

# Speech to the troops at tilbury 1



Speech to the Troops at Tilbury 1 My loving people, 2 We have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit 3 our selves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to 4 distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear, I have always so behaved myself that, 5 under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will 6 of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my 7 recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die 8 amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and 9 my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have 10 the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma 11 or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which 12 rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your 13 general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already, for your 14 forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and We do assure you in the word of a 15 prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the mean time, my lieutenant general 16 shall be in my 16 stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but 17 by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we 18 shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my 19 people.

text it's a speech, as the title indicates so. It belongs to narrative-historical texts. It rises from an historical event, in particular, the Spanish Armada invasion in 1588, August 19, at Tilbury (Essex, England). It was written in 1588 by Queen Elizabeth I, the British Queen, who reigned from 1558 to her death in 1603. She was the fifth and last monarch of the Tudor dynasty, she never married nor had children. She was known as the Virgin Queen. She was the daughter of the king Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, who was murdered when Elizabeth I was a kid (accused of adultery, incest and high treason). Elizabeth reign is known as the 'Golden Age' or 'Elizabethan era'. With her, literature flourished with writers world-wide known such as Marlowe and Shakespeare. She was religious, she became the Supreme Governor of the English Protestant church. She was very popular with her citizens, to whom she constantly referred as her children, the children she never had, so she had a motherhood spirit with them. The society at that time, sixteenth and seventeenth century, was very patriarchal. Both in family and in reigns. The male dominance was known as the 'rule of fathers'. According to this, the speech shows the need of Elizabeth I to be seen as a King, in terms of strength, power and respect, although she has a 'weak and feeble woman', line 9. She wants to silence the scorn words she had received, the criticism of taking her troops to the battle, when there was no hope for victory, lines 2-3. She shows her aversion to Spaniards with terms like 'foul scorn' or 'enemies of my God', lines 10 and 18. At the same time she is involving God and taking Him to her side. Making a holy battle and in that way, justifying her risky movement which involves all her realm. The speech was meant to be rehearsed to the British troops, with the purpose to encourage them to win the battle, to help them to get rid of their fears and also to see with

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other eyes their Queen, who had more courage than a King. Elizabeth I and her empire were in danger because the Spanish army, led by King Phillip II, was huge and impressive. It was Spain who decided to attack and invade England, to put an end to British involvement in the Spanish Netherlands. This Spanish failure was one of the greatest victories in English history. In lines 15-16, in concern of her lieutenant general, Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, as she said 'shall be in my stead', she's saying, in my opinion, that he is her body, as she cannot be in the battle for physical reasons. The speech is memorable, in the way that just being in the battlefield, shows all the strength she wanted to demonstrate with her words. She shows humanity when she says: 'to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust.' she puts herself at the same level of her soldiers and below her God, line 8. She praises her God beyond everything. Something against is the way she says God is hers, line 18. Catholicism was seen a danger to Protestantism. I think God cannot be on the side of people who are fighting because that goes against His creed. I feel admiration in the way she tries to raise women in society at that time. That confidence in herself it is formidable.