

## CALL BACK SIDES – *BECAUSE I AM YOUR QUEEN*

### **SIDE 2: La Reine's Story**

LA REINE

Lucretia's right. I've been hiding since Frederick died. I never had friends. I just wanted to die, the perfect tragic death. I loved Frederick. He was my best friend since childhood. The day we got married. The carriage. The crowds.

A young man, no older than we were. Twenty? Leapt from the crowd into our carriage with a bouquet of flowers. I didn't understand at first what was happening. I couldn't see the blood until it dripped down on his knees. Some guards pulled the boy from the carriage. I think he was executed. I don't even know.

I was a target of constant assassination attempts. Mostly, because I wanted to build theaters. I don't know why I didn't let myself be killed. Not romantic enough. Then Stanislas.

Sent to kill me. But he'd been injured by my men. He could have been Frederick's twin. There was even blood on his knees. But I knew who he was. He'd written these protest poems against me, that I loved. Perversely. To meet him in person was like waking up from a 10-year sleep. I fell in love. You don't have to tell me. I went from one romantic fantasy to another. For years I had worn a locket of poison around my neck, holding death close. I took it off. I went riding on my favourite horse, to exult in life. But when I came back my chief of police had found Stanislas and convinced him that I was better off without him. Stanislas swallowed the poison from my locket. He thought he was freeing me. Oh, the arrogance of his betrayal. I goaded him. Riled him. Made him think our love had been nothing but a trick I'd played for sport. You love me, he kept saying. I denied it. Once, I faltered. Only for a moment. I whipped him with my riding crop. Coward! I drove him into a wild rage, until at last he killed me, as he'd been sent to do. *Pardonne-moi, petit homme. Forgive me little hero. I had to make you mad. You had to strike me. Thank you for having made me live. Thank you for having made me die. I love you.*