

# TIME MACHINE 13

This book is a time machine. Travel back 400 years and solve the mystery of Queen Elizabeth's jewels!



**SECRET OF THE  
ROYAL TREASURE**



**This book is  
your passport  
into time.**



**Can you survive  
in the  
Elizabethan  
Age? Turn the  
page to find out.**

**TIME MACHINE 13**

**Secret of the  
Royal Treasure**

**by Carol Gaskin**

**illustrated by Ernie Colón**



**A Byron Preiss Book**

## **To John**

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# ATTENTION TIME TRAVELER!

This book is your time machine. Do not read it through from beginning to end. In a *moment* you will receive a mission, a special task that will take you to another time period. As you face the dangers of history, the Time Machine often will give you options of where to go or what to do.

This book also contains a Data Bank to tell you about the age you are going to visit. You can use this Data Bank to travel more safely through time. Or you can take your chances without reading it. It is up to you to decide.

In the back of this book is a Data File. It contains hints to help you if you are not sure what choice to make. The following symbol appears next to any choices for which there is a hint in the Data File.



To complete your mission as quickly as possible, you may wish to use the Data Bank and the Data File together.

There is one correct end to this Time Machine mission. You must reach it or risk being stranded in time!

# **THE FOUR RULES OF TIME TRAVEL**

As you begin your mission, you must observe the following rules. Time Travelers who do not follow these rules risk being stranded in time.

1. You must not kill any person or animal.
2. You must not try to change history. Do not leave anything from the future in the past.
3. You must not take anybody when you jump in time. Avoid disappearing in a way that scares people or makes them suspicious.
4. You must follow instructions given to you by the Time Machine. You must choose from the options given to you by the Time Machine.

# YOUR MISSION

**Your mission is to come face-to-face with Queen Elizabeth I and to discover whose ring she wore to her deathbed.**

Queen Elizabeth I ruled England for forty-five years. She never married, preferring to share her throne with no man. But she had many favorites, on whom she bestowed gifts of wealth and power. In return she demanded unswerving loyalty and devotion.

Chief among her admirers were the dashing earl of Essex and the gallant explorer, Sir Walter Raleigh. One of these men must have won the heart of the great queen—for on her dying day she was found to be wearing his gold and sapphire ring. Whose was it? And what became of it after she died?

Gloriana's court was a glamorous place, but it was a world closed to outsiders. And the sixteenth century was full of treachery, for noblemen and commoners alike.

How will you meet the queen? To find a way, you must travel backward four hundred years in time to Elizabethan England.



To activate the Time Machine, [click here](#).

**TIME TRAVEL  
ACTIVATED.  
Stand by for Equipment.**



**[Click Here](#)**

# EQUIPMENT

To help you blend into the everyday life of Elizabethan London, you will wear the clothes of a tradesman's apprentice: a close-fitting jacket called a doublet; short, full trousers, or breeches; and heavy cotton hose, all of dark blue. You will also have a woolen cloak, for warmth against London winters, and a round cloth cap that identifies you as an apprentice. Be sure to wear the cap on Sundays and holidays after 1571, for such was the queen's decree.



To begin your mission now, [click here](#).



To learn more about the time to which you will be traveling, [click here](#).

# DATA BANK

These facts about Elizabethan England will help you to complete your mission safely.

1. Elizabeth Tudor was born in 1533, the daughter of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII. She reigned as Queen Elizabeth I from 1558 until her death on March 24, 1603.

2. Elizabeth ruled over one of the most glamorous courts in Europe. The queen and her entire court moved from place to place, depending on her whim. Some of her favorite palaces were Whitehall, Nonesuch, Richmond, Hampton Court, Greenwich, and Windsor.

3. Elizabeth did not use the Tower of London as a royal residence. It was said to be haunted by the ghost of Elizabeth's mother, Anne Boleyn, who was beheaded there in 1536 by order of Henry VIII. Under Elizabeth, the Tower was used to house noble prisoners and the royal menagerie.

4. Chief among the entertainments at court were dancing and madrigal singing, banquets, masques, pageants, and plays.

5. A few companies of play-actors enjoyed noble patronage. The company of William Shakespeare, the greatest playwright of his age, was called the Lord Chamberlain's Men, after their sponsor, a high-ranking and influential member of Elizabeth's government. In 1599, the Lord Chamberlain's Men moved into their new, permanent theater, the Globe.

6. London is divided by a great river called the Thames. The royal palace of Whitehall, St. Paul's Cathedral, and the Tower of London are on the north side.

7. St. Paul's Cathedral was much more than a church in Elizabethan days. It served as a meeting place, shopping mall, employment agency, information exchange, and public boulevard as well. It was also a well-known haunt of pickpockets and con



artists.

8. Theaters were forbidden within the bounds of London proper. Most of them, including the Globe, were built on the southern bank of the Thames River, in a neighborhood known as Southwark

9. The north and south banks of the Thames were connected by London Bridge, with its towers and twenty arches. Londoners traveled up, down, and across the river by boat.

10. Travel was dangerous in the rest of England. The highways, often no more than rutted country roads, were the territory of mounted robbers known as highwaymen.

11. Sir Walter Raleigh was born about 1554 and died in 1618. He was famed as an explorer, statesman, and poet. In 1584, he financed an expedition to North America, where his explorers founded the first British colony in the New World. The colonists settled on Roanoke Island, in a territory Raleigh named Virginia in honor of the queen. In 1595, and again in 1617, Raleigh journeyed to South America in search of the fabled kingdom of El Dorado, "the Golden One."

12. Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, lived from 1567 to 1601. He came to Elizabeth's court in 1585, wellborn but with little wealth of his own. He is chiefly remembered for leading an uprising against the queen; it has come to be known as the Essex Rebellion.

**DATA BANK COMPLETED.**  
**CLICK HERE TO BEGIN**  
**YOUR MISSION.**



**Don't forget, when you see this symbol,  
you can click it to check the Data File for  
a hint.**







**Y**ou are in London, England, standing on the north bank of the Thames River. It is late September 1599, and a crisp fall breeze carries the unexpected smells of river water and rotting vegetables, raw sewage and an unwashed crowd—and it is a crowd. Phew!

The river is as busy as a modern freeway. Wooden boats of all sizes traffic their wares and passengers upstream and down. Next to you, a short flight of steps leads to a landing at the water's edge, where ferrymen show off their boats and compete for fares.

“Eastward, ho!” or “Westward, ho!” they shout to passersby. “Heigh ho, across we go!”

“An awning to keep the sun from your head!” promises one.

“Travel with 'im, you'll wind up dead,” retorts another.

“My cushions are filled with the finest goose down!”

“Travel with 'im, you'll surely drown!”

As you are jostled this way and that by hurried Londoners, you are surprised to see that the streets are alleys of mud. Few of the buildings are more than six stories high, though in the distance you can see the spires of a huge cathedral. And to your left, spanning the river, rise the towers of London Bridge.

Your suffering sense of smell is suddenly relieved by a whiff of strong perfume. It comes from a richly dressed foursome of men and ladies, who approach a nearby boatman.

“Farewell to the taverns of Cheapside!” calls one of the ladies, as she is helped into a boat by her companion. “And farewell to the wonders of St. Paul's. It's on to the Globe we go!” She claps her

hands gaily, rocking the boat.

“If you don’t sit still we’ll never see this new theater, much less get back to Whitehall,” scolds the second lady as she, too, is helped onto the boat.

“Ho! Miladies,” interrupts the boatman. “The queen would have my head if I spilled such a noble company. A penny’s the fare, by all that is fair—even for as fair a company as yourselves!”

“For that fine quip, you’ll get a good tip!” replies one of the gentlemen, to much laughter all around. Both gentlemen hop aboard and the boatman pockets his pennies. “To Southwark!” he sings out. Then he takes up his oars and shoves off across the Thames.

The Elizabethans certainly seem to enjoy wordplay, you think. But your thoughts are interrupted by a commotion. The crowd parts as two ragged youths zigzag by. They are pursued by a weasel-faced man who shouts for them to wait, his arm raised in anger. He has a stump where his hand should be!

As one of the youths lunges past you, he drops a velvet purse at your feet.

“Stop!” you cry. But the youth careens into a fruit peddler hawking her wares.

“Ragamuffin! Rascal!” she shrieks. Then she snatches up her empty basket and lumbers furiously after the youth, who darts away through the crowd.

“Weasel-face” is gone, and the crowd settles back into its normal hustle and bustle. You pick up the purse. It’s filled with coins!

You look about for a constable, but no one looks very helpful. So you tie the purse to your belt, hoping to meet the “ragamuffin” later. Now you must get on with your mission.

The noblemen and ladies you saw must have been courtiers—they seemed to know the queen. They had just come from St. Paul’s Cathedral. Perhaps you should go there and try to learn more of the nobility and the court.

Or should you follow the foursome across the Thames to Southwark? You know you can get there by walking across London Bridge.





Go to St. Paul's. **Click here.**



Walk across London Bridge. **Click here.**



**Y**ou are in Newgate Prison, and your only wish is to be locked in a cell so you can jump in time and escape!

“You’ll have to pay garnish,” barks the keeper, a brute of a man in filthy clothes. “No money? You freeze and starve in the hole. Or you can buy a blanket and food, and share your quarters with as many inmates as can pay. Or, if you’re rich, you can eat what you will, entertain friends, work at your trade, and sleep on a bed. Make your choice!”

You are lucky to have a purseful of coins. “I’ll be rich for a night,” you tell him. “Take me to a private cell.”

You pass horrifying sights on the way to your cell. Women and children sleep on cold stone floors. There are fighters and gamblers, drunkards and thieves, rattling chains, bellows, and screams.

At gate after bolted gate, you are made to pay a fee. At last you are led to a row of cells where the wealthy are locked up in comfort. Finally, you must *pay* to be locked in a cell! You bribe the keeper to leave you alone, and jump away from this nightmarish place.



[Click here.](#)



**W**easel's bony fingers grip your arm like an iron cuff as he steers you through the alleys of London. Soon you reach a shabby alehouse, crowded with rough-looking types carousing at wooden tables.

"This is an alehouse, not a schoolhouse," you say.

Weasel ignores you. He pulls you through a back door to an open courtyard beyond. You gape in amazement. The yard is filled with the laughter of a dozen boys, each holding a glinting knife. Slowly they circle a wooden post on which hangs a leather pouch covered with little bells. One after another they run to the post to slash at the pouch with their knives. The jingling of the bells is met with merriment and jeers.

What sort of game is this? "Is this a fencing school?" you ask.

"Yes, indeed," smirks Weasel. "We'll teach you to fence! You'll soon be as sharp as a sword and quick as a dagger."

A gray-bearded man hobbles over to greet you. Weasel drops your arm and heads for the alehouse.

"I am the innkeeper," says the old man, his eyes twinkling wickedly. "Welcome to the School of Nip and Foist. From now on, you work for me. In return, I will give you safe lodgings and teach you a time-honored trade."

"Observe," he continues, pointing to the post. "The lads are at practice. Those who can cut down the purse without making the bells sound are judged first-class Nippers. And a grade up from the Nips are the Foists, who learn to pick pockets using only sleight of hand." He shows you a similar practice post, on which hangs a



pocket sewn with bells.

“Over here we are practicing cons,” says the innkeeper. “This is called the fainting feint.” You watch as a lad pretends to faint. When a second boy bends down to “help” him, the “fainter” cuts the purse from the “helper’s” belt and scampers away.

“Well done,” says the innkeeper. But you are horrified. You’ve been enrolled in a school for thieves!

“Thieves, con artists, and fences,” says the innkeeper, as though he had read your thoughts. “We train the best. You’ll work only your own territory, you understand. We control all of London.”

“Agreed, innkeeper,” you say, searching the yard for a place in which to disappear. You spot a gate in the brick wall surrounding the yard. “I’d like to begin with the ‘fainting feint,’ if I may—it is truly a clever con.”

“Very well,” replies the innkeeper. “Join the group near the wall and wait your turn. Young Swifty here will be your partner.” He introduces you to a ragged youth with a shy, crooked smile. “By the way, you will need a name by which you are known in the trade. How shall we call you?”

“I am called the Ghost,” you answer with a grin, “for I am able to disappear into thin air.”

“Then you will be an asset to our league,” the innkeeper says. “Show us your skill.”

Patiently you wait your turn to faint. At a signal from the innkeeper, you collapse in a swoon. As Swifty leans over you, you can see that the strings of his purse are loose.

“Grab the purse,” he whispers, winking. “You must do well on your first day, or they’ll put you to work in the alehouse!”

“Oooh,” you moan, clutching your head. “I must have fainted. Thank you, kind sir, for coming to my aid. If you could just help me up . . .” You lean on Swifty’s arm, pretending to stumble. Quick as a wink, you snatch the practice purse from his belt and run for the gate.

“Well done, Ghost! Well done!” laughs the innkeeper. But you do not stop running. Popping through the gate, you drop the practice purse and *jump!*



**Click here.**



**S**tamping on Weasel’s foot with all your weight, you break his grip and run out of the chapel—right into the constable!

“Now I’ve got you!” he cries.

“That’s right, officer, arrest the cur!” says Weasel, limping from the chapel.

“Be off with you, Weasel, or I’ll arrest you as well,” warns the constable. He turns to you. “So, you’re one of Weasel’s young nippers, eh? Must be new, for I haven’t seen you here before. Well now, where is the purse?”

“I found it. I did *not* steal it,” you explain, handing the purse over.

The constable laughs heartily. “I can see that you have been well schooled in the art of trickery,” he says. “A valiant try, but it’s off to Newgate you go.”

“*Prison?*” Your voice falters.

“Prison it is,” says the officer, throwing you the purse. You catch it clumsily and stare at him, confused.

“First time in, I can see,” he says sympathetically. “You’ll need money in Newgate. Well, off we go, then!”



**Click here.**



It is 1592. You are inside a damp but nicely furnished room in the Tower of London. The door is ajar, and you see a servant scurrying away down a bleak corridor.

A prisoner is slumped at a table, his head in his arms. A dinner tray sits untouched at the door. Lifting up the tray, you clear your throat.

“Excuse me, sir,” you say. “Are you . . .?”

“Sir Walter Raleigh? That I am, and a most miserable wretch, as you can see. You must be the new page.” You can see that he doesn’t recognize you.

“Here is your dinner, sir,” you say, trying to conceal your surprise. Sir Walter Raleigh—a prisoner in the Tower!

“I shall eat it most gratefully,” says Sir Walter, “for I must stay fit until the queen sees fit to release me. She is angered by my secret marriage to one of her ladies-in-waiting. Surely she is just jealous! But I shall win back her heart, you shall see!”

“Have you tried sending her a gift?” you hint. “Maybe a *ring*.”

“Not a bad idea,” says Raleigh, thoughtfully pulling on a large pearl that he wears on one ear. “The queen loves jewels. I’ve given her several, but never a ring. Better yet, I shall write her a jewel of a poem. I shall liken her to the moon and the stars! I shall promise her all the gold of El Dorado!” Raleigh stares off into space, his eyes full of dreams.

If Raleigh did give Elizabeth a ring, you decide, at least you know it was after 1592.

Heavy footsteps clomp down the hall outside the tower room.

Guards!

Ducking to the side of the heavy wooden door, you wait for the guards to enter. The door swings open—and you are out of sight behind it. Time to jump!



**Jump backward thirty-eight years.**  
**[Click here.](#)**





**S**t. Paul's Cathedral! You crane your neck to gaze at the rows of spires that pierce the sky five hundred feet above your head. You feel like an ant at the foot of a boulder.

Far, far above you, in the cathedral tower, you can see other tiny ants—human sight-seers—enjoying a panoramic view of London. You decide to climb the tower to study your surroundings.

You enter the cathedral through massive doors, expecting a cool and churchlike hush. It *is* cool. But hundreds of voices echo in the cavernous space of the interior as rows of soaring arches mirror one another for the length of a city street. Mysterious light filters through windows of colored glass. The ceiling is as remote as the stars. And you are lost in a dizzying maze of pillars and aisles.

There are people everywhere! Note-taking lawyers confer with their clients; merchants finger velvets and silks. Job-seekers cluster around a notice board, lovers hide behind pillars, grocers display their wares on marble tombs, and gentlemen remove their hats to strolling ladies.

This certainly is unlike any church you've ever visited!

You spot an officer in uniform, standing by a pillar. He is listening sympathetically to a well-groomed merchant, who is obviously angry and upset.

Pleased to have found a policeman of some sort, you decide to report the lost purse to him as soon as the merchant goes away. But the merchant suddenly freezes in mid-complaint, turning purple with rage.

"Th-that's the one!" he sputters. "That's the nip who foisted me!"

The officer and the merchant run in your direction.

“That rascal cut my purse! Thief! Pickpocket!” shouts the merchant. “You’ll hang by your scrawny neck!” He means *you!*

In your mind you see an image of the gallows in the churchyard. You gulp. Then you *run!*

Dashing down the aisle, you stuff the telltale purse inside your shirt and come up with a plan: You can hide, wait for the hubbub to die down, and return the purse to the officer.

You duck behind a pillar and slip into a small, dark chapel. The chase thunders by, and you relax. Perhaps you should forget your plan and jump in time. Suddenly a bony hand grips your shoulder. You jump about a foot!

“You look as though you could use some help,” an oily voice croons into your ear. In the dim light of the chapel you can just make out the weasel-like features of the one-handed man you saw by the Thames.

“I don’t need any help, thank you,” you say, straining against his grip.

But his hold on your shoulder tightens. “I don’t want your purse,” says Weasel. “I’m after your talent, yes. Such a clever young one, so fleet of foot—my employer is looking for promising apprentices like you. He will gladly teach you his trade.”

“What trade?” you say. “Let me go!”

“He runs a sort of a school,” answers Weasel. “The School of Nip and Foist. You’ll be our star pupil! Come on, then, or I’ll call the constable and collect a fat reward—and you’ll sleep in chains at Newgate Prison!”

It doesn’t seem you have much choice. You can either go with Weasel, or run.



**Go with Weasel. [Click here.](#)**



**Break his grip and run. [Click here.](#)**





It's late September 1599, and you're on London Bridge. The stone bridge is lined with elegant houses and luxury shops, just like a street on solid ground. And it must be the busiest street in London, you think as you join the crowd crossing from the north bank to Southwark.

Reaching the south end of the bridge, you exit through a gatehouse that has attracted a flock of enormous black birds. You look up to see what they are eating.

"Scavenger kites," says a voice next to you, as you look away in horror. The birds are pecking at human heads that have been mounted on the tower of the gatehouse!

"The kites eat the traitors' heads," the voice explains. "Eyes first."

"*Stop* it!" you say, turning toward the voice. It's the ragamuffin who dropped the purse!

"Sorry," he says cheerfully. "Friend of yours up there, eh? I understand. I've known one or two myself."

You shake your head no, but the youth doesn't seem to notice. Taking your arm, he guides you into the streets of Southwark.



[Click here.](#)



It is 1554. You are in the Tower of London. And you have to muffle a cough, for you are standing behind a heavy velvet curtain and breathing dust.

Somewhere nearby you hear the sound of crying. Peeking around the curtain, you see a pale red-haired girl of about twenty, quite simply dressed in brown brocade and a furtrimmed cloak.

“Princess Elizabeth!” The door to her simple chamber swings open and several guards enter, accompanied by a man in black.

“Your doctor is here, my lady,” says one of the guards, bowing. The man in black waves them off, and is left alone with the princess.

“Good evening, Doctor,” says Elizabeth. “As you can see, I am heavily guarded. You are the only visitor I am permitted in this accursed tower, so your company is welcome.”

“How are you faring, my lady?” asks the doctor.

“I fear for my life,” the princess replies. “Queen Mary suspects me of treason. My own sister! It is true her people rebel against her, for she plans to wed King Philip of Spain, our greatest enemy. But I had no contact with the rebels, nor would I betray my own blood.”

“Truth will conquer,” the doctor says reassuringly. “You shall see. And some day you’ll be queen in Mary’s place.”

“If she doesn’t have my head first, as my mother lost hers,” answers Elizabeth. “Faith, this is a sorrowful place! I fear the ghosts of my mother and the others whose lives have ended here.”

“I regret that I must leave you so soon,” says the doctor, summoning the guard. “Take comfort, my lady. All will be well.”

“If only I could be so certain.” Elizabeth sighs when the doctor is gone. Softly she begins to weep again.

No wonder Elizabeth hates the Tower of London! She could have lost her own head here! It is too early to question her about the ring she wore as an old woman. But you decide to comfort the desolate girl before you jump in time.

“*Elizabeth*,” you whisper in a shrill voice. “Be not afraid.”

“My mother, is it you?” the princess asks fearfully, looking around the room.

“It is I, Elizabeth,” you answer, your voice ghostly but warm. “Take heed. Calm your fears, for you will be queen, and your reign will be full of glory. You *will* be queen.”

Elizabeth’s eyes fill with hope. You jump in time, stirring a slight puff of dust from the velvet curtain.



**Jump back to the Globe Theater.**  
**Click here.**





I believe this is yours,” you say, offering the tattered youth the purse you have been carrying.

His eyes widen at the sight of the purse. But then, to your surprise, the youth begins to laugh.

“Faith, but you must be artful indeed, to have snatched a purse from *me*, Kip the Nip! I can pick any pocket and cut any purse, but *never* have I been nipped by another! You humble me!” Kip bows to you with a flourish.

A pickpocket! And he thinks you stole the purse from *him!*

“No, no,” you insist. “You dropped it as you ran by!”

“How kind to try to spare me embarrassment,” answers Kip. “I appreciate your modesty. But I appreciate your skill even more! Keep the purse, my friend, you have earned it. Besides, there are plenty more to be had where *that* came from.”

Deciding you’d better change the subject, you fasten the purse to your belt once again. Perhaps you can return it to a constable somewhere in Southwark.

“Pleased to meet you, Mr. Kip,” you say. “I am a visitor to London, and I’m looking for the new theater. Can you direct me?”

“I knew you couldn’t be from these parts, or we would have met before,” says Kip. “So you’ll be working the Globe Theater, will you? Be careful—that’s Weasel’s territory, and he’ll claim a half share of your day’s work!”

Shuddering at the memory of the one-handed man with the weasel’s face, you thank the young pickpocket for the warning and tell him you are just looking for some friends you met earlier today.

“They mentioned they would be attending a play at the Globe,” you say.

“Spotted your marks already, eh?” says Kip with a wink. “Well, here’s the Globe Theater.”

You are standing in front of an octagonal building made of timber and plaster. High above its three stories flies a white silk flag, showing Hercules bearing the world on his shoulders. A playbill posted out front reads *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*.

“These tragedies last all afternoon,” says Kip. “Your ‘friends’ will still be here later. Why not come with me? I’m going to see the Great Sackerson at Paris Garden.” He points to another octagonal building a short distance from the Globe. It, too, flies a flag. It must be another theater, you decide.

“Who’s the Great Sackerson?” you ask.

“Just the best in London!” Kip exclaims. “Don’t tell me you’ve never heard of him! Oh, he’s a handsome brute, he is—the queen’s favorite!”

“A royal favorite?” you ask. Maybe this Sackerson can get you in to see the queen! But Kip is already striding away toward Paris Garden.

“Come on, if you’re coming!” he calls.

You’re not sure you want to get involved with a pickpocket, even if he is friendly. Scanning the crowd at the entrance to the Globe, you spot the four gentlemen and noble ladies you had seen earlier by the Thames. Should you follow them?



Go the play at the Globe. [Click here.](#)



Go to Paris Garden. [Click here.](#)



It is 54 B.C. You are standing behind a tree at the side of a dirt road. An army is on the move, filling the air with the sounds of marching feet, clanking shields, horses' hooves.

You step forward to watch several teams of horses pulling wooden carts loaded with very odd-looking contraptions. They look like mechanical slingshots, or catapults.

"No time to rest!" A rough hand grabs your shoulder and shoves you into an orderly rank of soldiers. Hurriedly falling into step, you study the troops. Short tunics, leather sandals, bronze armor—it's a Roman legion!

"What is this place?" you ask the legionary nearest you.

"Why, Londinius," replies the foot soldier. "Come up from the rear, have you? We're almost to the Tamesis. Once across the river, Caesar will conquer the stronghold of the barbarous. We shall bring glory to Caesar and to Rome!"

"Where is the great Caesar?" you ask.

"He rides up ahead."

Far ahead, you can just make out the mounted troops as they ride around a curve in the road and into open ground.

Suddenly a battle cry is raised! The barbarians are attacking!

You gulp in fear as a tribe of warriors, driving horse-drawn war chariots, thunders through the Roman cavalry. Some of them, naked but for their weapons and shields, stand on their horses' yokes. They fight wildly, making fierce, shrieking cries, thrusting spears and slashing broadswords.

But more fearsome than their weapons are the tribesmen themselves. They are *blue!* For their skin is tattooed all over with ornate designs. And their hair has been stiffened into yellow spikes that stand from their heads like porcupine quills.

“Look out!” cries the legionary. A spear whizzes by, just inches from your neck!

The Britons make chaos of the Romans’ neat lines, leaping from their chariots to fight on foot and stopping only to take Roman heads as trophies!

Luckily for you, the barbarians are out-numbered. They retreat swiftly, content to cause only a few deaths—plus terror and confusion—among the Roman invaders.

Still, you’ve had enough of blue warriors. And you’re sure Julius Caesar will do fine without you. You want out!



**Jump ahead 1608 years. [Click here.](#)**



**Jump ahead 1653 years. [Click here.](#)**





It is April 1585, and you are aboard the *Tiger*, ready to set sail for the New World.

The last of the supplies are being loaded into the ship's hold: salted beef and pork, rice and oatmeal, peas and beans, water and beer. There are weapons, tools, and sacks of seeds to plant in the new colony. Some two hundred sailors, soldiers, and colonists are crammed on board for the voyage, and another four hundred will travel in six smaller ships.

"Weigh anchors!" hollers the first mate. You can feel the electricity and tension in the air as the crew hastens to carry out orders.

"Man the capstans!" Grunting and sweating, the sailors push against thick wooden bars that turn several tall drums, or capstans. Heavy anchor lines slowly wind around the drums as the anchors are raised. You're off!

Cracking and heaving, the *Tiger* makes her way to the open sea. The seamen raise her huge white sails, hauling on ropes and straining against capstans. She's beautiful!

How she rides the waves! *Up* and down, *up* and down. And *up*. And down. You are not feeling quite yourself—your stomach is staying *up* when it should come down with the rest of you.

"Where is that blasted cabin mate?" A sailor is searching the deck. "Come on, matey, Admiral Grenville wants you below!"

"Grenville?" you say queasily.

"Sir Richard Grenville, commander of the fleet," the sailor answers impatiently. "His cousin, Sir Walter Raleigh, has organized the voyage, and will want a return on his investment! The queen has

named Raleigh lord and governor of Virginia.”

“Which ship does Raleigh command?” you ask, puzzled.

He laughs. “The queen would never allow a favorite to undertake such a long and hazardous journey! Raleigh stays in England, of course.”

England is rapidly disappearing from sight as the *Tiger* rolls up and down.

“Please tell Sir Richard I am ill,” you beg. “I’ll be there as soon as I can.”

“It happens to everyone the first time,” says the sailor sympathetically. “Keep your eye on the horizon.”

Watching the horizon steadies your stomach as you decide what to do. Should you jump ahead to the New World to see what kind of treasure the explorers find? Or look for Raleigh after his ships have returned?



**Jump ahead three months, to America.**

**Click here.**



**Stay in England and jump ahead six months. Click here.**



**U**p and up into the mountains you climb, following the column of smoke. You can hear thunder in the distance. You're worried that you might get caught in a tropical storm.

The thunder gets louder as you climb. But the hills are hot and sunny, and here and there deer cross your path.

Raleigh stoops to pick up some rocks.

"It's marcasite!" he exclaims excitedly. "This ore is found where gold is close at hand!"

The air grows moist, and a fine mistlike spray descends from the mountain.

Your path curves, and the thunder roars as loudly as an avalanche. Then, suddenly, you see it: a waterfall as high as St. Paul's Cathedral, or higher. The mist rises into the air like smoke. And above it all, arching into the sky, is a glorious rainbow, shimmering like a silken ribbon.

You take a deep breath. The spray from the rushing water tickles your nostrils.

Raleigh stops in awe to admire the sight. But his wonder is tinged with sadness. For there is no smoke and no city, no gold and no ring. And little chance of winning Elizabeth's favor. He has discovered one of the treasures of nature, but he must return to his ship empty-handed.

With heavy hearts you retrace your path to Topiawari's village.

"The rainy season has begun," says Ferdinando. "There will be no further exploration this year."

“We must leave for England,” agrees Raleigh sadly.

“I shall send one of my sons to learn your ways,” Topiawari announces. “Will any of your men stay here with our people?”

You see a way out of this wild goose chase!

“I’ll stay!” you tell Raleigh, slipping behind Topiawari’s hut. Two young Englishmen remain in the South American village, watching as Raleigh’s men prepare to battle the fierce currents of the Orinoco.

“I shall return in one year’s time!” swears Raleigh. “I shall not give up the search for the kingdom of El Dorado.”

You watch until the boat is out of sight and then jump back to England to continue your mission.



**Jump to England in 1596. [Click here.](#)**



**Jump to England in 1587. [Click here.](#)**



It is January 26, 1595. You are standing at the entrance to a great hall in an Elizabethan mansion. You're wearing the page's costume you borrowed.

The floors are strewn with fresh rushes, the paneled walls are hung with tapestries, and a roaring fire burns in a huge hearth. Hundreds of candles in silver candelabra spill flickering light across the enormous room.

Wedding festivities are in full swing. The guests sit at tables that run the length of the hall. There is much laughter and drinking of wine from silver goblets.

You wander behind the center table, where the guests of honor are seated on a raised platform. Musicians are playing from a gallery and several couples are dancing.

As the music picks up, the dancers step faster and faster—five steps forward, five steps back. Suddenly the dancers leap into the air, their feet crossing nimbly as they leave the floor.

A circle forms around one energetic couple. The man is tall, with curly reddish brown hair and devilish eyes. He looks to be in his late twenties. His partner winks flirtatiously from behind a silk fan; she is leaping all the while.

Her low-cut gown is sewn with pearls and silver threads. She wears a sparkling diamond pendant, set off by a high lace collar bordered with gold and jewels. Her hair is a flaming red—it must be a wig—and is decorated with jewels of every color and a golden crown.

Could these be the bride and groom? You are just about to ask when the woman lowers her fan. Even with her face powdered as



white as her pearls, it is impossible to mistake her age. She must be at least sixty!

The elegant couple seated in front of you hold hands and drink wine. *They* must be the bride and groom.

“The queen is dancing the galliard like a young girl tonight,” says the groom.

“It is a great honor,” says the bride. “But I don’t think she is inspired by our marriage. I’d wager it’s the earl of Essex who puts such light into her eyes!”

The queen and the earl of Essex! You stare as the earl leads Queen Elizabeth to a high-backed armchair next to the bride and groom.

“Don’t stare so, page,” says the queen, catching sight of you. “Fetch us some wine.”

Hurrying off, you find a silver ewer filled with red wine and deliver it with a bow. Then you fill the jeweled goblet at the queen’s place.

“Well, what are you waiting for?” demands the queen, handing you the goblet. “Taste it!”

Nervously, you take a sip. You aren’t sure what poison tastes like, but you feel fine, so you return the goblet to the queen. Smiling graciously, she raises the glass in a toast to you and drinks.

“The play is about to begin!” the bride says excitedly.

The end of the hall has been cleared, and as the music begins, you see Andrew, just a boy, dressed as an attendant to the Fairy Queen. You don’t worry that he’ll recognize you—you won’t even meet for another four years!

*A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is a fantasy about enchanted lovers and a star-crossed wedding.

“The course of true love never did run smooth,” says one of the actors.

“That is certain,” says Essex, leaning over to whisper to the queen. “I fear you cherish another more than myself.”

“Which of my admirers has earned your jealousy on this day?” asks the queen. “Could it be the adventurous Raleigh, who will soon win me a kingdom of gold?”

“Bosh,” replies Essex. “This El Dorado is a kingdom of dreams,

only as real as the realm you see in the play before you.”

“Raleigh’s expedition claimed Virginia in my honor and returned from Roanoke, our first New World colony, with an unheard-of treasure,” says the queen with a teasing smile. “Why should he not do even better on this forthcoming journey, ten years later?”

“Roanoke—El Dorado—*bosh!*” Essex says sulkily, returning his attention to the play.

Onstage, one of Queen Titania’s fairies has encountered the mischievous Puck, also called Robin Goodfellow. The fairy says:

“Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
Call’d Robin Goodfellow. Are you not he  
That frights the maidens of the villagery. . .?”

The queen laughs merrily. “Perhaps I should call *you* Robin Goodfellow, my Robin,” she says to the earl. Essex brightens at her affectionate tone.

Queen Elizabeth is enjoying the play. For Titania, Queen of the Fairies, has entered, and it is clear that she is meant to represent Elizabeth herself.

You study the queen’s slender hands. She is wearing many rings, but none of them fits the description of the ring you are seeking. She seems very taken with the earl of Essex. But wouldn’t she be wearing the ring if it was a gift from the earl?

Maybe you should be checking up on Sir Walter Raleigh. Could the ring have been part of the “unheard-of treasure” he brought back from the New World? Or a prize from the mysterious kingdom of El Dorado?



**Sail to Roanoke, Virginia, in 1585.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Stay in 1595 and journey to El Dorado.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Y**ou are standing in front of the Globe Theater. It is late September 1599. There must be two thousand people here! A boy thrusts a playbill into your hand. “The Tragedy of Julius Caesar, a new play by William Shakespeare,” you read.

“One penny, if you please. Apprentices stand in the yard!” barks the doorkeeper. Dropping a coin into his box, you enter the Globe.

Once inside, you follow a group of young apprentices dressed in the same dark blue livery as yours. You are in a large, brick-paved yard, facing the stage. The yard is open to the sky, but there are three stories of covered seats, ringing most of the octagonal building, for those who can pay.

An entire side of the building is taken up by the stage. There are several stages, really. A large platform projects into the yard. Behind it, curtained balconies rise for three stories and are topped by a turret. Musicians are playing in the highest balcony, and actors enter and exit through doors on either side of the platform and balconies.

The play is already in progress. But to your surprise, much of the audience is talking. Some play cards, others buy fruit from vendors.

A hush falls over the crowd as a handsome actor steps forward to speak. He is dressed as an Elizabethan courtier, with a Roman helmet on his head.

“Friends, Romans, countrymen,” he begins. “Lend me your ears; I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.”

The man next to you digs an elbow into your ribs. “A fine speech for Marc Anthony, the greatest of Romans,” he says.

“Bah! Caesar was greater,” says his companion, a rough-looking sort.

“Caesar got himself killed,” replies the first.

Anxious to avoid an argument, you search the crowd for the noblemen and ladies you saw earlier. Spotting them in a gallery to the left of the stage, you make your way through the noisy yard and up a flight of stairs.

You are in a narrow corridor leading to private boxes where the wealthier playgoers sit. A prosperous-looking merchant is making his way through the corridor.

“Halt there, apprentice,” he says when he sees you. “What are you doing in the galleries? You belong in the yard with the rest of your loudmouthed crew.” He studies you suspiciously. Suddenly his eyes rest on your belt.

“So you’re the one!” he shouts angrily. “Stop, thief! *Halt!*”

You aren’t sure what he is talking about, but you don’t wait to find out. You run!

“Catch that apprentice!” yells the merchant. “The rogue has stolen my purse!” He takes off after you.

So *that’s* it! Loosening the purse from your belt, you throw it at the merchant’s feet and duck through a door at the end of the corridor.

You’re backstage! Searching for a place to hide, you dive behind a pile of props and pull a Roman helmet over your head.

Rough hands grab you from behind!

“What are you waiting for?” demands a young actor in a helmet like yours. Thrusting a sword and shield into your hands, he pushes you toward a curtain, holds it aside, and steps through.

“Follow me!” he says. “You’re on!”



**Go onstage. [Click here.](#)**



**Jump far backward in time. [Click here.](#)**





It is October 1585. You are in a great hall at Queen Elizabeth's court.

Suddenly some fashionable ladies run into the hall, coughing and holding their noses.

"Sir Walter is at it again," says one, between coughs.

"Some say he is trying to poison the queen with this so-called treasure from America!" says another, gasping.

"Did you hear that his manservant saw smoke coming from his nose and mouth and thought he was on fire?" says yet another. "The poor man poured a jug of spiced ale on his master's head!"

The giggling ladies leave the hall as a gracious couple enter. You recognize Sir Walter Raleigh—he is puffing on a silver pipe and is surrounded by a cloud of smoke.

He is elegantly dressed in black and white. And with him is the queen!

Bowing as they enter, you pause in an alcove as Raleigh and the queen take seats at a nearby table. The queen wrinkles her nose.

"I must say, Walter," the queen remarks, "this new habit of yours has become quite the rage at court. But the odor is awful!"

"Shall we try a little wager, my lady?" Sir Walter smiles. "I have become such an expert on this pleasurable plant that I'll bet you I can weigh a pipeful of smoke!"

"Weigh smoke?" laughs the queen. "I'll accept your wager."

Drawing out a gilded leather pouch, Raleigh pinches a pipeful of tobacco between his fingers and weighs it on a little silver scale. Then he fills his pipe, lights it, and slowly smokes the pipe, watch-

ing the smoke curl into the air and disappear.

When the pipe is finished, he empties the ashes onto the scale and subtracts their weight from the weight of the tobacco.

“The difference, my lady, is the weight of the smoke!”

The queen is angry at having lost her wager, but soon she begins to laugh.

“I have heard of men turning gold into smoke,” she says, “but you must be the very first to turn smoke into gold!”

You see a flash of gold as the queen tosses Raleigh his prize. Then she flounces away.

So much for the treasure from the New World. If Raleigh gave the queen a ring, it must have been much later. Perhaps he found it in 1595, in the kingdom of El Dorado.



**Jump ahead ten years. [Click here.](#)**



**T**he year is 1582. You are standing in page's costume at the foot of a sweeping staircase at the back of Greenwich Palace.

The court must be in attendance for the season, because you can see groups of noblemen strolling on the lawns, while ladies fan themselves on garden benches.

Suddenly the ladies rise and curtsy, their gowns rustling and their elaborate wigs dipping toward the ground. Whirling about, you, too, drop to your knees. Queen Elizabeth is descending the staircase!

In an instant you understand how the queen came to be called Gloriana. She is radiant and youthful, though no longer young. She must be in her late forties. Her gown is of white silk, sewn all over with tiny pearls and embroidered with golden threads.

Jewels glisten on every finger of her long, slender hands and glitter from her wrists, her neck, her ears, and her hair. Her hair, the color of tangerines, is piled high on her head, with long, curling strands left to decorate her pale shoulders. Her face has been powdered as white as her dress, and it's framed by a high lace collar edged with pearls and made of a fabric as transparent as mist.

The queen is accompanied by a retinue of ladies-in-waiting, armed guards, and eager gentlemen who compete for the royal ear. It takes several young girls to carry the train of her pearl-laden dress.

*"Page! You there!"*

A nobleman beckons to you.

“Attend me on this walk, page. The queen wishes to take some exercise, and I would like to catch her eye. I may need you to carry my cloak!” he says with a conspiratorial wink.

“I will be most honored, sir,” you reply, catching up to the royal entourage. “But if I may say so, sir, I cannot see how you could *fail* to catch her eye.”

For this courtier is not only dark, handsome, and very tall, he is dressed in finery that almost rivals the queen’s.

“You flatter me, page,” he says with a laugh. “As you see, I wear only black and white, the queen’s colors.”

You nod. The nobleman is decked out in a white satin doublet and hose, black and white breeches, and a black velvet cloak. And he wears a single pearl droplet in his ear!

“But alas,” he continues, “all of my wealth is on my back. For I have lately returned from the wars in Ireland, and I spent my fortune on my clothes to make my way at court. With my last penny, I purchased my splendid cloak. But the queen has yet to take notice of me. Sir Walter Raleigh at your service!”

Raleigh! You follow closely as the group ambles along winding white-pebbled paths, between beds of flowers that have been planted in bright patterns. Soon you reach the forested park and set out along an earthen path, made spongy from a recent rain.

All at once, the retinue stops.

“Let us go no farther,” says the queen. “For I fear to step in this ‘plashy place.’”

Following on Raleigh’s heels, you push forward to stand near the queen, who has paused by a large mudpuddle.

“My lady, allow me,” says Raleigh, unfastening the velvet cloak from his shoulders. “Far be it from Nature to halt the course of her Majesty’s pleasure!”

And with that, he casts the cloak across the puddle and invites the queen to step across.

Elizabeth accepts Raleigh’s arm, her eyes shining, and steps lightly across the puddle.

“Such gallantry shall not go unrewarded!” she says, smiling.

Then she removes a glinting diamond ring from her finger and hands it to the astonished Raleigh.

“The honor is all mine, madam,” he says, bowing deeply. “Page, please retrieve my cloak, for I shall cherish it forever as a bridge upon which, for just an instant, beauty rested.”

All eyes are on Raleigh as the queen smiles and takes his arm to resume her walk.

“Tell me, Sir Walter, how did you find Ireland?” she asks as they saunter away.

Throwing Raleigh a broad grin, you scurry to pick up the ruined cloak.

“I shall call you Sir *Water*.” The queen is laughing as you catch up. She certainly seems taken with him!

Circling back to the palace, the queen pauses by a window. She seems reluctant to leave the dashing Raleigh and return to her duties.

You watch, confused, as Raleigh removes his new diamond ring and scratches at one of the window panes. The queen smiles and scratches something with a ring of her own. Then, with a nod to Raleigh, she disappears into the palace.

Raleigh laughs aloud and turns to you, grabbing his cloak and swinging it over his shoulder with a flourish. Then he strides away, whistling cheerfully.

Slipping to the window, you read the message Raleigh wrote to the queen:

“Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall.”

And, fainter, her etched reponse:

“If thy heart fail thee, climb not at all.”

You’ve had your lesson in gallantry. But in 1582, the queen gave Raleigh a ring, not vice versa. And Essex is nowhere in evidence. Should you check in on Raleigh in another ten years? Or jump to meet the queen at the wedding at Burghley House?





**Jump ten years to 1592. [Click here.](#)**



**Jump to the 1595 wedding. [Click here.](#)**



**H**urrying after Kip the Nip, you head for Paris Garden. If the Great Sackerson is a favorite of the queen, perhaps she will attend his performance. At least Sackerson might be able to help you find Raleigh or Essex.

Kip has disappeared into the crowd—plying his trade, no doubt. Rich and poor alike have gathered for the show. Finding a penny in the purse at your belt, you enter Paris Garden and are directed up three flights of stairs to your seat.

The theater is open to the sky. Three galleries of wooden seats encircle an arena below. But there is no stage. Instead, you see only an earthen floor with a large post driven into its center.

“What kind of play is this?” you ask the man seated next to you.

“If it’s plays you want, you’d best go to the Globe,” he answers. “This is the Bear Garden.”

“But what about the Great Sackerson?” you ask.

“Here comes the bear ward!” the man says excitedly. “He’s bringing Sackerson in now! My money’s on Sackerson. How about you?”

Your mouth drops as you get a look at Sackerson. He’s a bear! You watch as the bear ward chains the great beast to the stake in the center of the arena. A thick rope leads from the post to his collar, and the bear can move freely for about fifteen feet in any direction.

The crowd roars its approval as five growling dogs are released into the ring. Sackerson roars back. You can see that his teeth have been filed down. But he still has long, sharp claws.

Slowly, the dogs circle the bear. One of them attacks! The crowd

shouts encouragement to the bear, as bets fly and money changes hands. Sackerson crushes the troublesome dog and flings it like a rag doll to the edge of the arena. But the other four dogs rush him, fangs bared!

You can see little but a swirling mass of fur, claws, teeth, and blood. You turn away, sickened.

“This is so cruel!” you exclaim.

“Another bloody Puritan,” snaps the man at your side. “You want to outlaw bearbaiting, I suppose? And bullbaiting and apebaiting? All fine gentlemen’s sport!”

“Well, I’ve seen enough,” you say. Making your way back downstairs, you hold your ears against the yelps and howls of the frenzied animals and the almost identical sounds of the unruly crowd.

You slip through a doorway, expecting to find yourself outside. But you enter a small yard on the inner side of the Bear Garden. The bear ward is sipping some ale, waiting for the action to die down.

“How long does this go on?” you ask.

“Not much longer,” he says. “They’ll soon run out of dogs. Sackerson wears his scars like a proud soldier, you know. But he is a main attraction, and the queen’s favorite, so I’ll be taking him back to the Tower to rest.”

“The Tower of London?” you ask.

“The very same—the queen’s favorite lives like royalty in the Tower.” The bear ward looks you over closely. “You seem like an able sort. I could use a hand. Have you ever groomed a bear?”

“N-no,” you admit.

“Well, Sackerson’s a pussycat when he’s not working,” says the bear ward. “Eats too many sweets. He’s spoiled royal, they say.”

A great roar goes up from the crowd.

“That’s it,” says the bear ward, finishing his ale and heading for the arena. “Wait here if you want the job.”



Go with the bear ward to the Tower of London. [Click here.](#)



Go back to the Globe Theater. [Click here.](#)





**T**he Tower of London is not the gracious palace you expected. Rather, it is a huge stone fortress with a multitude of towers, as imposing as a mountain.

You and the bear ward pass through a gatehouse. The Great Sackerson ambles calmly after you. You keep your distance! But the tired bear seems quite content to return to his dark cage and warm dinner.

“Where does the queen live?” you ask.

“Not in the Tower of London!” the bear ward chuckles. “She was held prisoner here as a girl, you know. Now she won’t spend a night in the old place. Besides, they say it is haunted by the ghost of her mother, Anne Boleyn. They say that she walks at night in the Bloody Tower, holding her head under her arm!”

You shudder. The Tower *is* creepy.

The bear ward disappears to his own quarters. You decide it’s time to move on. You won’t find the queen here now. It may help to talk to the youthful Elizabeth, though. But how far back should you jump?



**Jump backward seven years to 1592.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Jump backward forty-five years to 1554.**

**[Click here.](#)**



It is May 1595. Sir Walter Raleigh's fleet is anchored off the shore of the island of Trinidad, at the mouth of the Orinoco River.

The Orinoco flows through the jungles of Guiana in South America. The river is too shallow for Raleigh's fleet. But one of the great ships, a galley, has been cut down and fitted with oars. On this bargelike boat, Raleigh will sail up the Orinoco with a handpicked crew, searching for gold. You join the sailors who are loading a month's provisions onto the boat.

"There's room for one more," the explorer calls. "You're small," he says, beckoning to you. "Come with us!"

The men take turns rowing. The day is young and the river is beautiful, snaking its way through the lush greenery of the South American jungle. You see birds of every color and strange tropical flowers of orange, purple, and red.

It is broiling hot, and you're surprised to see that Raleigh still wears a helmet and breastplate and his heavy Elizabethan clothes. But he is sweating with excitement as much as heat, for you are off to discover the lost kingdom of El Dorado!

"Why do they call it El Dorado?" you ask.

"It means the Golden One," Raleigh answers. "Only one man, a Spaniard, has ever seen it and returned to tell the tale. He says there is a city hidden deep in the jungle, where everything is made of gold. It is called Manoa. Every day the king of Manoa bathes in a kind of oil. Then his subjects blow gold dust onto his body through hollow canes, so that he is gilded from head to toe. He is known as



El Dorado.”

“How do you hope to find this place?” you wonder aloud.

“Meet our guide,” says Raleigh, introducing you to a young Indian. “We call him Ferdinando. He will help us through the first part of the river. From there, we will have to ask our way.”

You smile and nod reassuringly to Ferdinando, who looks uncomfortable and confused.

You soon find out why. The expedition is hopelessly lost in a maze of rivers and tributaries that are dotted with identical islands and bordered by impassable forests!

“Where are we?” you ask Ferdinando late in the day.

Ferdinando shrugs. “I have not actually *been* on the river for over twelve years,” he explains sheepishly. “But I *do* remember that some of the Indian tribes living along the Orinoco are cannibals! And some tribes attack intruders with poisoned arrows!” It’s not an encouraging thought.

After many days and nights, you are stiff and sore from taking your turn at the oars and sleeping on the hard deck of the open boat. Both men and supplies have been drenched by rains, burnt by a relentless sun, and bitten by insects.

“Take heart,” Raleigh urges. “Soon we will all be rich!”

But food is running low. And the smell of sixty miserable men is indescribable. You are almost ready to jump out of here, even though you are in plain sight of everyone.

Suddenly Ferdinando whoops gleefully. “I know this place!” he cries. “Just a few days away is a village where we can ask our way.”

For four days longer, you sleep and row, row and sleep. There are always men on watch.

And there is never a time you can jump. It looks as if you’re *stuck* on this treasure hunt.



[Click here.](#)



**T**he audience is waiting! Taking a deep breath, you step onstage at the Globe Theater. You are the second of three soldiers. The scene is in progress. But what should you do?

“Where do I . . .” you whisper.

“*Stand!*” says the first soldier, nudging you with his elbow.

“*Stand?*” you sputter.

“*Stand!*” says the third soldier.

The first soldier winks at you. “Well done,” he whispers. “You have no more lines for the rest of the scene.”

Relieved, you wait until the soldiers exit, and you march off-stage.

Backstage, the actors are scrambling to change their costumes for the next act. You are shocked to see a young lady remove a long, curling wig from her head and pop two oranges from the bodice of her dress! It’s a boy!

“Fooled you, didn’t I!” he laughs. “You made a good soldier. And come to think of it, you’d make a pretty lass yourself—we could use someone so versatile. Can you act?”

“Oh, I can act, all right,” you tell him, blushing. Little does he know! Good acting and fast thinking are the two most important talents of the time traveler!

“My name is Andrew,” says the boy. “What’s yours?”

“I’m, uh, *Toby*,” you answer, staring at your toes.

“Well, Toby,” says Andrew, “do you think you could perform at court?”

“Indeed!” you reply. “I would like nothing better than to bow

before the queen, and to imitate the manners of Sir Walter Raleigh or the earl of Essex!”

“Ah, the heroes of Cadiz!” says Andrew with a knowing smile. “If it’s manners you want, you can learn from no better than Sir Walter Raleigh. His triumph at court is still a legend after seventeen years. The queen will never forget his gallantry! But I wouldn’t copy the earl of Essex—haven’t you heard?”

You shake your head no.

“He is just back from the wars in Ireland, and, if tales be true, burst in to see the queen. He was covered with mud and looking a fright! They say she is furious—but then the queen is often furious with her favorites.”

“Have you really performed before the queen?” you ask.

“So I have—and so shall you, if you join Shakespeare’s troupe. We need someone to play a lady-in-waiting in his new comedy, *Twelfth Night*. It will be part of the queen’s Christmas celebrations.”

Christmas! But it’s only September!

“I don’t know . . .” you begin.

“It is certain to be a success,” Andrew goes on, bubbling with enthusiasm. “Our queen is sure to be as pleased as she was by Shakespeare’s wedding play, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. We performed it at Burghley House four years back. I played a fairy called Mustardseed in that one! And I’ve also played a page at the court of Richard the Second—see, my costume hangs yonder! And . . .”

“Andrew!” A voice hisses from the stage door.

“I’m on!” says Andrew, replacing his wig and adjusting his oranges. “See you later, Toby!”

A page’s costume! You’re in luck! That would be the perfect disguise for a time traveler at Elizabeth’s court!

Knowing you can always return to the theater, you decide to borrow Andrew’s costume and consider your clues. Should you jump back seventeen years to meet Sir Walter Raleigh at court? Or jump to the wedding at Burghley House, and try to meet the queen?



Jump to 1582 to meet Sir Walter Raleigh.  
[Click here.](#)



Jump to the 1595 wedding. [Click here.](#)



**T**he Tiger has run aground! It is late June 1585, and you're aboard a flooded ship on North Carolina's Outer Banks.

Men are scrambling to repair the damage to the ship. But most of her cargo has been lost.

"Ho! Cabin mate!" A sailor is shouting to you. "The admiral is planning an expedition inland. Will you join us? Or will you help to build the new fort on Roanoke Island?"

You join a shore party of some fifty settlers who are piling into four small boats. You are surprised to see that two of them are Indians!

"Meet Manteo and Wanchese," says the sailor. "They joined us on Raleigh's first expedition, last year, and journeyed to England to learn our tongue. Now they will serve as our guides. We're headed for the Indian village of Secotan."

Eagerly climbing into the boat, you greet your new companions.

Secotan is fascinating. The Indians live and gather in rectangular buildings with rounded roofs. All are covered with woven mats and look like loaves of bread. On one side of the village are fields of corn—some newly sown, some half grown, and some fully ripe.

The Indians perform a ceremony in your honor. Clothed in loin-cloths of skin and feathered headdresses, they dance in a circle, rattling gourds to rhythmic singing, stamping, and clapping.

The English are amazed by the precious powdered leaves the Indians burn on roaring fires and smoke in clay pipes. But you recognize that smell—tobacco!



“Soothing uppowoc leaves are healthy for body and soul,” explains Manteo. “You must smoke to cleanse body of evil humors. It quiet storms and cure diseases. You bring much uppowoc back to England.”

You help Grenville’s men load the boats with bales of tobacco. “Raleigh will be delighted!” says Grenville, as he watches the men work.

So *that’s* the treasure from the New World, you think. Tobacco!

Grenville plans to leave over one hundred men as colonists and to return to England with the rest. You decide to jump in time. The colonists will think you went back on the *Tiger*, and the crew of the *Tiger* will think you have stayed.



**Jump ahead three months to England to find Sir Walter Raleigh. [Click here.](#)**



It is still January 1603. Shaking the melted snow from your hair, you look around. You are in a candlelit bedchamber in the palace of Whitehall, and an old woman is lying in an enormous canopied bed. She is dozing and moans weakly in her sleep.

You barely recognize the elderly queen. She is wrinkled and pale, wigless and thin.

“Your Majesty,” you whisper. Softly, you clear your throat. The old woman opens her eyes and peers at you through the flickering light. Then she clutches at the bedclothes with her skeletal fingers, her eyes widening. You notice that she is wearing only one ring, a plain gold band.

“Yiiieeh!” she screams. “*Begone*, ghost!”

“I am not a ghost, I . . .” you begin. Guards rush into the room.

“I come with a message from Dr. Dee!” you insist.

“Dr. Dee’s messenger left here an hour ago,” one guard says fiercely.

“It is the ghost of Essex, returned from Ireland!” shrieks the queen. “You haunt me still? You enter my chamber once again, muddy and wet? *Oohhh*, begone, ghost!”

Elizabeth shuts her eyes tightly as several ladies hurry to her bedside.

“Hush, my lady,” says one. “It was only a dream.” The guards drag you from the chamber.

“Trying to frighten the queen into her grave?” barks a guard.

“Only a lunatic would do such a thing!” says another, ignoring

your protestations. “It’s off to Bedlam for you!”



**Click here.**





**Y**ou are at Essex House, London, at the end of July 1587. Essex is packing. “I’m off to war in the Netherlands!” he says angrily. “Where are my gloves? Look for them!” he shouts to you.

Searching the hall, you soon spot the gloves draped over the back of a tall wooden chair.

“Here, my lord,” you say. “But surely you will be missed at court?”

“She’ll miss me, all right. You’ll see,” says Essex, yanking the gloves on.

“Perhaps you should send her a going-away present,” you suggest. “Maybe a ring?”

“She has twice as many rings as fingers. She needs no more from me!”

You are interrupted by a nobleman entering the hall. “The queen wishes you to remain at court,” he tells Essex. “You are not to fight in Holland.”

“Humph!” mutters the earl. “I have no choice but to obey the wishes of the queen.” But you see a smile of satisfaction flicker across his face.

Slipping out of the room, you decide to jump ahead nine years, when Raleigh and Essex returned as heroes from the Battle of Cadiz.



**Jump to 1596. [Click here.](#)**



**F**inally Ferdinando directs Raleigh to enter a narrow tributary. “The village is just three hours away,” he promises.

Soon you have been rowing for *six* hours. There is no town in sight. And the sun is setting. Raleigh looks angry—and hungry. You row on and on.

*Thwap!* A vine slaps your face.

The tributary is narrowing, and the men draw swords to hack at the branches that are choking your air space. The sounds of the jungle are everywhere—chattering, shrieking, sharp whistles and low growls. You begin to worry about spiders. And bats.

“Very close now,” promises the Indian guide. It is after midnight.

Somewhere a dog is barking. A dog? In the jungle? There’s a light in the trees!

“The village!” you cry.

By one o’clock in the morning, you are safely ashore, surrounded by curious natives.

“They will trade with us,” translates Ferdinando. “They have much food. Their leader has gone up the Orinoco to trade for gold.” At this, Raleigh’s eyes light up.

“There *is* gold here. I knew it!” he exclaims.

Soon you are feasting on bread and fish while hens roast on an open fire.

Falling asleep on solid ground for the first time in a week, you can still feel your body rocking as though you were on the water.

In the morning, your boats loaded with food, you head back to

the Orinoco. You're amazed at the beauty of the country that seemed so creepy by night.

One of the men joyfully leaps from the boat into the river. "First, a swim!" he cries.

"No, no! *Lagartos!*" shouts Ferdinando. But it is too late. Something moves in the water like a giant serpent. All at once the water thrashes and froths. And a huge alligator snaps your companion in his monstrous jaws.

The river is teeming with alligators! They cruise stealthily near your boat, hoping for breakfast. Swallowing your horror, you row harder.

Soon the mountains of Guiana rise in the distance.

"*There* must lie El Dorado, the legendary city of gold," says Raleigh hopefully. "For where there are mountains," he says, "there may be gold mines!"

Spotting an island, he orders the crew to anchor for a rest. The beach is covered with thousands of odd-looking rocks, smooth and rounded like eggs. You toss one into the air— and jump back in surprise when it smashes, covering your feet with goo.

"Turtles' eggs!" laughs Ferdinando. "Dinner!"

The eggs last you many days, until you come to a large village on the riverbank. The Indians here have heard of the Englishmen who voyage on their river, and their king has come to meet you.

"We bring you greetings from our queen, Gloriana," Raleigh says. He bows to the Indian chief just as though they were meeting at Queen Elizabeth's court.

Raleigh and the Indian chief exchange gifts. The Englishmen receive the rarest of rarities: pineapples, hummingbirds, and an armadillo!

"The chief is called Topiawari," translates Ferdinando. "He says he is one hundred and ten years old."

Raleigh listens entranced as the old chieftain tells him of the people who live in the distant mountains.

"They are called the Ewaipanoma," says the Indian. "They have no heads, but eyes in their shoulders and mouths in the middle of

their chests, while their hair grows down their backs.

“And nearby live the Amazons, a tribe of warrior women. Once a year, the great chiefs meet with them, to dance and feast. Any sons who are born to the Amazons are returned to their fathers. But daughters are raised in the ways of war. They too have much gold, and jade-green stones.”

Raleigh is listening to all of this with great interest. But you are growing skeptical. Men with faces in their chests? You are beginning to think that El Dorado sounds like a legend too, or perhaps the dream of an explorer whose mind had been boiled in the jungle heat!

Suddenly Raleigh leaps to his feet. “*Look!*” he cries. “A column of smoke, rising in the mountains! Only a *city* could make that much smoke.” His voice drops to a whisper. “El Dorado!”

Some of the sailors decide to stay with Topiawari while Raleigh sets off into the hills on foot. Now is your chance to jump, if you want to.

Should you jump a year ahead to England and try to pick up the trail of the ring? You’ll forfeit your share of the treasure, if there is one. Or should you continue with Raleigh on his search for gold?



**Search for El Dorado with Raleigh.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Jump back to England in 1596.**

**[Click here.](#)**



It is the middle of January 1603. It is snowing, and your hair is wet and bedraggled. You are standing at the door of an imposing house in the village of Mortlake. You knock at the great door.

You are greeted by an old man with a long, pointed white beard. He wears a long black robe and a black skullcap. “May I help you?” he asks in a voice as brittle as crumbling paper.

I am looking for the astrologer, John Dee,” you reply.

“I am Doctor Dee, master of mathematics, student of the sciences, alchemist, and astrologer,” says the old man. He nods to himself, as if to make sure he has listed everything, then steps aside, beckoning absently. “Come into my study and warm yourself.”

You follow him into a dark room that is lined with books. A crackling fire casts an orange glow on a curious collection of objects piled on an oak table. There are maps and diagrams, mortars and crucibles. A crystal ball rests on a square of red silk, and charts marked with numbers and planets are strewn on a chair. A convex mirror reflects your face, stretched and flattened like a blowfish.

“I see you are admiring my mirror,” says the astrologer. “The queen herself paid me a visit to gaze into the magic glass. She has always been interested in new things, you see. Ever since I forecast an auspicious day for her coronation . . .” Dee’s voice drifts off.”

“It is the queen I have come to see you about,” you say.

“Ah, yes.” Dee sighs. “She is dying. I’ve seen it, there. . . .” He waves sadly at the crystal ball. “She mourns for Essex. For the past

two years, since the earl was beheaded, she has gradually become weary of living.”

Dee paces anxiously around his study. He seems to have forgotten your presence.

“I *warned* her not to go to Whitehall,” he says. “*So* drafty.” Dee shivers. “I cast her horoscope this morning and sent a messenger. She *must* leave Whitehall and move to Richmond, her favorite palace. It’s in the stars. . . .”

The old astrologer hurries out the door, calling for a servant.

It sounds as though the queen is on her deathbed. Perhaps she is wearing the ring! Why not jump directly to her bedchamber and *ask* her whose ring she is wearing? Or should you try to find Essex before he gets his head chopped off, and ask *him* about the ring?



**Jump to the queen’s bedchamber.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Find Essex in 1599. [Click here.](#)**





All of London is celebrating. It is August 1596, and you are caught up in a rejoicing crowd.

“Onward to Essex House!” they cry. “Hooray for the knights of Cadiz!” “Long live Raleigh!” “Long live Essex!”

You fall in next to a young woman who is carrying a child in her arms.

“What’s going on?” you ask.

“Why, you must have heard!” she says. “Our fleet has taken the Spanish town of Cadiz. It was a great battle! Raleigh and Essex are heroes! Together they commanded our warships. They have proved England’s glory!”

“Raleigh and Essex are friends?” you ask.

“Oh, yes!” replies the woman.

“The queen must be very pleased,” you say.

“The queen may be pleased that her favorites won the battle,” the woman tells you. “But they say she is angry as well, for little gold was taken, and the treasury has suffered. The people don’t care, as you can see.” She points to the crowd. “*They* know when England has triumphed.”

“The queen is certainly hard to please,” you remark, half to yourself. “If only I could ask *her*. . . .”

“You wish to ask the queen a favor?” inquires the young woman.

“In a way,” you reply. “I wonder what her future holds.”

“If you want to speak to the queen,” says the woman, “she always listens to her people when she takes the court on her summer progress from her palaces in London to her many country

estates. But if it's her future you're after, you'll have to speak to her astrologer, John Dee. He lives in a great house at Mortlake."

"Thank you," you tell the woman. "You have been more help than you know!"

There is no way you can think of to find the earl of Essex—or Sir Walter Raleigh—in all this confusion. But it looks as though they are friends for now, and both in the queen's favor.

Should you try to ask the queen herself about the ring? Or jump in time to consult her astrologer? He may know which man she really favored. You decide to jump closer to the year the queen died.



**Jump to the queen's progress of 1598.**

**Click here.**



**Jump to Mortlake in 1603. Click here.**



It is July 1587. You are in the county of Hertfordshire, at the earl of Warwick's great estate, North Hall.

The mansion is buzzing with excitement, for the queen and her entire court have just arrived. North Hall is to be one of many stops as the royal court travels through the countryside to avoid the London heat—and the plague.

Servants are swarming everywhere, unloading the courtiers' belongings from carriages and carts.

"Hey, there!" calls a strapping youth. "Give us a hand!" The youth is dressed very much like you. He must be a page, you decide.

"I'm Gerald," he says. "I haven't seen you before—you must be one of Essex's pages. If you're not busy, how about helping me carry Sir Walter's trunk?"

"Sir Walter Raleigh?" you ask.

"The very one," says Gerald. "His wardrobe has increased tenfold since the queen made him captain of the guard! He always wants to look his best now that he must stay so close to the queen. But I guess your earl of Essex is just as careful with his finery."

You laugh knowingly in response. Then, lifting one side of the trunk, you help Gerald lug it up a broad staircase and into a large, empty bedroom.

"Where is Sir Walter?" you ask.

"Why, guarding the queen in the game room," replies Gerald. "She is at cards with the earl, as usual. Well, I'd best unpack. Thanks for your help."

Heading downstairs, you soon find the game room. And standing guard in the hallway just outside the open doors is Sir Walter Raleigh. Now is your chance to ask him about the ring!

“Good day, sir,” you say, bowing politely.

“Good day, page,” answers Sir Walter. “Speak quietly, for the queen is behind in her wagers.”

Peeking through the doors, you glimpse the queen, frowning in concentration at her hand. Her partner, the handsome earl of Essex, taps his foot impatiently. All at once Elizabeth smiles and, with a flourish of her bejeweled fingers, lets fly a card.

“You *see*, my wild horse,” she coos to Essex, “I have still a few cards to play!”

You can hear low laughs and chuckles as the game progresses. Raleigh looks annoyed.

“It seems the queen holds the winning hand,” you say, hoping to distract him. “How lovely her hands are! So many rings!”

“The queen loves her jewels,” Raleigh agrees.

“Have you ever given her jewels?” you ask cautiously.

“I’ve given her jewels aplenty, and my loyal service too,” growls Raleigh, “for all the good it is doing me now. She has eyes only for that knave Essex these days.”

“She wouldn’t have made *you* captain of the guard if she didn’t want you constantly near,” you say.

Raleigh grunts appreciatively, but he continues to sulk.

“Yes, she certainly seems to like rings,” you press.

“I never did give her a ring, now that I think of it,” Raleigh says with a sigh.

Well, you think, that eliminates Raleigh so far. You decide to wait for Essex to leave the game room so you can try the same questions on him. *If* he ever leaves the queen’s side, that is! She certainly does seem to favor him.

Suddenly voices are raised in the game room. Raleigh stands stiffly and silently at the doors.

“You honor Raleigh over me!” shouts the earl. “You disgrace me by showing favor to such a lowborn wretch.” Essex looks toward

the doors, as though to make sure his rival is listening.

“Such arrogance! How dare you address me this way?” The queen rises to her feet, her voice growing shrill. “You have no cause to disdain Sir Walter Raleigh, nor to speak of him so!”

“How can I serve a mistress who favors the likes of him?” yells Essex. “I’m leaving!”

“Then leave, and the devil take you!” shrieks Elizabeth, sending the pack of cards flying across the room.

Essex storms out. “Pack my goods and send them to London!” he shouts at a servant. Then he gallops away.

The queen is in a rage.

“Essex goes too far!” says Raleigh triumphantly. “You see? The queen has defended my good name.”

But you’re not so sure. The queen seems angrier at Essex for picking a quarrel and leaving her than for insulting Raleigh. And she seems to favor them both!

You’ve learned what you can from Sir Walter. Should you follow the earl of Essex and question him now? Or jump to London in 1596, just after the battle with the Spanish at Cadiz? Perhaps one of the homecoming heroes brought Elizabeth the sapphire ring.



**Follow Essex to London in one day’s time. [Click here.](#)**



**Jump to London in 1596. [Click here.](#)**



**T**he guards drag you to Bethlehem Hospital—Bedlam.

“This one’s been impersonating the earl of Essex,” one of the guards tells the keeper.

“Right. Come this way.” The keeper leads you down a long, dark corridor. Men and women dressed in rags wander up and down the hall. You hear ranting and babbling, shrill laughter and frenzied cries. A woman rocks an imaginary baby, two men play at leapfrog, and one huddles in a corner, staring into space. They’ve put you in a madhouse!

You pass a large room in which guards are whipping howling patients. Several visitors pay a few coins and are admitted to watch the spectacle.

“This is horrible!” you say. “I’m not crazy!”

“Of course you’re not, my lord,” answers the keeper with a chuckle. “We’ll just put you in here, next door to the duke of Norfolk. You’ll get along fine.”

Shoving you into a small room, bare but for a bed of straw, the keeper bolts the door behind you. A large rat crawls out of the straw and scurries across the floor.

You’re getting out of here!



**Jump to the queen’s progress of 1598.**

**[Click here.](#)**





**S**pring smells sweetly in Ireland. It is April 1599, and you are in a land of vivid greens wrapped in a pearl gray sky. But a ghostly mist licks across woods and mountains, while brooks and spongy bogs soak up a drizzling rain.

The earl of Essex and his troops are quartered in Dublin Castle, in a small area of central Ireland known as the English Pale. Within the Pale, English settlers in Ireland are safely in power. But beyond the Pale, to the north and south, angry Irish lords and chieftains lead rebel troops against the English in defense of their homeland.

Essex speaks to the troops, his voice rebounding off the mossy stone walls of a spooky courtyard.

“The queen has commanded me to squelch the rebellion in the north,” he says, “and to defeat the rebel leader, Hugh O’Neill, earl of Tyrone and overlord of Ulster. It is said he is a cunning enemy!

“We are instructed to march north from Dublin to face Tyrone in his stronghold. But the rivers are flooded with the spring rains. There is not transport enough for an army, nor pastureland for our horses. And numbers of Tyrone’s men lurk to the west and south of us, ready to ambush our rear guard.

“Therefore, we shall delay our attack on the north until summer is upon us. And tomorrow we march out of Dublin to secure the south and west!”

Most of the men seem relieved by the delay. But the soldier next to you is disgruntled.

“The queen won’t like this plan,” he says. “She just wants us to overthrow Tyrone. This may bode ill for Essex.”

“You may be right,” you reply.

“I am Gamaliel Ratsay,” he says. “A pleasure to make your acquaintance.”

“How do you do?” you say. Although he is a husky fighting man, Ratsay also appears to be a gentleman of some education. No doubt he would make a good companion on a long march through mud and bogs.

Essex is too busy planning his campaign to talk to you now about Elizabeth’s ring. You decide to skip *some* of the marches and battles and try to meet up with him later on.



**Jump ahead six months. [Click here.](#)**



It is September 1599, and you are marching to the north of Ireland to do battle with the earl of Tyrone. You fall in step next to Gamaliel Ratsay.

“Back with us again?” he says. “You must have fallen sick with fever, like so many of the others.”

“Yes,” you say, “but I feel fit now.”

“We have lost thousands of soldiers since I saw you last,” Ratsay tells you. “Many were taken ill, and some were killed in battle. Everywhere we faced rain and fog and lost our way in sodden forests and fens.”

“Had you no success at all?” you ask.

“Not a whit,” replies Ratsay. “The Irish are a tricky lot. In one town, the rebel commander challenged us to a tournament—but then they didn’t show up! Another time we were ambushed! The plumes were shot off our hats! In yet another town, we were paraded and cheered by all, so we had no cause to attack. But the welcome we received was just a sham, for the villagers are loyal to their own Irish leader, not to the queen!”

“Where are we going now?” you ask.

“We are to remain in the background while Essex meets Tyrone face-to-face. The Irish troops outnumber our own by at least two to one.”

You halt on a hill overlooking a river. The earl of Tyrone waits alone on the riverbank, his rebel troops fanned across the opposite hill.

Essex gives you a wink as he rides by on a magnificent horse.



He canters to the riverbank to meet the earl of Tyrone. They speak calmly for an hour, and then both leaders return to their men.

“I have negotiated a truce with the Irish!” Essex announces. “Our hostilities are at an end! We shall establish no new forts. They shall retain their present holdings. This is a great day! I shall return to England at once to tell the queen!”

Essex gallops away. Everything is happening so fast! How can you ask him anything?

“I shall return as well,” says Ratsay, “to take to the highways. My usefulness is at an end here. Come with me, if you like. The queen is sure to be furious that Essex has not conquered the Irish, and he will have to endure her displeasure at court!”



**Return to England with Gamaliel Ratsay.**

**Click here.**



**Return to London and try to overtake**

**Essex. Click here.**



It is the summer of 1598. You are standing with a group of farm-folk on the side of a country road not far from London, watching as cart after horse-drawn cart rumbles past, each one loaded high with trunks and coffers. There must be hundreds of them!

The queen is making her summer progress between country estates, and her court—with all its trappings—travels with her.

Children scamper up and down the road, waiting excitedly for a glimpse of the elegant courtiers, who are riding behind the carts. Soon they are in sight, great noblemen and ladies, each mounted on a handsome steed.

Next you see a military escort surrounding a carriage drawn by six horses. The horses have plumed headdresses, and the coach looks like something out of Cinderella. The queen! And behind her coach, another hundred wagon loads!

“Long live Queen Elizabeth!” shout the villagers. The queen extends a hand from the window of her coach and waves to her people.

“A petition, please, your Majesty,” calls a young farmer. The queen leans out the window and motions to the coachman.

“*Ho!*” he cries. “Halt!” The order is relayed, and the entire parade grinds to a stop while the queen, nodding attentively and smiling, listens to the man’s request.

Pushing forward, you take your place in line behind the farmer and before the village parson. Soon it is your turn, and you bow to the queen.

“May I ask just one question, your Majesty?” The queen nods graciously and waits for you to continue.

“May it please your Majesty, of all of your fine jewels, do you have a favorite finger ring?” you ask.

“An odd question,” says the queen. “But I will answer all the same. I cherish my coronation ring above any other, and never have I removed it since the day I became queen.”

You are just about to ask whether she has a second favorite, a gift from Raleigh or Essex, when the parson steps up to take his turn. Bowing low, you move to one side.

As you look back along the line of wagons that curve into the distance, an awkward movement catches your eye. A man with a weaselly face is skulking alongside a cart that is loaded with riches. He has loosened a wheel!

You recognize him immediately. It’s the weasel-faced man you saw by the Thames in 1599. But in 1599—one year from now—he had only one hand!

The cart begins to wobble, and its horse whinnies. You wander over to see what is going on.

“Here!” Weasel cries to, a group of wagoners. “This cart is loose. Better lighten the load!” But the wagoners, talking among themselves, don’t notice. Weasel hauls a heavy sack over his shoulder, as though he is trying to help. Through a hole in the sack you see the gleam of a silver goblet. Weasel starts to walk to the end of the line! He’s stealing the queen’s silver!

Elizabeth motions for the entourage to get underway. Soon the damaged cart will collapse, and Weasel is sure to escape in the confusion.

Should you run to your left to tell the queen? Or alert the wagoners on your right?



**Tell the queen. [Click here.](#)**



**Alert the wagoners. [Click here.](#)**



It is February 6, 1601, and you are inside the Globe Theater.

“Well, young Toby!” says a familiar voice. It is Andrew, the actor you met in *Julius Caesar*. “That was quite a Christmas, was it not?”

You are not sure what he is talking about, but you nod your head yes.

“But we’re in trouble now,” he goes on. “The earl of Essex’s men are here. They’re asking for a performance of *Richard the Second*. I hope we can avoid it. Ever since the earl was released from prison, there’s been talk of an uprising! Armed men come and go from Essex House. The earl is still banished from court, and they say his fortunes are so low he is desperate!”

So—Elizabeth must have banished Essex after he returned from Ireland, and she had him imprisoned as well!

“What does this have to do with *Richard the Second*?” you ask, confused.

“Don’t you remember the story? *Richard the Second* is about a king who was *deposed*. It would be dangerous to perform it now, with Essex gathering a force against the queen!”

“Let’s listen,” you say. “Where are these men?”

Following Andrew, you hide behind a pile of props to eavesdrop as several actors argue with a group of wealthy noblemen.

“That play is old and out of fashion, my lord,” says one of the actors.

“It is not worth our time,” says another. “The audience will not come.”

“That’s Richard Burbage, the greatest actor in all of England,” whispers Andrew. “He is to play King Richard.”

“Forty shillings is a great deal of money,” says one of Essex’s followers. “Plus whatever you take in at the door. Naturally, if you do not wish to honor our request . . .”

“Not honor a request from such noble gentlemen as yourselves?” replies Burbage. “Nonsense, my lords. If it is your wish, we will perform *Richard the Second* tomorrow.”

“Very well,” says a richly dressed lord, tossing the actors a bag of coins. “Until tomorrow.” They saunter out.

Burbage shrugs. “How can we refuse an order from such high-ranking men? Knights, earls, *lords*? And for forty pieces of silver! I say we do it! Rehearsal begins at once!”

Should you stay with Shakespeare’s company? Or jump to Essex House?



Stay at the Globe. [Click here.](#)



Go to Essex House. [Click here.](#)



It is the fall of 1599. You are in England, galloping along the rutted dirt road to London with Gamaliel Ratsay. He is a magnificent horseman, and you have trouble keeping up with him!

“*Whoa!*” he cries as you trot through a village. “We’ll be putting up at an inn for the night.”

Signaling to a stableboy, Ratsay dismounts and strides into an inviting country inn. You follow, tired and hungry.

Inside, weary travelers, sitting at wooden tables, enjoy the comforts of a roaring fire, warm dinners, and ale. Ratsay is already deep in conversation with the innkeeper, and you see a flash of silver change hands. The innkeeper nods his head toward a table of wealthy merchants, then slides away, his pockets jingling.

Ratsay joins you at a table. “We’ll be riding out tonight,” he says. “Dine well, for we have several miles to cover before we sleep.”

“Why don’t we stay at the inn?” you ask.

“There’s business to attend to!” says Ratsay with a wink.

You are soon on your way again, galloping into the night. Ratsay’s cloak flaps in the moonlight. He looks like a raven. You settle down to camp in a wooded glen some distance from the village. Ratsay builds a fire, draws a piece of cloth from a pouch on his saddle, and begins to sew.

“What are you making?” you inquire. “It looks like a hood, but the face is awful!”

“Ay, I’ll look like a devil come the dawn,” answers Ratsay.

Did the Elizabethans have Halloween costumes? you wonder as

you drift into sleep.

You awake abruptly in broad daylight.

“*Shhhh!*” hisses Ratsay. “Stay here!” He gallops a short distance through the trees. From your hiding place, you can hear the rustle of leaves. A farmer is walking into the clearing.

Suddenly Ratsay springs into the clearing—pistols drawn, the fearsome devil’s mask on his face.

“*Aaaiii!*” screams the farmer, cowering in fright.

“Your purse or your life!” declares Ratsay.

“Devil!” cries the farmer, tossing Ratsay his purse. “Here is all the money I have saved in five years’ time!”

Ratsay opens the purse. “Five gold pieces? You are a poor man indeed! What had you planned to do with this fortune?”

“I was going to market to buy a milk cow,” answers the farmer in a quavering voice.

“Then take your purse, and five gold pieces more,” says Ratsay, pulling the mask from his face. “Buy two cows, that you may always have milk for your family. Now begone!”

The farmer falls on his knees in gratitude, but Ratsay gives him a gentle push, and he scurries away through the forest.

“You’re a *highwayman!*” you say, pointing an accusing finger at your companion.

“A highwayman I may be, but I rob only rich men—those who live off the poor. Stay or go, as you please. But if you ride in the forest alone, there are crueler men than I waiting to take your money.”

“You know I have no money,” you say. But you must decide.



Ride to London with Ratsay. [Click here.](#)



Jump to London to try to find Essex.  
[Click here.](#)





**Y**ou are still in the Tower of London! It is the end of October 1618. You are in a simply furnished cell.

A man is writing at a table. It's Sir Walter Raleigh! You are shocked by his appearance. He's a tired old man now—his long white hair shaggy and unkempt, his beard straggling over his collar, his clothes worn and creased.

Raleigh looks up from his writing. But his gaze is far away, and he doesn't seem to recognize you. Then he nods wearily, indicating a tray on which you see the remains of his dinner. He must think you are a servant.

"You have eaten very little, Sir Walter," you say quietly.

"Alas," says Raleigh, "I am ill with a fever and have little appetite. And what need have I for nourishment? King James has found me guilty of treason. *I*, who have always served my country so well.

"He claims I misled him with a tale of a gold mine in Guiana. But I searched for the gold at El Dorado and found none. He claims that I led an attack on the Spaniards there—but it was they who attacked my men.

"If only the queen still lived, I might finish my life in peace. But in two days' time I must lose my head!"

"You are a great man," you say, "and the queen loved you well, perhaps more than any other."

"Ah, no." Raleigh sighs. "If she loved any man, it was Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, whose head has gone before mine. She mourned him to her death, and I mourned him as well."

“Did you ever give the queen a ring?” you ask.

Raleigh shakes his head and returns to his writing. You hear footsteps in the hall. Perhaps a guard has come, or a servant to remove Raleigh’s tray.

It *must* have been Essex, you think. The queen must have loved him, even if he did lead a rebellion against her. You decide to ask him, once and for all.



**Jump back to 1601. [Click here.](#)**



**D**ashing to your left, you reach the queen's carriage just as her coachman raises his whip.

Suddenly the loose cart wobbles and collapses, and three mounted guards gallop off in pursuit of Weasel.

"Wait!" you shout to the queen's coachman. "A thief is making away with a sack of silver goblets!"

"You certainly have sharp eyes!" says the coachman.

"Yes, indeed!" says the queen, leaning from the coach. "But don't worry! We've seen this trick before!"

The coachman winks. "And it won't work!"

In no time, the three guards return with the unhappy thief in tow.

"I know him," says one of the guards. "He's a notorious cutpurse, known as Weasel!"

"You'll have a hand chopped off for this," a second guard snaps angrily at the thief. Weasel hangs his head and says nothing.

"You should have known better than to try that old trick on the queen's guard!" says a third.

"That rascal must be rash indeed to try to cut the queen's purse!" remarks a nobleman riding close to the queen. He turns to you. "And you certainly have sharp eyes!"

"Thank you for your quickness and loyalty," the queen tells you. "Perhaps my lord of Essex could use a clever aide on his forthcoming campaign to Ireland!" She smiles at the nobleman. It's the earl of Essex!

"Yes, indeed," says the earl. "You shall ride with me. Find a horse!"



In a few minutes you're mounted upon a nobleman's steed. The earl of Essex gallops to your side.

"You shall come with me to Ireland in April," he orders. "You'll make a fine soldier!"



**Jump to Ireland in April 1599.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Y**ou run to your right to tell the wagoners. But you are too late! The wagon wobbles and collapses to one side, and the wagoners surround you!

“You’re the one who was asking the queen about her jewels!” says one accusingly.

“We saw you lurking about this cart. What kind of trick are you up to?” asks another.

“There’s a sack missing!” says a third. “Thief! Where did you hide the silver?”

“I didn’t!” you cry. “*He* did it!” You point after Weasel. But he has disappeared into the line of carts. You’d better act quickly!

Diving between the legs of the wagoners, you roll under a wagon and jump!



**Jump back five minutes and tell the queen! [Click here.](#)**



**Y**ou decide to travel to London with Ratsay. Suddenly you hear the clapping of horses' hooves. "This is what we have been waiting for!" whispers Ratsay. "Hide!"

Concealing yourself behind a tree, you watch as a party of merchants rides into the clearing. They are the merchants the innkeeper pointed out last night! Ratsay is hurriedly changing his clothes. Soon he too is dressed as a merchant, with a floppy hat pulled low over his eyes!

"Ho, there, friends!" he says. "Had a good week at market?"

"Indeed we have, stranger," answers one. "I sold all of my cloth for twice its worth and then some. These country folk are fools indeed!"

"But not so foolish as men of *greed!*" shouts Ratsay. "Your money or your lives!" Waving his pistols, he collects a purse from every merchant and several additions to his wardrobe.

"Be off with you now," he orders, "or I'll fill you with more holes than a beggar's cloak!"

They scatter like a flock of pigeons.

"Why did you take their clothes?" you ask.

"There are few places in this world to which you cannot gain entry, *if* you wear the proper costume," Ratsay tells you. "Why, I could get in to see the queen herself, if I had a mind . . ."

Suddenly you hear someone singing nearby.

"With a hey and a ho and a hi derry dee," you hear. A curious little man dances into the clearing, accompanied by a boy with a pipe.

"I know you," says Ratsay. "You're Will Kempe, the famous

clown. Have you left the Lord Chamberlain's Men?"

"I am dancing my way from London to Norwich," says the clown, "collecting my keep as I go. There is no place in the theater anymore for the likes of me. It's that upstart, Will Shakespeare. With his tragedies so serious, and his comedies so light, there are no parts for ill-mannered buffoons"—he burps loudly—"and he won't allow my antics between acts."

The highwayman laughs sympathetically and makes a generous donation to the clown's purse. He even offers to guide him through the woods, as protection against thieves!

But you remain behind. Ratsay has given you an idea. If you disguised yourself, maybe you could get in to see the queen! And Kempe has reminded you of Andrew's invitation to join the cast of *Twelfth Night* as a lady-in-waiting! But perhaps you should try to find Essex first.



**Rejoin Shakespeare's company.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Jump to London to try to find Essex.**

**[Click here.](#)**



**Y**ou bang your head—on the underside of a bed! You are in the queen’s bedchamber in Nonesuch Palace, early in the morning on September 28, 1599.

Elizabeth is seated at a dressing table in front of a mirror. She wears no makeup, and her face is covered with wrinkles. Her teeth are brown, and some are missing. She removes a red wig from her head. Her real hair is gray, and she’s growing bald!

Suddenly the door bursts open. It is the earl of Essex, returned from Ireland!

The queen turns, her eyes wide with shock. But they soon narrow in anger.

“You are wet and muddy,” she says.

Essex falls to his knees and kisses her hand. “I have ridden all night,” he explains.

“Return to me when you are suitably attired.” You can tell the queen is holding back her temper. Essex leaves the chamber.

“*Ladies!*” hollers Elizabeth, replacing her wig. “I’ll banish him from court for this!”

If only you were dressed as a lady-in-waiting, you could try to talk to the queen. You know where you can find the right costume.



**Rejoin Shakespeare’s company.**  
**Click here.**



**Y**ou are serving ale to a group of noblemen who have gathered in Essex House after the play. It is the evening of February 7, 1601.

“Well, young page!” calls the earl. “It’s nice to be warm and dry after the bogs of Ireland, is it not? How come you to my house?”

“I returned from the Irish campaigns ill with fever,” you explain. “And pouring ale is better than ailing pores!” Essex and his friends guffaw at your pun.

There is a loud knock at the door. You hurry to answer it and admit an elegant visitor who swoops into the dining room.

He addresses the earl of Essex, who does not rise from his chair.

“As secretary to the queen’s Privy Council, I have been sent to ask you to appear before said council at once,” he announces.

“I regret that I am not well,” answers Essex, “and I fear to leave the confines of my own home, for I have enemies who wish me harm.” Essex waves weakly at you. “Show our visitor to the door.”

When you return to the dining room, Essex’s men are in an uproar.

“The council suspects!” says one of the noblemen you had seen at the theater. “We must attack at once!”

“We can have thirteen hundred men ready by morning!” says another. “We can secure the queen before noon and go on to seize the court at Whitehall!”

“I know all of London is behind me,” says Essex. “We must work through the night, and come morning, all of the queen’s injustices will be put to rest.”

The men cheer and scatter busily to organize the revolt.

A plot to overthrow the queen! Should you stick with Essex? Or steal away to warn Elizabeth?



**Ride with Essex. [Click here.](#)**



**Warn the queen. [Click here.](#)**



It is January 6, 1601—the twelfth night of Christmas celebrations at Whitehall Palace.

Joy and merriment fill the gaily decorated hall as courtiers sing and dance.

“I’m glad you joined the players in time for Christmas, Toby,” says Andrew, winking. “I told you that you would make a fine lady-in-waiting!”

“I certainly hope so!” you reply. Your mission depends on it!

Andrew makes a final adjustment to your lady-in-waiting costume and straightens your wig. “I’ll see you after the play,” he says. “Don’t be nervous!”

You have learned your part thoroughly—you have no lines, and you’re not even on until Act Five!—but there are butterflies in your stomach. Somehow the thought of acting in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* before *royalty* does make you nervous!

Besides, you’re not very comfortable. You have never worn oranges on your chest before, and your ruffled collar itches!

At a fanfare of trumpets, the courtiers settle into comfortable seats. The play is about to begin!

“If music be the food of love, play on,” announces the smiling actor in his role as Duke Orsino.

The audience murmurs in delight.

With the play safely underway, you decide to look for a quiet corner where you can jump in time to the queen’s bedchamber. You have at least two hours before the fifth act.

Wandering through endless rooms and corridors, all peopled

with scurrying servants, you get the funny feeling that you're being followed. You whirl around to look behind you.

“Surprise!” says a young man. “I have not seen you at court before, though how I could have missed your sweet charms is beyond me! But why does such loveliness leave the celebrations? Perhaps you wanted to find yourself alone with me?”

“Just *alone*, perhaps!” you answer, blushing. This young courtier seems to be the persistent type. Where can you hide?

“You cannot hide from me!” says the handsome gallant, as though he has read your thoughts. “I shall prove it. Let's have a little game of hide-and-go-seek! Hide anywhere you like—I *shall* find you!” He covers his eyes with his hands.

Taking him up on his game, you jump in time.



**Jump to the queen's bedchamber in 1603. [Click here.](#)**



**R**acing against time, you reach Whitehall Palace.

“I *must* see the queen,” you pant. “The earl of Essex is about to revolt!”

The guards look at you doubtfully but lead you through a maze of passageways to a sumptuous audience chamber. You drop to your knees before the queen.

“I have been to Essex House, your Majesty,” you say. “The earl is gathering an army of men to storm Whitehall.”

“I remember you,” says the queen in surprise. “You have alerted me to danger before, on my summer progress. I thank you once again! We are well aware of the earl’s plot. But I recommend you to my captain of the guard. It is his job to protect my person from harm.”

You bow to the captain of the guard, and rise to face him. It is Sir Walter Raleigh!

“The revolt will fail,” the queen continues. Then she gives a sad laugh. “Essex has never been well organized.”

Elizabeth sighs and stares into space despondently. She is obviously in no mood to discuss her jewelry!

“I have doubled the guard,” says Raleigh. “You need have no fear.”

“I am not afraid,” says Elizabeth. “I am filled with sorrow. For Essex must be declared a traitor and be sent to the Tower. And then he shall lose his head.”

Your eyes meet Raleigh’s as the queen rises to retire to her cham-

ber. Raleigh, too, seems filled with regret.

“And to think how merry I was just a few months ago,” says Elizabeth, “dancing and laughing at the Lord Chamberlain’s Men. It was a lovely Christmas, wasn’t it, Walter?”

Raleigh nods his assent and bows his head as the queen departs. Then he takes his post outside her door.

“Find yourself some food and a place to rest,” he tells you gently. “It is sure to be a long day.”

You find a deserted chamber in Whitehall. Should you go back two months in time to join the Lord Chamberlain’s Men at their Christmas celebration? Or try to see Essex before his head rolls?



**Jump to Christmas, 1600–01. [Click here.](#)**



**Find the earl of Essex in the Tower.  
[Click here.](#)**



It is the morning of February 8, 1601. Crowds have gathered inside Essex House and beyond the gates. Rebellion is in the air!

Essex is pacing nervously in his study. “So it has come to this!” he says loudly. “The queen has banned me from court. She has stripped me of my income! She accuses me of disobeying her orders, squandering money, creating too many knights in the Irish War. Well, now she will see how wrong she has been. I shall prove a great leader of men!”

How could the queen be in love with this man? you wonder. Perhaps the ring *did* come from Raleigh.

You have little time to wonder. Again there is a thunderous pounding at the door. This time you admit *four* of the queen’s privy councillors.

“What is the meaning of this assembly?” demands one. “There are some three hundred men, armed and mounted, in the courtyard!” He shouts out the open doorway. “I command you in the name of the queen to lay down your weapons and depart!”

The crowd jeers, and the councillor slams the door to face Essex.

“I shall return to speak with you gentlemen shortly,” says Essex, signaling several of his men. “Lock the councillors in the study and post a guard!” he commands. Then, as sturdy musketeers do his bidding, he strides out the door.

“To the court! To the court!” cries the mob. Essex vaults onto a handsome horse and leads his followers through the gates of Essex House. Joining the crowd, you hasten to follow the horsemen on

foot.

“For the queen!” shouts Essex. “A plot is laid for my life!” A cheer rises from the mob, and the Essex Rebellion is underway.

“But why is he riding *away* from Whitehall?” asks one of his followers.

“We are to meet more men—reinforcements,” explains another.

But, though you march through the city of London for most of the morning, the promised men never materialize. Onlookers cheer and wave, but none arm themselves to join the march. At last Essex, confused and desperate, decides to stop for lunch!

Hearing a herald in a nearby square, you pause to listen. “The earl of Essex has been declared a traitor!” he announces. “Lay down your arms and you will be pardoned!”

You notice many of Essex’s followers slip down alleys and into side streets. His army is dissolving!

“Page!” cries Essex. “Come here and report!”

“You have been declared a traitor, my lord,” you say, “and many of your supporters have fled.”

“I shall use the hostages to negotiate with the Privy Council,” declares Essex. “We must flee to the Thames!”

You hurry to the river with the earl and his few remaining followers. Piling into boats, you soon reach Essex House via the water.

You are greeted by a cowering servant. “The hostage councillors have been released, my lord,” he says fearfully. Essex groans and flings open a chest full of papers.

“Help me to burn these,” he pleads urgently. “Every document must be destroyed!” You cast the brittle pages onto the hearth and watch as the precious bits of history wither and feed the flames.

Suddenly you hear shots, and the sound of glass being smashed!

You search for a place to jump in time, but armed guards burst into the room.

“Take these traitors to the Tower of London!” they order.

In no time, you are dragged to the Tower of London and thrown into a miserable cell.

You’d better jump now!



**Click here.**



**Y**ou decide to stay at the Globe. There is no part for you in *Richard II*. But you can sneak into the costume room while the actors are rehearsing!

Slipping backstage, you hurriedly search through trunks and wardrobes, looking for a lady-in-waiting's gown.

You find an elegant silk dress and climb into it. Surveying your reflection in a mirror, you sigh in dismay. It is much too big for you, and you look silly.

Suddenly a man enters the costume room. He looks preoccupied and wipes his balding forehead with his sleeve. Startled to see you, he drops the sheaf of papers he is carrying.

"Hey, there!" he says. "What do you think you're doing? Stealing our best costumes, are you? Planning to sell them in the street?"

"No!" you protest, struggling out of the gown. "I was only trying them on! Really, I . . ."

Andrew comes to your rescue.

"It's all right, sir," says the young actor. "This is Toby, a part-time player! Don't you remember the soldier in *Julius Caesar*? The lady-in-waiting in *Twelfth Night*?" You look up in surprise. *You* don't remember that one! But you hold your tongue.

"Toby," Andrew continues, "I would like to present you to the greatest of all playwrights, William Shakespeare!"

"I am very pleased to meet you, sir," you say, bowing clumsily in your excitement. Then you rush to retrieve the papers that are scattered on the floor.



“I am delighted to meet you as well, Toby,” Shakespeare says. Then his attention returns to the stack of papers you hand him.

“Toby?” he muses, studying you quizzically. “Toby, or not Toby? That is the question!” he remarks. For a moment, you wonder if he has spotted you as a visitor to Elizabethan times!

But Shakespeare just nods politely and walks from the room, shuffling his papers and muttering under his breath, “Toby, or not Toby?”

“Don’t mind him,” says Andrew. “He’s always like that when he’s working on something new. This one is about a Danish prince, I think. Named Hamlet.”

“I’m sure Shakespeare’s new play will live on in history!” you tell Andrew. “And I’ll bet there will be a part in it for you. But now I must be going. Thank you—you’ve been more help to me than you know!”

Ducking through a side door, you leave the Globe Theater and jump ahead a day to Essex House.



**[Click here.](#)**



It is February 1603. You are standing outside the door to the queen's bedchamber in Richmond Palace.

Several ladies-in-waiting are hurrying down the corridor, their skirts rustling. Between them walks a small, thin man who is carrying a bag of tools. They usher him into Elizabeth's chamber.

One of the ladies stops to speak to you. Does she recognize your disguise? You curtsy nervously, your heavy skirt rustling just like the others.

"Why, you must be Lady Anne's youngest daughter," she says. "We've been expecting you. But what a sad time to arrive! Come."

Sighing with relief, you join the little procession.

The queen is seated on a pile of pillows. She looks weak and very old. The little man with the bag of tools drops to his knees at her greeting.

"So, jeweler, you have come at last. This is a sorrowful occasion, but it must be done. As you can see, my fingers are swollen from my illness, and my coronation ring, the ring I have worn like a wedding band for all these years, has grown into my finger. It is causing me pain. I regret that I must ask you to saw it off."

"I shall be gentle, your Majesty. Have no fear." The jeweler extracts a slender file from his tool bag and begins to cut a plain gold band from the fourth finger of the queen's left hand. Finally it snaps free.

"My marriage to my people has come to an end," says Elizabeth, weeping softly.

"Oh, no!" chorus her ladies-in-waiting. "You must not say such

things!”

Elizabeth pays them no heed. Rubbing at the bare spot on her finger, she continues to weep. But all at once she rouses herself

“Lady Scrope,” she commands, “bring me the coffer by my bedside!”

A handsome lady-in-waiting kneels next to the queen, holding a little casket. It is filled with Elizabeth’s most cherished letters, mementos, and jewels.

“The gold and sapphire ring, please, Lady Scrope,” says the queen.

The ladies ooh and aah as Elizabeth draws the magnificent ring onto her newly bare finger. Staring at the sparkling jewel, you sense that your mission is coming to an end. But the queen has begun to weep once more. Her ladies steal quietly out of the room, and you follow.

Once in the corridor, several of them burst into tears.

“She finally wears his ring!” one of them says between sobs.

“She weeps for Essex still,” says another sadly.

“I pray her end is swift and peaceful,” says a third, the one you know as Lady Scrope. Soon all are weeping heartily as they disappear down the corridor.

Now you know whose ring the queen is wearing. How painful it must have been for the queen to order Essex’s execution! She loved him still! But your mission is not quite complete. You must find out what happened to the ring after Elizabeth died.

Before you jump back to Whitehall Palace to play your part in *Twelfth Night* and return the costume you have borrowed, you decide to jump ahead a few weeks to finish your mission!



**Jump ahead a few weeks. [Click here.](#)**



It is February 20, 1601. You are in the Tower of London.

Passing an empty room, you see a desk littered with blank sheets of paper, quills, and ink. Perhaps these things are a way in for you. You gather up supplies and approach the guard at a heavy wooden door.

“I have brought pen and ink for the earl of Essex,” you say.

“The traitor sees no one,” growls the guard.

“Perhaps he has something to confess,” you suggest. The guard nods curtly and lets you in.

“Your paper and ink, my lord,” you say, leaving the supplies on an ornate table.

“I have no more to write,” says the earl. “In five days’ time, I am to be executed as a traitor. The queen waits for me to plead for my life. But she shall have no word from me.”

“I hear she wears a ring you gave her,” you say.

Essex looks surprised. “I did give her a gold and sapphire ring once, it is true, but I doubt that she would wear a token of mine. Her ladies-in-waiting would all recognize it, you see. Besides, she loves me no longer. I am guilty of treason, and she must have my head. No, you are mistaken.”

“Perhaps,” you tell him. “But I think she loves you still. Good-bye, my lord.” Knocking to be let out, your mind races. A gold and sapphire ring! That sounds like the one! What could have happened to it?

The guard lets you out. But Essex’s mention of ladies-in-waiting



has jogged your memory. You *will* take the part Andrew offered you and play a lady-in-waiting in *Twelfth Night*. While still in costume, you can gain entry to the queen's bedchamber!



**Jump backward to 1601. [Click here.](#)**



**Y**ou are in the queen's bedchamber. It is March 24, 1603. Brocade curtains have been pulled around Elizabeth's great bed, and ladies-in-waiting shuffle about the room, sobbing softly.

The queen has died peacefully in her sleep. A long, slender hand extends through the bed curtain. On one white finger gleams a gold and sapphire ring—the ring she cherished as a gift from the earl of Essex.

A black-robed figure glides silently to the bed. You recognize Lady Scrope. The other ladies slowly file from the room as Lady Scrope straightens the bedclothes covering the queen. But what else is she doing?

Concealing yourself behind the bedchamber door, you watch in amazement as Lady Scrope slips the precious ring from the queen's lifeless hand.

Opening the bedroom window, she hisses a signal into the darkness beyond. Then she wraps the ring in a clean white cloth, ties the soft bundle to a lengthy cord, and lowers it to someone waiting below!

You had better get downstairs! You slip quickly from the chamber and jump.



**Click here.**





**M**inutes later, you're outside Richmond Palace, beneath the window of the queen's bedchamber. A nobleman in a dark cloak is waiting below, his horse tethered nearby.

At your approach, he hurriedly shoves a soft white bundle under his cloak and kicks a length of cord behind a bush.

But you have a plan to find out what you want to know. "I have been sent by Lady Scrope," you whisper, "to make sure you have the ring. You have your orders?"

"Indeed I do," answers the nobleman, vaulting onto his horse. "Lady Scrope has given the signal. I am to deliver the ring at once to James the Sixth of Scotland, where he waits to learn that he is to ascend the throne of England as James the First. *The queen is dead! Long live the king!*"

And with that, the messenger gallops into the night.

Your mission is solved. Essex's ring, so dear to Elizabeth's heart, bore her final message: "Gloriana's days are at an end, and England is to have a new king."

With a final leap in time, you are back at Whitehall. Queen Elizabeth, Gloriana, is laughing at the antics of Shakespeare's troupe. She is dressed in regal splendor, the way you will always remember her.

Stepping onstage, you play your part in the finale of *Twelfth Night*. Then you leave the stage for the last time.

A clown is singing a final song as you shed your costume and return to your own time.

“A great while ago the world begun,  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;  
But that’s all one, our play is done,  
And we’ll strive to please you every day.”

**MISSION COMPLETED.**



# DATA FILE

Page 4: What theater was new in 1599?

Page 22: Who wrote *Julius Caesar*?

Page 33: What does “El Dorado” mean?

Page 46: Does the queen live in the Tower of London?

Page 48: How old was Elizabeth in 1599?

Page 54: Would you rather watch Raleigh meet the queen or meet her yourself?

Page 66: Do you know where Essex was in 1599?

Page 69: Do you believe in astrology?

Page 72: Are you likely to learn much from Essex when he is twenty?

**Page 79:** What does Ratsay mean by “take to the highways”?

Page 81: Could it help your mission to do a service for the queen?

Page 83: Do you have a part in *Richard II*?

**Page 85:** Can you learn anything helpful to your mission from Ratsay?

Page 97: How did Essex meet his end?

Page 101: When was *Twelfth Night* performed?

## **About the Contributors**

CAROL GASKIN has written five previous books for young readers, including the Forgotten Forest series: *The War of the Wizards*, *The Magician's Ring*, *The Forbidden Towers*, and *The Master of Mazes*. She also writes non-fiction articles for adults. She recently moved from a small apartment in New York City to a house in Sarasota, Florida, where she has sighted an alligator in her yard at least once.

ERNIE COLÓN has worked in many styles and media in his thirty-year professional career. His work has appeared in children's books, comic books, and magazines. He has drawn Casper the Friendly Ghost and Richie Rich for Harvey Publications and is presently illustrating fantasy and science fiction for DC Comics. He has also designed and produced multimedia productions, some of which have won awards.