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## ACT 1 – 1594

*In half-light the cast enter and stand as unrecognizable figures.*

*They sing*           “Lord save our gracious sovereign  
Elizabeth by name  
That long unto our comfort  
She may both rule and reign”

*LIGHTS UP on QUEEN ELIZABETH I*

QUEEN ELIZABETH: Amongst our guests who will attend us here at Hampton Court is the ambassador of the French King, we wish him to hear a play. We were greatly taken by the fat knight, Falstaff in love, and we wish another play from its writer, we would have a history play showing how our beloved grandfather rescued the realm from the clutches of the usurping Duke of Gloucester. Call forth the Master of the Revels.

*[ELIZABETH imperiously claps her hands, at once figures dart off looking for the errant Sir Edmund Tilney and calling for him]*

VOICE 1:           Call forth the Master of the Revels ...

VOICE 2:           The Master of the Revels ...

VOICE 3:           Sir Edmund Tilney ...

VOICE 4:           *[a harlot’s voice]* Edmund love, I think they want you.

*[SIR EDMUND TILNEY rushes into the spotlight adjusting his breeches]*

ELIZABETH:       What kept you Sir Edmund?

TILNEY:            Forgive me Your Majesty, I was about the business of the Revels, seeing a supplier of er ... stuff.