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presents

the Annotated Popular Edition of

THE MASSACRE AT PARIS

by Christopher Marlowe

Written c. 1592

First Published: c. 1594

Featuring complete and easy-to-read annotations.

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THE MASSACRE AT PARIS

By Christopher Marlowe

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

The French Royal Family:
Charles IX, King of France.
The Duke of Anjou, his brother, afterwards King Henry III.
Catherine, Queen-Mother of France.
Margaret, sister of the king.

The Brothers Guise:
Henry, the Duke of Guise, the eldest brother.
The Duchess, wife to Guise.
Maid to the Duchess.
The Son of Guise.
Charles, the Duke of Dumaine, the middle brother.
Louis, Cardinal of Lorraine, the youngest brother.

Catholic Nobles of France:
Gonzago.
Retes.
Mountsorrell.

Protestant Nobles of France:
Prince of Condé, cousin of the King of Navarre.
The Lord High Admiral.

Minions of Henry III:
The Duke of Joyeux.
Epernoun.
Mugeroun.

The Royal Family of Navarre:
The King of Navarre.
The Old Queen of Navarre.

Nobles of Navarre:
Pleshé.
Bartus.

Protestant Victims of the Massacre:
Loreine, a Preacher.
Seroune.
Wife to Seroune.

INTRODUCTION to the PLAY

The Massacre at Paris was originally penned by Christopher Marlowe, but the truncated and mangled version that was published in the early 1590's, after Marlowe had been killed, can hardly be considered representative work. The edition that has been bequeathed to us is essentially a parody of a gore-fest: most of the scenes are brief, and half of them contain at least one murder. With its blood-soaked plot and collection of villains designed to be especially odious to the English - they were French *and* Catholic - *The Massacre at Paris* must have been a great treat for its original London audience.

NOTES on the ANNOTATIONS

Mention of Dyce, Ribner, and Bennett in the annotations refers to the notes provided by these editors in their respective editions of our play.

The information in the italicized annotations (which provide the play's historical context, but which need not be read to follow the play), is adopted, except where otherwise noted, from the scholarly works of Frederic Baumgartner and Robin Briggs (see citations #5 and #7 below).

The most commonly cited sources are listed in the footnotes immediately below. The complete list of footnotes appears at the end of this play.

1. *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) online.
2. Crystal, David and Ben. *Shakespeare's Words*. London, New York: Penguin, 2002.
3. Dyce, Rev. Alexander. *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*. London: George Routledge and Sons, 1876.
4. Ribner, Irving. *The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe*. New York: The Odyssey Press, 1963.
5. Baumgartner, Frederic J. *France in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.
7. Briggs, Robin. *Early Modern France, 1560-1715*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.
8. Bennett, H.S. *The Jew of Malta and The Massacre at Paris*. London: Gordian Press, 1931.
12. Coble, Hayley. *The Massacre at Paris and the Rhetoric of Anglo-French politics in the 1590s*. Graduate

Ramus, a Scholar.

Other Characters:
Taleus, a Scholar.
Two Lords of Poland.
A Cutpurse.
A Friar.
Surgeon.
English Agent.
Apothecary.
Captain of the Guard.

Protestants, Schoolmasters, Soldiers, Murderers, Messengers, Attendants, etc.

Theses and Dissertations. 12299. (2012). Retrieved 12/15/2019: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3306&context=etd.

19. Bullen, Arthur H. *The Works of Christopher Marlowe*. London: John C. Nimmo, 1885.

21. Bulteel, John, trans. Mezeray, Francois Eudes de. *A General Chronological History of France*, 1683.

Prelude I: The Protestant Reformation in France.

The Reformation began in 1517, when **Martin Luther** published his Ninety-Five Theses in Germany, and its ideas quickly spread across Europe. Luther's works were promptly banned in Catholic France, and cases of heretics being burned for possessing the reformer's books date from the 1520's; the growth of Protestantism, however, could not be suppressed.

As in other countries, Protestantism in France appealed to many who were appalled by the excesses of the Catholic Church. The "First Estate" of France, as the church was referred to, dominated French "religious, intellectual and cultural life" (Baumgartner, p. 34).[5] Its wealth was prodigious: the church owned a third of the kingdom's land and collected 40% of its income. In addition, the church charged oppressive fees for providing various services, including saying masses and burying the dead.

The French kings did their best to stamp out the new but growing heresy. A royal edict banned Protestant works in 1542, and violence against Protestants occurred with regularity. Despite the repression, however, by 1560 the Protestants "had achieved remarkable success in increasing their numbers and organizing themselves" (Baumgartner, p. 147).

Prelude II: The Short Road to Religious War.

When the French **King Henry II** died in 1559, he left behind a land sharply divided across religious lines. The new king, Henry's fifteen-year-old son **Francis II** ["sickly and not very bright" (Baumgartner, p. 129)], was clearly not up to the task of governing. Francis had married Mary, Queen of Scots, in 1558 (her first marriage; she was only 16 at the time), and it was her uncles, of the family known as "**the Guise**", who seized power in Paris.

The leaders of the clan were **Francis, the Duke of Guise**, and his brother **Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine**. The Guises actively promoted a policy of repressing French Protestantism, which naturally resulted in the family becoming a uniting influence for French Protestants [or **Huguenots**, as they "inexplicably came to be called" (Briggs, p. 17)[7]].

Many leading French nobles converted and joined the Huguenot cause, in part to counter the increasingly unrestrained power of the Guises. These men included most notably **Louis I, Prince of Condé**, and **the Admiral of France, Gaspard II de Coligny**.

Violence against the Protestants continued. A Huguenot plot against the king, hatched in 1560, was discovered, and King Francis gave the Duke of Guise a free hand to suppress the nascent rebellion, which he did effectively, executing over 300 conspirators (the "**Tumult of Ambois**"). In 1562, 30 Huguenots were slaughtered for the crime of offending their neighbours by holding a service in a barn (the "**Massacre of Vassy**").

Extremist Protestants responded to the Catholic reign of terror in kind. Historian Robin Briggs describes the Huguenots as descending into a savagery of their own, a party which "murdered priests, raped nuns, committed every kind of sacrilege, and might at any moment attempt a general massacre of Catholics" (p. 18).

By the early 1560's, both sides had sizeable armies and strong organizations. Huguenot forces began a series of maneuvers in which they captured a number of towns in the Loire Valley.

The French religious wars, which were to consume the kingdom for the next four decades, had begun.

Prelude III: The First Three Religious Wars (1562-1570).

The short reign of **Francis II** came to a merciful end when he died on 5 December 1560, still only 16 years old. He was succeeded by his younger brother, who assumed the throne as **Charles IX**. Charles was only ten years old himself, and his mother **Catherine de' Medici**, the widow of Henry II, took control of the reins of government. Catherine favoured a policy of religious tolerance. But the country's leading Catholics were not in a generous mood, and Catherine was not in a position from which she could control events.

Throughout the 1560's, the direction of the Catholic Party continued to be driven by the hard-core anti-Huguenot Guises. After the patriarch Francis was killed by a Huguenot assassin in February 1563, leadership of the Catholic faction passed to his son, the virulent anti-Protestant **Henry, the (new) Duke of Guise**, who spent the rest of his life avenging his father's murder. The duke was joined in power by his brothers **Charles, the Duke of Dumaine**, and **Louis,** a prelate who would be raised to **Cardinal of Guise** in 1578.

Changes occurred in the Protestant leadership as well in the ensuing decade. **Henry, Prince of Condé**, succeeded his father Louis, who was killed in Battle in 1569, and Admiral Coligny found himself (reluctantly) leading Protestant armies, with great success.

The Huguenots received a further boost in their leadership when the Catholic partisan **King Antoine of Navarre** (Navarre was a small but independent kingdom adjoining the Pyrenees in southern France) was killed in battle in 1562, after which his widow **Queen Jeanne** established Protestantism as the official religion of her lands. She was succeeded by her son **Henry** to the throne when she died in 1572. This Henry quickly established himself as a leader of the Protestant movement as well.

Riots and local massacres had finally blossomed into open warfare in 1562. The details regarding the military maneuvering of the two sides in the early years of the religious wars will be of little interest to the readers of this play (although contemporary audiences might have remembered with interest that Queen Elizabeth had provided 6,000 soldiers to support the Huguenots in 1562). The grand picture, however, is useful to obtain some context for our opening scenes.

The religious wars were comprised of brief periods of intense military action alternating with uneasy periods of peace. The first three wars took place 1562-1563, 1567-1568, and 1568-1570. Each flaring up of warfare was terminated by a treaty which granted various degrees of religious freedom to the Protestants. The **Treaty of St. Germain** (July 1570), which ended the **Third War**, was quite generous to the Protestants: it granted freedom of worship to all the towns the Huguenots held, and more limited freedom to worship elsewhere.

Two marriages were also proposed to help heal the divisions between Catholic and Protestant; first, **King Charles** was to marry **Elizabeth**, a daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximillian II; they were married in November 1570; secondly, Charles' younger sister **Marguerite of Valois** (our play's Margaret) was to marry **Henry, the new King of Navarre**.

It is 18 August 1572 on the day our play begins, the wedding day of Marguerite (Margaret) and the King of Navarre.

Material for this introduction was adopted primarily from (1) Frederic J. Baumgartner's *France in the Sixteenth Centuries*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1995, and (2) Robin Briggs' *Early Modern France, 1560-1715*, Oxford University Press, 1977.

OTHER NOTES on THIS EDITION of THE MASSACRE at PARIS.

A. The Butchered Script.

The earliest extant edition of *The Massacre at Paris* is an undated octavo-sized copy which is usually estimated to have been printed in about 1593 or 1594. The published play is, unfortunately, a severely abbreviated and mangled version of whatever it is Marlowe originally wrote. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine, Part One*, and *The Jew of Malta*, for example, contain roughly 20,000 and 18,000 words respectively, but *Massacre* checks in at just over 11,000 words, certainly much shorter than the typical play of the period, and much shorter than what *Massacre's* original length would no doubt have been.

From the unusually high occurrence of misprints, unmetrical lines, short lines and long lines, it is to be concluded that much of this play may only be a pale reflection of what Marlowe actually wrote. The irregularities are so numerous, that we have decided to eschew our normal practice of suggesting emendations to repair the metre where such imperfections occur.

B. Too Many Henry's.

It seems that hardly a family existed in mid-16th century France in which at least one person in each generation was not named Henry. Each of the leading families in *The Massacre at Paris* has a Henry, which means that three of our main characters, plus one character of lesser import, bear that name:

(1) **the Duke of Anjou** is named Henry; he becomes France's **Henry III** about two-thirds through our play. His father was **King Henry II** of France.

(2) **the King of Navarre** is named Henry; he will become France's **Henry IV** in the play's final scene. His grandfather was **Henry II of Navarre**.

(3) France's most powerful noble, **the Duke of Guise**, is named Henry.

(4) **the Prince of Condé**, a leading Huguenot, and cousin to Henry of Navarre, is named Henry.

C. Scene Breaks, Settings, and Stage Directions.

The octavo of c. 1594 does not divide the play into individually numbered scenes, nor does it provide scene settings. We follow our usual guideline of beginning a new numbered scene whenever all of the actors exit the stage.

Sometimes Marlowe's scenes change location without requiring the actors to vacate the stage; in these cases too, we assign a new scene number at the moment the setting changes, to facilitate the reader's following the action. We do this even as we recognize that on-stage, the change in location in these cases would take place seamlessly from the perspective of the audience, even if we doubt the spectators' ability to always follow the exact nature of the change in settings.

Scene settings are adopted primarily from those suggested by Dyce, but in some cases we have altered the setting to reflect historical reality; none of this affects the action or language of the play, but simply provides context.

Finally, as is our normal practice, a good number of the octavo's stage directions have been modified, and others added, usually without comment, to give clarity to the action. Most of these changes are adopted from Dyce.

D. Annotations in *Italics*.

Unsurprisingly, writers of history plays took liberties with the facts as they actually occurred on the ground, because their primary goal was to create effective dramas which they hoped would attract paying customers.

Having said that, the simplification of history that takes place in the extant edition of *The Massacre at Paris* is magnified, but it is not the fault of the playwright Marlowe; for one thing, the events of the period portrayed were so intimidating in their complexity that simplification was unavoidable; for another, the publishers of the original octavo, which was printed after Marlowe died, have omitted what probably amounted to a third, and perhaps up to a half, of the script as it was originally written (why this occurred is a source of speculation for scholars: without an original version to work from, the script, goes one theory, was recreated based on the recollections of the actors who appeared in the original production).

The result is a play that at times seems to have completely lost its focus, frequently devolving into a series of short scenes which serve no other purpose than to portray one on-stage killing after another in bewildering rapid fashion.

Some readers might find the actual historical events which serve as the basis for *The Massacre at Paris* to be of greater interest than the play itself; consequently, we provide in the annotations a description of the real history of the events of 1572-1588 as they took place, in parallel with developments in the play.

These notes on the historical background of the play are printed in *ITALICS.* The important thing to know is that **it is not necessary to read the italicized annotations in order to understand the play**.

E. Marlowe Modifies the Lives of Historical Persons.

Those readers who are interested in following the actual historical events of the period (the descriptions of which appear in ***italics*** in the annotations) should be aware of significant changes Marlowe made to the lives of two of his real-life characters:

(1) the character referred to in the play as **The Old Queen of Navarre** is **Jeanne**, who ruled Navarre in her own right from the time of her husband's death in 1562 until her own death in June 1572, at which time the crown was formally assumed by her son **Henry, the King of Navarre**; however, for the initial scenes of the play, which take place in August 1572, Jeanne is very much still alive, even as Henry has already ascended the throne of his little nation.

(2) our play's primary religious figure is **Louis, Cardinal of Lorraine**, who is a brother of the protagonist **Henry of Guise**; however, Louis is a composite of the real **Cardinal of Lorraine**, who was **Charles**, an uncle to the Guise brothers, and Louis himself. Charles, the actual Cardinal of Lorraine, died in 1574; Louis, furthermore, was Cardinal of Guise, not Lorraine, and he was not raised to cardinal until 1578.

What this means is that those notes which provide helpful commentary on the action of the play will always refer to **Louis, Cardinal of Lorraine**, even as understand this was not his real title; but in the italicized historical notes, Louis will be referred to by his actual title, **Cardinal of Guise**.

THE MASSACRE AT PARIS

By Christopher Marlowe
Written c. 1592

SCENE I.

Before Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.
18 August, 1572

Scene I: Our Backstory in Brief: today is 18 August 1572, the day of the wedding between **Princess Margaret** of the French royal family and the **King of Navarre**, at the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

Since 1562, the **Catholics** and **Protestants** (or **Huguenots**, as they were called in France), have been fighting a vicious, but on-again-off-again, war; the so-called **Third War** (1568-1570) was settled with the **Treaty of St. Germaine**, which granted the Huguenots a fair degree of religious freedom.

The present day's marriage was arranged in part to bring further harmony between the Catholic and Protestant parties.

Catholic Leadership: the **Catholics** are led by three brothers of the House of Guise, a family hailing from Lorraine; they include:

(1) **Henry, the Duke of Guise**, the head of the family, who will be referred as ***Guise*** throughout the play;

(2) **Charles, the Duke of Dumaine**, his younger brother; and

(3) **Louis, Cardinal of Guise**, the youngest brother (who is erroneously called the **Cardinal of Lorraine** in our play).

(4) **Catherine, the Queen-Mother**, also plays a leadership role in the Catholic party.

Protestant Leadership: the **Protestants** are led by:

(1) **Henry, the King of Navarre**, scion of the House of Bourbon;

(2) **Henry, the Prince of Condé**; and

(3) **Admiral Gaspard II de Coligny**.

Catherine, widow of French King Henry II and now the Queen-Mother, and her son, **King Charles IX**, are Catholics; Charles is both too young and too weak a figure to directly influence events; it was the Regent Catherine who managed the royal family's posturing in these years. While the historic Catherine generally encouraged religious tolerance, in our play she is portrayed as a fervent Catholic.

Enter Charles (the French King), Catherine (the Queen-Mother); the King of Navarre, Margaret, the old Queen of Navarre, the Prince of Condé, the Lord High Admiral, with others.

Entering Characters: ***Charles IX***, a Roman Catholic, is the King of France. Born in 1550, he is 22 years old. He had become king when his father, Henry II, died in 1559. Charles is married to Elisabeth of Austria, who does not appear in this play.

Catherine is ***Catherine de' Medici***, widow of Henry II, and mother of the current king Charles.

The ***King of Navarre*** is ***Henry III*** (of Navarre). Henry, born in 1553, is 19 years old. (Navarre is a small, independent Protestant outpost, nestled against the Pyrenees Mountains in southern France).

Today the young King of Navarre has married Charles' sister ***Margaret of Valois***, who, having been born in 1553, was also 19 years old.

The Old Queen of Navarre is Jeanne, the present King of Navarre's mother. She is the daughter of King Henry II of Navarre, who ruled from 1517 to his death in 1555. In 1548, she had married Antoine of the house of Bourbon. Antoine, a Catholic partisan, was killed in 1562 during the First Religious War; after his death, Queen Jeanne established Protestantism in her lands. Jeanne in fact ruled Navarre independently until...

We are presented with our first historical anomaly here: Jeanne had actually died in June 1572, just two months before the opening scene of our play takes place, leaving her son Henry as King of Navarre; Marlowe, however, has kept Jeanne alive, for reasons which will quickly become apparent.

The ***Prince of Condé*** is ***Henry***, born in 1552. ***Condé*** is a French town located about 60 miles north of Paris. Henry's father Louis was the brother of Antoine (who married Jeanne of Navarre), so that Condé and the King of Navarre are first cousins.

Finally, the ***Lord High Admiral*** is ***Gaspard II de Coligny***, who, having been born in 1519, was a senior figure amongst the leadership of either faction. He had joined the Protestant side in 1560 primarily as a political expedient, seeing in the new religion a philosophy which could bring order to France.[18]

K. Char. Prince of Navarre, my honourable brother,
Prince Condé, and my good Lord Admiral,

1-2: Charles' opening speech is directed towards the leading Protestants of France, whom he names in the first two lines.

1: Charles, the French king, addresses Henry, the King (***Prince***) of Navarre, who has just married Charles' sister Margaret. In calling Navarre his ***brother***, Charles means brother-in-law. Note that this Henry will always be referred to as ***Navarre***, to mitigate the potential confusion created by the play's profusion of ***Henrys***.

I wish this union and religious league,
Knit in these hands, thus joined in nuptial rites,
May not dissolve till death dissolve our lives;

3-5: Charles expresses hope that the marriage of Catholic Margaret and Protestant Navarre will last as long as each of them is alive.

league (line 3) = alliance.

And that the native sparks of princely love,
That kindled first this motion in our hearts,
May still be fuëled in our progeny.

6-8: Charles further notes his desire that the new unity will continue through to their descendants (***progeny***) as well.

Note the "combustion" metaphor in these lines with ***sparks***, ***kindled*** and ***fueled***.

motion = impulse.[4]

still = forever, always.

Nav. The many favours which your grace hath shown
From time to time, but specially in this,
Shall bind me ever to your highness' will,

10-13: Navarre expresses his gratitude to his new brother-in-law Charles and mother-in-law Catherine for allowing him to marry Margaret.

In what Queen-Mother or your grace commands.

Cath. Thanks, son Navarre. You see we love you well,
That link you in marriage with our daughter here;
And, as you know, our difference in religion
Might be a means to cross you in your love −

= "I"; Catherine naturally employs the royal "we".

17-18: the fact that the bride and groom are of different religions - Catholic and Protestant respectively - might have been enough to prevent the marriage from taking place.
cross = thwart, frustrate.

K. Char. Well, madam, let that rest. −

20: Charles cuts off his mother's speech, which is veering into provocative territory.
let that rest = "let us say no more about that."

And now, my lords, the marriage rites performed,
We think it good to go and consummate
The rest with hearing of a holy mass. −
Sister, I think yourself will bear us company.

22-23: ***consummate / The rest*** = complete the remaining ceremonies.[1]

Qu. Marg. I will, my good lord.

K. Char. The rest that will not go, my lords, may stay.
Come, mother,
Let us go to honour this solemnity.

Cath. [*Aside*] Which I'll dissolve with blood and cruëlty.

32: Catherine has only been play-acting: she is not really as happy with her daughter's marriage to Navarre as she lets on.

[*Exeunt all except the King of Navarre, Condé, and the Admiral*.]

34-35: the Protestant faction remains on-stage, while the Catholics head back into Notre Dame Cathedral.

Nav. Prince Condé, and my good Lord Admiral,
Now Guise may storm, but do us little hurt,
Having the King, Queen-Mother on our sides,
To stop the malice of his envious heart,
That seeks to murder all the Protestants.

37-41: Navarre hopes that now that Charles and Catherine have formally accepted him into the royal family, the Duke of Guise, a vociferous enemy of the Huguenots, will hesitate to harm any more of their co-religionists in the future.
envious (line 40) = hateful.

Have you not heard of how late he decreed
(If that the King had given consent thereto)
That all the Protestants that are in Paris
Should have been murderèd the other night?

42-45: apparently Guise had announced a plan to slaughter all of Paris' Huguenots, which would surely have taken place if Charles had given his consent to it.
late (line 42) = recently.
given (line 43) = a monosyllable, with the ***v*** essentially omitted: *gi'en*.

Adm. My lord, I marvel that th' aspiring Guise
Dares once adventure, without the King's consent,
To meddle or attempt such dangerous things.

= the Duke of Guise is usually referred to as ***the Guise***.
= risk.

Condé. My lord, you need not marvel at the Guise,
For what he doth, the Pope will ratify,
In murder, mischief, or in tyranny.

51-53: Condé responds cynically: since any injury the Guise visits on Protestants is vocally supported by the Pope, he (Guise) need not worry what the king thinks about his crimes.

Nav. But he that sits and rules above the clouds
Doth hear and see the prayers of the just,
And will revenge the blood of innocents,
That Guise hath slain by treason of his heart,
And brought by murder to their timeless ends.

55: poetically, "but God".
= ie. murder.
= untimely, premature.

Adm. My lord, but did you mark the Cardinal,
The Guise's brother, and the Duke Dumaine,

61-62: the Admiral refers to the two brothers of the Duke of Guise: (1) first, the youngest brother, Louis, Cardinal of Lorraine, then (2) the middle brother Charles, the Duke of Dumaine.

mark = observe.

How they did storm at these your nuptial rites,
Because the house of Bourbon now comes in,
And joins your lineage to the crown of France?

= rail against.
= ie. the family of the King of Navarre.
= a disyllable: *LIN-e'age*.

Nav. And that's the cause that Guise so frowns at us,
And beats his brains to catch us in his trap,
Which he hath pitched within his deadly toil.

68-69: the hunting metaphor is a common one, referring to a net (***toil***) which is spread out vertically over a defined area, into which prey are driven; here Navarre seems to add an additional feature of a trap set within the enclosed area to seize the quarry.

beats his brains = "thinks hard (over how)".
pitched = laid, set.

Come, my lords, let's go to the church, and pray
That God may still defend the right of France,
And make his gospel flourish in this land.

[*Exeunt.*]

The Marriage of Navarre and Margaret: *as a Protestant, the King of Navarre naturally would have avoided getting married in Notre Dame Cathedral itself; a 17th century history of the period (which we shall call "the Chronology")*[21] *describes the compromise solution worked out by the participating royal families: Navarre and Margaret "tied the nuptial knot on a scaffold before the church door of Notre Dame", after which Navarre "conducted his mistress into the choir", and "retired while they were saying mass. When that was ended he returned, and having kissed his new spouse, led her into the Bishop's palace where dinner was prepared for them."*

The union of the two royal families had actually been favoured by both Charles IX and his mother Catherine. The peace between the factions which the wedding was intended to foster did in fact seem to be assured, as the wedding was attended by many of the leading noble Protestants of the land; but as Baumgartner notes, the descending of hundreds of high-ranking Huguenots on Paris actually had the opposite effect of raising the tension level in France's capital city.

Events, as a result, were quickly to take a turn for the worse.

War with Spain? *Spain's King Philip II, a stubborn enemy of Protestantism, had been trying with mixed success to put down a rebellion of Calvinists in the Netherlands since 1566. In 1572, Charles, as a way to unite his people, planned to launch an invasion of the Netherlands against the Spanish, who were viewed unfavourably by most French. In fact, even as the wedding of Navarre and Margaret was taking place, Huguenot forces were gathering near Paris to take part in the assault. Their leader was to be none other than Admiral Gaspard.*

SCENE II.

An Apartment (not in the house of Guise).
August 1572.

Enter the Duke of Guise.

Entering Character: *Henry I, the Duke of Guise*, was the leading member of the house of Guise, a family that came into power on the national stage when King Charles' older brother Francis (who had ruled as king before Charles, but only from July 1599 to December 1560) wed Mary, Queen of Scots. The Guises were Mary's cousins, and the weak Francis permitted the Guises to assume effective control of the national government.

Henry (usually referred to in the play as ***the Guise***, but whom we shall call simply ***Guise***) was France's most outspoken opponent of French Protestantism.

Guise. If ever Hymen loured at marriage rites,

1-8: Guise is distraught over the marriage that has united the Catholic and Protestant royal families of France and Navarre.

Note the parallel structure of each pair of lines within lines 1-6.

1: "if ever the Roman god of marriage (***Hymen***) frowned upon (***loured at)*** any wedding".

And had his altars decked with dusky lights;
If ever sun stained Heaven with bloody clouds,
And made it look with terror on the world;
If ever day were turned to ugly night,
And night made semblance of the hue of hell;
This day, this hour, this fatal night,
Shall fully shew the fury of them all. −

= adorned. = ie. extinguished torches.

= ***Heaven*** is almost always pronounced in one syllable: *Hea'n*.

= made to resemble. = colour or shade.

8: ***shew*** = normal alternate spelling for ***show***.
them all = Hymen and the personified sun, day and night.

Apothecary!

1-9: we see in Guise's opening speech several examples of the light intra-line alliteration so beloved by Elizabethan playwrights: line 2 (***decked*** and ***dusky***), line 3 (***sun*** and ***stained***), line 6 (***hue*** and ***hell***), and line 8 (***Shall*** and ***shew***, and ***fully*** and ***fury***).

Enter the Apothecary.

Apoth. My Lord?

Guise. Now shall I prove, and guerdon to the full,
The love thou bear'st unto the house of Guise.
Where are those perfumèd gloves which I sent

= test. = "reward".

= in a world in which no one bathed, gloves and handkerchiefs were often scented as a way to temper, even if only slightly, olfactory unpleasantness.

To be poisoned? hast thou done them? speak!
Will every savour breed a pang of death?

= ie. "to you to". = ie. "done so to".
= the sense is "whiff" or "sniff". = painful spasm.[1]

Apoth. See where they be, my good lord,
And he that smells but to them, dies.

Guise. Then thou remainest resolute?

= steadfast, unwavering.

Apoth. I am, my lord, in what your grace commands, till death.

Guise. Thanks, my good friend: I will requite thy love. Go, then, present them to the Queen Navarre,

= repay.
29: ***them*** = ie. the gloves.
the Queen Navarre = ie. Navarre's mother Jeanne, the Old Queen.

For she is that huge blemish in our eye
That makes these upstart heresies in France.

30-31: Guise blames Jeanne in part for promoting the growth of Protestantism in France.
in our eye = "always before me".

Be gone, my friend, present them to her straight.

= right away.

[*Exit Apothecary.*]

Soldier!

Enter a Soldier.

Sold. My lord?

Guise. Now come thou forth, and play thy tragic part:

42: it is always pleasing when our dramatists' characters engage in a little ironic self-referencing to their metaphoric roles as actors.
come thou forth = ie. as if on stage.

Stand in some window, opening near the street,

= a disyllable.

And when thou seest the Admiral ride by,
Discharge thy musket, and perform his death;

= "kill him"; note how Guise, with ***perform***, playfully continues his acting metaphor of line 42.

And then I'll guerdon thee with store of crowns.

46: ***guerdon*** = reward.
store = an abundance.
crowns = Marlowe's go-to international currency; ***crowns*** were gold coins in common use in France in the 16th century.[1]

Sold. I will, my lord.

[*Exit Soldier.*]

Guise. Now, Guise, begin those deep engendered thoughts

52-54: Guise needs to come up with a plan, but for what purpose, is unclear; see the next note below.
deep engendered = profoundly conceived.

To burst abroad those never dying flames
Which cannot be extinguished but by blood.

53-54: what exactly the ***flames***, which cannot be put out except by violence, represent, is not certain; at first it seems Guise is referring to Protestantism, which certainly could be described as needing to be ***extinguished***; but Guise's monologue quickly turn to his own personal goals, so that the ***flames*** might refer to his aspirations.
burst abroad = cause to break out.[1]

Oft have I levelled, and at last have learned
That peril is the chiefest way to happiness,

55-56: "I have often tried to guess the secret to success (***happiness***),[2] and at last I have figured out that true success cannot be achieved without accompanying danger".
levelled = guessed.[8]

And resolution honour's fairest aim.

57: the finest goal of honourable conduct is to act with firmness of purpose and courage (***resolution***).[2]

58	What glory is there in a common good, That hangs for every peasant to achieve?	58-59: there is no true glory to be gotten by reaching a level of success that is within the grasp of the ordinary person.
60	That like I best that flies beyond my reach.	60: the restless Guise needs a true challenge to satisfy his desire for accomplishment.
	Set me to scale the high pyrámidès,	= ie. pyramid; the plural form was usually used to mean the singular; ***pyramides*** is pronounced in four syllables: *py-RA-mi-des*.
62	And thereon set the diadem of France;	62: although not yet stating it explicitly, Guise seems to be flirting with the idea of wanting to become the king of France himself!
64	I'll either rend it with my nails to naught, Or mount the top with my aspiring wings, Although my downfall be the deepest hell.	63-65: literally, "I will either tear down the pyramid in trying but failing to climb it, or succeed, even if in failing my fall brings on my complete destruction." Guise is willing to risk everything on his attempt to win the crown for himself. ***naught*** = nothing. ***aspiring*** = climbing.
66	For this I wake, when others think I sleep;	66: scheming to become king keeps Guise awake at night. ***For this*** = "it is for this purpose", ie. to become King of France. The phrase is used repeatedly from line 67 to 81 to begin many of the lines.
	For this I wait, that scorns attendance else;	67: "scheming takes up all my time: I have no desire to occupy myself in any other way."
68	For this, my quenchless thirst, whereon I build, Hath often pleaded kindred to the king;	69: the line suggests Guise believes that the fact that he is related to the royal family through his kinship with Mary, Queen of Scots, the widow of Charles' brother Francis, will permit him to make a legitimate claim to the French throne.
70	For this, this head, this heart, this hand, and sword, Contrives, imagines, and fully executes,	70-73: Guise's entire being is dedicated to planning and performing matters of great importance, such as many other people attempt…but when Guise reaches line 73, he seems to be admitting that he has lost track of his point, so that no one, including himself, knows what he is really aiming for, even talking about (McAdam, p. 180).[9] Note the parallelism of lines 71 and 72: his ***head contrives***, ie. plots, new schemes, his ***heart imagines*** them, and his ***hand and sword execute*** them. One wonders whether a listening audience would be able to follow this closely.
72	Matters of import aimèd at by many, Yet understood by none;	
74	For this hath Heaven engendered me of earth; For this, this earth sustains my body's weight,	= "brought me forth onto the earth."
76	And with this weight I'll counterpoise a crown,	76: ***this weight*** = ie. this body. ***counterpoise*** = match or balance against, as on a scale; with ***weight***, a metaphor.
	Or with seditions weary all the world;	= strife, violence.[1]
78	For this, from Spain the stately Catholics Send Indian gold to coin me French ecues;	78-79: the Catholic Spanish are financially supporting Guise's efforts to rid France of Protestantism by sending him gold, which he metaphorically turns into French coins (***ecues***).

Indian gold = Marlowe frequently alludes to the gold mines of India in Asia, but here ***India*** must refer to the West Indies, meaning the Western Hemisphere, from which, in this age of exploration, Spain has been mining precious metals and subsequently becoming fabulously wealthy.

For this, have I a largess from the Pope,

80: the pope at this time was Gregory XIII, who had come to the papal seat only in May of this year, 1572.

Gregory remained pope until his death in 1585, when he was succeeded by Sixtus V, who is referred to by name a number of times later in the play.

largess = generous bestowal of money.[1]

A pension, and a dispensation too;

81: ***pension*** = regular payments.[1]

dispensation = forgiveness for any sins Guise will commit in pursuit of his goal of eradicating Protestantism from France; dispensations could be purchased from the Catholic Church, and as such were considered one of the more blameworthy excesses of the Church's fund-raising activities.

And by that privilege to work upon,

= "and by the license (***privilege***)[2] granted me by the pope".

My policy hath framed religiön.

= "influenced the form of", or perhaps "benefited", an archaic meaning.[1]

Religion: *O Diabolè!*
Fie, I am ashamed, however that I seem,

= an exclamation of disgust or scorn.

To think a word of such a simple sound,
Of so great matter should be made the ground!

86-87: ie. that the simple word ***religion*** could be the cause of such momentous events.

Note also the rhyming couplet (lines 86-87) that has snuck into the verse.

The gentle king, whose pleasure uncontrolled
Weakeneth his body, and will waste his realm,
If I repair not what he ruinates, −

90: Guise will have to undo the damage Charles has wrought to the cause of Catholicism in arranging the marriage of his sister to Navarre.

Him, as a child, I daily win with words,

91: Guise is able to easily persuade Charles to sanction anything he (***Guise***) wants to do by talking to him as if he were a child.

So that for proof he barely bears the name;

92: Charles barely deserves the name of "king".

for proof = ie. as proof of his statement.[4,8]

barely bears = note the typical Elizabethan intra-line wordplay.

I execute, and he sustains the blame.

93: Charles is blamed for any unpopular or controversial action taken by Guise.

The Mother-Queen works wonders for my sake,

94: Catherine, as we saw near the end of Scene I, is actually a strong supporter of Guise.

And in my love entombs the hope of France,
Rifling the bowels of her treasury,
To supply my wants and necessity.

96-97: Catherine pilfers the state treasury to fund Guise's activities.

Paris hath full five hundred colleges,
As monasteries, priories, abbeys, and halls,
Wherein are thirty thousand able men,
Besides a thousand sturdy student-Catholics;

98-101: because Paris was well-populated by Catholic institutions, the city remained solidly on the Catholic side during these tumultuous years.

And more, − of my knowledge, in one cloister keeps

= "as I happen to know".[1] = dwells.[3]

Five hundred fat Franciscan friars and priests:

103: Guise - or is it Marlowe? - is not necessarily impressed with the Catholic clergy. Bennett[8] notes that Marlowe has exaggerated the population of a typical medieval monastery, which rarely contained over one hundred monks.
Note the line's impressive alliteration.

All this, and more, if more may be comprised,
To bring the will of our desires to end.

104-5: "all these people and more may be employed to assist me in achieving my ends."

Then, Guise,

106-9: Guise addresses himself in the second person.

Since thou hast all the cards within thy hands,
To shuffle or cut, take this as surest thing,
That, right or wrong, thou deal thyself a king. −

107-9: Guise uses the metaphor of a card-dealer to direct himself to make sure that he always deals himself the best hand.
take this as surest thing = "make sure to do this thing which is the most certain way to get what you want".
thou deal…king = through this metaphor, Guise tips his hand as to his true goal.

Ay but, Navarre, Navarre, − 'tis but a nook of France,

110: Guise muses on Navarre - perhaps first the man, and then the land.
Navarre, Navarre = Dyce omits one ***Navarre***; Ribner[4] punctuates as follows: "***Navarre! Navarre?***"
'tis but a nook of France = we have previously noted the diminutive size of Navarre in southern France.

Sufficient yet for such a petty king,

111: Guise disparages Navarre, whom he dismisses as minor or insignificant (***petty***).[1]

That, with a rabblement of his heretics,

= rabble, ie. mob.[1]

Blinds Europe's eyes, and troubleth our estate.

= ie. to the religious truth. = ie. kingdom.[2]

Him will we − (*Pointing to his sword*)
but first let's follow those in France,

= the sense is "take care of", or "deal with".

That hinder our possession to the crown.

116: Guise confirms he is interested to grab the throne of France for himself. Note how with ***our***, meaning "me", Guise assumes the royal "we.

As Caesar to his soldiers, so say I, −

= ie. "like Caesar said".

Those that hate me will I learn to loathe.
Give me a look, that, when I bend the brows,

= countenance. = ie. frown.

Pale death may walk in furrows of my face;

120: ie. a man's death sentence can be perceived in the frown-lines of his face.

A hand, that with a grasp may gripe the world;

= hold or seize.

An ear to hear what my detractors say;

122: ie. so that they may be held accountable.

A royal seat, a sceptre, and a crown,
That those which do behold, they may become
As men that stand and gaze against the sun.

124-5: Guise imagines that those who view him on the throne will feel as if they are staring directly into the sun.
they = Dyce emends ***they*** to ***them***, and omits the preceding comma.

The plot is laid, and things shall come to pass
Where resolution strives for victory.

Exit.

The Plots to Kill Queen Jeanne of Navarre and the Admiral: *the real Jeanne, as mentioned earlier, had passed away in June 1572, two months before the wedding of Navarre and Margaret.*
While Marlowe gives Guise full credit for planning the attempt on the Admiral's life, historians remain uncertain as

to who was really responsible for this deed. Catherine, Anjou, Guise, pro-Spanish Catholics, and even "the mob", have been hypothesized to be the forces responsible. Marlowe's goal, of course, is to portray Guise early on in the play as a despicable villain for his Protestant English audience.

Spanish Support for Guise: *as noted above, Philip of Spain had been having a difficult time crushing the revolt of the Dutch Calvinists, so he had a natural interest in ensuring the French did not also take a hand in the Netherlands; it was for this reason that Philip actively supported Guise financially, to keep France too occupied with its own problems to venture beyond its borders*.

SCENE III.

A Street.
22 August 1572.

Scene III: it is the morning of 22 August 1572, only four days since the wedding of Scene I.

Enter the King of Navarre, Queen Margaret, the Old Queen of Navarre (Jeanne), the Prince of Condé, and the Admiral;

They are met by the Apothecary with the gloves, which he gives to the Old Queen.

Entering Characters: France's leading Protestants meet in the street. All had come to Paris to attend Navarre's wedding.

Apoth. Madam,
I beseech your grace to accept this simple gift.

= should be pronounced in two syllables for the sake of the metre: *t' ac-cept*.

Old Qu. Thanks my good friend. Hold, take thou this reward.

= word used to signal the offering of money.

[*Gives a purse*.]

Apoth. I humbly thank your majesty.

[*Exit Apothecary*.]

Old Qu. Methinks the gloves have a very strong perfume,
The scent whereof doth make my head to ache.

= fragrance.[1]

Nav. Doth not your grace know the man that gave them you?

14: ***you*** = ie. "to you?"

Old Qu. Not well; but do remember such a man.

Adm. Your grace was ill-advised to take them, then,
Considering of these dangerous times.

Old Qu. Help, son Navarre! I am poisoned!

Qu. Marg. The heavens forbid your highness such mishap!

Nav. The late suspicion of the Duke of Guise

= ie. "our recent suspicions regarding".[8]

Might well have moved your highness to beware
How you did meddle with such dangerous gifts.

Qu. Marg. Too late, it is, my lord, if that be true,
To blame her highness; but I hope it be
Only some natural passion makes her sick.

Old Qu. O, no, sweet Margaret, the fatal poison
Works within my head; my brainpan breaks;
My heart doth faint; I die!

The Old Queen dies.

Nav. My mother poisoned here before my face!
O gracious God, what times are these?
O, grant, sweet God, my days may end with hers,
That I with her may die and live again!

Qu. Marg. Let not this heavy chance, my dearest lord,

(For whose effects my soul is massacred),
Infect thy gracious breast with fresh supply
To aggravate our sudden misery.

Adm. Come, my lords, let us bear her body hence,
And see it honourèd with just solemnity.

As they are going out, the Soldier dischargeth his musket at the Lord Admiral.

Condé. What, are you hurt, my Lord High Admiral?

Adm. Ay, my good lord, shot through the arm.

Nav. We are betrayed! Come, my lords, and let us go tell the king of this.

Adm. These are the cursèd Guisians, that do seek our death.
Oh, fatal was this marriage to us all.

Exeunt, bearing out the body of the Old Queen of Navarre.

= prompted, persuaded.[2]

= overpowering emotion or torment of natural causes, ie. not from poison.

= skull.[1]

Death of Jeanne: *Queen Jeanne of Navarre had died in Paris on 9 June 1572 from pleurisy; rumours circulated for some time thereafter that Catherine had poisoned her. A contemporary history provides the anecdote of the poisoned gloves.*

= ie. in Heaven.

45-48: Margaret asks Navarre to cease his lamenting, which only serves to increase their distress.
heavy chance = sad occurrence.

45: ie. "the accomplishment of which has destroyed my soul".

= ie. "my".

The Attempt to Assassinate the Admiral: *Coligny was returning to his residence from the Louvre on the morning of 22 August when three shots rang out, two of which struck, but did not kill, the Admiral. The wounds were not considered life-threatening, and Coligny was brought to his home to recuperate.*

The Chronology describes the Admiral's injuries as "one bullet breaking a finger of his right hand, and another grievously wounding him in the left arm." [21]

SCENE IV.

An Apartment in the Louvre.
August 1572.

Enter the King, Catherine (the Queen-Mother), the Duke of Guise, Anjou and Dumaine.

Cath. My noble son, and princely Duke of Guise,

Now have we got the fatal, straggling deer
Within the compass of a deadly toil,
And, as we late decreed, we may perform.

K. Char. Madam, it will be noted through the world
An action bloody and tyrannical;

Chiefly, since under safety of our word
They justly challenge their protectiön:

Besides, my heart relents that noble men,
Only corrupted in religiön,
Ladies of honour, knights, and gentlemen,
Should, for their conscience, taste such ruthless ends.

Anjou. Though gentle minds should pity others' pains,
Yet will the wisest note their proper griefs,
And rather seek to scourge their enemies
Than be themselves base subjects to the whip.

Guise. Methinks my lord Anjou hath well advised
Your highness to consider of the thing,
And rather choose to seek your country's good
Than pity or relieve these upstart heretics.

Cath. I hope these reasons may serve my princely son
To have some care for fear of enemies.

K. Char. Well, madam, I refer it to your majesty,
And to my nephew here, the Duke of Guise:
What you determine, I will ratify.

Scene IV: the Louvre was still functioning at this time as a royal castle; it was converted into a museum of art in 1793.[6]

Entering Characters: the Catholic faction gathers at the royal palace.

Anjou is ***Henry, the Duke of Anjou***, the next-youngest brother of the French King Charles IX. Anjou is presently all of 17 years old. Since Charles has no children as of yet, Anjou is the heir-presumptive to the French throne.

Dumaine is ***Charles, the Duke of Dumaine***, the next-youngest brother of the Duke of Guise. Dumaine is only 18 years old himself.

= ie. Charles.

2-4: Catherine uses essentially the same hunting metaphor previously employed by Navarre at Scene I.68-69 to describe the Catholics' plan to destroy the Protestants; in hunting, the prey might be driven out of hiding and into large nets which have been spread out over a circumscribed area, beyond which the prey is prevented from passing.

fatal = doomed.[2]
compass = range or boundary.
toil = trap, specifically a net.[2]
late = recently.

6*f*: the Catholics are up to something, and Charles is unhappy with the plan.

8-9: for one thing, Charles had given the Huguenots his word that their lives would not be endangered.

challenge = demand as a right.

10-13: for another thing, it seems wrong to kill off high-ranking individuals over something like religion, which, as honest persons, they follow with their consciences, even if they have made a wrong choice.

relents (line 11) = grows soft or tender.[1]

= noble.
= own.[3]

17-18: Anjou's response to his brother is cynical: "it is either us or them - someone is going to be destroyed, so it may as well be them."

25-26: ie. Charles needs to recognize that his enemies are dangerous to him.

28-30: the weak king defers to his mother and Guise.

my nephew = ie. his kinsman.

Cath. Thanks to my princely son. − Then tell me, Guise,
What order will you set down for the massacre?

Guise. Thus, madam.
They that shall be actors in this massacre

36: another bit of self-reference; Guise refers to those Catholics who will take part in the slaughter of their enemies.

Shall wear white crosses on their burgonets,

= small, light helmets.[2]

And tie white linen scarves about their arms;
He that wants these, and is suspected of heresy,

39: ***wants these*** = lacks these, ie. is not wearing the accessories of the Catholics.

Shall die, be he king or emperor.
Then I'll have a peal of ordnance shot from the tower,

= ie. a discharge of a cannon.[1]

At which they all shall issue out, and set the streets.

42: ***they*** = ie. the Catholics.
issue…streets = ie. come out from concealment and pour onto the streets.

And then, the watchword being given, a bell shall ring
Which when they hear, they shall begin to kill,
And never cease until that bell shall cease;
Then breathe a while.

46: then they can rest a while.

35-46: **Guise's Plan for the Massacre:** the program seems a touch complicated: when the cannon is fired from the tower, the Catholics are to go onto the streets *en masse*; then, when the church bells begin to ring, they should commence to slaughter Protestants, and continue to do so, only stopping when the bells cease their tolling.

Charles' Feet Grow Cold: *the Chronology describes Charles' reaction to the approach of the day of the planned massacre: "the nearer he came to the Moment of Execution, the more he was troubled in his soul, so that the very sweat ran down his forehead, and his pulsation was like one in a fever."*[21]

Enter the Admiral's Serving-man.

= servant.

K. Char. How now, fellow, what news?

Man. An it please your grace, the Lord High Admiral,

= common expression of deference.
An it = if it.

Riding the streets, was traitorously shot,

= on horseback.[1]

And most humbly entreats your majesty
To visit him, sick in his bed.

= asks.

K. Char. Messenger, tell him I will see him straight.

= immediately.

Exit Serving-Man.

What shall we do now with the Admiral?

Cath. Your majesty were best go visit him,
And make a shew as if all were well.

= show, ie. pretense.

K. Char. Content; I will go visit the Admiral.

= "ok."

Guise. And I will go take order for his death.

= issue a command.

Exeunt Catherine and Guise.

70: Charles remains on stage with Anjou and Dumaine.
Marlowe was fond of having the setting or location of a scene change without requiring his characters to exit and then re-enter the stage. Such seamless transitions from one scene to the next kept the action moving along uninterruptedly.

SCENE V.

The Admiral's Sleeping Apartment.
August 1572.

Still on Stage: *Charles, Anjou and Dumaine.*
The Admiral discovered in his bed.

Entering Character: the curtain is drawn to reveal (***discover***) a tableau of the wounded ***Admiral*** convalescing in his bedroom. Dyce suggests the scene takes place on the upper stage, or stage's balcony, because of the stage direction given at Scene VI.63.
The octavo's stage direction here is "Enter the Admiral in his bed". Ribner notes that in this period, a bed would "literally be thrust upon the stage already occupied by the other characters" (p. 250).

K. Char. How fares it with my Lord High Admiral?
Hath he been hurt <u>with</u> villains in the street?
= by.[4]

I vow and swear as I am King of France,
To find and to repay the man with death,
With death delayed and torments never used,

5: ie. the assassin's death will be a slow one, as he is to be tortured by means so horrible that they have not even been invented yet.

<u>That durst</u> presume, for hope of any gain,
= ie. "he who dares".

To hurt the noble man <u>their</u> sovereign loves.
= Dyce emends to ***his***, but ***their*** could refer to the ***villains*** of line 3.

Adm. Ah, my good lord, these are the Guisians,
That seek to massacre our <u>guiltless</u> lives!
= innocent.

K. Char. Assure yourself, my good Lord Admiral,
I deeply sorrow for your treacherous <u>wrong</u>,
= injury.

And that I am not more secure myself
Than I am careful you should be preserved. −
14-15: ie. Charles claims to have as much interest in the Admiral's security as he does in his own.[4]

Cousin, take twenty of our strongest guard,
And, under your direction, see they keep
All treacherous violence from our noble friend,

16-18: Charles instructs Dumaine to guard the Admiral's house; but Bennett argues that the first word of line 16, which is spelled ***Cosin*** in the octavo, is actually ***Cossin***, the historical name for the Captain of the Guards, and emends his text accordingly. The issue crops up again at Scene VI.32.

Repaying all attempts with <u>present</u> death
Upon the cursèd breakers of our peace. −

19-20: ie. kill anyone who attempts to come near the Admiral or break into his house.
present = immediate.

And so be patient, good Lord Admiral,
And every <u>hour</u> I will visit you.
= a disyllable here: *HO-ur*.

Adm. I humbly thank your royal majesty.

[*Exeunt Charles, etc. The scene closes.*]

26: the Admiral's visitors depart the stage, and the curtain closes.

SCENE VI.

A Street.
24 August 1572.

Scene VI: it is the early morning of 24 August 1572, the day of the feast of St. Bartholomew.

Enter Guise, Anjou, Dumaine, Gonzago, Retes, Mountsorrell, and Soldiers, to the massacre.

Entering Characters: we remind our readers that ***Anjou*** is the next-younger brother of King Charles, and ***Dumaine*** is Guise's next-younger brother.

Gonzago is Louis Gonzaga, who gained the title of Duke of Nevers through his marriage to Henriette of Cleves;[8] Henriette was the sister of Catherine of Cleves, the wife of the Duke of Guise; Bennett notes that the Catholic Gonzago had distinguished himself in the religious wars.

Retes is Albert de Gondi, who would become the Duke of Retz in 1581. According to Bennett, Gondi was an Italian who arrived in France with Catherine de' Medici, and was a favourite of Charles and his successor Henry III.

The editors are silent as to the possible historical identity of ***Mountsorrell***. The *Chronology* mentions a *Lord de Montsoreau* who was active in this period on the Catholic side.

All the characters on-stage are Catholics committed to a violent extermination of the Protestants.

Guise. Anjou, Dumaine, Gonzago, Retes,
Swear by the argent crosses in your burgonets,
To kill all that you suspect of heresy.

= silver-coloured, or silvery-white.[1] = helmets.

Dum. I swear by this, to be unmerciful.

Anjou. I am disguised, and none knows who I am,
And therefore mean to murder all I meet.

Gonz. And so will I.

Retes. And I.

Guise. Away, then! break into the Admiral's house.

Retes. Ay, let the Admiral be first dispatched.

= put to death.

Guise. The Admiral,
Chief standard bearer to the Lutherans,

19: ***standard bearer*** = ie. leader.

Lutherans = followers of Luther, another name for the Protestants. Interestingly, the term ***Lutherans*** was the earliest English name used for break-away Catholics, appearing in literature already in the 1520's; ***Protestants*** first appears in works of the 1540's, and ***Puritans*** in the 1570's.

Shall in the entrance of this massacre
Be murdered in his bed.

= ie. "to begin".

Gonzago, conduct them thither,
And then beset his house, that not a man may live.

= "lead your men to there".
= assail.[2]

Anjou. That charge is mine. − Switzers, keep you the streets;
And at each corner shall the king's guard stand.

25: ***charge*** = task or responsibility.
Switzers = "you Swiss", a vocative; the Catholics had hired Swiss mercenaries to assist them during the religious wars.
keep you the streets = "keep watch near the Admiral's house."
We may note here that Charles had appointed his brother Anjou to be lieutenant general, which put him in charge of the royal army - when Anjou was still only the tender age of 17.

Gonz. Come, sirs, follow me.

[*Exit Gonzago with others.*]

Anjou. Cousin, the captain of the Admiral's guard,
Placed by my brother, will betray his lord. −
Now, Guise, shall Catholics flourish once again;
The head being off, the members cannot stand.

= ie. Guise, though ***Cousin*** could refer to Cossin, the Captain of the Guards;[8] see the note above at Scene V.16-18.
= ie. Charles. = ie. the Admiral.
35: a metaphor: cut off the leader of the movement, and the movement must die.
members = limbs.
Editors have been unable to state whether there existed a single source of information from which Marlowe drew to write this play. An intriguing borrowing seems to have occurred with respect to line 35, for in a 1591 history of the French civil wars, authored by Antony Colynet, we find this line: "*The King...supposing that the head being off, the members would coole and waxe weake*." Is this an indication that this history was used as a source by Marlowe, and thus constitutes evidence that he did not write this play prior to 1591?

Retes. But look, my lord, there's some in the Admiral's house.

= someone.

[*The Admiral discovered in bed; Gonzago and others in the house.*]

39: Dyce suggests the curtain is drawn on the upper stage; the assassins enter "upstairs" in the Admiral's house.

Anjou. In lucky time! come, let us keep this lane,
And slay his servants that shall issue out.

= guard.
= ie. emerge from the house.

Gonz. Where is the Admiral?

Adm. O, let me pray before I die!

Gonz. Then pray unto our Lady; kiss this cross.

= meaning Gonzago's dagger.

Stabs him.

Adm. O God, forgive my sins!

[*The Admiral dies.*]

Guise. Gonzago, what, is he dead?

Gonz. Ay, my lord.

Guise. Then throw him down.

[*The body of the Admiral is thrown down*.]

61: ie. onto the street.

63: the main stage represents the street, where Anjou and the others had waited for Gonzago to dispatch the Admiral.

Anjou. Now, cousin, view him well:
It may be it is some other, and he escaped.

= "take a close look at the body;" Anjou is unsure if it is indeed the corpse of the Admiral.

From the Chronology: "When the Admiral was killed, they threw his body down into the court, the Duke of Guise who stood below, wiped the blood off which covered his face to know if it were he."[21]

Guise. Cousin, 'tis he; I know him by his look:
See where my soldier shot him through the arm.
He missed him near, but we have strook him now. −

= ie. Anjou. = appearance.

70: ***He missed him near*** = ie. "he nearly missed him".[8]
strook = common form of "struck".

Ah, base Chatillon and degenerate,

71: ***base*** = craven, cowardly.[1]
Chatillon = meaning the Admiral, whose family name is Chatillon. There is a township called Châtillon-Coligny about 75 miles south of Paris.
degenerate = debased person.

Chief standard bearer to the Lutherans,
Thus, in despite of thy religiön,
The Duke of Guise stamps on thy lifeless bulk!

72: deliberately or not, line 72 repeats line 19 above.
73: "thus, in scorn of your Protestantism".
= body.

Anjou. Away with him! cut off his head and hands,
And send them for a present to the Pope;

76-77: a contemporary work describes the Admiral's head being severed, then "preserved with spices" and sent to the pope in Rome.

And, when this just revenge is finishèd,
Unto Mount Faucon will we drag his corse;
And he, that living hated so the Cross,
Shall, being dead, be hanged thereon in chains.

79-81: a 1611 history book identifies a small hillock at one end of Paris known as ***Mount Faucon***, on which was constructed a gallows on which to hang the body of the Admiral.[3]
Bennett identifies ***Mount Faucon*** as a hill near Paris where the bodies of criminals were typically hung from upright posts, known as "gibbets", where they were left to decay.
corse = more common form of "corpse".
hated so the Cross = ie. rejected the true religion.

Guise. Anjou, Gonzago, Retes, if that you three
Will be as resolute as I and Dumaine,
There shall not a Huguenot breathe in France.

= pronounced "*Retz*", a single syllable.
= resolved, determined.

Anjou. I swear by this cross, we'll not be partial,
But slay as many as we can come near.

= ie. choosy, particular.

Guise. Mountsorrell, go shoot the ordnance off,

= cannon, the firing of which was to signal the Catholics to emerge onto the streets.

That they, which have already set the street,

= the sense seems to be "appeared on the streets"; the expression ***set the street*** appears nowhere else in early literature.
set = beset.[4]

May know their watchword; then toll the bell,
And so let's forward to the massacre.

Mount. I will, my lord.

[*Exit Mountsorrell.*]

Guise. And now, my lords, let's closely to our business.

Anjou. Anjou will follow thee.

Dum. And so will Dumaine.

[*The ordnance being shot off, the bell tolls.*]

Guise. Come, then, let's away.

[*Exeunt.*]

92: ***watchword*** = signal.[1]
toll the bell = the Catholics' signal to begin the general slaughter.

= covertly.[1] = ie. go to.

After the Admiral was Shot: *the Huguenots unwisely responded to the attempted assassination of Gaspard by threatening revenge on Charles and his family; Catherine, possibly panicking, convinced Charles that the Protestants were in fact planning to overthrow him. As a result, Charles agreed to a plan to execute the leaders of the Huguenots, starting with the Admiral. The task of finishing off the 53-year-old Gaspard was assigned to Guise.*

Death of the Admiral: *before dawn on 24 August 1572, Guise led some troops to Gaspard's residence. A few soldiers forced their way inside, where they proceeded to slay Gaspard, and tossed his body onto the street below.*

The Chronology explains that the Admiral's head was cut off by "an Italian", embalmed, and sent first to Catherine, and then forwarded to the pope.

The Chronology continues: "The populace fell upon the unhappy trunk of his body; they first cut off the hands and privities, then left it (ie. the trunk) on a dunghill; in the afternoon they return to it again, dragged it three days about the streets, then to the riverside...and at last to Mount Faucon, where they hung it up by the feet with an iron chain, and made a fire underneath, which half consumed it."[21]

The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre Begins: *even as the Admiral was being finished off, royal forces were fanning out across Paris to hunt down the other Huguenot leaders. It is important to note that Catherine and Guise had not actually intended to instigate a general slaughter of Protestants; what appears to have happened was that the Paris mob, having quickly learned of Guise's actions early that morning, took it upon itself to commence a riot of Huguenot bloodletting. Charles tried desperately to halt the massacre, but his efforts were futile.*

SCENE VII.

A Street.
24 August 1572.

Enter Guise, and the rest, with their swords drawn, chasing the Protestants.

Entering Characters: ***Guise*** leads a number of generic Catholics in chasing down random Protestants.

Guise. *Tuès, tuès, tuès!*
Let none escape, murder the Huguenots!

1: ***tues*** is a hunting cry,[1] a disyllabic word.

Anjou. Kill them, kill them!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VIII.

Another Street.
24 August 1572.

Enter Loreine, running; Guise and the rest pursuing him.

Entering Character: ***Loreine*** is a Protestant preacher.

Guise. Loreine, Loreine, follow Loreine! − Sirrah,
Are you a preacher of these heresies?

= common form of address to an inferior; Guise's use of ***sirrah*** to address the preacher is insulting.

Lor. I am a preacher of the word of God;
And thou a traitor to thy soul and him.

Guise. "Dearly belovèd brother," − thus 'tis written.

7: Guise mocks Lorraine by employing the opening words of a sermon; Anjou will mock likewise at line 11.

You may wish to note how many of the murders in our play are accompanied by sardonic commentary by the killers.

[*Guise stabs Loreine, who dies.*]

Anjou. Stay, my lord, let me begin the psalm.

= "wait a moment".

Guise. Come, drag him away and throw him in a ditch.

[*Exeunt.*]

The Real Loreine: *Bennett quotes a 16th century history work: "Leranne being thrust through with a sword, escaped and ran into the Queen of Navarre's chamber, and was by her kept and preserved from the violence of those that pursued him."*

SCENE IX.

Another Street.
24 August 1572

Enter Mountsorrell, who knocks at Seroune's door.

Entering Character: Mountsorrell arrives at the home of the unidentified Seroune.

Ser.'s Wife. [Within] Who is that which knocks there?

= from off-stage.

Mount. Mountsorrell, from the Duke of Guise.

Ser.'s Wife. [*Within*]
Husband, come down; here's one would speak with you
From the Duke of Guise.

Enter Seroune from the house.

Seroune. To speak with me, from such a man as he?

Mount. Ay, ay, for this, Seroune; and thou shalt hav't.

Showing his dagger.

Seroune. O, let me pray, before I take my death!

Mount. Despatch, then, quickly.

= "get it done".

Seroune. O Christ, my Saviour!

Mount. Christ, villain!
Why darest thou presume to call on Christ,
Without the intercession of some saint?

23-25: Mountsorrel is appalled that the Protestant Seroune dares address Christ directly, without the intercession of a priest or saint, as is required by Catholicism.

Sanctus Jacobus, he was my saint; pray to him.

= ie. Saint James.

Seroune. O, let me pray unto my God!

Mount. Then take this with you.

[*Stabs Seroune, who dies; and then exit.*]

SCENE X.

The Apartment of Ramus.
24 August 1572

Scene X: Bennett suggests the curtain should be drawn to reveal Ramus in his study at the rear of the stage.

Enter Ramus in his study.

Entering Character: ***Ramus*** is ***Petrus Ramus*** (1515-1572), one of the most important figures in education in Europe of the 16th century.

Ramus was infamous in France for two reasons:

(1) Ramus dared criticize Aristotle's approach to the field of logic, which had been taught without change for centuries, but which Ramus felt was too complicated to be useful. In completely rewriting, and by doing so simplifying, Aristotle's works in this area, Ramus earned the ire of the traditionalists at the University of Paris; and

(2) he had converted to Protestantism in 1561.

Ramus. What fearful cries come from the river Seine,
That fright poor Ramus sitting at his book?

= ie. "as he is reading or studying".

I fear the Guisians have passed the bridge,
And mean once more to menace me.

4: note the exceptional alliteration in this line.

Enter Taleus.

Entering Character: ***Taleus*** is ***Omer Talon*** (or Audomarus Talaeus),[3] a colleague of Ramus'. The two were close friends who collaborated on a number of important works. Here Marlowe represents Taleus and Ramus as roommates as well

as scholars.

Omer Talon *(1510-1562), a professor of rhetoric at the University of Paris,[4] had actually died a decade before the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, but Marlowe has resurrected the Catholic Talon in order to illustrate the admirable religious toleration which existed between the two scholars, a contrast to the intolerance of Guise and his fellow Catholic extremists.*

Tale. Fly, Ramus, fly, if thou wilt save thy life! — = flee. = "wish to".

Ramus. Tell me, Taleus, wherefore should I fly? — = why.

Tale. The Guisians are
Hard at thy door, and mean to murder us: — = nearby.
Hark, hark, they come, I'll leap out at the window. — = listen.

Ramus. Sweet Taleus, stay.

Enter Gonzago and Retes.
[*They stop Taleus as he is going out.*] — 19: stage direction added by Ribner.

Gonz. Who goes there?

Retes. 'Tis Taleus, Ramus' bedfellow. — = ie. roommate; it was normal for men to share a bed in these days when furniture was still prohibitively expensive. The playwrights and collaborators Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher famously shared a flat, a bed, and women.

Gonz. What art thou? — = who.

Tale. I am, as Ramus is, a Christiän.

Retes. O, let him go; he is a Catholic.

[*Exit Taleus.*]

Gonz. Come, Ramus, more gold, or thou shalt have the stab. — 33: Gonzago demands money as the price Ramus must pay to spare his life.

Ramus. Alas, I am a scholar! how should I have gold?
All that I have is but my stipend from the king, — 36: see the note below at line 44.
Which is no sooner received but it is spent.

Enter Guise, Anjou, Dumaine, Mountsorrel, and Soldiers.

Anjou. Who have you there?

Retes. 'Tis Ramus, the King's Professor of Logic. — 44: Ramus had been appointed "Royal Professor of Philosophy and Eloquence" by Henry II.[12]

Guise. Stab him.

Ramus. O, good my lord,
Wherein hath Ramus been so offensious? — = offensive.

Guise. Marry, sir, in having a smack in all, — 51-52: Ramus has a superficial knowledge about everything (***a smack in all***), but cannot discuss any topic beyond the superficial level.
And yet didst never sound anything to the depth.

		Coble[12] notes that Ramus was indeed a "dabbler", involving himself in many areas, including writing on mathematics, as well as proposing changes to the curriculum of and establishing chairs for departments as diverse as botany, anatomy and pharmacology (p. 108). 52: Guise employs a metaphor of measuring the depth of a body of water; ***sound*** = use a weight at the end of a line to measure the depth of a body of water.
	Was it not thou that scoff'dst the *Organon*,	53: Ramus first gained notoriety when he devised what he believed to be a simpler approach to understanding and teaching the fields of logic and dialectic, explicitly criticizing and rejecting Aristotle's approach to these areas. In doing so, Ramus outraged traditionists, who had for centuries been teaching logic unvaryingly as it had been created and organized by Aristotle. ***scoff'dst*** = scoffed at, ie. ridiculed.[1] ***the Organon*** = the collective name given to Aristotle's six treatises on formal logic.
54	And said it was a heap of vanities?	= mass or collection of follies or trifles.[1]
	He that will be a flat dichotomist,	55: ie. "any man who claims to be an absolute (***flat***) dichotomist". A student of logic in the Middle Ages and Renaissance faced a daunting task: he was expected to memorize a complicated and dogmatic system of nomenclature and rules, which Ramus completely rejected. Ramus invented his own system for organizing the field of logic, which began with a brand new approach to categorization; Ramus' method, of dividing logic into two classes or branches (which he called *judgment* and *invention*), each of which was halved into two smaller branches, and the sub-branches thus halved again, and then again, was known as ***dichotomy***; and he who engages or practices this process, Guise calls a ***dichotomist***.[13]
56	And seen in nothing but epitomes,	56: "and who is skilled (***seen***)[3] in epitomes only". ***epitomes*** = according to Miller,[13] the ***epitome*** was the name given to the standard tree-diagram of the topic of logic broken down via dichotomy into its smallest "branches"; Ribner assigns ***epitomes*** its more typical meaning of "abstracts or condensed versions". Coble asserts that Guise uses ***epitomes*** to suggest that Ramus has, in rethinking or simplifying Aristotle, committed a sort-of scholarly crime.[13]
	Is in your judgment thought a learnèd man,	
58	And he, forsooth, must go and preach in Germany,	58: "such sophists ought to go and preach (their inanities) in Germany". Coble suggests that Guise is referring to a journey Ramus' made throughout Germany and Switzerland from 1568 to 1570, a triumphant tour of wildly popular lectures.[12,13] ***forsooth*** = truly.
	Excepting against doctors' axioms,	59: "objecting to the axioms of scholars". ***axioms*** = the octavo prints ***actions***, which Dyce emends to ***axioms***, which is the term used to describe "judgments made as a result of syllogism in Ramistic logic" (Coble, p. 112).

		60-64: Guise uses Ramus' own system of logic against him in devastating style. Ramus dichotomized logic's subcategory of ***invention*** into two types of ***arguments***, ***artificial*** and ***inartificial***: (1) an ***artificial argument*** refers to a conclusion which can be drawn from any facts which are visible or apparent to an observer at a given moment; one could, for example, recognize that fire causes heat from observation; and (2) an ***inartificial argument*** refers to a belief that can be based only on the testimony of another person; the belief in the resurrection of Christ, or the existence of Alexander the Great, are examples of things persons can believe in only because they were asserted to be true by those whose word is trusted. Ramus, a nuanced thinker, explained that while inartificial argument had no place in the investigation of truth, it did have "great value in civil and human affairs" (Miller, p. 130). Miller calls Ramus' creation of these categories "startling innovations" at which his enemies were "particularly exasperated" (p. 129).
60	And *ipse dixi* with this quiddity,	60: ***ipse dixit*** = Latin: "I have said it", a variation of the expression from logic, ***ipsi dixit*** ("he has said it"), used to describe an inartificial argument, ie. an assertion which has not been proved but is considered true based only on the authority of the speaker. ***quiddity*** = quibble, nicety of argument.[1]
	Argumentum testimonii est inartificiale.	61: Guise quotes Ramus: "the argument derived from the testimony of another is inartificial", ie. is not and cannot be in itself conclusive. The octavo prints "*Argumentum testimonis est an arte fetialis*", which all the editors emend to proper Latin, which is what we would expect the educated Guise to speak.
62	To contradict which, I say, Ramus shall die:	62: Bennett explains: in asserting "***Ramus shall die***", Guise is giving an example of an argument Ramus would classify as inartificial; such an argument would not normally have any truth value, since it depends on the authority of the speaker; but in this case, the statement's truth is irrefutable!
	How answer you that? your *nego argumentum*	= a common expression from logic: "I reject the argument."
64	Cannot serve, sirrah. − Kill him!	64: ***Cannot serve*** = ie. "is not sufficient to help you in this case". ***sirrah*** = Guise gratuitously insults Ramus by using this term of address usually reserved for inferiors.
66	***Ramus.*** O, good my lord, let me but speak a word!	
68	***Anjou.*** Well, say on.	
70	***Ramus.*** Not for my life do I desire this pause;	= "it is not for the purpose of saving my life".
	But in my latter hour to purge myself,	= ie. last hour of life. = ie. "clear myself of these charges".
72	In that I know the things that I have wrote,	72*f*: Coble observes that though Ramus chooses to explain himself, he at no point feels the need to apologize for his innovations.
	Which, as I hear, one Scheckius takes it ill,	73-74: Ramus refers to the philosopher ***Joseph Schegt***, a

Because my places, being but three, contain all his.

devotee of Aristotle, and a scholar at the University of Tubingen in Germany;[4] Ramus had once debated Schegt, whose work he finds inferior to his own scholarship, which he proudly observes describes all of the topic of logic, but much more concisely and briefly than did Schegt.

ill = ie. illy.

places = grounds of proof, a term from logic.[4]

I knew the *Organon* to be confused,
And I reduced it into better form:

= transformed it,[1] ie. rewrote it into a more comprehensible form.

And this for Aristotle will I say,
That he that despiseth him can ne'er
Be good in logic or philosophy.

77-79: for all the controversy he has caused, Ramus is no hater of Aristotle; instead, Ramus generously expresses gratitude for all his ancient predecessor had accomplished in the field of logic.

And that's because the blockish Sorbonnists
Attribute as much unto their [own] works
As to the service of the eternal God.

80-82: the faculty of the theological department at the University of Paris (the Sorbonne) are as stuck in their devotion to their own works and beliefs as they are in their service to God.

In these lines, Ramus is criticizing the Sorbonne's Catholic faculty for stubbornly adhering to traditional methods of teaching without allowing the minutest of deviations.[12]

blockish = stupid.

Sorbonnists = students or instructors at the ***Sorbonne***, the early name for the University of Paris. Ramus refers to the Sorbonne's role as the seat of the Department of Theology, a fiercely Catholic and conservative organization which was preeminently influential in deciding all things theological in France; the Sorbonne notably outlawed the expression of any deviations from Catholic orthodoxy, and banned publications which did not toe the Catholic line, which, as Coble notes, made it impossible, or at least illegal, to teach Aristotle in a new way.

Guise. Why suffer you that peasant to declaim?
Stab him, I say, and send him to his friends in hell.

= "do you permit". = speechify.[1]

Anjou. Ne'er was there collier's son so full of pride.

= Ramus was born into a poor family in Picardy in northern France; his father was known to have worked for a time as a charcoal-burner.[11]

[*Stabs Ramus, who dies.*]

Guise. My lord of Anjou, there are a hundred Protestants,
Which we have chased into the river Seine,
That swim about, and so preserve their lives.
How may we do? I fear me they will live.

= what should.

Dum. Go place some men upon the bridge,
With bows and darts, to shoot at them they see,
And sink them in the river as they swim.

= arrows.

Guise. 'Tis well-advised, Dumaine; go see it straight be done.

= immediately.

[*Exit Dumaine.*]

And in the meantime, my lord, could we devise

= ie. find a way, come up with a scheme.

To get those pedants from the King Navarre,
That are tutors to him and the prince of Condé −

Anjou. For that, let me alone: − cousin, stay you here,

And when you see me in, then follow hard.

[*All but Anjou retire*.]

= teachers.

108: once again, Anjou volunteers for the most grisly of jobs.

= enter (the house). = ie. "close behind me."

111: all but Anjou step back or to the side of the main stage, leaving Anjou front and center, as the scene setting changes.

SCENE XI.

Navarre's Lodging in the Louvre.
24 August 1572.

Still on Stage: *Anjou in foreground; Guise, Gonzago, Retes, and Mountsorrell in the background.*

Anjou knocketh at the door; and enter the King of Navarre and Prince of Condé, with their Schoolmasters.

= tutors, instructors; we remember that Navarre is only 19 years old at this time, and Condé 20.

Anjou. How now, my lords, how fare you?

Nav. My lord, they say
That all the Protestants are massacred.

Anjou. Ay, so they are; but yet, what remedy?
I have done what I could to stay this broil.

= "what can be done?"
= put a stop to. = tumult.

Nav. But yet, my lord, the report doth run,
That you were one that made this massacre.

= ie. "one of those behind".

Anjou. Who I? You are deceived; I rose but now.

= "I only just now got out of bed."

Guise, Gonzago, Retes, Mountsorrell, and Soldiers come forward.

Guise. Murder the Huguenots, take those pedants hence!

= "out of here."

Nav. Thou traitor, Guise, lay off thy bloody hands!

19: Guise's men have seized the instructors.

Condé. Come, let us go tell the King

Exeunt the Prince of Condé and the King of Navarre.

Guise. Come sirs,
I'll whip you to death with my poniard's point.

26: Guise morbidly refers to the corporal punishment that was a typical feature of Elizabethan-era schools.
poniard's = dagger's.

Stabs the Schoolmasters, who die.

Anjou. Away with them both!

Exeunt Anjou and with Soldiers carrying bodies.

Guise. And now, sirs, for this night let our fury stay.

Yet will we not that the massacre shall end. −

34: "it is time to put an end to our frenzy for the rest of the night."
= "I do not desire"; note how Guise, with his pretensions to the crown, assumes the royal "we".

Gonzago, post you to Orleans,

Retes to Dieppe, Mountsorrell unto Rouen,

36: ***post you*** = hurry.
Orleans = city on the Seine, 75 miles south-west of Paris.
37: ***Dieppe*** = French coastal town on the English Channel.
Rouen = city 85 miles north-west of Paris.
Orleans and Rouen are usually listed among the cities to which rioting spread from Paris, but not Dieppe.

And spare not one that you suspect of heresy.
And now stay

= ie. no one.
= ie. put a stop to the ringing of.

That bell, that to the devil's matins rings.

40: the bell that peals to call witches to a service of satanic worship;[1] a grim metaphor for the Catholics who have been called by the bell to commit mass-murder.
matins = a night-service of the Catholic Church.

Now every man put off his burgonet,
And so convey him closely to his bed.

= "remove his helmet".
= himself. = secretly.

Exeunt.

Navarre and Condé Avoid Execution: *the King of Navarre and Prince of Condé were fortunate to not have been put to death themselves; instead, they were taken to Charles, who promised them their lives if they renounced their heretical beliefs and returned to the Catholic fold. The pair soon acquiesced, but remained permanently under guard as prisoners of the court.*

A Summing Up of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day: *in Paris alone, over three days of unrestrained violence, 2000-3000 people are thought to have been slain. The rioting also spread to a number of other French cities, including Toulouse, Rouen and Lyon. By the time the violence against the Protestants had completely exhausted itself in October, perhaps 12,000 persons had been murdered across the nation.*

The Chronology's summary of the week's work in Paris, starting from Sunday 24 August, is gruesome and chilling:

"During which time were murthered five thousand persons...amongst others five or six hundred gentlemen (ie. members of the upper classes). Neither the aged, nor the tender infants were spared, nor women great with child, some were stabbed, others hewn in pieces with halberts (ie. pole weapons), or shot with muskets or pistols, some thrown head-long out of the windows, many dragged to the river, and diverse had their brains beaten out with mallets, clubs, or such like instruments."[21]

SCENE XII.

An Apartment in the Louvre.
1573

Scene XII: a year has passed since the Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

Enter Anjou, with two Lords of Poland.

Entering Characters: the ***Polish Lords*** represent the Electors of Poland, who have voted to offer the crown of their land to ***the Duke of Anjou***.

The independent Kingdom of Poland had reached the pinnacle of its power in the first half of the 16th century, under the monarchs Sigismund I and his son Sigismund II; but the latter had died in July 1572 without a male heir, and so the country's nobles were forced to search for a successor.

On 11 May 1573 at Warsaw, having been well-bribed, the Electors voted to offer the Polish throne to France's Duke of Anjou.[15]

Anjou. My lords of Poland, I must needs confess,
= ie. must admit.

The offer of your Prince Electors far
Beyond the reach of my deserts;
2-3: Anjou modestly acknowledges that he has done nothing to merit the offer of the throne of Poland.

For Poland is, as I have been informed,
A martial people, worthy such a king
= deserving.

As hath sufficient counsel in himself
6: ie. who has the confidence to decide things for himself, ie. to not be dependent on the advice of others.

To lighten doubts, and frustrate subtle foes;
7: to mitigate any doubts people will have of him, and successfully take on those who oppose him, though not openly.

And such a king, whom practice long hath taught
To please himself with manage of the wars,
8-9: ***whom…the wars*** = ie. who is experienced in warfare.
= direction or command (of the armies).

The greatest wars within our Christian bounds, –
= lands.

I mean our wars against the Muscovites,
And, on the other side, against the Turk,
11-12: the Russians and Turks had been traditional enemies of the Poles; happily, at this moment in time, neither power was a threat: Russia's Ivan the Terrible had recently concluded a truce with Poland, and the Turks, having recently been crushed in a major sea battle at Lepanto (7 October 1571), were still trying to regain their footing in Europe.[15]

our (line 11) = some editors emend ***our*** to ***your***.[8]

Rich princes both, and mighty emperors.
Yet, by my brother Charles, our King of France,
And by his grace's council, it is thought
= the king's advisors.

That, if I undertake to wear the crown
Of Poland, it may prejudice their hope
17-18: ***it may…of France*** = Anjou is concerned that if he commits himself to the throne of Poland, and Charles dies childless, that Anjou, who as Charles' next youngest brother, and hence the heir-presumptive, would not be able to assume the throne of France.

inheritance = a trisyllable: *in-HER-'tance*.

Of my inheritance to the crown of France;

For, if th' Almighty take my brother hence,
By due descent the regal seat is mine.
= ie. legal right.

With Poland, therefore, must I covenant thus, –
= ie. stipulate.

That if, by death of Charles, the diadem
Of France be cast on me, then, with your leaves,
= (pre-granted) permission.

I may retire me to my native home.
If your commission serve to warrant this,
25: "if you, as representatives of the Polish Electors, have it in your power to grant this term".

I thankfully shall undertake the charge
= responsibility.

Of you and yours, and carefully maintain
The wealth and safety of your kingdom's right.

1st Lord. All this, and more, your highness shall command
For Poland's crown and kingly diadem.

Anjou. Then, come, my lords, let's go.

Exeunt.

30-31: the Poles agree to Anjou's terms.

The French King of Poland: *Anjou did not leave for Poland to take up his new post until January 1574, arriving at Cracow in February. His stay in central Europe, however, would prove to be a brief one*.

SCENE XIII.

The Neightbourhood of Paris.
August 1572

Scene XIII: we return briefly to Paris in the aftermath of the Massacre. Such on-stage intertwining of historical events, which in reality took place months or often years apart in real time, but are made to seem to occur simultaneously or immediately after one another, was a hallmark of history plays. Such mingling and rapid back-and-forth allowed the action to move swiftly and the intensity to increase dramatically.

Enter two Men with the Admiral's body.

1st Man. Now, sirrah, what shall we do with the Admiral?

= used here as a familiar form of address.

2nd Man. Why, let us burn him for an heretic.

= ie. "for his being".

1st Man. O, no! his body will infect the fire, and the fire the air, and so we shall be poisoned with him.

= ie. "fire will corrupt".

2nd Man. What shall we do, then?

1st Man. Let's throw him into the river.

2nd Man. O, 'twill corrupt the water, and the water the fish, and by the fish ourselves, when we eat them!

= printed as ***cate*** in the octavo, emended by Dyce.

1st Man. Then throw him into the ditch.

2nd Man. No, no. To decide all doubts, be ruled by me: let's hang him here upon this tree.

17: ***decide*** = resolve.
17-18: ***be ruled by me*** = "let's do as I suggest."

1st Man. Agreed.

[*They hang up the body on a tree, and then exeunt.*]

1-22: we note that the events depicted in this scene are not consistent with Anjou's instructions at Scene VI.79-81 to hang the Admiral's body on a gallows at Mount Faucon.

[*Enter Guise, Catherine the Queen-Mother, and the Cardinal of Lorraine, with Attendants*.]

Entering Characters: the Catholic leaders enter the scene.
The ***Cardinal of Lorraine*** is ***Louis***, the younger brother of the Dukes of Guise and Dumaine.

Guise. Now, madam, how like you our lusty Admiral?

= lively or merry.

Cath. Believe me, Guise, he becomes the place so well
As I could long ere this have wished him there.
But come, let's walk aside; the air's not very sweet.

= befits. = ie. hanging from a tree.
= ie. before now.

Guise. No, by my faith, madam. −
Sirs, take him away, and throw him in some ditch.

[*The Attendants bear off the Admiral's body.*]

And now, madam, as I understand,
There are a hundred Huguenots and more,
Which in the woods do hold their synagogue,

= assembly or place of worship;[1] Bennett suggests that ***synagogue*** is used contemptuously.

And daily meet about this time of day;
And thither will I, to put them to the sword.

= "I will go to there".

Cath. Do so, sweet Guise; let us delay no time;
For, if these stragglers gather head again,

= "assemble their forces".[4]

And disperse themselves throughout the realm of France,
It will be hard for us to work their deaths.
Be gone; delay no time, sweet Guise.

Guise. Madam,
I go as whirlwinds rage before a storm.

Exit Guise.

Cath. My lord of Lorraine, have you marked of late

= noticed recently.

How Charles our son begins for to lament

= ie. to lament.

For the late night's-work which my lord of Guise
Did make in Paris amongst the Huguenots?

57-58: a grimly humorous euphemism for the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

Card. Madam, I have heard him solemnly vow,
With the rebellious King of Navarre,
For to revenge their deaths upon us all.

= ie. to revenge.[1]

Cath. Ay, but, my lord, let me alone for that;
For Catherine must have her will in France:
As I do live, so surely shall he die,

66: did Catherine actually just announce her attention to kill the king?

And Henry then shall wear the diadem.

= ie. Anjou, now the King of Poland.

And, if he grudge or cross his mother's will,

= ie. Anjou. = begrudges or objects to. = thwarts.

I'll disinherit him and all the rest;
For I'll rule France, but they shall wear the crown,

70: regardless of who is king, Catherine intends to hold the real power behind the throne.

And, if they storm, I then may pull them down.
Come, my lord, let us go.

71: "and if the king (whoever it is) complains, I'll destroy him too."
storm = rage, complain with vehemence.[1]

Exeunt.

SCENE XIV.

A Wood.
c. 1572.

Enter five or six Protestants, with books, and kneel together. Then enter Guise and others.

Entering Characters: several Protestants silently enter the stage in a Dumb-Show.[8]

Guise. Down with the Huguenots! Murder them!

1st Prot. O Monsieur de Guise, hear me but speak!

Guise. No, villain; that tongue of thine,
That hath blasphemed the holy Church of Rome,
Shall drive no plaints into the Guise's ears,
To make the justice of my heart relent. −
Tuès, tuès, tuès! let none escape.

They kill the Protestants.

So, drag them away.

Exeunt with the bodies.

7-8: Guise remains deaf to any wailing or laments (***plaints***)[1] on the part of his victims.

SCENE XV.

An Apartment in the Castle of Vincennes.
30 May 1574.

Scene XV: the failing Charles IX has retired to the chateau in Paris' eastern suburb of Vincennes.

Enter King Charles, supported by the King of Navarre and Epernoun; Catherine the Queen-Mother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, Pleshé, and Attendants.

Entering Characters: ***King Charles*** feels ill, and must be supported by his companions as he enters the stage.

Epernoun is Jean Louis de Nagaret de la Valette, a nobleman who would be made Duke of Epernoun in 1581. Epernoun was a radical Catholic who would also go on to become one of Henry III's favourites.

Pleshé is Philippe Du-Plessis-Mornay,[3] a Huguenot leader.[4] A partisan of Henry of Navarre, Pleshé served his king "with untiring zeal and fidelity" (Bennett, p. 215).

K. Char. O, let me stay, and rest me here a while,

1: ***stay*** = stop.

rest me = ie. rest; a good example of the figure of speech known as the *ethical dative*, in which the extra ***me*** adds emphasis, and also helps fill out the metre of the line.

A griping pain hath ceased upon my heart;
A sudden pang, the messenger of death.

= gripping. = "seized", an alternate form.

Cath. O, say not so! thou kill'st thy mother's heart.

5: one wonders if Catherine's tears are genuine, given her concluding speech of Scene XIII, in which she breezily threatened to eliminate any of her kingly sons who thwarted her ambitions.

K. Char. I must say so; pain forceth me complain.

Nav. Comfort yourself, my lord, and have no doubt
But God will sure restore you to your health.

9-10: *while Navarre is portrayed here as a friend of Charles, in reality he was still a prisoner of the king in 1574, as he had been since 1572, and would remain so for two more years.*

K. Char. O, no, my loving brother of Navarre!
I have deserved a scourge, I must confess;

= Charles deserves punishment (a ***scourge***)[2] for his sanctioning the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

Yet is their patience of another sort

14-15: "the feelings (***patience***) of those by whom I deserve

Than to misdo the welfare of their king:

to be scourged - the Protestants - will keep them from murdering their king."[4,8]

misdo = ie. do injury to.

16 God grant my nearest friends may prove no worse!

16: "God grant that my nearest relations do not treat me worse than those who should be my enemies!"[8]

O, hold me up! my sight begins to fail,
18 My sinews shrink, my brains turn upside down;
My heart doth break: I faint and die.

= compare the Old Queen of Navarre's complaint at Scene III.35 after she was poisoned: "*my brainpan breaks*."

20

Charles dies.

22

Cath. What, art thou dead, sweet son? speak to thy mother!
24 O, no, his soul is fled from out his breast,
And he nor hears nor sees us what we do! −

= neither; ***nor…nor*** was a common construction.

26 My lords, what resteth there now for to be done?

= remains.

But that we presently dispatch ambassadors
28 To Poland, to call Henry back again,
To wear his brother's crown and dignity? −
30 Epernoun, go see it presently be done,
And bid him come without delay to us.

32

Eper. Madam, I will.

34

Exit Epernoun.

36

Cath. And now, my lords, after these funerals be done,

= funeral rites.

38 We will, with all the speed we can, provide
For Henry's coronation from Polony.

= alternate form of ***Poland***.

40 Come, let us take his body hence.

42 [*The body of King Charles is borne out;*
and exeunt all except the King of Navarre and Pleshé.]

44

Nav. And now, Navarre, whilst that these broils do last,

45: ***Navarre*** = Dyce emends to ***Pleshé***.

whilst…last = "so long as this turmoil continues".

46 My opportunity may serve me fit
To steal from France, and hie me to my home.

47: ***steal from*** = secretly leave.

hie me = "hurry myself", another good example of the ethical dative.

to my home = ie. to Navarre.

48 For here's no safety in the realm for me.
And now that Henry is called from Poland,

= a likely trisyllable: *HEN-er-y*. = ie. recalled.

50 It is my due, by just succession;

50: something has dropped out here, as this line doesn't really logically follow the previous one.

Navarre seems to be mulling over his bifurcated kingdom: historical Navarre had actually extended from France across the Pyrenees and into the Spain. Henry happily ruled the northern and still independent French half of Navarre, but southern Navarre had ben annexed by Spain in 1516, and remained in Spain's possession.

Pleshé follows up on Navarre's musing at lines 61-64 below.

And therefore, as speedily as I can perform,
52 I'll muster up an army secretly,
For fear that Guise, joined with the King of Spain,

Might seem to cross me in mine enterprise.

But God, that always doth defend the right,
Will shew his mercy, and preserve us still.

Pleshé. The virtues of our true religiön
Cannot but march, with many graces more,
Whose army shall discomfort all your foes,

And, at the length, in Pampelonia crown
(In spite of Spain, and all the popish power,
That holds it from your highness wrongfully)
Your majesty her rightful lord and sovereign.

Nav. Truth, Pleshé; and God so prosper me in all,
As I intend to labour for the truth,
And true profession of his holy word!
Come, Pleshé, let's away whilst time doth serve.

Exeunt.

54: ***seem*** = Dyce emends to ***seek***.
cross = thwart.
mine enterprise = "my plans".

= show. = ie. "keep me from harm always (***still***)."

= "cannot help but thrive".
= dishearten.[2]

61-64: Henry of Navarre and Pleshé have in mind a plan to raise an army and recapture the Spanish part of their kingdom, now occupied by Philip, so that Henry can be properly crowned in his nation's capital ***Pampelonia***, which lies in that southern half.
at the length (line 61) = in the end.
crown (line 61) = a verb, the direct object of which is ***Your majesty*** in line 64.

= affirmation or declaration.[1]
= "let's get away while there is still an opportunity to do so safely."
time doth serve = "the moment is favourable".

The Death of Charles: *Charles IX passed away on 30 May 1574 without issue, precipitating the need to recall his brother Anjou from the east only four months after the new Polish king had arrived in Cracow. Historians acknowledge that Charles' guilt over the 1572 Massacre may have played a role in the monarch's declining health, but Baumgartner points out that Charles was also known to have suffered from consumption, perhaps tuberculosis.*

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1911) writes of Charles, "undermined by fever, at the age of twenty he had the appearance of an old man, and night and day he was haunted by nightmares."

Anjou Escapes Poland: *the Poles were not at all pleased when Anjou announced he was returning home to ascend the throne of France. The Encyclopedia Britannica recounts that "at midnight on the 18th of June 1574, he literally fled from Poland, pursued to the frontier by his indignant and bewildered subjects."*

Navarre Escapes Paris: *Henry, the King of Navarre, finally escaped royal custody in 1576, four years after the Massacre. He of course immediately returned to the Protestant faith, and was appointed protector of the Calvinist government which was running the Huguenot-controlled areas of south-central France.*

SCENE XVI.

Reims.
13 February 1575

Scene XVI: Anjou has just been crowned King of France at the cathedral at Reims, the traditional location for the nation's coronation ceremonies.[10] Bennett suggests the

Trumpets sound within, and then a cry of "Vive le Roi" two or three times.

Enter Anjou, crowned as King Henry the Third; Catherine the Queen-Mother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, Guise, Epernoun, Mugeroun, the Cutpurse, and others.

scene is situated in an "open place".

Entering Characters: France's royalty and nobility gather for the crowning of the new king, ***Henry III*** (now formerly the Duke of Anjou).

The ***Dukes of Epernoun*** and ***Mugeroun*** are members of a new clique at the court, a group of the king's favourites who came to be known as *les mignons*, or ***minions*** in English. More about them later. Epernoun we met in Scene XV; ***Mugeroun*** is one Louis de Maugiron.[3]

Marlowe adds a thief (***the Cutpurse***) into the scene to demonstrate immediately the favouritism Henry III will show his minions: a ***cutpurse*** is a robber of purses: in this period, men carried their money in a purse which was tied to their girdles, or belts; a cutpurse is so-called because he could steal the purse by cutting its strings.

All. *Vive le Roi, Vive le Roi!*

A flourish of trumpets.

Cath. Welcome from Poland, Henry, once again!
Welcome to France, thy father's royal seat!
Here hast thou a country void of fears,
A warlike people to maintain thy right,
A watchful senate for ordaining laws,
A loving mother to preserve thy state,
And all things that a king may wish besides;
All this, and more, hath Henry with his crown.

= Catherine alludes to her late husband, King Henry II.

= ie. parliament.

Card. And long may Henry enjoy all this, and more!

All. *Vive le Roi, Vive le Roi!*

A flourish of trumpets.

K. Henry. Thanks to you all. The guider of all crowns
Grant that our deeds may well deserve your loves!
And so they shall, if fortune speed my will,
And yield your thoughts to height of my deserts. −

20*ff*: from this point forward, ***Anjou*** will be referred to as ***Henry***.

The guider…crowns = ie. God.

= "brings success to my desires".

23: "and you consequently regard me in a way which is commensurate with what I deserve".

What says our minions? Think they Henry's heart
Will not both harbour love and majesty?

24: ***What says our minions*** = "and what do my favourites (***minions***) think of all of this?" Henry addresses Mugeroun and Epernoun, his minions, those men whom Henry considered his companions in play, but rather than shed them on his ascent to the throne, has brought them to court with him; the continued presence of the minions signals to the audience that Henry can be expected to be immature and irresponsible.

24-25: ***Think they...majesty*** = Henry asks if his minions worry that now that he is king, he will shun them.

harbour = ie. be the seat of.

Put off that fear, they are already joined:

26: "you need not worry, I have already decided that I will continue to be your close friend and be King of France at the same time."

No person, place, or time, or circumstance,
Shall slack my love's affection from his bent.
= ie. slacken, ie. lessen. = its path.

As now you are, so shall you still persist,
Removeless from the favors of your king.

29-30: Henry assures his minions that he will never cease to show them favour.

Removeless = that cannot be removed, constant.[1]

Muger. We know that noble minds change not their thoughts
For wearing of a crown, in that your grace
= "just because they wear".

Hath worn the Poland diadem, before
You were invested in the crown of France.

K. Henry. I tell thee, Mugeroun, we will be friends,
And fellows too, whatever storms arise.
= companions, comrades.

Muger. Then may it please your majesty to give me leave
= permission.

To punish those that do profane this holy feast.

K. Henry. How mean'st thou that?

Mugeroun cuts off the Cutpurse's ear,
for cutting the gold buttons off his cloak.

Cutpurse. O Lord, mine ear!

Muger. Come, sir, give me my buttons, and here's your ear.

Guise. Sirrah, take him away.

52: Guise orders Mugeroun's arrest.

K. Henry. Hands off, good fellow; I will be his bail

54-55: ***Hands off…offense*** = Henry basically orders that Mugeroun shall go unpunished for his assault on the thief.

For this offense − Go, sirrah, work no more
Till this our coronation day be past. −

55-56: ***Go, sirrah…past*** = Henry dismisses the mutilated Cutpurse.

And now our solemn rites of coronation done,
What now remains, but for a while to feast,

58-61: Henry again demonstrates his unfitness for office by announcing his intent to engage in play, despite the escalating crises of France.

And spend some days in barriers, tourney, tilt,

60: ***barriers*** = a martial exercise in which teams of men fight each other with short swords within an area separated from the spectators.[14]

tourney = another martial exercise in which "a number of combatants, mounted and in armour, and divided into two parties, fought with blunted weapons and under certain restrictions, for the prize of valour" (OED).

tilt = jousting, ie. the familiar sport of two men riding at each other, each trying to unhorse the other with the use of a long lance.

And like disports, such as do fit the court?
= similar games or amusements.[1]

Let's go, my lords; our dinner stays for us.
= "is waiting".

[*Exeunt all except Catherine the Queen-Mother*
and the Cardinal of Lorraine.]

Cath. My Lord Cardinal of Lorraine, tell me,
How likes your grace my son's pleasantness?

67: "what do you think of my son the king's humour or merriness?"

His mind, you see, runs on his minions,
And all his Heaven is to delight himself;

= ie. is focused on.
69: all Henry cares about is enjoying himself.
all his Heaven is = ie. "his greatest joy is".

And, whilst he sleeps securely thus in ease,
Thy brother Guise and we may now provide
To plant ourselves with such authority
As not a man may live without our leaves.

71-73: with Henry completely ignoring the affairs of state, Catherine and Guise may seize (or continue to exercise) effective power and run France as they wish.
we (line 71) = possibly meaning "I".
leaves (line 73) = permissions.

Then shall the Catholic faith of Rome
Flourish in France, and none deny the same.

= a disyllable here: *CATH-'lic*.
= the sense is, "no one will be able to do anything about it."

Card. Madam, as in secrecy I was told,
My brother Guise hath gathered a power of men,

= an army.

Which are, he saith, to kill the Puritans;
But 'tis the house of Bourbon that he means.

79-80: "with which Guise says he intends to destroy the Protestants, by whom he really means the King of Navarre and his family."
Puritans = the name the English gave to their own subset of Protestants who felt that the religious reformation undertaken by Elizabeth was not rigorous enough.

Now, madam, must you insinuate with the king,
And tell him that 'tis for his country's good,
And common profit of religiön.

= "ingratiate yourself".

= benefit. = ie. the true religion.

Cath. Tush, man, let me alone with him,
To work the way to bring this thing to pass;
And, if he do deny what I do say,
I'll despatch him with his brother presently,

= ie. "I know how to handle the king".

= refuses to follow Catherine's guidance.
88: "I'll kill him off, so he may join his dead brother Charles without delay." Is Catherine hinting that she poisoned Charles?

And then shall Monsieur wear the diadem.
Tush, all shall die unless I have my will;
For, while she lives, Catherine will be queen.
Come, my lord, let us go seek the Guise,
And then determine of this enterprise.

89: if Catherine dispatches Henry, then her youngest son Francois (***Monsieur***) will become king.

= ie. plan.

Exeunt.

END OF PART ONE: thus concludes the unofficial first half of the play, which depicted the last years of the reign of Charles IX (1572-1575). The remainder of the play focuses primarily on the last year or so of the reign of Henry III (1587-1588).

(The events of Scenes XVII and XVIII, which deal with the episode of Guise's cheating wife, took place in 1577-8; these interesting but historically insignificant scenes may be thought to bridge the two halves of the play.)

THE REIGN OF HENRY III FROM 1575 To 1585.

Henry III's Minions: *the new King of France was sophisticated and bright, but his attempts to reform the legal and tax systems were doomed to failure in part because of the anarchy that persisted throughout his reign, but mostly because Henry did not possess a strong enough personality to see through any project he began.*

Further hampering Henry's effectiveness was the questionable reputation the king developed for his unseemly attachment to his group of royal favourites, known as ***les mignons****, or* ***minions*** *in English. Baumgartner writes that Henry became hated in Paris for "his often bizarre behavior and extravagance toward his mignons", on whom he lavished money, estates and titles, and with whom he would frequently ride through the streets of Paris at night practicing mischief.*

The childless Henry was widely believed to be homosexual. The Encyclopedia Britannica (1911) adds that "Henry dressed himself in women's clothes, made a collection of little dogs and hid in the cellars when it thundered. The disgust aroused by the vices and effeminacy of the king increased the popularity of Henry of Guise."

Growth of Huguenot Power (1576-1577): *the Huguenots had grown strong enough by the mid-1570's that they were able to create what was for practical purposes an independent state within France (their strength received a great boost when the party of Catholic moderates, known as the* ***Politiques****, which were led by none other than the king's youngest brother and heir-presumptive,* ***Francois, the Duke of Alencon****, joined the Huguenots as allies).*

Faced with such strong opposition, Henry had no choice but to negotiate a new treaty with the Huguenots, and the resulting ***Peace of Monsieur*** *(1576) granted the Huguenots the most favourable settlement they had received to date.*

The Catholic League: *a Catholic backlash to the new concessions ensued immediately. Catholic zealots organized a reactionary party known as the* ***Catholic League****, and Guise was elected to head it.*

Henry, faced with yet another threat to his authority, decided to renew the war on the Huguenots, and in what turned out to be a brilliant strategy, declared himself the leader of the Catholic League! The move successfully neutralized the League, but in an unintended way: the Leaguers (as they were called) were so unenthusiastic about being led by the king, that they actually disbanded.

Some desultory fighting in 1577 led to another treaty, the Peace of Bergerac, after which an uneasy peace settled over France for the next seven years.

INTRODUCTION TO PART II (1585-1588).

The event which precipitated the crises of the remaining years of Henry's reign was the death of the heir-presumptive, the youngest son of Catherine, Henry's brother Francois, the Duke of Alencon, on 10 June 1584.

Salic Law and the French Succession: *since the early 14th century, the French succession was governed by the rules prescribed by what is familiarly known as Salic Law, which required that the crown could only pass to a new king through male relatives; should a king not have a male descendent, the throne "passed to the closest male relative who could trace his lineage in the male-line (father to eldest son) to a kingly ancestor common to himself and the reigning king" (Baumgartner, p. 222).*

This meant that the King of Navarre was now heir-presumptive to the throne; though Navarre's blood relationship to Henry was reckoned to be of 22 degrees, every other male who was more closely related to the king - and there were dozens - could only claim their kinship through female family members!

Revival of the Catholic League (1585): *the idea that the Protestant Navarre would likely be the next King of France (since Henry seemed unlikely to produce an heir) was of course intolerable to France's radical Catholics, and the result was the resurrection of the* ***Catholic League****. Guise, once again placed at the head of the organization, and supported financially by* ***Philip of Spain****, raised a large army in 1585, with which he was able to take control of much of eastern France.*

Henry, trying to remain relevant, allied himself with the League as he had done a decade earlier; he revoked all the rights and privileges that had been previously granted to France's Protestants, and declared that Navarre would not be permitted to succeed him on the throne (the Catholics' choice for the next king was ***Charles, Cardinal of Bourbon****, an uncle of Navarre's); for extra good measure,* ***Pope Sixtus V*** *excommunicated Navarre and Condé as relapsed heretics.*

Navarre Prepares for War: *the* ***King of Navarre****, now only one life away from obtaining the grand prize of the French monarchy, was of course not one to passively accept these new developments; having cut his teeth leading troops since he had escaped captivity in Paris, the seasoned commander raised his own army, and prepared to face the army of Henry and Guise.*

The result was the dramatically, and entertainingly, named ***War of the Three Henrys.***

SCENE XVII.

An Apartment in the House of the Duke of Guise.
c. 1577-8.

Enter the Duchess of Guise and her Maid.

Entering Characters: we meet the Duke of Guise's wife, ***Catherine of Cleves*** (1548-1633).

Duch. Go fetch me pen and ink, −

Maid. I will, madam.

Duch. That I may write unto my dearest lord.

Exit Maid.

Sweet Mugeroun, 'tis he that hath my heart,

9*f*: oh my! the duchess is in love with Mugeroun, the Catholic favourite of the king!

And Guise usurps it 'cause I am his wife.
Fain would I find some means to speak with him,

= "I would like to".

But cannot, and therefore am enforced to write,
That he may come and meet me in some place,
Where we may one enjoy the other's sight.

The Duchess' Lover: *Guise's wife actually had an affair with one Saint-Mégrin, another of the king's favourites, and not Mugeroun.*

Re-enter the Maid, with pen, ink, and paper.

So, set it down, and leave me to myself.

[*Exit Maid.*]

[*The Duchess writes.*]

O, would to God, this quill that here doth write,

24-26: the duchess wishes she had the ability to write an effective love letter.
would = "I wish".

Had late been plucked from out fair Cupid's wing,

25: ***late*** = recently.
Cupid's wing = ***Cupid*** is the cherubic Roman god of love, who was usually portrayed as possessing a pair of ***wings***.

That it might print these lines within his heart!

= imprint, ie. stamp. = ie. Mugeroun's.

Enter Guise.

Guise. What, all alone, my love? And writing too?
I prithee, say to whom thou writes?

= "please", an abbreviation for "I pray thee". = ie. "tell me".

Duch. To such

33-35: the duchess pretends she is writing to a female friend.

A one my lord, as, when she reads my lines,
Will laugh, I fear me, at their good array.

35: an unclear line; Bennett tentatively suggests the duchess is claiming that the letter's recipient will laugh because of the contrast between her frivolous thoughts and the orderly arrangement (***array***) of her lines.

Guise. I pray thee, let me see.

Duch. O, no, my lord; a woman only must
Partake the secrets of my heart.

Guise. But, madam, I must see.

[*Guise takes the paper.*]

Are these your secrets that no man must know?

Duch. O, pardon me, my lord!

Guise. Thou trothless and unjust, what lines are these?
Am I grown old, or is thy lust grown young?
Or hath my love been so obscured in thee,

= unfaithful and wicked.[1,2]

= literally "hidden in darkness", but figuratively meaning "incomprehensible because of its complexity";[1] Guise continues with this difficult metaphor in the next line.

That others need to comment on my text?

53: Guise alludes to the ancient tradition of scholars writing helpful interpretive commentary in the margins of obscure texts.

Is all my love forgot, which held thee dear?
Ay, dearer than the apple of mine eye?

= ***apple***, in this still-current phrase, refers to the pupil of one's eye.

Is Guise's glory but a cloudy mist,
In sight and judgment of thy lustful eye?

56-57: ***but a cloudy…eye*** = ie. something she cannot see.

Mor du! wert not the fruit within thy womb,

58: ***Mor du*** = usually emended to ***Mort Dieu***, meaning "God's death", a French oath; Shakespeare used the same form (***mor du***) in ***Henry V***.

wert not…womb = ie. "if you were not pregnant at this moment".

Of whose increase I set some longing hope,

= ie. on. = growth. = expectation (of an heir).

This wrathful hand should strike thee to the heart.
Hence, strumpet! hide thy head for shame;

= "get out of here!"

And fly my presence, if thou look to live!

= flee.

[*Exit Duchess.*]

O wicked sex, perjured and unjust!

= because she violated her marriage oaths. = sinful.[1]

Now do I see that from the very first
Her eyes and looks sowed seeds of perjury.
But villain, he, to whom these lines should go,
Shall buy her love even with his dearest blood.

= almost always a monosyllable, as here: *e'en*.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE XVIII.

Navarre or Southern France.
c. 1586-1587

Scene XVIII: Bennett again suggests the setting to be "an open place."

Historically, Navarre has raised an army in response to a number of developments:

(1) he has been declared ineligible for the succession to the crown of France because he is a Protestant, even though he is the present heir-presumptive under Salic Law;

(2) Guise has mustered a large army, to which Henry has allied himself, and, by taking financial responsibility for maintaining the army, has converted it in one fell swoop into a royal army.

Enter the King of Navarre, Pleshé, Bartus, and train, with drums and trumpets.

Entering Characters: Navarre enters with his two lieutenants, ***Pleshé*** and ***Bartus***. Bennett proposes that Bartus (who makes his first appearance in the play here) corresponds in real life to the well-known French poet ***Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas*** (1544-1590), who was known to have served Navarre for much of his life.

train = attendants.

Nav. My lords, sith in a quarrel just and right
We undertake to manage these our wars
Against the proud disturbers of the faith,
(I mean the Guise, the Pope, and King of Spain,
Who set themselves to tread us under foot,
And rent our true religion from this land;

= since. = ie. this conflict.
= conduct.[1]
3: ie. against the Catholics.
= tear, ie. remove.

But for you know our quarrel is no more
But to defend their strange inventiöns,
Which they will put us to with sword and fire,)
We must with resolute minds resolve to fight,
In honour of our God, and country's good.
Spain is the council-chamber of the Pope,
Spain is the place where he makes peace and war;

7-8: "but because (***but for***) you know our goal in this war is no more than to defend ourselves against the Catholics' exceptional (***strange***)[2] designs."

defend = repel or hinder.[1,19]

inventions = perhaps referring to religious innovations.[8]

= a disyllable: *RES-'lute*.

12-13: the Spanish act as the pope's military arm for checking the growth of Protestantism.

And Guise for Spain hath now incensed the king
To send his power to meet us in the field.

= on behalf of.[8] = incited.[3]
= army.

Bart. Then in this bloody brunt they may behold
The sole endeavour of your princely care,
To plant the true succession of the faith,
In spite of Spain and all his heresies.

= military assault.[1]
18: "the single aim of your kingly concern".

19: to create conditions in which Protestantism can blossom, and perhaps even become the official religion of France; but Bartus may also have in mind the legitimate ***succession*** of Navarre to the throne of France.

= ie. the king of Spain.

Nav. The power of vengeance now encamps itself
Upon the haughty mountains of my breast;
Plays with her gory colours of revenge,
Whom I respect as leaves of boasting green,
That change their colour when the winter comes,
When I shall vaunt as victor in revenge.

= great amount;[1] here a monosyllable.
= meaning both proud and imposing.[1]

24-27: Navarre uses a season-changing metaphor to describe his growing feelings of vengeance, comparing himself to the leaves of a tree which proudly display their brilliant colours as summer turns to autumn.

respect as (line 25) = consider to be like.

vaunt (line 27) = boast, brag.

Enter a Messenger.

How now, sirrah! what news?

Mess. My lord, as by our scouts we understand,
A mighty army comes from France with speed;
Which are already mustered in the land,
And means to meet your highness in the field.

= from.
= ie. King Henry.

Nav. In God's name, let them come!
This is the Guise that hath incensed the king
To levy arms, and make these civil broils. = disturbances, ie. war.
But canst thou tell who is their general?

Mess. Not yet, my lord, for thereon do they stay; = "the royal army has delayed moving on us until the king decides who will command it."

But, as report doth go, the Duke of Joyeux
Hath made great suit unto the king therefore. 44-45: it is rumoured that the Duke of Joyeux has been begging Henry to appoint him commander of the army.

Nav. It will not countervail his pains, I hope. 47: Navarre hopes that the result of Joyeux' petition will not equal the efforts (***pains***) he put into it, ie. that Joyeux's strenuous efforts to be appointed to lead the army will come to naught.
countervail = match, balance.[1]

I would the Guise in his stead might have come! = wish. = place.
But he doth lurk within his drowsy couch, = ie. Guise remains in hiding. = sleep-inducing.[2]
And makes his footstool on security: 50: ie. on his couch, the lazing Guise remains safe while others are out fighting.

So he be safe, he cares not what becomes
Of king or country; no, not for them both. = ie. either of them.
But come, my lords, let us away with speed,
And place ourselves in order for the fight. = array.

Exeunt. **King Henry's Subtle Strategy:** *actually, Guise was not at all sitting out the military action of 1587; instead, he was being set-up by Henry, who had devised a clever plan to neutralize both Guise and Navarre:*
(1) Henry sent the main force of what was now the royal army under the Duke of Joyeux to crush Navarre's army; and
(2) Henry sent out Guise in command of an undersized army with which to face a large body of German Protestants who had invaded France; Henry expected the Germans to defeat Guise.

SCENE XIX.

An Apartment in the Louvre.
Spring 1587.

Enter King Henry, Guise, Epernoun and Joyeux. **Entering Characters:** ***Joyeux*** is ***Anne de Joyeuse (Joyeux)***, one of the king's minions. Joyeux, an experienced commander, had led a campaign against the Huguenots in 1586 at Guienne.

K. Henry. My sweet Joyeux, I make thee general
Of all my army, now in readiness
To march against the rebellious king Navarre.
At thy request I am content thou go, = ie. "to let you go join the army of France as its commanding general".

Although my love to thee can hardly suffer['t], = "bear it".
Regarding still the danger of thy life. = ie. "as I continuously worry about".

Joy. Thanks to your majesty: and, so I take my leave. −

Farewell to my lord of Guise and Epernoun.

Guise. Health and hearty farewell to my Lord Joyeux.

Exit Joyeux.

K. Henry. So kindly, cousin of Guise, you and your wife
Do both salute our lovely miniöns.

16: "do you both express your good wishes to my loveable favourites."

He makes horns at the Guise.

18: Henry sets a pair of forked fingers on his forehead, as a sign to mock Guise for possessing a straying wife; hardly a play exists in the canon that does not refer at least once to the traditional horns ascribed to the cuckolded husband.

Remember you the letter, gentle sir,
Which your wife writ
To my dear minion, and her chosen friend?

22: ie. to Mugeroun; ***friend*** = lover.

Guise. How now, my lord! Faith, this is more than need.
Am I thus to be jested at and scorned?
'Tis more than kingly or imperious:
And, sure, if all the proudest kings
In Christendom should bear me such derision,
They should know how I scorned them and their mocks.
I love your minions! Dote on them yourself;
I know none else but holds them in disgrace;

= truly. = necessary; Henry is overdoing the teasing.

26: ie. this is not the proper behaviour of a king or emperor. ***imperious*** = imperial.[3]

= ie. would learn.

= stated with great sarcasm or astonishment.

31: "I know of no one who holds your minions in anything but utter contempt."

And here, by all the saints in Heaven, I swear,
That villain for whom I bear this deep disgrace,
Even for your words that have incensed me so,

= a powerful oath.

= a monosyllable: *vil'n*.

= a monosyllable: *E'en*.

Shall buy that strumpet's favour with his blood!
Whether he have dishonoured me or no,
Par la mor du, il mourra!

= Guise's wife's.

36: ie. whether he has actually slept with his wife or not.

37: French: "by God's death, he shall die!" Editors usually emend ***mor du*** to ***mort de Dieu***.

[*Exit Guise.*]

K. Henry. Believe me, this jest bites sore.

41: Henry is tickled that he has struck a nerve of Guise's.

Eper. My lord, 'twere good to make them friends,
For his oaths are seldom spent in vain.

43-44: Epernoun warns Henry that he should reconcile Guise and Mugeroun, because if Guise promises to do something - ie. kill Mugeroun - one can be assured he will follow through on it!

Enter Mugeroun.

K. Henry. How now, Mugeroun! met'st thou not the Guise at the door?

Muger. Not I, my lord; what if I had?

K. Henry. Marry, if thou hadst, thou mightst have had the stab.
For he hath solemnly sworn thy death.

52: ***Marry*** = a common oath, derived from the Virgin Mary. ***had the stab*** = ie. "been stabbed".

Muger. I may be stabbed, and live till he be dead:
But wherefore bears he me such deadly hate?

= why.

K. Henry. Because his wife bears thee such kindly love.

Muger. If that be all, the next time that I meet her,
I'll make her shake off love with her heels.

61: "I will get her to give up (***shake off***) her love for me."
with her heels = the phrase ***with one's heels*** seems to have been proverbially used to emphasize the rejection of something (e.g. "I scorn them with my heels," from *Much Ado About Nothing*), though its exact meaning is unsettled: perhaps the sense is that of "turning one's heels" (an expression used to mean "walk away from") or kicking at.
There may be additional wordplay at work here, as the expression to ***shake one's heels*** means to be hanged.

But which way is he gone? I'll go make a walk
On purpose from the court to meet with him.

= Dyce emends to ***take***.

[*Exit Mugeroun*.]

K. Henry. I like not this. Come, Epernoun,
Let's go seek the duke, and make them friends.

= ie. Guise.

Exeunt.

SCENE XX.

Near Coutras.
20 October 1587.

Scene XX: the army of the King of Navarre has defeated the royal army led by the Duke de Joyeux, in a battle at Coutras in far south-western France.
We may note that the second part of Henry's scheme, the expected defeat of Guise, who was commanding an undersized force of his own, by an invading force of German Protestants, also went awry. Guise successfully repelled the Germans, who were forced to retreat from France.

Alarms within, and a cry – "The Duke Joyeux is slain!"
Enter the King of Navarre, Bartus, and train.

Stage Directions: the octavo here reads "*Alarums within. The Duke of Joyeux slaine*." Dyce interprets the latter clause to be a cry which is heard from off-stage. Bennett wonders if the death of the Duke is intended to be enacted on stage in a Dumb-show.

Nav. The Duke is slain, and all his power dispersed,
And we are graced with wreaths of victory.
Thus God, we see, doth ever guide the right,
To make his glory great upon the earth.

= army.

Bart. The terror of this happy victory,
I hope, will make the king surcease his hate,
And either never manage army more,
Or else employ them in some better cause.

6-9: Bartus hopes that Henry, and by extension the Catholics, will be frightened enough by the Protestants' fortunate (***happy***) victory to stop pursuing them with arms.
surcease (line 7) = ie. cease.

Nav. How many noblemen have lost their lives
In prosecution of these cruël arms,
Is ruth, and almost death, to call to mind:

= a cause or matter for regret.[1]

But God we know will always put them down
That lift themselves against the perfect truth;

= ie. those.

Which I'll maintain so long as life doth last,

= support. = ie. "my life".

And with the Queen of England join my force

17: Navarre was perpetually allying himself to Queen Elizabeth of England.[4,8]

18 To beat the papal monarch from our lands,
And keep those relics from our countries' coasts.

= uncertain meaning: Ribner suggests a possible reference to either (1) relics of saints and the such that Catholics loved to worship; or (2) "the Catholics themselves as relics of another era" (p. 266)

20 Come, my lords; now that this storm is overpast,
Let us away with triumph to our tents.

22

Exeunt.

24

SCENE XXI.

Before the Louvre.
c. 1577-78 (lines 1-32);
1588 (lines 33-142).

Enter a Soldier.

Entering Character: the Soldier has been sent by Guise to assassinate Mugeroun, Guise's wife's lover. As the Soldier enters the stage, he seems to be imagining or rehearsing a speech he might make to his intended victim, speaking as he is on behalf of Guise.

In this speech, then, ***you*** refers to Mugeroun, and ***he*** to Guise.

Note how the Soldier's speech is filled with double entendres.

Textual Note: an intriguing alternate version of lines 1-29 of Scene XXI, now as known as the **Collier Leaf**, appeared in the early 19th century. Printed on a quarto page, the Leaf is thought perhaps to have been part of a copy of the play that was used when *Massacre* was first acted. This alternate version of this scene is reproduced at the end of this edition of our play.

1 ***Sold.*** Sir, to you, sir, that dare make the duke a
2 cuckold, and use a counterfeit key to his privy-

2: ***to*** = ie. to open or enter.

chamber-door: and although you take out nothing

2-3: ***privy-chamber-door*** = ie. bedroom door.
3-5: ***although…him*** = a vaguely bawdy metaphor for Mugeroun penetrating the duchess.

4 but your own, yet you put in that which displeaseth
him, and so forestall his market, and set up your

5-6: ***and so forestall…should not*** = literally, by setting up a stall (***standing***) where he should not be doing so, from which Mugeroun may sell his goods, Mugeroun prevents Guise from making a sale or profit; a commercial metaphor for Mugeroun moving in on the duke's wife.

It is probably unnecessary to point out the overtly dirty wordplay of ***set up your standing where you should not***.

6 standing where you should not; and whereas he is
your landlord, you will take upon you to be his, and
8 till the ground that he himself should occupy, which
is his own free land; if it not be too free – there's the

6-9: ***he is…free land*** = switching metaphors, the Soldier compares Mugeroun to a man who rents land from Guise, but then acts as if their situations were reversed, and proceeds to farm (***till)*** the property which is properly reserved for Guise's use.

occupy = in addition to its benign meaning, ***occupy*** was used to refer to sexual intercourse.[1]

free land = land held in free-hold, ie. with absolute power to dispose of as the owner wishes.

question; and though I come not to keep possession (as I would I might!), yet I mean to keep you out;

10-11: ***and though…you out*** = continuing the real estate metaphor, the Soldier remarks that he intends to keep Mugeroun from further occupying Guise's land, though slyly noting that he himself would be pleased to take possession of the land - ie. the duchess - himself!

which I will, if this gear hold.

= "if this business continues", ie. if Mugeroun does not put an end to his cuckolding Guise.

Enter Mugeroun.

What, are ye come so soon? have at ye, sir!

= common expression used to signal an assault of some kind.

Shoots at Mugeroun and kills him.

Enter Guise and Attendants.

Guise. [*Giving a purse*]
Hold thee, tall soldier, take thee this and fly.

= brave.

Exit Soldier.

Lie there, the king's delight and Guise's scorn! −

27: Guise addresses the body of the slain Mugeroun: "lie there, you who gave pleasure to the king, but who are one I hold in contempt!"

Revenge it, Henry, if thou list or dare;
I did it only in despite of thee.

28: ***list*** = wish to.

As a matter of fact, Henry did not retaliate against Guise for his arranging the murder of the duchess' lover, Saint-Mégrin. See the next note below.

[*Attendants bear off Mugeroun's body.*]

Mugeroun's Death: *the real Mugeroun (ie. Louis de Maugiron) was killed in a duel in 1578; but the duchess' paramour Saint-Mégrin was indeed assassinated.*[3]

Enter the King and Epernoun.

Entering Characters: with Joyeux dead, ***Epernoun*** has now filled the role of Henry's top favourite.

K. Henry. My Lord of Guise, we understand
That you have gatherèd a power of men:
= army; a monosyllable.
What your intent is yet we cannot learn,
= ie. "I", the royal "we".
But we presume it is not for our good.

Guise. Why, I am no traitor to the crown of France;
What I have done, 'tis for the Gospel' sake.

Eper. Nay, for the Pope's sake, and thine own benefit.
What peer in France, but thou, aspiring Guise,
= noble.
Durst be in arms without the King's consent?
= dares.
I challenge thee for treason in the cause.
= charge, accuse.

A Literary Revision of History: *Marlowe here portrays Guise as having raised a third army, one distinct from that of Navarre and Henry III. But as we have previously noted, Guise had raised his army first; Henry chose to ally himself with Guise, and adopted the latter's army as his own. Subsequent developments are described at the end of this scene.*

Guise. Ah, base Epernoun! Were not his highness here,
Thou shouldst perceive the Duke of Guise is moved.

= angered.

K. Henry. Be patient, Guise, and threat not Epernoun,
Lest thou perceive the King of France be moved.

Guise. Why, I am a prince of the Valois line,
Therefore an enemy to the Bourbonites;

54: an error: Guise was a member of the house of Lorraine.
= the family of the King of Navarre.

I am a juror in the Holy League,

56: ***juror*** = one who swears allegiance to a cause.[1]
the Holy League = ie. the Catholic League, a large but loose body of extreme Catholics, of which Guise was the appointed leader; as described in the Intermission notes following Scene XVI, the League had first been founded in 1576, then abandoned soon after, before being revived in 1584.

And therefore hated of the Protestants.

= by.

What should I do but stand upon my guard?

58: "I have no choice but to do what is necessary to protect myself."

And, being able, I'll keep an host in pay.

59: ie. "and since I am able to afford it, I will employ a private army (to protect me)."
host = army.

Eper. Thou able to maintain an host in pay,

61: Epernoun, mocking, repeats Guise's words.

That livest by foreign exhibitiön!

62: Guise is financially supported by foreign powers.
livest = ie. lives.
exhibition = maintenance, support.[1]

The Pope and King of Spain are thy good friends;
Else all France knows how poor a duke thou art.

K. Henry. Ay, those are they that feed him with their gold,
To countermand our will, and check our friends.

67: "to oppose my commands, and thwart the actions of those in my favour." With ***check our friends***, Henry presumably refers to the now-deceased Mugeroun.

Guise. My lord, to speak more plainly, thus it is:

69*f*: Guise professes to come clean.

Being animated by religious zeal,
I mean to muster all the power I can,

= ie. the largest army.

To overthrow those factious Puritans:

= the octavo prints ***sexious***, emended by Dyce as shown; the OED, however, has an entry for ***sexious***, for which this line is the only citation, and whose meaning the OED writes to be, "perhaps: sectarian."

And know, my lord, the Pope will sell his triple crown,

= would. = the pope's famous three-tiered tiara or head-piece.

Ay, and the Catholic Philip, King of Spain,

74-76: briefly, "I can always count on King Philip of Spain to give me money." Guise alludes to the fabulous wealth Spain gained during the age of exploration by exploiting the native Indians of the Americas, using them as slaves to strip the mines of gold and silver for the benefit of the Spanish crown.

	Ere I shall want, will cause his Indians	75: ***Ere I shall want*** = "before I would ever run out of money."
76	To rip the golden bowels of America.	76: like all dramatists of the era, Marlowe was not above re-using favourite phrases; in *The Jew of Malta*, we find the following line in the play's opening scene: "*Ripping the bowels of the earth for them*, etc."
	Navarre, that cloaks them underneath his wings,	77: Navarre covers (***cloaks***), ie. protects, the Huguenots like a mother bird shielding its young under her wings.
78	Shall feel the house of Lorraine is his foe.	= ie. the Guises.
	Your highness needs not fear mine army's force;	79-80: Guise tries to reassure the king he intends to destroy Protestantism with his army, but not overthrow Henry. ***wrack*** = ruin, usually emended to ***wreck***.
80	'Tis for your safety, and your enemies' wrack.	
82	***K. Henry.*** Guise, wear our crown, and be thou King of France,	82-84: the king is sarcastic.
	And, as dictator, make or war or peace,	= either.
84	Whilst I cry *placet*, like a senator!	= a Latin term referring to a vote in favour of a proposition; the OED notes that in university or church assemblies, a vote taken on a proposition took the form of *placet* or *non placet*, ie. "aye" or "nay".
	I cannot brook thy haughty insolence:	= tolerate.
86	Dismiss thy camp, or else by our edict	= ie. army.
	Be thou proclaimed a traitor throughout France.	
88		
	Guise. [*Aside*] The choice is hard; I must dissemble. −	
90	My lord, in token of my true humility,	= as a sign.
	And simple meaning to your majesty,	
92	I kiss your grace's hand, and take my leave,	
	Intending to dislodge my camp with speed.	
94		
	K. Henry. Then farewell, Guise, the king and thou are friends.	
96		
	Exit Guise.	
98		
	Eper. But trust him not, my lord; for had your highness	
100	Seen with what a pomp he entered Paris	= showy procession.
	And how the citizens with gifts and shews	
102	Did entertain him,	
	And promisèd to be at his command −	
104	Nay, they feared not to speak in the streets	104-6: the Parisians had no qualms about openly discussing - and supporting - Guise's apparent rebellion against Henry, who has not taken sufficient steps to eliminate Protestantism from France, as the pope has commanded him to do. ***speak*** (line 104) = emended to ***speak it*** by Bullen.[19] ***effecting*** (line 106) = carrying out.[4]
	That the Guise durst stand in arms against the king,	
106	For not effecting of his holiness' will.	
108	***K. Henry.*** Did they of Paris entertain him so?	
	Then means he present treason to our state.	= immediate.
110	Well, let me alone. − who's within there?	
112	*Enter an Attendant with paper, ink and pen.*	

Make a discharge of all my council straight,
And I'll subscribe my name, and seal it straight. –

[*Attendant writes*.]

My head shall be my council; they are false;
And, Epernoun, I will be ruled by thee.

Eper. My lord, I think, for safety of your royal person,
It would be good the Guise were made away,
And so to quite your grace of all suspect.

K. Henry. First let us set our hand and seal to this,
And then I'll tell thee what I mean to do. −

Henry writes.

So; convey this to the council presently. −

Exit Attendant.

And, Epernoun, though I seem mild and calm,
Think not but I am tragical within.
I'll secretly convey me unto Blois;

For, now that Paris takes the Guise's part,
Here is no staying for the King of France,

Unless he mean to be betrayed and die:
But, as I live, so sure the Guise shall die.

Exeunt.

114: Henry instructs the Attendant to prepare an edict dismissing his council.
straight = at once.
subscribe = sign.

119-120: Henry bravely announces that he will rule France alone; he has finally realized that those who are serving as his official advisors, which include Guise, are not really loyal to him; but then the king undercuts his own decision by telling Epernoun he will do whatever the latter advises him to do!

= ie. eliminated.
= free, acquit.[3,19] = suspicion.

126: "first let me sign and place an official seal on this edict".

= immediately.

= in a state of mourning,[1] or full of strong emotion.[4]
137: ***convey me*** = ie. travel.
Blois = episcopal city located 100 miles south of Paris;[6] Henry had a castle at Blois.

138-9: the strongly Catholic city of Paris is too dangerous for Henry to remain.
part = side.

= ie. Henry himself. = intends.

Guise Enters Paris: *after the invading Germans were repelled, Guise's popularity, especially among the radical Catholics of Paris, reached fever pitch. Despising King Henry, the Leaguers, in 1588, invited Guise to enter Paris. Henry, understandably worried that he was about to be deposed, banned Guise from doing so, and even arranged to have 5000 Swiss mercenary soldiers stationed around Paris to intervene should events turn further against him.*

Guise decided it would be good policy to justify himself before the king (as portrayed in the just-concluded scene), and so, on 9 May 1588, he entered Paris, to the elation of the members of the Catholic League.

SCENE XXII.

Navarre.
Spring 1588.

Scene XXII: Bennett again proposes "an open space" for the setting.

Enter the King of Navarre, reading a letter, and Bartus.

Nav. My lord, I am advértisèd from France
That the Guise hath taken arms against the king,
And that Paris is revolted from his grace.

Bart. Then hath your grace fit opportunity
To shew your love unto the King of France,
Offering him aid against his enemies,
Which cannot but be thankfully received.

Nav. Bartus, it shall be so: post, then, to France,
And there salute his highness in our name;
Assure him all the aid we can provide
Against the Guisians and their complices.
Bartus, be gone: commend me to his grace,
And tell him, ere it be long, I'll visit him.

Bart. I will, my lord.

Exit Bartus.

Nav. Pleshé!

Enter Pleshé.

Pleshé. My lord!

Nav. Pleshé, go muster up our men with speed,
And let them march away to France amain,
For we must aid the king against the Guise.
Be gone, I say; 'tis time that we were there.

Pleshé. I go, my lord.

Exit Pleshé.

Nav. That wicked Guise, I fear me much, will be
The ruin of that famous realm of France;
For his aspiring thoughts aim at the crown:

And takes his vantage on religiön,

To plant the Pope and Popelings in the realm,
And bind it wholly to the see of Rome.

But, if that God do prosper mine attempts,
And send us safely to arrive in France,
We'll beat him back, and drive him to his death,
That basely seeks the ruin of his realm.

[*Exit.*]

= notified; ***advertise*** and its derivatives were stressed on the second syllable in this period; hence, *ad-VER-ti-sed*.

= "hurry yourself".

= accomplices; ***complice*** was the original form of the word.[1]

= before.

= with all speed.

38: Navarre recognizes that Guise's ultimate goal is to seize the throne of France.

39: perhaps, "Guise is taking advantage of, ie. exploiting the support he has from, the Catholics".
And = ie. "and he".

40-41: Navarre worries that Guise intends to make France a puppet-state of the pope.
Popelings = followers or adherents of the pope.

Fictional Scene XXII: *Navarre's supposed interest in intervening on behalf of King Henry at this point is a*

complete fiction; events were proceeding apace in Paris, and heading toward a denouement without any help from Navarre. Navarre will, however, ally with Henry at a later time.

Day of the Barricades: *three days after Guise entered Paris, Henry ordered the Swiss mercenaries to take positions within the capital. The enraged Parisians used barricades (for the first time in their history) to prevent the troops from shifting positions, and the Swiss, caught in isolated pockets, surrendered to the mob en masse (to Henry's credit, he had ordered the Swiss not to fire on the crowds). The king, now fearful for his life, left Paris for Chartres, about 55 miles south-west of the capital.*

Henry Joins Guise - Again: *the humiliated king made a public show of allying himself one more time with Guise, this time appointing the duke to lieutenant general of the realm. Henry also reaffirmed a previous ruling that his nearest male relative - and thus heir-presumptive - was the Cardinal of Bourbon (Navarre's uncle), once again blocking Navarre from the succession.*

Henry Takes Control of the Situation: *political conditions changed considerably when the Spanish Armada was defeated by the English in the summer of 1588, and the Spanish lost their aura of invincibility. Henry, emboldened, decided it was finally time for him to act: the Estates had met at Blois in the fall, and as the sessions were concluding, the king invited Guise to visit him at the king's own chateau in that city. Guise, despite receiving numerous warnings about the king's intentions, accepted.*

SCENE XXIII.

An Apartment in the Residence of King Henry at Blois.
23 December 1588.

Scene XXIII: we are now Henry's castle of Blois.

Enter the Captain of the Guard, and three Murderers.

Capt. Come on, sirs. What, are you resolutely bent,
Hating the life and honour of the Guise?
What, will you not fear, when you see him come?

= unwaveringly determined (to see this through, ie. to assassinate Guise).

1st M. Fear him, said you? tush, were he here, we would kill him presently.

= immediately.

2nd M. O, that his heart were leaping in my hand!

3rd M. But when will he come, that we may murder him?

Capt. Well, then, I see you are resolute.

1st M. Let us alone; I warrant you.

14: ie. "don't worry, we'll take care of it, I assure you."

Capt. Then, sirs, take your standings within this chamber;
For anon the Guise will come.

All three M. You will give us our money?

Capt. Ay, ay, fear not: stand close: so; be resolute.

The Murderers retire.

Now falls the star whose influence governs France,
Whose light was deadly to the Protestants;
Now must he fall and perish in his height.

Enter King Henry and Epernoun.

K. Henry. Now, captain of my guard, are these murderers ready?

Capt. They be, my good lord.

K. Henry. But are they resolute, and armed to kill,
Hating the life and honour of the Guise?

Capt. I warrant ye, my lord.

[*Exit the Captain of the Guard.*]

K. Henry. Then come, proud Guise, and here disgorge thy breast,
Surcharged with surfeit of ambitious thoughts;
Breathe out that life wherein my death was hid,
And end thy endless treasons with thy death.

[*Knocking within.*]

Guise. [*Within*]
Holà, varlet, hey! − Epernoun, where is the King?

Eper. Mounted his royal cabinet.

Guise. [*Within*] I prithee, tell him that the Guise is here.

Eper. An please your grace, the Duke of Guise doth crave
Access unto your highness.

K. Henry. Let him come in. −
Come, Guise, and see thy traitorous guile outreached,

= stations, places.
= shortly, soon.

= "hide yourselves".

Stage Directions: we adopt Bennett's suggestion for the Murderers to retire to the rear stage, which represents the separate room or chamber of line 16.

25: allusion to the effect the stars were thought to have on the affairs of humanity; here Guise is ***the star***.

= ie. at the height of his fortunes or power.

36: a repetition of line 2 above.

42-43: Henry invites Guise to empty out (***disgorge***)[1] the ***ambitious thoughts*** with which his breast (as the seat of his emotions) is overloaded (***surcharged***).
surfeit = an abundance.[1]

43, 45: note the wordplay of these lines, with ***surcharged*** and ***surfeit*** in line 43, then ***end*** and ***endless*** in line 45.

47-63: the octavo's stage directions instruct Guise to enter the stage, after which he is to knock on the king's door; we, however, adopt Dyce's suggestion to have Guise remain off-stage till he is admitted into Henry's presence.

50: ***hola*** and ***hey*** were are both cries to attract attention;[1] the editors usually emend ***hey*** to ***hé***.

52: the meaning of the line is unclear: the king might be sitting on his throne, which rests upon a raised dais, or Epernoun may simply mean that the king is in the chamber containing the raised throne.[4,8]

= "I pray thee", ie. please.

= if it please.

= treachery. = over-reaching, over-extended.[1]

And perish in the pit thou mad'st for me.

Enter the Guise.

Guise. Good morrow to your majesty.

K. Henry. Good morrow to my loving cousin of Guise:
How fares it this morning with your excellence?

Guise. I heard your majesty was scarcely pleased,
That in the court I bear so great a train.

K. Henry. They were to blame that said I was displeased;
And you, good cousin, to imagine it.
'Twere hard with me, if I should doubt my kin,
Or be suspicious of my dearest friends.
Cousin, assure you I am resolute,
Whatsoever any whisper in mine ears,
Not to suspect disloyalty in thee:
And so, sweet coz, farewell.

[*Exit Henry with Epernoun.*]

Guise. So;

Now sues the king for favour to the Guise,
And all his minions stoop when I command.

Why, this 'tis to have an army in the field.
Now, by the holy sacrament, I swear,

As ancient Romans over their captive lords,
So will I triumph over this wanton king;
And he shall follow my proud chariot's wheels.

Now do I but begin to look about,
And all my former time was spent in vain. −
Hold, sword, for in thee is the Duke of Guise's hope.

The Third Murderer comes forward.

Villain, why dost thou look so ghastly? Speak.

3rd M. O, pardon me, my lord of Guise!

Guise. Pardon thee! why, what hast thou done?

3rd M. O my lord, I am one of them that is set to murder you!

= hardly, barely.

71: with the fact that Guise has so many followers and attendants waiting on him.

= ie. "are to blame for believing it."

= "it would be distressing for me". = suspect.

= determined.

78: "no matter what I hear".

= common abbreviation for ***cousin***.

84-95: Guise recognizes that even Henry has begun to defer to him, now that he - Guise - has a large army of his own threatening France.

88: ie. now Henry seeks Guise's approval.

= bow or kneel.[1]

= ie. "this is what it is".

= an oath.

89-91: briefly, just as the ancient Romans gloried over their defeated foes, so Guise will exult over Henry.

The lines allude to the Roman custom of parading captive monarchs and other leaders of their defeated foes in a triumph held in Rome whenever the Romans conquered their enemies.

over (lines 88 and 89) = usually emended to ***o'er*** for the sake of the metre.

wanton (line 90) = morally loose, effeminate.[1,4]

92-94: ie. Guise has been wasting his time trying to gain power in more subtle ways; having his own army will allow him to fast-track his way to the top.

96: the octavo reads, "Enter one of the Murtherers." Dyce assigns the part to the ***Third Murderer***.

= terrible, ie. causing terror.

Guise. To murder me, villain!

3rd Murd. Ay, my lord: the rest have ta'en their
standings in the next room. Therefore, good my lord, = places.
go not forth.

Guise. Yet Caesar shall go forth. 113: as he did above in lines 89-91, Guise identifies with the ancient Romans, but now he connects himself explicitly to perhaps the greatest Roman of all.

The sentence that comprises line 113 appears verbatim in Act II.ii of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*; solving the puzzle of how exactly one author's line comes to be borrowed into another writer's work is one that makes a great project for literary detectives.

Let mean conceits and baser men fear death: = (those with) inferior imaginations or mental capacities.[1,8]
But, they are peasants; I am Duke of Guise; = ie. the killers in the other room.
And princes with their looks engender fear. 116: "and kings can raise fear in others just by their looks;" Guise means he expects to save his own life by scaring his attackers with his haughty looks alone.

1st M. [*Within*]
Stand close; he is coming; I know him by his voice. = ie. "remain hidden."

Guise. As pale as ashes! nay, then 'tis time 101-2: a common simile: Guise comments on the ***ghastly*** (line 98) countenance of the Third Murderer, and decides to investigate.[8]
To look about.

The First and Second Murderers come forward. 124: Guise enters the "other" chamber.

1st and 2nd M. Down with him, down with him!

[*They stab Guise.*]

Guise. Oh, I have my death's wound! give me leave to = permission, ie. a chance.
speak.

2nd M. Then pray to God, and ask forgiveness of the king.

Guise. Trouble me not; I ne'er offended him,
Nor will I ask forgiveness of the king.
Oh, that I have not power to stay my life, = ie. "it is a shame that". = ie. "put off my death".
Nor immortality to be revenged!
To die by peasants, what a grief is this! − = ie. by the hands of.
Ah, Sixtus, be revenged upon the king, 139: Guise apostrophizes to the pope.

Philip and Parma, I am slain for you! 140: ***Philip*** = the King of Spain.

Parma = ***Parma*** is ***Alexander Farnese*** (born 1545, Duke of Parma 1586-1592). the greatest general of the late 16th century. Farnese, who had been raised in Spain, served as head of the Spanish forces which had been fighting to maintain control of the Netherlands since 1578.[15]

Pope, excommunicate, Philip, depose 141-2: ***depose…his line*** = destroy or overthrow the French
The wicked branch of cursed Valois his line! royal family.

his line = ie. and the king's heirs.

Vive la messe! Perish Huguenots! = French: "long live the mass!"

Thus Caesar did go forth, and thus he died.

144: in his final line, Guise once again identifies himself with Caesar.

[*Guise dies.*]

Enter the Captain of the Guard.

Capt. What, have you done?
Then stay a while, and I'll go call the king,
But see, where he comes.

= ie. "done it?"
= remain.

Enter King Henry, Epernoun, and Attendants.

My lord, see, where the Guise is slain.

K. Henry. Ah, this sweet sight is physic to my soul!
Go fetch his son for to behold his death. −

= medicine.

[*Exit an Attendant*.]

Surcharged with guilt of thousand massacres,
Monsieur of Lorraine, sink away to hell!

= overburdened.
= the Guises hailed from ***Lorraine*** in north-eastern France; an alternate name for Guise was *Henri I de Lorraine*.[16]

And, in remembrance of those bloody broils,
To which thou didst allure me, being alive,

= disturbances, tumults.[1]
166: ***allure me*** = "draw me in".
being alive = ie. "when you were alive".

And here in presence of you all, I swear,
I ne'er was king of France until this hour.

167*f*: Henry addresses all those surrounding him.
= ie. was king in fact, and not just king in name, ie. was *really* king.

This is the traitor that hath spent my gold
In making foreign wars and civil broils.

= wars.

Did he not draw a sort of English priests
From Douay to the seminary at Rheims,

171-2: in 1562, a college for exiled English priests was founded at Douai (***Douay***) in Belgium about 150 miles north of Paris; the college, under the protection of Guise, had been temporarily relocated in 1578 to ***Rheims*** due to the religious wars.[6,8]
sort (line 171) = set or collection.

To hatch forth treason 'gainst their natural queen?

173: Ribner suggests the reference is to the Babington conspiracy of 1586, a scheme to kill Elizabeth and replace her with the imprisoned Mary Queen of Scots.

Did he not cause the King of Spain's huge fleet

= the Armada, which had only months before been destroyed by the English.

To threaten England, and to menace me?
Did he not injure Monsieur that's deceased?

176: another reference to Francois, the Duke of Alencon, the youngest son of Catherine, who had died in 1584.

Hath he not made me, in the Pope's defense,
To spend the treasure, that should strength my land,
In civil broils between Navarre and me?

177-9: Henry rues the fact he has been forced to spend the state's money on fighting unnecessary wars against Navarre instead of on more constructive measures.

Tush, to be short, he meant to make me monk,

180: ***to be short*** = in brief.
he meant…monk = Henry suggests that Guise meant to depose him, and, rather than assassinate him, file him away in some remote monastery where he might dither away the rest of life.

Or else to murder me, and so be king.

Let Christian princes, that shall hear of this,
(As all the world shall know our Guise is dead),
Rest satisfied with this, that here I swear,
Ne'er was there King of France so yoked as I.

Eper. My lord, here is his son.

Enter Guise's Son.

K. Henry. Boy, look, where your father lies.

Gu.'s Son. My father slain! who hath done this deed?

K. Henry. Sirrah, 'twas I that slew him; and will slay
Thee too, and thou prove such a traitor.

Gu.'s Son. Art thou king, and hast done this bloody deed?
I'll be revenged.

Guise's Son offers to throw his dagger .

K. Henry. Away to prison with him! I'll clip his wings
Or e'er he pass my hands. Away with him!

[*Some of the Attendants bear off Guise's Son.*]

But what availeth that this traitor's dead,
When Duke Dumaine, his brother, is alive,
And that young cardinal that is grown so proud? –

[*To the Captain of the Guard*]
Go to the governor of Orleans,
And will him, in my name, to kill the duke.
[*To the Murderers*]
Get you away, and strangle the cardinal.

[*Exeunt the Captain of the Guard and Murderers*.]

These two will make one entire Duke of Guise,

Especially with our old mother's help.

Eper. My lord, see, where she comes, as if she drooped
To hear these news.

= monarchs.

= metaphorically, "controlled by another"; as in a ***yoke***, Henry has been coupled with Guise, and consequently prevented from ever acting on his own.[8]

Entering Character: Guise's oldest son was Charles (1571-1644), now the 4th Duke of Guise. This may be the offspring with whom Guise's wife was mentioned to be pregnant at Scene XVII.58. Charles is 17 years old here.

= if.

201: Guise's son attempts to assault the king, but is stopped.

= metaphor for "cut his expectations or aspirations short."

The Fate of the Son of Guise: *following the assassination of his father, Charles was imprisoned at Tours, from which he escaped after three years imprisonment, in 1591. In 161l, Charles married Henriette, the niece of our play's Duke of Joyeux, who was killed at the battle of Coutras, as portrayed at the beginning of Scene XX.*[20]

= "benefit or use is it".

210: ***And*** = ie. "as is"
that young cardinal = Guise's younger brother Louis, Cardinal of Lorraine.
cardinal = a disyllable here.

= command. = ie. Dumaine.

219: killing both Dumaine and the cardinal will eliminate two persons who together are the equivalent of the Duke of Guise.

= ie. "the assistance of Catherine"; the king speaks ironically: Henry, below, is flippant as he casually discusses Guise's death with the grieving Catherine.

= had become dispirited or despondent.[1]
= note how ***news*** is treated as a plural word.

K. Henry. And let her droop; my heart is light enough.

Enter Catherine the Queen-Mother.

Mother, how like you this device of mine?
I slew the Guise, because I would be king.

Cath. King, why, so thou wert before.
Pray God thou be a king now this is done!

K. Henry. Nay, he was king, and countermanded me;
But now I will be king, and rule myself,
And make the Guisians stoop that are alive.

Cath. I cannot speak for grief: − When thou wast born,
I would that I had murdered thee, my son!
My son? Thou art a changeling, not my son:
I curse thee, and exclaim thee miscreant,
Traitor to God and to the realm of France!

K. Henry. Cry out, exclaim, howl till thy throat be hoarse!
The Guise is slain, and I rejoice therefore.
And now will I to arms. − Come, Epernoun,
And let her grieve her heart out, if she will.

Exit Henry and Epernoun.

Cath. Away! leave me alone to meditate.

[*Exeunt Attendants*.]

Sweet Guise, would he had died, so thou wert here!

To whom shall I bewray my secrets now,
Or who will help to build religiön?
The Protestants will glory and insult;
Wicked Navarre will get the crown of France;
The Popedom cannot stand; all goes to wrack;
And all for thee, my Guise! What may I do?
But sorrow seize upon my toiling soul!
For, since the Guise is dead, I will not live.

Exit.

= scheme.

= (always) opposed.

= bow (to Henry's superior authority).[1]

= due to.
= wish.
= baby switched in at birth for a mother's actual baby.
= proclaim, accuse. = villain or heretic.[1]

= "I will take up my".

256: "dearest Guise, I wish it had been Henry who had died, so that you could be here!"
= reveal.
= edify, increase the health of.[1]
= exult.
= ruin.
= labouring.[1]

The Assassination of the Duke of Guise: *on 23 December 1588, Guise was stabbed to death by royal guards as he was waiting to be admitted to see the king. In a political master-stroke, twenty other Catholic leaders were arrested at the same time, including the Cardinal of Bourbon and Louis, Cardinal of Guise (Guise's youngest brother).*

SCENE XXIV.

A Prison at Blois.
24 December 1588.

Scene XXIV: Guise's youngest brother Louis, Cardinal of Lorraine, had been arrested even as Guise was being murdered, and placed in a prison cell at Blois. It is Christmas Eve, the day after Guise's assassination.

Enter two Murderers, dragging in the Cardinal.

Card. Murder me not; I am a cardinal.

1st M. Wert thou the Pope, thou mightst not 'scape from us.

Card. What, will you file your hands with churchmen's blood?

= defile.

2nd M. Shed your blood? O lord, no! for we intend to strangle you.

Card. Then there is no remedy but I must die?

= ie. "no way out of this".

1st M. No remedy; therefore prepare yourself.

Card. Yet lives my brother Duke Dumaine, and many mo,
To revenge our deaths upon that cursèd king;

= "more", a common alternative form.
= ie. the deaths of Guise and the Cardinal himself.

Upon whose heart may all the Furies gripe,
And with their paws drench his black soul in hell!

15-16: ***Furies*** = avenging goddesses of mythology; they were usually portrayed as ugly, winged women with hair and arms entwined with poisonous serpents.
gripe = seize, take hold.
paws = Marlowe alone in the old literature ascribes ***paws*** to the Furies.
drench = drown.[1]

1st M. Yours, my Lord Cardinal, you should have said. −

[*They strangle him.*]

So, pluck amain: he is hard-hearted;

22: ***pluck*** = pull: the term suggests they are strangling the cardinal with a cloth or cord.
amain = "with all your force!"
hard-hearted = used here with a sense of "stubborn",[1] ie. refusing to die quickly or easily.

Therefore pull with violence. −
Come, take him away.

24: it has taken a few moments, but the Cardinal has finally expired.

[*Exeunt with the body.*]

The Death of Louis: *as depicted, Guise's youngest brother, Louis, Cardinal of Guise, was murdered in his prison cell on Christmas Eve.*

SCENE XXV.

An Apartment in the House of Dumaine, in Lyon.
December 1588 (lines 1-15).
July 1589 (lines 17-46).

Scene XXV: Dyce places Dumaine in Paris, but he was actually in Lyon at the time of his brothers' murders.[15]

Enter Duke Dumaine, reading a letter, with others.

Entering Character: Dumaine's letter informs him only of the death of his oldest brother Guise.

Dum. My noble brother murdered by the king!
O, what may I do for to revenge thy death?
The king's alone, it cannot satisfy.

= in order to.
= ie. Henry's death alone.

Sweet Duke of Guise, our prop to lean upon,

= Dumaine characterizes Guise as the man upon whom all the others of the Catholic faction relied to direct and support them.

Now thou art dead, here is no stay for us.

= synonym for prop or support.[2]

I am thy brother, and I'll revenge thy death,
And root Valois his line from forth of France;

7: ie. and destroy the royal Valois family.
root = uproot.
from forth = out of.[1]

And beat proud Bourbon to his native home,

8: "and drive Navarre back to his homeland."

That basely seeks to join with such a king,

= "he who".

Whose murderous thoughts will be his overthrow.

= ie. result in.

He willed the governor of Orleans, in his name,

= ie. "King Henry commanded".

That I with speed should have been put to death;
But that's prevented, for to end his life,
And all those traitors to the Church of Rome
That durst attempt to murder noble Guise.

13-15: Dumaine anticipated (***prevented***) the move to find and kill him, and so his life was spared, for the purpose of giving him an opportunity to wipe out those who murdered his brothers.
for to end his life (line 13) = in order to kill Henry.

Enter the Friar.

Friar. My lord, I come to bring you news that your brother the Cardinal of Lorraine, by the King's consent, is lately strangled unto death.

= recently.

Dum. My brother Cardinal slain, and I alive!
O words of power to kill a thousand men! −
Come, let us away, and levy men;
'Tis war that must assuage this tyrant's pride.

= satisfy.[1] = ie. Henry's.

Friar. My lord, hear me but speak.
I am a friar of the order of the Jacobins,
That for my conscience' sake will kill the king.

= an order of the Dominicans in Paris, so named because the monks' original house had been located on Rue-St.-Jacques in Paris at the time the order was founded in 1218.[17]

Dum. But what doth move thee, above the rest, to do the deed?

= impel. = more than anyone else.

Friar. O, my lord, I have been a great sinner in my days, and the deed is meritorious.

= and thus "rewarded by absolution from sin." Ribner notes that King Henry's murder was subsequently justified by Pope Sixtus V (p. 276).

Dum. But how wilt thou get opportunity?

Friar. Tush, my lord, let me alone for that.

Dum. Friar, come with me;
We will go talk more of this within.

[*Exeunt.*]

Dumaine Leads the Catholics: *the deaths of his siblings left Dumaine, the sole surviving Guise brother, as head of the Catholic party.*

Dumaine raised an army in his strongholds of Burgundy and Champagne and marched on Paris, where the populace remained fanatically devoted to the Guises. Dumaine entered the capital in February 1589, and assumed control

of the city, forming a council to manage its affairs, and naming himself lieutenant general of the realm.

Dumaine next marched on the king, who was at Tours, but Henry in the interim had finally made an alliance with his brother-in-law, the King of Navarre. The combined royal forces repelled Dumaine, who retreated back into Paris with his army.

Navarre and Henry followed Dumaine to the capital, and laid siege to the city.[15]

SCENE XXVI.

Saint-Cloud, a Council-Chamber.
1 August 1589.

Scene XXVI: the combined armies of Henry III and the King of Navarre are at Saint-Cloud, a suburb west of Paris; they are besieging the capital, which remains in a state of rebellion.

Drums and Trumpets.

Enter King Henry, the King of Navarre, Epernoun, Bartus, Pleshé, Soldiers and Attendants.

Entering Characters: Bennett would have ***Henry*** sitting on his throne.

K. Henry. Brother of Navarre, I sorrow much
That ever I was proved your enemy,
And that the sweet and princely mind you bear
Was ever troubled with injurious wars.
I vow, as I am lawful King of France,
To recompense your reconcilèd love
With all the honours and affectiöns
That ever I vouchsafed my dearest friends.

= ***brother*** was used to mean both "brother-in-law" and "fellow king".

6: "to reward or repay you in honour of our reconciliation".

= granted.

Nav. It is enough if that Navarre may be
Esteemèd faithful to the King of France,
Whose service he may still command till death.

= reckoned, accounted.

K. Henry. Thanks to my kingly brother of Navarre.
Then here we'll lie before Lutetia-walls,
Girting this strumpet city with our siege,

= the walls of Paris; ***Lutetia*** was the ancient Roman name for Paris.

= surrounding. = Paris is compared to a whore, for its disloyalty to Henry.

Till, surfeiting with our afflicting arms,
She cast her hateful stomach to the earth.

17-18: "till the city, having suffered as much of our military assaults as it can take, is razed to the ground."

cast = vomit, punning on ***stomach***.[4]

hateful = deserving of hate.

stomach = Paris is described as a ***stomach***, the organ believed to be the seat of numerous emotions, including pride.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. And it please your majesty, here is a friar of the order of the Jacobins, sent from the President of Paris, that craves access unto your grace.

= if.
= head of the Parliament in Paris.[4]
= desires.

K. Henry. Let him come in.

[*Exit Messenger.*]

Enter Friar, with a letter.

Eper. I like not this friar's look:
'Twere not amiss, my lord, if he were searched.

K. Henry. Sweet Epernoun, our friars are holy men,
And will not offer violence to their king,
For all the wealth and treasure of the world. −
Friar, thou dost acknowledge me thy king?

= a monosyllable.

Friar. Ay, my good lord, and will die therein.

K. Henry. Then come thou near, and tell what news thou bring'st.

Friar. My lord,
The president of Paris greets your grace
And send[s] his duty by these speedy lines,
Humbly craving your gracious reply.

= the friar refers to the letter he is carrying.
speedy = hastily written.[8]

[*Gives letter to Henry.*]

K. Henry. I'll read them, friar, and then I'll answer thee.

Friar. *Sancte Jacobus*, now have mercy upon me!

= usually emended to ***Sancte Jacobe***, but ***Jacobus*** was the more common form.

The friar stabs the king with a knife as he reads the letter; and then the king gets the knife, and kills him.

Eper. O, my lord, let him live a while!

K. Henry. No, let the villain die, and feel in hell
Just torments for his treachery.

Nav. What, is your highness hurt?

K. Henry. Yes, Navarre; but not to death, I hope.

Nav. God shield your grace from such a sudden death! −
Go call a surgeon hether straight.

= alternate form of ***hither***. = immediately.

[*Exit an Attendant.*]

K. Henry. What irreligious pagans' parts be these,
Of such as hold them of the holy church!

= ie. "land is this", meaning Paris.
74: ie. "populated as it is by people who account such men as this friar to be true representatives of the Catholic church!"

Take hence that damnèd villain from my sight.

= "away from here".

Attendants carry out the friar's body.

Eper. Ah, had your highness let him live,
We might have punished him to his deserts!

= "as he deserved;" it would have been preferable to painfully torture the friar first rather than gift him a quick death.

K. Henry. Sweet Epernoun, all rebels under Heaven

Shall take example by his punishment,
How they bear arms against their sovereign. −
Go call the English agent hether straight:

Exit an Attendant.

I'll send my sister England news of this,
And give her warning of her treacherous foes.

Enter a Surgeon.

Nav. Pleaseth your grace to let the surgeon search your wound?

K. Henry. The wound, I warrant ye, is deep, my lord. −
Search, surgeon, and resolve me what thou seest.

[*The Surgeon searches the wound.*]

Enter the English Agent.

Agent for England, send thy mistress word
What this detested Jacobin hath done.
Tell her, for all this, that I hope to live;
Which if I do, the papal monarch goes
To wrack, and [th'] antichristian kingdom falls:
These bloody hands shall tear his triple crown,
And fire accursèd Rome about his ears;

I'll fire his crazèd buildings, and enforce

The papal towers to kiss the holy earth. −

Navarre, give me thy hand. I here do swear
To ruinate that wicked church of Rome,
That hatcheth up such bloody practices,
And here protest eternal love to thee,
And to the Queen of England specially,
Whom God hath blest for hating papistry.

Nav. These words revive my thoughts, and comforts me,
To see your highness in this virtuous mind.

K. Henry. Tell me, surgeon, shall I live?

Surg. Alas, my lord, the wound is dangerous,
For you are stricken with a poisoned knife!

83: ie. so as to be deterred from attempting the like.
= ie. "and see what happens to those who".
= ambassador. = to here. = right away.

= ie. Queen Elizabeth I; stage monarchs usually referred to each other as ***brother*** and ***sister***.

= probe.

= assure.
= inform, tell.

Entering Character: *England's ambassador to France at this time was Sir Edward Stafford, who was actually in England at the time Henry was assassinated.*

= ie. Elizabeth.

= destruction. = ie. Rome.

= meaning "burn", both here and in line 110; a monosyllable in both lines.

110: ***crazed*** = diseased, flawed, or bankrupt.[1]
enforce = cause; the octavo prints ***incense***, usually emended as shown.

111: metaphorically, "and raze the papal towers."
holy = usually emended to ***lowly***; compare lines 110-1 to these lines from Marlowe's *Edward II*:
"*I'll fire thy crazèd buildings, and enforce*
The papal towers to kiss the lowly ground!"

= schemes.
= profess.

K. Henry. A poisoned knife! what, shall the French king die,
Wounded and poisoned both at once?

Eper. O, that that damnèd villain were alive again,
That we might torture him with some new-found death!

Bart. He died a death too good:
The devil of hell torture his wicked soul!

K. Henry. Ah, curse him not, sith he is dead! −
O, the fatal poison works within my breast! −
Tell me, surgeon, and flatter not − may I live?

Surg. Alas, my lord, your highness cannot live.

Nav. Surgeon, why say'st thou so? The king may live.

K. Henry. Oh no, Navarre, thou must be King of France.

Nav. Long may you live, and still be King of France!

Eper. Or else, die Epernoun!

K. Henry. Sweet Epernoun, thy king must die. − My lords,
Fight in the quarrel of this valiant prince,
For he is your lawful king, and my next heir;
Valois's line ends in my tragedy.
Now let the house of Bourbon wear the crown;
And may it never end in blood, as mine hath done! −
Weep not, sweet Navarre, but revenge my death. −
Ah, Epernoun, is this thy love to me?
Henry, thy king, wipes off these childish tears,
And bids thee whet thy sword on Sixtus' bones,
That it may keenly slice the Catholics.

He loves me not [the most] that sheds most tears,
But he that makes most lavish of his blood.

Fire Paris, where these treacherous rebels lurk. −
I die, Navarre: come bear me to my sepulchre.
Salute the Queen of England in my name,
And tell her, Henry dies her faithful friend.

[*Henry dies*.]

Nav. Come, lords, take up the body of the king,
That we may see it honourably interred:
And then I vow for to revenge his death
As Rome, and all those popish prelates there,

= if only.

= ie. means of a newly-invented torture, ie. one so terrible it has not yet been thought of.

= since.

= ie. "do not lie to me to make me feel better."

144: *never having produced an heir, Henry, as he lay dying, recognized Navarre to be his successor.*

148: the minion Epernoun, ever loyal to Henry, would die if Henry were to expire.

151: ie. "fight for Navarre".

= written so to indicate it is a trisyllable: *va-LOIS-es.*

159-160: note the grind-stoning metaphor, with ***whet*** and ***slice***.
keenly = with a sharp edge.[1]

161-2: "it is not the man who cries the most who proves he loves me the most, but the one who can spill the most blood in avenging my death."
makes most lavish = "causes the greatest profusion".[1]

= burn.

Henry's Assassination: *the king was stabbed on 1 August 1589 by a fanatical monk named Jacques Clement, who had been admitted to Henry's presence by means of some forged letters of introduction he was carrying. The Encyclopedia Britannica (1911) writes that Henry "died a few hours afterwards with great fortitude."*

Shall curse the time that e'er Navarre was king,
And ruled in France <u>by</u> Henry's fatal death.

= ie. because of.

They march out, with the body of the King, lying on four men's shoulders, with a dead march, <u>drawing</u> weapons on the ground.

177-180: we reproduce the final stage directions as they physically appear in the octavo.

= dragging.

FINIS.

Postscript I: Peace in France - Eventually.

Peace did not return easily to France on the formal ascension to the throne of Navarre (now France's Henry IV). Dumaine took to the field with his army of radical Catholics, now reinforced with Spanish troops, and fought a series of battles against (the new) King Henry, before suffering a total defeat at Ivry on 14 March 1590.

It took some time for Dumaine to come to terms with the new order of things, but he eventually did so, signing a peace with Henry on 31 July 1593. Henry himself had begun to win over his Catholic opposition by converting to Catholicism that same month.

Postscript II: A Return to Prosperity.

Paris surrendered to Navarre in March 1594; province after province yielded to Henry soon after, and when Philp signed a treaty with Henry in May 1598, peace officially descended on France after an absence of four decades.

Henry worked long and hard to restore prosperity to his war-torn nation, and as a result, "Henry the Great", as he was called, became one of the most popular monarchs in all of French history. His reputation was no doubt boosted greatly by his genial personality: "he was affable to the point of familiarity, quick-witted like a true Gascon, good-hearted, indulgent."[15]

To end on a light note, we quote one more time from the Encyclopedia Britannica (1911), which had this to say about Henry's love life and work ethic:

"His love affairs, undoubtedly too numerous…if they injure is personal reputation, had no effect on his policy as king, in which he was guided by an exalted ideal to his royal office, and by a sympathy for the common people."

The Collier Leaf.

A fragment containing an alternate version of lines 1-29 of our Scene XXI appeared in the early 19th century, and it has been postulated that this quarto page of text may have constituted a part of the true original text of the play, being perhaps a prompter's copy. We pass no judgment on the question, but simply reproduce this version of Scene XXI.1-29 below.

Enter a Soldier with a musket.

Souldier. Now, sir, to you that dares make a duke a cuckold, and use a counterfeit key to his privy-chamber: though you take out none but your own treasure, yet you put in that displeases him, and fill up his room that he should occupy. Herein, sir, you forestall the market, and set up your standing where you should not. But you will say you leave him room enough besides: that's no answer; he's to have the choice of his own free land; if it be not too free, there's the question. Now, for where he is your landlord, you take upon you to be his, and will needs enter by default: what though you were once in possession, yet coming upon you once unawares, he frayed you out again; therefore your entry is mere intrusion: this is against the law, sir: and though I come not to keep possession (as I would I might!), yet I come to keep you out, sir.

Enter Minion.

You are welcome, sir: have at you!

[*He kills him*.]

Minion. Traitorous Guise, ah, thou hast murthered me!

Enter Guise.

Guise. Hold thee, tall soldier: take thee this, and fly.

[*Exit Soldier*.]

Thus fall, imperfect exhalation,
Which our great son of France could not effect;
A fiery meteor in the firmament:
Lie there, the king's delight and Guise's scorn!
Revenge it, Henry, if thou list or dar'st:
I did it only in despite of thee.
Fondly hast thou incensed the Guise's soul,
That of itself was hot enough to work
Thy just digestion with extremest shame.
The army I have gathered now shall aim,
More at thy end then extirpation;
And when thou think'st I have forgotten this,

And that thou most reposest in my faith,
Then will I wake thee from thy foolish dream,
And let thee see thyself my prisoner.

[*Exeunt*.]

Marlowe's Invented Words and Phrases.

Like all writers of the era, Christopher Marlowe made up words when he felt like it, usually by adding prefixes and suffixes to known words, combining words, or using a word in a way not yet used before. In addition, many phrases that Marlowe created were found attractive, and hence used again by later, other authors.

The following is a list of words and expressions from *The Massacre at Paris* that research suggests may have been first used, or used in a certain way, by Marlowe in this play.

a. Words and Compound Words.

deep-engendered
dichotomist
dictator (first non-historic use to describe one acting as a dictator; unconfirmed)
juror (first use meaning one who takes an oath; unconfirmed)
removeless
sexious (usually emended to ***factious*** in the text)
student-Catholic

b. Expressions and Collocations.

Collocations are words that are commonly, conventionally and familiarly used together (e.g. "blue sky"), but which when used collectively so do not rise to the level of what may be called an expression. All of the following expressions and collocations make their first appearance in *The Massacre at Paris*, and were subsequently used by later writers, and some even continue to be used this day.

Those collocations in *quotation marks* indicate an exactly worded formula that was reused regularly by later writers.

"bloody brunt"
"by all the saints in Heaven"
(though this oath appeared previously without the "all")
"chariot's wheels"
"deadly toil"
"glory and insult"
"golden bowels"
"haughty insolence"
"heap of vanities"
"if this gear hold"
"late night's-work"
"never-dying flame"
"poniard('s) point"
"scarcely pleased"
"straggling deer"
"toiling soul"
"treacherous foes"
"wanton king"
"wicked sex"
a "prop to lean on/upon"
collocation of **lavish** and **blood**
collocation of **partake** and **secrets**

collocation of **scale** and **pyramid**
devil's matins
mor du, ie. **mort dieu**
muster up (first use referring to an army)
to "crave access"
to have all the cards (precursor to "hold all the cards").
to hold one in disgrace
to set the street(s)
to stay a bell

III. Words and Expressions Incorrectly Credited to Marlowe by the OED.

The OED cites *The Massacre at Paris* as being the publication containing the earliest use of the following words; however, research has shown that the OED is not correct in giving Marlowe credit for using these words first, as all of them appeared in works published before 1594.

fuel (first use as verb), **fueled**
ill-advised
offensious (appeared 1535)
perfume (first use referring to the sweet odour of something)
vive (as in *vive le roi*)
window opening

COMPLETE LIST of FOOTNOTES.

Footnotes in the text correspond as follows:

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