

## Audition Sides - King, Anna

### SCENE 6: THE KING'S LIBRARY

*Immediately following.*

*AT RISE: The KING is walking up and down impatiently. He sees ANNA approaching, hurries down to the arm pillow, puts on his spectacles and resumes reading the Bible. In a moment, ANNA enters, takes in the scene and curtsseys.*

**ANNA**

Your Majesty.

*She comes into the room and curtsseys again.*

Your Majesty.

*He pretends not to hear her. He leans closer to his book. ANNA comes downstage, level with him, and peers over his shoulder at the book.*

Your Majesty is reading the Bible!

**KING**

*(remaining on the floor, pretending great surprise)*

Ah! Mrs. Anna. I think your Moses shall have been a fool.

**ANNA**

Moses?

**KING**

*(impatiently, as he sits up)*

Moses! Moses! Moses!

*(tapping the Bible)*

Here it stands written by him that the world was created in six days! You know and I know it took many ages to create world. I think he shall have been a fool to have written so. What is your opinion?

**ANNA**

Your Majesty, the Bible was not written by men of science, but by men of faith.

*The KING considers this. Removing his glasses, he places them on the Bible.*

It was their explanation of the miracle of creation, which is the same miracle – whether it took six days or many centuries.

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**BEGIN**

**KING**

*(rising)*

Hm. You have come to apologize?

**ANNA**

I am sorry your Majesty, but—

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**KING**

Good! You apologize.

**ANNA**

Your Majesty, I—

**KING**

I accept!

**ANNA**

Your Majesty, when the boat arrived from Singapore yesterday was there any news from abroad?

**KING**

News! Yes, there are news! They call me barbarian.

**ANNA**

Who?

**KING**

Certain parties who would wish to use this as excuse to steal my country. Suppose you were Queen Victoria and somebody tell you King of Siam is barbarian. Do you believe?

**ANNA**

Well, I—

**KING**

You will! You will! You will! You will believe that I am barbarian – because – there is no one to speak otherwise.

**ANNA**

But this is a lie!

**KING**

It is a false lie!

**ANNA**

What have you decided to do about it?

**KING**

*(after a pause)*  
You guess!

**ANNA**

*(knows what he's up to)*  
Well, if someone were sending a big lie about me to England, I should do my best to send the truth to England... Is that what you have decided to do, Your Majesty?

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**KING**

*(pleased with himself)*

Yes. That is what I have decided to do.

*(suddenly deflated)*

But how?

*(triumphantly solving his problem)*

You guess how I shall do this!

**ANNA**

Well, my guess would be that when Sir Edward Ramsay, the British diplomat, arrives you will entertain him and his party in an especially grand manner. Then he will return to England and report to the Queen that you are not a barbarian.

**KING**

Naturally... naturally!

**ANNA**

This is the only way to get the better of the British. Stand up to them. Put your best foot forward.

*The KING, bewildered, holds up his foot and looks at it.*

That is just an expression, Your Majesty. It means make a good impression... dress everyone in their best clothes.

**KING**

*(walks past her thoughtfully, suddenly turning to her)*

But, shall it be proper for them to put their best bare feet forward? No! Sir Ramsay will go back and tell Queen Victoria I am barbarian.

*(an idea!)*

Ha! We shall dress them up, European fashion.

**ANNA**

You mean dress them in... dresses?

**KING**

Why do you not think of this?

*The KING claps three times.*

Come! Come! Come! Everybody! Wives! Etcetera, etcetera, etcetera!

**END**

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*The WIVES enter led by LADY THIANG and TUPTIM.*

**ANNA**

I wonder how much time we shall have?

**KING**

One week.