That Elizabeth I of England was an icon of anti-Catholicism in seventeenth-century England is a well-known fact. It is seldom noted, however, that the image of the anti-Catholic Elizabeth of the Exclusion Crisis (1679–1681) is vastly different to the image of Elizabeth as a ‘victim’ of Catholic schemes that was perpetuated at her succession in 1558. This paper explores the way that Elizabeth’s relationship with anti-Catholicism shifted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, focusing on how the literary depiction of Elizabeth as a passive victim of Catholicism shifted instead to one of an active attacker of Catholics and Catholicism. While this shift is at least partially Elizabeth’s own fault—due to her own increasingly anti-Catholic agenda—the re-printing of her Golden Speech in 1679, for instance, with the fabricated title ‘The last speech and thanks of Queen Elizabeth of ever blessed memory, to her last Parliament, after her delivery from the popish plots’ shows that this shift intensified after her death, and reached new heights within the context of the Exclusion Crisis. By analysing a range of texts, including pamphlets and plays, this paper argues that concerns over the internal and external threats of Catholicism under successive Stuart monarchs meant that writers turned to the monarch who was seen as being responsible for the defeat of the Spanish Armada to show how England had been rewarded by God for its Protestantism, and to highlight the dangers Catholicism posed to England by using Elizabeth as the supreme example of an anti-Catholic warrior.