candle and a mug, preparing her some broth. One of the officers asked her if she would be willing to burn for her faith, and Rose said yes. He then held her by the wrist, put the candle under her hand, and burned a cross in the back of her hand. He didn't stop until the tendons of her hand divided from the flesh.

Agnes: John...such horrors are happening. Have you seen all of these tortures and executions?

John: Some are stories I have heard, and others I have witnessed.

Agnes: John, there is one more name on this list.

John: Yes, Joyce Lewes.

Agnes: What happened to her?

John: My love, she has been in prison for twelve months now. Last night two priests came to hear her confession, but she turned them away. This morning, she will be executed.

[They hear the sounds of a mob outside]

Agnes: Will you go to witness?

John: I must.

Agnes: Then I will accompany you.

John: Agnes, no, it will be too much.

Agnes: I will stay by your side. *[they exit]*

III

[*a crowd is gathered around a raised execution platform. Lewes, John, and Agnes join the crowd]*

Mob 1: Did you hear? Her husband delivered her to the Bishop.

Thomas: Serves her right!

Mob 2: Apparently, when she heard she was going to die, she said “As for death, I think but lightly of. When I know that I shall behold the amiable countenance of Christ my dear Saviour, the ugly face of death does not much trouble me.” [*John listens and scribbles on paper*]

Thomas: She always was a talker.

Mob 3: Did you know her, man?

Thomas: She is my wife, but not for much longer.

Mob 1: You brought her to the Bishop to be killed?

Thomas: No, no. In fact, I paid one hundred pounds to take her home for a month to try to convert her. When that didn’t work, then I sent her back to the Bishop.

Mob 2: And now look what has happened.

Mob 3: [*stage whisper to Mob 1 and 2*] Murderer.

[*Sheriff and Executioner lead Joyce on to the platform*]

Thomas: Shame!

Mob 1: Quiet, sir. They are giving her something to drink.

Mob 2: [*To Thomas*] Did you not try to defend her, perhaps send her out of the country?

Thomas: Why should I? She is a heretic! And, she was costing me money.

Mob 3: Surely the life of your lady wife is worth more than mere money.

Thomas: Not at all. Wives are replaceable, especially ones that betray the church.

Joyce: [*after she drinks*] I drink to all them that unfeignedly love the Gospel of Christ and wish for the abolition of popery.

Agnes: Hear, hear!

John: Quiet, Agnes. Even though this crowd seems friendly to our cause, we never know who is listening.

Sheriff: [reading from paper] Joyce Lewes, you stand condemned for rebellion against the church, for despising the sacraments, and for disobedience to the Bishop. I hereby command that you be burned at the stake until dead.

Joyce: May I speak?

Sheriff: Joyce, my friend, you know how unwilling I am to carry out this sentence. You may speak for as long as you like.

Joyce: [addressing the mob] I pray you all, good Christian people, to bear me witness, that I die a good Christian woman, and that I do look to be saved by no other mean, but only by the mercy of God in the blood of His only Son Jesus Christ: and I confess that when I did know the Word of God, I neglected the same, loved myself and the world, and therefore this plague and punishment is happily and worthily happened unto me for my sins; and yet I thank God, that of His goodness He hath thus given me a time and a respite to repent. And now, good people, while I am alive, I pray you assist me with your prayers.⁶ [To the sheriff] May I sing?

Sheriff: Of course.

Executioner: [angrily] In Latin!

[Joyce begins singing Psalm 51 from the Anglo-Genevan Psalter. The mob joins in, and John gestures the audience to join as well]

O gracious God, be merciful to me,
And in your love, your infinite compassion,
Blot out my sins, remove all my transgressions.
O God, have mercy, Listen to my plea!
From every taint of evil wash me clean,
And from my guilt and misery relieve me.
For I am deeply conscious of my sin,
And all day long my misdeeds haunt and grieve me.

Create in me a pure, clean heart, I pray;
Renew a steadfast spirit deep within me.
Give me new life to strengthen and sustain me;
God, from your presence cast me not away.
Show me your mercy. Do not take from me
Your Holy Spirit, but again, O Saviour,
Let me the joy of your salvation see,

⁶ Words of Jane Grey when she was executed, according to John Foxe.

And make me willing to obey you ever.

Sheriff: [brokenly] Executioner, prepare the fire.

[*Joyce stands in front of the stake and the executioner puts bundles of sticks around her feet. When he is done, he steps away and Joyce raises her hands heavenwards*]

Agnes: John, look at her! She is smiling!

John: Lord, into Thy hands I commend her spirit.

Agnes: I can't stand this! [*she begins to cry*]

John: Agnes, you must stop. Who knows who might see you?

Agnes: But John, look, even her husband is crying!

John: I know, Agnes, but we must be cautious. We have to get you home. [*in a voice loud enough for all those around him to hear*] Wife, you are covered in red spots! I hope it's not the plague again. [*The people around them recoil and clear a path so that John can lead Agnes away*].

Agnes: [*out of earshot of the crowd, to John*] John, you must write your book. And add pictures. Lots of pictures. Everyone needs to hear and see what has happened here, and they need to remember.

Exeunt.

3. Theodore Beza's Fruitful Poetry

Characters:

Students of Beza:

Heinrich

Thomas

William

Johan

Theodore Beza

Housekeeper

Setting: Back in England, we saw Agnes Foxe encouraging her husband to record stories of martyrdom so that people would “hear, see, and remember” what had happened. In Geneva, Switzerland, Dr. Theodore Beza is also encouraging Christians to “hear, see, and remember,” both by versifying the Psalms and by writing plays. His four students are assisting him in both endeavours, but they are up to some hijinks of their own at the same time. The audience never meets the wife of Theodore Beza, but they find out that she is of great importance to Beza, as are Idelette de Bure to John Calvin and Anna Reinhard to Ulrich Zwingli.

Scene 1: The library. Heinrich, Thomas, and William are sitting quietly, reading and taking notes.

Johan: [entering and brandishing a piece of paper] Fellow students!

Heinrich: What is it now, Johan?

Johan: I have the newly revised Psalm from Dr. Beza.

Thomas: Another?

William: How does he write them so quickly?

Heinrich: You know Dr. Beza. He considers this his duty, so he does it immediately, and well.

Thomas: Has he asked us to give it a trial?

William: Of course! That is one of our tasks, is it not? Let's take a look, Johan.

Johan: Not so fast! I think we should play a little game.

Heinrich: Not another game. The last one almost broke my collarbone.

Johan: There are 150 of these Psalms. Don't you think we should make each one interesting?

Thomas: Each one of them is interesting already, Johan.

William: True, true, but let's hear him out, Thomas.

Johan: I propose this: we sing the Psalm, and at the end of the last verse, we hold the last note for as long as we can. The first one to take a breath loses.

Heinrich: Sounds simple. Shall we begin?

Thomas: Wait! What is the punishment for the loser?

William: We can figure that out after we play the game.

[*They sing Psalm 128 from the Anglo-Genevan Psalter*]:

Blest is the man who always
reveres and serves the LORD,
who, walking in his pathways,
obeys and keeps his word.
The fruit of all your labour
you as reward will eat;
you, blest by his great favour,
will have what you may need.

Your wife a vine resembles,
fruitful within your house.
Like olive shoots assemble
the children God allows.
Around your table sitting,
they are a rich reward,
a blessing great and fitting
for him who fears the LORD.

From Zion come your blessing;
may you see Salem's peace
and happiness progressing
until your days will cease.
May you through life's duration
know that your seed is well
and see their generations.

Peace be on Israel. [*they hold the last note for as long as possible. The first one to falter is William*]

William: [gasping] That's it! I couldn't hold it any longer.

[*The other three students cheer*].

Heinrich: Johan, what shall be his punishment?

Johan: Heinrich, Thomas, come here and we will decide. [*Johan, Heinrich, and Thomas whisper together. William looks on, apprehensive*].

Thomas: [*emerging from the huddle*] William, we have decided.

William: What is it? [*cringing*]

Thomas: For the rest of the day, the only words you can speak aloud are the names of fruits and vegetables.

William: What? That's outrageous!

Heinrich: Now, now, William. Those words are forbidden.

William: But, but, what if Dr. Beza calls us to his study?

Johan: Even then, William, only the names of fruits and vegetables.

William: Oh, oh, ...squash!

[*Housekeeper enters*]

Housekeeper: Gentlemen, Dr. Beza asks that you join him in his study. [*exits*]

Heinrich: Oh Thomas, Have you ever *bean* this frightened?

Johan: *Olive* us will be rooting, er, *rutabagaing* for you, William.

Thomas: You may have to stay *mum* all day. Get it? Mum? Chrysanthemum?

Heinrich: Ah, Thomas, that's the name of a flower.

William [*looking panicked*]: Beets! Beets!

Johan: What's that, William?

William: Beet!

Heinrich: I think he's worried that Dr. Beza will beat him.

Thomas: Haha! That's what you get for losing the game!

Johan: Maybe we had better help him out when we can, fellows.

Thomas: But he lost the bet, and now he must accept the consequences.

Heinrich: Let's consider this situation a challenge for all of us. If we can keep Dr. Beza from determining what we are doing, we all win.

Thomas: I guess.

William: [looking relieved] Olive...

Thomas, Heinrich, Johan [in unison]: ...us together. [*Exeunt*]

Scene 2: [Beza in his study, solus. He is working on writing a play. He is holding a quill and a parchment, pacing back and forth as he writes the prologue].

Beza: Let's see:

“God save you every one both great and small
Of all degree: right welcome be you all.”

Hmm, that's a good start. Very Welcoming.

“Would God we might each week through all the year
See such resort in Churches as is here.”

That adds weight, definitely...

“Ye Gentlemen and Ladies, I ye pray
Give ear and harken ...”

Harken? Yes, I like that. But what next? “Harken to my play?” No, no, too direct.
“Harken every day?” No, I don't think I want them to see this play *every* day. And “every day” doesn't contain enough syllables. “Hearken and call out, yay!” Too light-hearted, I think. Maybe simple is best:

“Ye Gentlemen and Ladies, I ye pray
Give ear and harken to what I have to say.”

There it is! Now, I need to give more direction to the audience. What should they be doing during the play? Listening, I guess:

“To hold your peace only I require.”

No, not enough syllables. How about, “to hold your peace alone I require?” Not enough syllables there, either. “To hold your peace lonely I require.” There it is! But is “lonely” a word? It doesn’t matter. The mark of a great playwright is inventing new words.

But they will want to know why. Hmm. I will anticipate the question for them:

“What win you (some will say) by that desire?
We neither can nor will away with that.”

And my answer:

“But yet you must, or else I tell you flat,
That both of us our labour lose together,
In speaking I, and you in coming hither.”

That should satisfy them! And a final reminder about silence. There is nothing worse than a rowdy audience.

“Wherefore I crave but silence at your hand,
My words with patience for to understand.”

Patience, patience, we all need plenty of that. Speaking of patience, where are my students? I sent my housekeeper to summon them a long time ago.

[*The four students enter noisily*]

Thomas: Dr. Beza, you asked for us?

Johan: We were practicing your psalm for you.

William: Endive...

Heinrich: Never heard something so beautifully rhymed.

Beza: Ah, Psalm 128. What a lovely chapter in the Bible. What did you think of my versification?

Heinrich: Lovely!

Thomas: Beautiful!

Johan: Wonderful!

[*They all turn to look at William*].

Beza: And you, William, what did you think?

William: Grape!

Beza: Thank you all for your kind words. I still remember the first time that I heard a Psalm put to music. When I was a young man—only 29—after I first converted to the Reformed faith, I attended a public worship service in Geneva for the first time. I heard the congregation sing a psalm, and it was so moving that I wanted to assist with the formidable task of versifying the rest. I started with Psalm 16. Once I had finished it, I snuck into the home of John Calvin and hid it among the papers on his desk.

Johan: What did he do when he found it?

Beza: He asked me to do the rest.

Heinrich: What an immense task!

Beza: It is my duty. God has given me talents, and I will use them to his honour.

Thomas: Did you summon us here to ask us our opinion on the new Psalm, Dr. Beza?

Beza: Partly, yes, but I am working on something new, and I need your help. I need you to read through and act out the play that I am writing. I am finished with most of it, but I need to hear it read out loud.

William: [Loudly] Sweet! [followed by a stage whisper] Potato.

Johan: Dr. Beza, is there anything you don't write? We already know of your Psalms and sermons, but you've also written dramas, satires, polemical treatises, Greek and French grammars, biographies, political treatises, and you even edited an annotated text of the Greek New Testament.⁷

Thomas: What is the play about?

Beza: The play is about the Colloquy of Poissy, which occurred nearly two decades ago, in France.

Heinrich: Was that when the Protestants and Catholics met with the king of France to negotiate a truce?

Beza: Exactly. It was in 1561.

⁷ Steinmetz, David Curtis. *Reformers In The Wings : From Geiler Von Kaysersberg To Theodore Beza*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. eBook Collection (EBSCOhost). Web. 4 Jan. 2017.

Thomas: Were you there?

Beza: I led the delegation of the Protestants.

Johan: Because you were trained as a lawyer?

Beza: I think so, and also because my family has certain connections with the nobility. But let us look at the play. I wrote it so that people will remember what happened to the church.

Thomas: Sounds fair enough. What do you need us to do, Dr. Beza?

Beza: There are only a few characters in the play:

Catherine de Medici,
Henry III,
Ted Bezor, and
Cardinal de Tournon

Which ones would you students like to be?

Heinrich: I recognize the other names, but who is this Ted Bezor?

Johan: Is that you, Dr. Beza?

Beza: It is. It didn't feel right to feature myself as a main character. What do you think?

Thomas: You were there, weren't you? And besides, your participation in the Colloquy of Poissy is fairly well known, I think.

Beza: Alright, I'll make the change. So, the characters are now the following: Catherine de Medici, Henry III, Theodore Beza, and the Cardinal de Tournon. Who do you all choose?

[Johan, William, Thomas, and Heinrich are all silent, and clearly avoid eye contact with Beza].

Beza: Who will read the part of Catherine de Medici, the mother of Henry III, and the woman who organized the Colloquy?

Thomas: Not me!

Johan: No thanks.

Heinrich: Nope.

[William shakes his head vehemently when the other characters on stage look at him.]

Beza: Why not?

Thomas, Johan, and Heinrich [*in unison*]: She's a woman! [*William nods vehemently*]

Beza: What about Henry III?

Thomas: Wasn't he merely a child at this point? No thanks.

Beza: And the Cardinal de Tournon?

Johan: He's Roman Catholic!

Beza: And the role of Theodore Beza?

Heinrich: It hardly seems fitting to act like you when you're right here, Dr. Beza.

Beza: [*sigh*] I see that I shall have to assign the roles. Thomas, you shall read the part of Catherine de Medici, Johan, you can be Theodore Beza, Heinrich, you are the Cardinal de Tournon, and William is Henry III. Henry III doesn't have very many lines, William. Are you alright with a largely silent role?

[*William nods*]

Beza: We will start right in the middle. The play is following the Protestant delegation as they make their way to Poissy. They are excited to attend, as they will be able to defend and explain the Reformed faith in front of the King of France, Henry III. The Roman Catholic clergy have been delaying the meeting because they do not want the King to hear the truth of Reformation theology.

Johan: Wait, wasn't there a large delegation of Protestants?

Beza: Yes, there were eleven ministers from France, as well as theologians from Switzerland, Germany and England. The King and Queen of Navarre were in attendance as well.

Heinrich: So why such a small delegation in the play, then? Are you trying to keep the stage from being overcrowded and confusing?

Beza: Ah, yes, I thought that someone would wonder that. I even wrote something about it in the preface to the play. What were my exact words? [*He rummages around through his papers until he finds the preface*]. Ah. [*Reading from the paper*]: "As touching the manner of dealing, I have altered some small circumstances of the story, to apply myself to the company. Moreover I have followed the ground as near the text as I could, according to such conjectures as I thought most convenient for the matter and persons. And although the affections be very great, yet have I abstained from words and speeches too far estranged from the common ordinary."

Johan: I've heard something like that before. "So then the best of the Historian is subject to the Poet, for whatsoever action or faction, whatsoever counsel, policy, or war, stratagem, the

Historian is bound to recite, that may the Poet if he list with his imitation make his own...” How does it end?

Thomas: I think, “beautifying it both for further teaching, and more delighting as it please him: having all from Dante his heaven to his hell, under the authority of his pen.”

Heinrich: That sounds so familiar! But who wrote it?

Beza: The sentiment is similar to mine, but I don’t know who wrote that.

[Johan and Thomas shake their heads and look puzzled. William clearly knows the author. He raises his hand, and opens his mouth to speak, but each time he is about to say the name, he realizes that he can’t because he can only speak using the names of fruits and vegetables. The others realize that he knows, but that he can’t say it].

Beza: Well, William, if you know it, why don’t you tell us the name?

[William looks aghast, but doesn’t want to admit his predicament. Instead, he fakes a coughing fit and losing his voice].

Heinrich: It looks like he won’t be able to tell us, Dr. Beza. William, can you act it out?

[William feigns being in a battle].

Johan: He’s batting mosquitos!

Thomas: He’s playing pin the tail on the donkey.

Heinrich: He’s in a battle.

[William gestures in agreement, pretends to be mortally wounded, and then falls down and pretends to be dying].

Johan: He’s sleepy.

Thomas: He’s wounded.

[William indicates agreement].

Heinrich: He’s dying.

[William indicates agreement. William then acts out giving his water to another soldier].

Johan: He’s giving something to someone else.

[William nods].

Thomas: But what is it?

[*William pretends to drink, then shakes his head and gives the imaginary drink to an imaginary other soldier*].

Heinrich: I have no idea.

Johan: Is it a drink of some sort?

[*William nods*].

Thomas: So, he's giving his drink,

Johan: As he lays dying,

Heinrich: On the battlefield.

[*William nods agreement*].

Thomas, Johan, and Heinrich, [*together*]: Sir Philip Sidney!

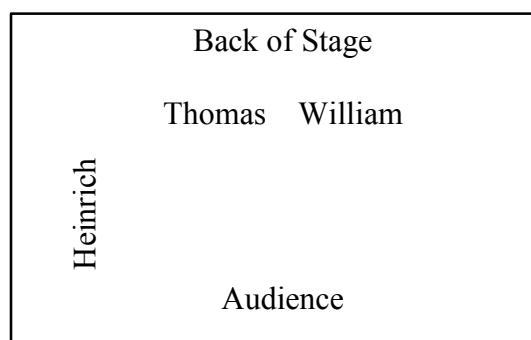
Beza: Of course! The man who died on the battlefield and gave his water to another soldier, saying, "Thy need is greater than mine." I know him, of course. Before he died, he was in the process of versifying the Psalms into English. I think his sister is working on the rest, now.

[*William gets up off of the floor*]

Beza: [to *William*] Well, William, you can certainly act. Your coughing has ended, I see. Has your voice returned to you? Are you able to assist your fellow students and I with the play?

William: Yam. [*He tries to make "yam" sound like "I am."*]

Beza: Then let us take our places. [*He arranges three chairs: two side-by-side, facing the audience, and one perpendicular to those chairs, facing the side of the stage*]. Thomas and William, you sit here [*he gestures to the chairs facing the audience*] and Heinrich, you sit here [*he gestures to the other chair*]. Johan, you exit the room and then re-enter. And begin!



[All of the characters take their places, and once they are seated, Johan re-enters the room]

Heinrich: [reading from the play text] Ah, the Huguenots have finally arrived.

Beza: Heinrich, you should be sneering as you say that. I'll add the stage direction [*he scribbles on his page*] and you read the line again.

Heinrich: [sneeringly] Ah, the Huguenots have finally arrived.

Johan: [reading from the script] Is this not the time and the place? After you delayed this vital colloquy so many times, it is hardly likely that we would be late when you finally deigned to meet with us.

Thomas: [reading from the script] You must be Dr. Beza. Welcome to the Colloquy.

Johan: [reading from the script] Thank you, queen mother, for meeting with us, and taking your son, King Henry. [He bows to Henry III. William nods his head in return]

Thomas: [reading from the script] We look forward to hearing from you, Dr. Beza, and from the Cardinal de Tournon.

Johan: [reading from the script] I see that you are all sitting already. Where shall I take my seat?

Heinrich: [reading from the script] We have no chairs for you Huguenots. If you are so eager to speak, you can stand. [Heinrich looks up from the script and addresses Beza] Did that really happen? Did they provide you with no chairs?

Beza: Yes, yes, but don't interrupt the play. Just keep reading.

Johan: [reading from the script] Surely you cannot ask us to stand for the entire Colloquy! It may last days, even weeks!

Heinrich: [reading from the script] If you are truly committed to your cause, you will stand.

Thomas: [reading from the script] Take your place, Dr. Beza. [Johan stands opposite the Cardinal]

Johan: [reading from the script] May I begin?

Heinrich: [reading from the script] Absolutely not! Your majesty, before we begin the hearings, I must again protest about the presence of King Henry. Surely his majesty is too young and tender to hear the wranglings of a confused theologian.

Thomas: [reading from the script] You have already registered your objections, Cardinal, and I have already answered them. His Majesty shall stay.

Heinrich: [*reading from the script, and addressing William*] Your Majesty, what say you to this?

Thomas: [*reading from the script*] You will address me, Cardinal, not his young Majesty. I am the regent of France.

Heinrich: [*reading from the script*] Of course, my queen.

Thomas: [*reading from the script*] Now, Dr. Beza, I understand that you and the Cardinal will be debating the nature of the Mass.

Johan: [*reading from the script*] The Holy Supper, yes.

Thomas: [*reading from the script*] You may begin your remarks. When you are finished speaking, the Cardinal will deliver his address.

Johan: [*reading from the script*] Thank you, your majesty. Madame, first calling upon the name of our Lord God, that it may please him to assist us with his especial grace in a matter of so great consequence, that we may be utterly void of all particular opinions and passions, and that there might be planted in our hearts instead thereof a right knowledge of his verity with an earnest desire to set it forth to the honour of his holy name, and to the advancement of your majesty and the quietness of all Christendom, and namely of this realm.

Thomas: [*reading from the script*] You are well spoken, Doctor.

Heinrich: [*reading from the script*] Get on with it!

Johan: [*reading from the script*] Madam, we say unto you that our Lord Jesus Christ is in the use of the Holy Supper in which he presents, gives, and exhibits verily unto us his body and blood by the operation of his holy Spirit, and that we receive and eat spiritually, and by faith his own body which died for us, for to be bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh that we may thereby be quickened and receive all that which is necessary for our salvation.

Heinrich: [*reading from the script, and standing up in mock rage*] Spiritually? Spiritually? I refuse to hear more of this heresy. Your majesty, you must banish Dr. Beza and his companions at once! The King cannot hear this blasphemy.

Thomas: [*reading from the script*] Sit down, Sir Cardinal. Your unruly behavior does not become you. [To Beza] Did that really happen, Dr. Beza?

Beza: It did indeed. Johan, it's your line next.

Johan: [*reading from the script*] Madame, we are here present for two principal ends, the one is to render a reason to God, and to you, and to all the world of our faith, the other is to do service to God and to the King, and to you in all possible means to appease and mitigate the troubles that be risen in the cause of religion...

[*The Housekeeper enters*]

Housekeeper: Dr. Beza, could I speak with you for a moment? [*She and Beza speak quietly on one side of the stage While they do so, the four students move to the other side of the stage to stand together*].

Johan: Excellent work so far, William.

Heinrich: I don't think Dr. Beza has any idea!

William: Fig!

Thomas: We are all doing so well.

Housekeeper: [sadly] Students!

[*Johan, Thomas, William, and Heinrich rush to her side*].

Housekeeper: Dr. Beza's wife, Claudine, who has been quite ill of late, has just gone to be with her Lord.

[*The students soberly turn to look at Beza*]

Beza: She was a woman endowed with all the virtues of a wife, with whom I spent 39 years, 5 months, and 28 days in utter harmony. She never undertook formal studies, but she possessed so many remarkable virtues that I found it easy to endure this lack. Nothing more bitter in this life could have happened to me, and I have never craved the comfort of friends more. Just when I am most in need of help—soon to be 70 years old, if the Lord wills it—I have lost an incredibly devoted wife. Yet blessed be the name of the Lord our God.

Housekeeper: Sir, before I came to tell you the news, I went and found the letter that you received years ago from John Calvin, after the death of his wife. I hope that it can comfort you. [*She takes the paper from her pocket and reads*] “Idelette was the excellent companion of my life, the ever faithful assistant of my ministry. Whosoever finds a wife, finds a good thing and obtains favour from the Lord. I have lost her who would never have quitted me either in exile, or misery, or death. She was a precious help to me, and never occupied with self. The best of partners has been taken from me. How painful and burning are the wounds which the death of an excellent wife causes. How hard it is to become master of my sorrows.”

Thomas: I am reminded, too, of the last words between Ulrich Zwingli and his wife. A Catholic army made a surprise attack on the city of Zurich. Zwingli joined the inhabitants of Zurich as a soldier against a force of twice their size. The battle lasted for less than an hour, and Zurich was defeated. Zwingli was one of the 500 soldiers killed on the battlefield. Zwingli's wife, Anna Reinhard, lost much more than a husband. Her eldest son, a son-in-law, and a brother-in-law also died in battle. As Zwingli left their home to join the battle, apparently he said to her, “The hour is

come that separates us. Let it be so. The Lord wills.” She replied, “We shall see each other again if the Lord wills. His will be done. And what will you bring back when you come?” His answer: “Blessing after dark night.”

William: Mangoes...

Heinrich: ...Through valleys of the shadows of death.

Johan: Shall we leave you alone, sir?

Beza: Not just yet. I should tell you about the rest of the Colloquy.

Heinrich: We noticed that the play is exceedingly long.

Beza: That’s because I debated with the Roman Catholic clergy for days on end.

Thomas: And what happened as a result of the meeting?

Beza: The results were not immediately positive. No one at the Colloquy changed their minds about faith and the Lord’s supper, and the wars of religion started soon after. However, we did plead our case before the French King and his mother, and the Queen of Navarre, Jeanne D’Albret, became a mighty champion of the Huguenot cause.

Heinrich: And how could you remember so clearly what you said at the Colloquy?

Beza: My speech was written down and immediately published in many countries in Europe. I hope that it had some effect on its readers. But one more question about the play: Should I add a conclusion, do you think, reminding the audience of what it has learned?

Heinrich: Something about “the mighty power of earnest faith?”

Johan: Or “what reward the true obedience payeth”?

Beza: Perfect! I shall write those down, and I shall compose an epilogue for the play. And now, students, you had best go back to your studies. Thank you for your assistance, both with the Psalm and the play.

Heinrich: Are you sure?

Beza: Yes. Thank you. [*The students exit, somberly*]

Beza: [*to the audience*]

“Ye Lords and Ladies, I you pray,
When you from hence shall go again away,
Let not this fine and noble story part

Out of the mind and tables of your heart.
For who doth unfeignedly endeavor
To keep God's sayings ever,
And (notwithstanding all the reasons which)
His mind allegeth backward him to twitch)
Doth still refer himself and all his deeds
To God: with much more happy issue speeds,
That he can wish: for come here storms or winds,
Come grief, come death, come cares of sundry kinds,
Let earthquake come, let heaven and skies down fall;
Let dark confusion overcover all:
The faithful heart so steadfastly is grounded,
As it abideth ever unconfounded.”

Exit.

4. Anna Bullinger and the household of faith

Characters:

Anna Bullinger
Britta Schmid
Regula Zwingli
Rudolph Gualther
Henry Bullinger
Anneli
Margarethe
Elisabeth
Heinrich
Hans Rudolph
Christof
Hans
Diethelm
Veritas
Dorothea
Felix
Anna Zwingli
Young Anna Zwingli
Old Mr. Bullinger
Old Mrs. Bullinger
Henry Lavater
Josiah Simler
Polish tutor
Lec (Polish student)
Karol (Polish student)
John Hooper
Huguenot

Setting: Ulrich Zwingli has died in battle, but his family is not left alone. Anna and Henry Bullinger, Zwingli's successor, have taken in Anna Zwingli and her daughters Regula and Anna. Anna and Henry have eleven children themselves, and they also care for Henry's aged parents. They have also taken in Henry's many students. Their home operates, too, as a safe haven for Christians who are escaping persecution in other places. When John Hooper reaches the home, running from persecution in England, he meets the large family, which tells him some of their history. The Bullinger's faithful servant, Britta, undercovers an elopement plot, which the women of the household must thwart.

Scene 1: Bullinger's house. Loud knocking is heard. Britta enters, moving from one side of the stage to the other. The loud knocking continues.

Britta: [as she walks, shouts] Just a moment! [then as an aside] My old bones don't move as quickly as they once did. [knocking continues. Britta continues, as an aside] Someone must be in quite the lather. [she briefly steps offstage and enters with Hooper, who is disheveled and anxious.]

Hooper: Have I reached the home of Rev. Bullinger, leader of the Reformed church in Zurich?

Britta: You have indeed, sir.

Hooper: I must speak with him at once!

Britta: I'm afraid he is currently out of the house, sir. Would you like to wait for him?

Hooper: No, no, there is no time. [frenzied] I must see Bullinger!

Britta: [trying to calm him] Sir, sir, don't make yourself upset. You are safe in the home of Henry and Anna Bullinger. The Reverend will be back soon enough.

Hooper: [still frenzied] I must speak with him!

[Anna enters, wielding an umbrella as a weapon]

Anna [to Britta]: Britta, what is this commotion? Are you alright?

Britta: Of course, ma'am. This gentleman knocked at the door, looking for your husband. He seems quite overcome.

Anna [to Hooper]: Dear sir, welcome to our home. My name is Anna Bullinger, and I understand you are looking for my husband?

Hooper: Yes, I must speak with him at once!

Britta: Anything you can say to him, you can say to her.

Anna: Britta is quite right, Mr....?

Hooper: Hooper.

Anna: Hooper? Isn't that an English name?

Hooper: [guardedly] Yes, I am English.

Anna: Henry told me that we might be expecting refugees from England. Are you one of them, sir? Do you, perchance, have a letter?

Hooper: I do have a letter, ma'am, but I'm to show it to Reverend Bullinger.

Anna: I understand.

Hooper: But I can tell you that I am indeed a refugee from England. I was no longer safe in my own country, so Archbishop Cranmer sent me here for refuge and to study with the great Rev. Bullinger.

Anna: You are safe now, Mr. Hooper, and my husband and I welcome you to the city. Do you have a place to stay while you are here?

Hooper: I'm afraid I don't, and what's worse, my wife is planning to join me as soon as she can escape England.

Anna: That's no trouble at all. You and she shall join our household!

Britta: [worriedly] Ma'am, do you think that is a good idea?

Anna: Of course, Britta. What are two more members of our family...?

Hooper: My wife is pregnant, too.

Anna: ...Three more members of our family?

Hooper: We think it's twins.

Anna: ...Four more members of our family?

Britta: Well, if you're sure. I'll see if I can find a spot for them to sleep.

Hooper: [in relief] Dear lady, you are an angel!

[*Henry Bullinger enters suddenly*]

Henry: I agree! She is my angel-wife.

Anna: [blushing] Oh Henry.

Britta: Welcome home, sir.

Henry: Thank you, Britta. And I see that we have a visitor. Welcome, sir. It looks like you have travelled a long distance.

Anna: He is a refugee from England, Henry, and his pregnant wife is hard on his heels.

Henry: Then I bid you an even heartier welcome! Are you Hooper?

Hooper: Yes, sir. Here is a letter of introduction from Archbishop Cranmer. [*He passes a letter to Henry. Henry stuffs it in a pocket*].

Anna: Henry, Hooper and his wife are going to live with us while he's here in Zurich.

Henry: But of course!

Britta: Since he's going to be a part of the family, should he meet everyone?

Anna: Would you like to, Hooper, or are you too tired from your long journey?

Hooper: Madam, I am so blessed and thankful to be here, I have new hope, new life, and new vigor. Let me meet your little family.

Britta: Little! [*snorts*]

Anna [*calling out*]: Children! Students! Everyone! We have a new guest staying with us! Come and meet him!

[*A few moments pass, during which the sound of many footsteps is heard*]

[*Enter Regula Zwingli, Rudolph Gualther, Henry Bullinger, Anneli, Margarethe, Elisabeth, Heinrich, Hans Rudolph, Christof, Hans, Diethelm, Veritas, Dorothea, Felix, Anna Zwingli, Young Anna Zwingli, Old Mr. Bullinger, Old Mrs. Bullinger, Henry Lavater, Josiah Simler, Polish tutor, Lec, Karol, in no particular order*]

Anna: Ah, there you all are! Hooper, meet my family.

Hooper: [*in amazement*] Is that all of them?

Britta: [*drily*] For now.

Hooper: And they all live here?

Anna: Of course!

Britta: We have quite the collection here.

Anna: Henry, why don't you start the introductions?

Henry: These are my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bullinger. [*They nod*] And this is Anna Zwingli.

Hooper: Anna Zwingli, widow of Ulrich Zwingli?

Anna Zwingli [*quietly*]: The very same. These are my children, essentially adopted by Henry and Anna. [*she gestures to young Anna Zwingli and Regula*]

Young Anna Zwingli [*screeches, like a young child*]: Our papa was killed dead! And we were really poor after that. But we're fine now, because we live with the Bullingers.

Regula [*to her sibling*]: Do you have to tell everyone the whole story?

Anna Zwingli: It's alright, Regula. [*to Hooper*] This is my eldest remaining daughter, Regula.

Regula: [*to Hooper*] Very pleased to meet you.

Henry: And now our own children: [*He lists them all in turn*]: Anneli, Margarethe, Elisabeth, Heinrich, Hans Rudolph, Christof, Hans, Diethelm, Veritas, Dorothea, and Felix.

Felix: [*screeches, like a young child*] We have a story, too!

Dorothea: [*screeches*] It's very exciting!

Veritas: [*comforting Hooper*] But nobody dies in this story.

Anneli: [*To siblings*] We don't have to tell the story to every new guest!

Margarethe: And we're too old for stories, don't you think?

Diethelm: It wouldn't be fair if he didn't know the story. Everyone else does.

Hans: I could act it out for you, sir.

Christof: Hans, you look for any excuse to put on a play.

Hooper [*aside, to Henry*]: You let them put on plays?

Henry [*loudly*]: Of course they act out plays. Why, I've even written one myself.

Anna: Children, you can tell Mr. Hooper the story, but only if he's not too tired.

Felix: Are you too tired, Mr. Hoppy?

Dorothea: It's not Hoppy, it's Super, right Mr. Super?

Hooper: Sure. And I'm not too tired to hear a story.

Hans: I'll be mama. Hans Rudolph, you can be the guard. Heinrich, would you be Britta?

Britta: Can't I be Britta?

Heinrich: No, Britta. I have to be you. This is a play, after all.

Elisabeth: Should Dorothea and Felix be the babies?

Dorothea: We're not babies!

Elisabeth: Hans, you can just pretend to hold babies.

Hans: No problem! Everyone, take your places. [*Hans stands centre stage, Hans Rudolph stands on one side of the stage, and Heinrich stands on the other side*].

Heinrich: I have to start. [*Assumes an “acting” stance*]. My name is Britta, and I'm the servant of the Henry and Anna Bullinger family.

Britta: Bravo!

Heinrich: Oh no, Master Henry has fled for his life from the city of Bremgarten. Poor Mistress Anna is left behind with two babies, and now thirty Roman Catholic soldiers have taken over the house. [*Heinrich runs over to Hans*] Mistress Anna!

Hans: [*assumes “acting stance”*] Yes, I am Anna Bullinger. What is it, Britta, my faithful servant?

Heinrich: Mistress, we have to flee the city for our lives. Take up the babies and run!

Hans: But what about the house, Britta?

Heinrich: I will take care of the house, mistress. You should join your husband. Here, take your babies and run. [*Heinrich passes imaginary babies to Hans*]

Hans: I must flee the city! Away! [*Hans moves towards Hans Rudolph*]

Hans Rudolph: Halt! Who goes there?

Hans: [*aside*] Alas, it is the guard of the city gates. [*to Hans Rudolph*] Kind sir, I must leave the city.

Hans Rudolph: No one can leave the city tonight.

Hans: But I must go at once.

Hans Rudolph: It is forbidden!

Hans: But surely you have the key, and it would a simple matter to open the gate.

Hans Rudolph: I do have the key [*brandishes the key, gloatingly*], but I will not open the gate.

Hans: [shifts the “babies” to one side, then grabs the key. The two tussle over the key for a while, and then Hans rips it from the grasp of Hans Rudolph.] Aha!

Hans Rudolph: [Falling to the ground, groaning] I guess I am no match for the strength of a desperate woman.

Hans: And now I can leave the city and rejoin my beloved husband.

[*Hans Rudolph stands up, and all three actors bow to the assembled family*]

[*everyone on stage applauds*]

Britta: Well done!

Hooper: [to Anna] Did that actually happen?

Anna: Well, more or less, yes. The children like to dramatize it a bit.

Henry: You have had your fun, children, but the introductions are not yet complete. Mr. Hooper, these are my students, Rudolph Gualther, Henry Lavater, and Josiah Simler. I understand that you will be joining them in their studies.

Rudolph: Welcome.

Henry: Pleased to meet you.

Josiah: I hope you enjoy your stay with us.

Henry: And these children are visiting us from Poland, together with their tutor.

Lec: Hello, sir.

Karol: Very pleased to meet you.

Lec [to tutor]: Teacher, the Zwinglis had a good story,

Karol [to tutor]: ...and the Bullinger children had a little play. What can we do?

Tutor: Why don't you sing a song? Which one is your favourite?

Lec: Something by Dr. Beza!

[*Lec and Karol sing Psalm 116. The rest of the cast join in and sing verse 1 and 9 together*]:

I love the Lord, the fount of life and grace
He heard my voice, my cry and supplication,

Inclined his ear, gave strength and consolation,
In life, in death, my heart will seek his face.

I am, O LORD, thy servant, bound yet free,
Thy handmaid's son, whose shackles thou hast broken.
Redeemed by grace, I'll render as a token
Of gratitude my constant praise to thee.

Karol: [to tutor] But everyone joined in! It wasn't just from us.

Tutor: That's what happens when you sing a Psalm—everyone sings with you.

Hooper: It was lovely. We have nothing like that in England right now.

Anna Bullinger: Mr. Hooper, you must be exhausted. Why don't you go with Henry, who will show you where to wash up. And it's almost time for dinner. Children, everyone, go and wash up for dinner!

[All of the cast exits, except for Regula, Rudolph, and Britta. Britta sees that Regula and Rudolph are looking conspiratorial, so she hides behind something ridiculous, like a small piece of furniture]

Regula: Oh Rudolph!

Rudolph: Oh Regula!

Regula: How I love you, my dearest.

Rudolph: And I you, sweet darling!

[Britta looks confused]

Regula: My handsome love muffin.

Rudolph: My beautiful buttercup.

[Britta looks disgusted]

Regula: What have you decided to do?

Rudolph: Have you asked your mother about us?

Regula: I do not dare. She will tell us that we are too young to wed.

Rudolph: True, true. And if we speak with her, she may try to separate us.

Regula: We have to run away.

Rudolph: But my studies!

Regula: Once we are married we can return. Rev. Bullinger will be sure to take you back, and then no one will be able to separate us.

Rudolph: I guess you're right.

Regula: When should we run? Today?

Rudolph: I think we must. I can no longer hide my overwhelming love for you.

Regula: My bags are packed.

Rudolph: And mine could be ready in a matter of moments.

Regula: While everyone is preparing for dinner, we can slip away.

Rudolph: Meet me back here in five minutes.

Regula: Even those five minutes away from you are too long.

Rudolph: My darling!

Regula: We must hurry. [*they both exit*]

Britta: [*emerging from hiding*] Oh my. I must tell Mrs. Bullinger and Mrs. Zwingli [*she hurries off stage*].

Scene 2: *Britta, Anna Bullinger, and Anna Zwingli enter.*

Britta: [*to the two women*] They were standing right over there [*gestures to where Regula and Rudolph were standing*].

Anna Bullinger: And you are sure you heard them make plans for today?

Anna Zwingli: What is that girl thinking?

Anna Bullinger: We must stop them.

Anna Zwingli: What if they change their plans, or if they deny it all?

Britta: We should hide to see if they meet here as they planned. [*All of the women hide, as ridiculously as Britta did in the previous scene*].

[They wait for an uncomfortably long time]

Anna Zwingli: [in a stage whisper] Britta, are you sure?

Britta: [in a stage whisper] Yes!

Anna Zwingli: You know you have no filter, Britta.

Anna Bullinger: [in a stage whisper] Quiet! I think I hear them now.

[Regula and Rudolph enter, dressed for travel, carrying a bag each]

Regula: Our plan is working, dear heart.

Rudolph: Sweetums, I long to be married to you.

Regula: And soon we shall be! [they embrace, then jump apart in shock as the three women emerge from their hiding places]

Britta: Stop!

Anna Zwingli: Regula, what are you thinking?

Anna Bullinger: Rudolph, I expected better from you.

Regula: We are in love.

Rudolph: And we are going to get married. You can't stop us.

Anna Zwingli: Why would we?

Anna Bullinger: Well, they are quite young.

Regula: Too young? Is there a right age for marriage?

Britta: I suggest 31, at least.

Anna Zwingli: Why didn't you speak to me, Regula?

Regula: I was sure you would say no!

Anna Bullinger: But why?

Regula: You three are so...old! Would you understand our romance?

Rudolph: [looking a bit uncomfortable] Well, ah, we might have been a bit carried away.

Britta: You think they don't know romance? Look at this! [*She pulls a large package of paper out of a pocket*]

Anna Bullinger: [*looking comically dismayed*] Oh Britta, you didn't.

Regula: What is that?

Britta: This is the marriage proposal from Henry Bullinger to one Anna Adlischweiler.

Rudolph: He proposed by letter?

Britta: Oh yes. Take a look. [*she passes the letter to Rudolph*]

Rudolph: [*paging through the 14-page letter*] Let's see: in the fourteen pages he explains that he is a good and honourable man, he details his financial expectations, and says that he is in love with her. This letter sounds more like a treatise than a love letter. Listen to this: "Yes, you are young, and God did not give you such a body, and did not create you so that you remain an eternal madam and do nothing so that fruit comes from you."

Anna Bullinger: I was a nun at the time, so he had to convince me to leave the convent so that I could marry him.

Regula: [reading over Rudolph's shoulder] He ends with, "Read my letter three or four times, think about it, and ask God so that he tells you what his will is in this matter."

Britta: Mr. Bullinger was only twenty-three years old at the time.

Anna Bullinger: I agreed, of course, but it was a few years before we married.

Regula: But why are you showing this to us, Britta?

Anna Zwingli: We have been married, my dear, and we understand love.

Anna Bullinger: We know that our children will want to marry at some point.

Britta: You're not the only one with romance in your hearts and eyes. Have you seen the way Josiah and Elisabeth look at each other?

Anna Zwingli: Just talk to us, dear children. We will support you, if it is the Lord's will.

Anna Bullinger: So you can put away your cloaks and your bags and join the family for supper.

Rudolph: And marriage?

Anna Bullinger: Of course! We ask only that you both be “sound, hardworking, and [...] clean [...], fearing God, honourable toward God, and all people... Watch the time for doing what needs to be done, not being slothful, and praying without ceasing, loyally. And protect yoursel[ves] from bad company and enjoy staying home.”⁸

Britta: In addition to all of that, always remember to make sure that “you have enough shirts...and do not let your shoes fall apart, give them to be cleaned, and be domestic.”⁹

Anna Zwingli: Oh Britta, you are always so practical.

Rudolph: Thank you, all, for your advice and understanding.

Regula: Yes, thank you, mama, Mrs. Bullinger, and Britta.

Anna Bullinger: Let us all go in for dinner. [*They all leave*]

[As soon as the stage is empty, loud knocking is heard at the door. Britta enters and opens the door].

Huguenot: *[in a thick French accent]* Bonjour. I am looking for Monsier Henri Bullinger. It is tres important.

Britta: Mr. Bullinger is just sitting down for dinner, sir.

Huguenot: I must speak with him. I am a Huguenot, just escaped from persecution in France. I need a safe place to hide, and I would like to learn from Monsier Bullinger.

Britta: Well, come inside, then. *[Huguenots walks forward. Britta shouts in the direction Anna Bullinger exited the stage.]* Mrs. Bullinger! We have another one! You'd better set another place for dinner.

Exeunt

⁸ This quotation comes from the only extant letter written by Anna Bullinger.

⁹ From the same letter

5. A whole new world for the Huguenots

Characters:

Samuel Champlain

Hélène Boullé—wife of Champlain

Mary Catherine des Granches—widow of Jacques Cartier

Pierre Du Gua de Mons—leader of expedition

Nicolas Aubry—RC priest

Louis Hébert—an apothecary

Jean Chauvin—Protestant minister

Imogene de la Roque—parents killed in the St. Bartholemew Massacre

Marc Lescarbot—first farmer in Canada

Setting: The seventeenth century has just begun, and it looks like life is improving for the Huguenots. The Edict of Nantes has created an official compromise between Roman Catholics and Protestants in France, but both sides are still unsettled. Fearing that life might become difficult for her in France, orphaned Huguenot Imogene de la Roque consults with Mary Catherine de Mons, the widow of Jacques Cartier. When Imogene finds out that Hélène Boullé, the very young wife of Samuel Champlain, is going to Quebec to join her husband, Imogene seizes the opportunity to leave France. She must agree, though, to marry one of the settlers of New France once the ship lands. What is in store for the intrepid Imogene and the Huguenot faith in Canada?

Scene 1: The home of Mary Catherine des Granches

Mary: I am so glad that you have come to visit me again, Imogene.

Imogene: You have become like a mother to me, Madame des Granches.

Mary: Ah, but no one could take the place of your dear, departed mother.

Imogene: I will never cease to mourn her and my father.

Mary: How long has it been?

Imogene: Since they were martyred in the St. Bartholemew's Massacre? Surely no one can forget that day.

Mary: Who knew that when Protestants gathered to celebrate the marriage of the King, they would be trapped and murdered?

Imogene: The fury of the Romish church is unparalleled.

Mary: It has been a few years since Good King Henri took the throne of France.

Imogene: Good! The King was raised by a Protestant mother, but he gave up his Protestant faith when he became King.

Mary: I wonder, though, if he is Roman Catholic in name only. Think of the Edict of Nantes!

Imogene: Yes, the Edict of Nantes does give official freedom to Huguenots and Roman Catholics alike, but I fear it does not offer enough protection to Protestant Christians in France.

Mary: What do you plan to do, Imogene?

Imogene: I wonder how long the freedoms for Huguenots will last, Mary. I am not sure what the future holds.

Mary: Would you ever consider leaving the country?

Imogene: What do you mean?

Mary: You never met my late husband, did you?

Imogene: Jacques Cartier?

Mary: The very same. But surely you know his reputation.

Imogene: I know that he was a great explorer, and that he founded New France.

Mary: And you know, of course, that he was a Huguenot like I am.

Imogene: I would have liked to meet him.

Mary: He would have loved you, as I do, I'm sure. I am still in contact with one of his successors, Samuel Champlain. He, like you, is frightened about the future of Huguenots, so he hides his Protestant faith behind a veil of Catholicism.

Imogene: I cannot blame him for that.

Mary: Did you know that he is married?

Imogene: I thought he was a confirmed bachelor.

Mary: He was married two years ago, to one Hélène Bouillé. Their marriage contract stated that they would not live together as man and wife until two years after the wedding date. That time has passed, and Champlain has asked to have Hélène sent to New France to live with him. She needs a companion to take her across the ocean.

Imogene: Why would a grown woman need someone to take her? Is she ill? Is she looking for a servant?

Mary: She needs a companion because she is only 14 years old.

Imogene: Fourteen! That means that she was 12 when she married.

Mary: That's right.

Imogene: And isn't Champlain an old man?

Mary: Hardly that. He's only 45 years old.

Imogene: 45! So when he was 43 years old, he married a 12-year-old girl.

Mary: Yes, and now she needs a companion to take her to New France.

Imogene: And you think that should be me.

Mary: Well, you are worried about your future here in France, and you have been talking about needing a change.

Imogene: It does sound like an excellent adventure.

Mary: Of course, you would have to get married once you landed in New France.

Imogene: What?

Mary: Well, my dear, there are many men in New France, but very few women. The imbalance is causing some problems. So the only way you would be allowed on the voyage is if you agreed to marry one of the men in New France.

Imogene: But, but...

Mary: Wouldn't you like to be married?

Imogene: But would he be a Huguenot?

Mary: Most of the men in New France are Huguenots.

Imogene: And would I have a choice?

Mary: As I said, there are many men looking for a wife, any wife.

Imogene: But would he love me?

Mary: That I cannot guarantee.

Imogene: I cannot decide right now. It's a big commitment.

Mary: Yes, take some time to think about it. But don't wait too long—the expedition is leaving in just a few days.

Imogene: I shall give it careful thought and prayer. Thank you, Mary.

[Hélène bursts on stage]

Hélène: *[to Mary, excitedly]* Did she say yes? Did she say yes?

Mary: Hélène, I told you to stay outside!

Imogene: Hélène? This is the wife of Samuel Champlain?

Hélène: *[To Imogene]* Oui, mademoiselle. I am Hélène Bouillé, well, Hélène Champlain, now. I am very pleased to make your acquaintance.

Imogene: And I yours, young madame.

Hélène: Did Madame des Granches ask you about New France?

Imogene: *[somewhat guardedly]* She did...

Hélène: And you said yes, yes? Oh, say that you will come with me? We shall be as sisters!

Imogene: I'm not sure...

Hélène: Oh, say yes!

Imogene: Alright then, yes!

Mary: *Incroyable!* Girls, let us go and make plans for the voyage!

[They exit]

Scene 2—On the ship, in the Atlantic. Hélène and Imogene are on deck.

Hélène: Will this ship never make it to land?

Imogene: We've only been at sea for a month, Hélène. Patience, my dear. You shall see your husband soon.

Hélène: Oh yes, him. But I also want to see those, what do you call them, meece?

Imogene: Mice? We have plenty of those in France.

Hélène: No, no, the big meece, with strange horns.

Imogene: Do you mean, moose?

Hélène: Yes, I want to see a moose. Lots of meece!

Imogene: We shall see many strange things, I am sure.

[Pierre, Nicolas, and Jean burst onto stage. Hélène and Imogen move aside, and watch their conversation raptly]

Nicolas: [angrily, to Pierre] Monsieur de Mons, I can take this no longer! Because you are leader of this expedition, I demand that you throw this man overboard.

Pierre: Pere Nicolas, what has made you upset this time?

Nicolas: [gesturing to Jean] This, this, “minister” insists on speaking with me.

Pierre: Is that not his right?

Nicolas: He wants to talk about transubstantiation, and the supremacy of the Word.

Jean: Excellent topics for us to discuss as we while away our time on board.

Nicolas: He is trying to make me a Huguenot! Me! A Catholic priest!

Jean: I am merely trying to save your soul, Monsieur Nicolas.

Nicolas: That’s Father Nicolas!

Pierre: There, there, Monsieur Priest. I am sure that Pastor Jean meant you no harm.

Jean: No, none at all!

Nicolas: And why would you bring both of us on this expedition in the first place? A Catholic priest and a Huguenot minister—it is *stupide*!

Pierre: It’s what the King wants. You know that with the Edict of Nantes, King Henry wants to see better relations between Catholic and Huguenot Christians. And that is why you are here, Monsieur Priest.

Nicolas: Don’t you mean that’s why *he*’s here?

Pierre: I know what I said.

Jean: Maybe you are here so that you can see that the Roman church has led you astray. Let me tell you, brother, of the glories of the Protestant faith.

Nicolas: Stop! I mean it!

Jean: You could be free of the tyranny of relics, of the mass, of holy water, and saints.

Nicolas: That is enough!

Jean: You could read the Bible in French, and you could forget all about Latin.

Nicolas: That's it. I may be a man of God, but I will fight you, sir.

Jean: If you can't defend yourself with the Word, I guess you have to use your fists.

Nicolas: Thank you for the invitation! [*he lunges at Jean, and the two of them tussle for a while. Pierre looks amused for a while, but then alarmed*].

Pierre: Men! Stop! Stop, I say. [*He notices the women*] You are frightening the women. [*The two keep fighting. Pierre calls offstage to Louis*] Louis, Louis, come here! I need your help!

[*Louis enters*]

Pierre [to *Louis*]: Help me to separate these two.

Louis: The minister and the priest! How did this happen?

Pierre: We both know that it was just a matter of time. [*The two pull the men apart*]

Louis: For shame, gentlemen. [*Imogene and Hélène draw near*]

Hélène: [to the two brawlers] Is that blood?

Imogene: You are both completely bruised.

Pierre: [to *Louis*] You are an apothecary. Can you draw up a potion for their wounds?

Louis: Of course. Come, gentlemen. [*Louis, Jean, and Nicolas walk offstage*].

Hélène: What an adventure! I did not think we would see violence until we reached New France.

Imogene: I must confess that my nerves are shattered.

Hélène: Well, then, we must sing a song.

Imogene: Now?

Hélène: Oh yes. That always helps to calm me. I shall begin: [*She sings Psalm 2:1, Genevan Psalter. Imogene and Pierre join in*]

“Why do the restless heathen madly rage?
What haughty schemes are they in vain contriving?
The kings and rulers of the earth engage
In rash attempts to plot their empty striving.
They stand prepared, they all conspire together
Against the LORD and His anointed King.
“Let us,” they say, “tear loose and break their fetters,
Cast off their chains, their shackles from us fling.”

[*As soon as they complete the Psalm, Nicolas runs back onstage*]

Nicolas: Was that a Genevan melody? Were you singing a Psalm?

Pierre: Why yes.

Nicolas: You Huguenots and your bloody Psalms! ARGH! [*He covers his ears and runs offstage again*]

Imogene: [*giggling*] Poor Monsieur Priest.

Pierre: He came on the expedition to convert Huguenots, but he is not finding it easy. But should we go below deck? The seas are becoming choppy, and I would not want you ladies in any trouble.

Exeunt.

Scene 3—On shore in New France.

[*Louis, Imogene, and Hélène enter*]

Imogene [*to Hélène*]: Is this the spot?

Hélène: Yes, I am to meet him here.

Imogene [*to Louis*]: Thank you, Monsieur Hébert, for accompanying us off of the ship.

Louis: It was my pleasure, *mesdames*.

[*Samuel and Marc enter*]

Samuel: Ah, my little Hélène. How happy I am that you have arrived safely.

Hélène: Indeed I have, Monsieur.

Samuel: Monsieur? Why so formal? I am Samuel.

Hélène: Yes, Monsieur Samuel.

Samuel: [to Imogene] And you must be Imogene, who has so faithfully taken my little wife to New France.

Imogene: I am pleased to meet you, Monsieur. I have heard much of your successes.

Samuel: And I hear that you are to marry one of our French settlers—I introduce to you your future husband, Marc Lescarbot.

Imogene: [to Samuel] My future husband? Am I to marry so quickly?

Samuel: A woman cannot live in the colony unmarried, mademoiselle. It would be unseemly.

Imogene: And am I to have no choice in the matter?

Samuel: Why would you not want the good Marc Lescarbot? He is a faithful Huguenot, and probably the first farmer in New France.

Marc: Indeed, Madame, and I am writing a book about my doings in New France. [*He clears his throat, and is clearly quoting:*] “We being, of a long time, informed of the situation and condition of the lands and territories of Acadia, moved above all things, with a singular zeal, and devout and constant resolution, which we have taken, with the help and assistance of God, author, distributor, and protector of all kingdoms and estates, to cause the people, which do inhabit the Country, men (at this present time) barbarous, Atheists, without faith or religion, to be converted to Christianity, and to the belief and profession of our faith and religion: and to draw them from the ignorance and unbelief wherein they are.”¹⁰

Imogene: I am sure that you are a good man, Monsieur Lescarbot, but do I have no choices here?

Hélène: You do have choice, my dear Imogene. [*she nudges Louis forward*]

Imogene: Monsieur Hébert?

¹⁰ Marc Lescarbot, *Nouua Francia: or The description of that part of New France, which is one continent with Virginia Described in the three late voyages and plantation made by Monsieur de Monts, Monsieur du Pont-Grau , and Monsieur de Poutrincourt, into the countries called by the Frenchmen La Cadie, lying to the southwest of Cape Breton. Together with an excellent seuerall treatie of all the commodities of the said countries, and maners of the naturall inhabitants of the same. Translated out of French into English by P.E. 1609.* 2.

Louis: Ah, Mademoiselle, um...Imogene...I assumed that you would marry me once we landed in New France.

Imogene: Marry you?!

Louis: Well....yes?

Samuel: No, no, mademoiselle. You must marry Marc! [*he pushes Marc forward*]

Imogene: I cannot make such an important decision so quickly!

Samuel: But you must!

Louis: You must pick me, Mademoiselle.

Marc: Non, mademoiselle, I am your choice.

Louis: But I just spent months on board a ship with her!

Marc: But I have lived for years alone already!

Louis: But she already knows me.

Marc: She will grow to know me.

Imogene: Gentlemen, please. You are not making this easier for me. Monsieur Champlain, may I not have a few weeks, even a few days to consider?

Samuel: Not even a few hours, Mademoiselle Imogene. An unwed woman would cause havoc in the settlement.

Imogene: But what shall I do?

Hélène: I have a solution, mademoiselle. [*To Marc and Louis*]: You both want her, non? [*They both nod*] So you would be willing to fight for her?

Marc: Well, within reason.

Louis: I wouldn't kill a man for her, if that's what you mean.

Hélène: Oh, surely not. But would you be willing to participate in something I like to call...Marriage Olympics?

Samuel: What are these... Olympics?

Hélène: An ancient Greek game filled with all sorts of competitions.

Samuel: Ah, my *petite chou-chou*, you are so clever.

Louis: What do you mean? Do you want us to demonstrate our physical prowess?

Marc: I can milk a cow in under two minutes...

Imogene: Hélène, I'm not sure this is a good idea.

Hélène: But no, Mademoiselle Imogene, it is an idea *merveilleux*!

Imogene: Well, I guess I have no choice in the matter.

Hélène: None at all!

Samuel: What is their first task, little one?

Hélène: First, they must obey all of my instructions. There will be four challenges all together, I think.

Marc: Of course, Madame Champlain.

Louis: We shall be your humble servants in this...romantic Olympic.

Hélène: Marriage Olympics! First, both of you must close your eyes immediately. [*Marc and Louis do so.*] Now, Monsieur Lescarbot, can you describe what Imogene looks like?

Marc: [*confidently*] Her hair is brown, and... [*he says the rest hesitantly*] her skin is white, and her eyes are...brown. She is wearing a green dress and a white bonnet.

Hélène: And now, Monsieur Hébert, it is your turn.

Louis: Her hair is brown, her eyes are blue, and she is wearing a blue dress and a yellow bonnet. [*He is closer to the truth*]

Hélène: And now, you may open your eyes.

[*Louis and Marc open their eyes*]

Louis: I am victorious! Imogene, you shall soon be mine.

Marc: Don't forget that there are three more challenges.

Hélène: Indeed. And now for the second challenge. Monsieur Louis, since you won the last challenge, you shall go first. Monsieur Marc, you may go and stand over there. [*she gestures to a spot down stage, to which Marc moves*]. Now, Louis, you have demonstrated that you can pay

attention to Imogene, but now you have to demonstrate that you can be romantic. On the spot, you have to compose a love sonnet to her.

Imogene: Hélène, I won't need love sonnets.

Hélène: You don't know that.

Louis: I can do this: [*he clears his throat, reflects, and begins*]:

Oh Imogene, Imogene,
Let me...begin again.
You are so beautiful and dear,
You bring me plenty of cheer.
You are as fresh as a newly picked orange.
Ah... orange, orange...
And you brighten my day like the bright...colour of orange.
How shall I describe my love for you?
I love you as much as I love a new shoe.
So say that you will be mine, dear heart.
And from you never will I depart.

[*The rest of the characters on stage stifle their giggles*]

Hélène: Thank you, Louis. Now go and bring Monsieur Marc back to us [*he goes to Marc, gestures to send him back to the other characters, and then they both rejoin the other actors*].

Samuel: Marc, there is nothing to fear.

Hélène: Monsieur Marc, you failed to demonstrate that you can pay close attention to Imogene, but you can demonstrate that you can be romantic. On the spot, you have to compose a love sonnet to her.

Marc: How wonderful. Give me a moment to reflect. [*He pauses, thinks, and then walks to Imogene. He holds her hands, looks into her eyes, and says*]:

When I look to the fields, to the land God has made,
I marvel at his goodness.
When I look to the skies, to the beautiful expanse,
I marvel at his glory.
When I look to the sea, to the mighty waters,
I marvel at his greatness.
When I look to you, my dearest wife.
I marvel at his grace.

Imogene: Oh, Monsieur. I am blushing.

Samuel: Aha! We have a clear winner!

Louis: [to Marc] Sir, your poetry skills are remarkable.

Marc: [to Louis] Perhaps I shall take up writing! [to Imogene] Mademoiselle Imogen, you are soon to be mine.

Louis: Monsieur, there are still two more competitions.

Hélène: And the third competition is a demonstration that you can provide for her.

Samuel: My little darling, may I propose this challenge?

Hélène: Why, of course.

Samuel: Marc, Monsieur Hébert, I am going to ask both of you a question about farming. Whoever answers their question correctly wins the challenge.

Marc: [to Louis] I am sorry, Monsieur, but I shall win this one.

Louis: Perhaps, but there are four competitions all together.

Samuel: Marc, a farmer had twenty sick sheep, and one died. How many did he have left?

Marc: What a simple question. Twenty-five, of course.

Samuel: *Non!* He had nineteen.

Marc: Can't you count? If he has twenty-six sheep and one dies, he has twenty-five. Twenty-six minus one equals twenty-five.

Samuel: But he did not have twenty-six sheep. He had twenty *sick* sheep.

Marc: *Pardon?*

Samuel: He had twenty *sick* sheep. When one of those sick sheep died, he had only nineteen. Twenty minus one equals nineteen.

Marc: The question was *stupide*.

Louis: The question was simple.

Samuel: Ah, Monsieur Louis, here is your question: A farmer has thirty cows and twenty ate chickens. How many didn't?

Marc: Another question that makes no sense! Have you no grammar as well as no math?

Samuel: Marc, let Louis answer.

Louis: [to Samuel] Can you repeat the question?

Samuel: A farmer has thirty cows and twenty ate chickens. How many didn't?

Louis: [under his breath] A farmer had thirty cows....twenty-eight chickens. How many...didn't? Thirty cows. Hmm. Twenty-eight chickens. Hmm. How many didn't. Twenty-eight chickens. Twenty-eight. Twenty....ate! [To Samuel] Ten cows did not eat chickens.

Marc: Huh? That makes no sense! And besides, cows don't eat chickens.

Samuel: I'm sorry Marc, but Louis is correct.

Marc: But, but...

Hélène: The round goes to Louis. He has solved Samuel's riddle! And now there is only one more competition. Louis, you have won two challenges, and Marc, you have won one. The last competition is about the purpose of a wife. What do you think Imogene should do as your wife? Louis, you may go first.

Louis: I would want my wife to be a companion to me, to have my children, to love me, and to be a beautiful ornament in my home. She should wear lovely clothes and always be ready to support my opinion.

Hélène: And you, Marc, what do you think Imogene should do?

Marc: She should buy goods for the children and I, she should make warm clothing for winter, she should wake up early to make food for the family, she should knit blankets and sew quilts, she should make shirts to sell in the market, and she should care for our land transactions. She also should host a Bible study in our house.

Hélène: Imogene, which one has won?

Imogene: I know that Louis's answer sounds better, but I think that Marc has won. He clearly knows Proverbs 31.

Marc: Again, I am the winner!

Samuel: But Hélène, now we have a problem: we have a tie between Louis and Marc.

Hélène: We must have a tie-breaker, of course. We can only have one winner. But what challenge shall we propose?

Imogene: May I suggest a challenge? Marc, Louis, you have both proven, with varying degrees of success, that you can pay attention to another person, that you are romantic, that you can answer riddles, and that you know what to expect from a wife. But I want to be sure that my husband is a knowledgeable Reformed man, who understands the Protestant faith. Therefore, I want you to recite all of Martin Luther's ninety-six theses.

Louis: But of course, dear Imogene. [*He recites*]:

1. When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, "Repent" (Matt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.
2. This word cannot be understood as referring to the sacrament of penance, that is, confession and satisfaction, as administered by the clergy.
3. Yet it does not mean solely inner repentance; such inner repentance is worthless unless it produces various outward mortification of the flesh.
4. The penalty of sin remains as long as the hatred of self (that is, true repentance), namely till our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.
5. The pope neither desires nor is able to remit any penalties except those imposed by his own authority or that of the canons.
6. The pope...the pope...cannot...

Argh! That is all that I can remember.

Hélène: Five of the theses. Marc, can you top that?

Marc: I cannot recite all of the ninety-six theses.

Hélène: Why not?

Marc: Because there are only ninety-five!

Imogene: Ha! Marc, you have broken the tie, and you are the winner!

Marc: Let us be wed at once, my bride. [*He swoops her up and runs off stage*]

Samuel: Let us go with them to celebrate their marriage. And don't worry, Louis. Perhaps in a few years the King will send more Huguenot women for the men of New France.

Exeunt