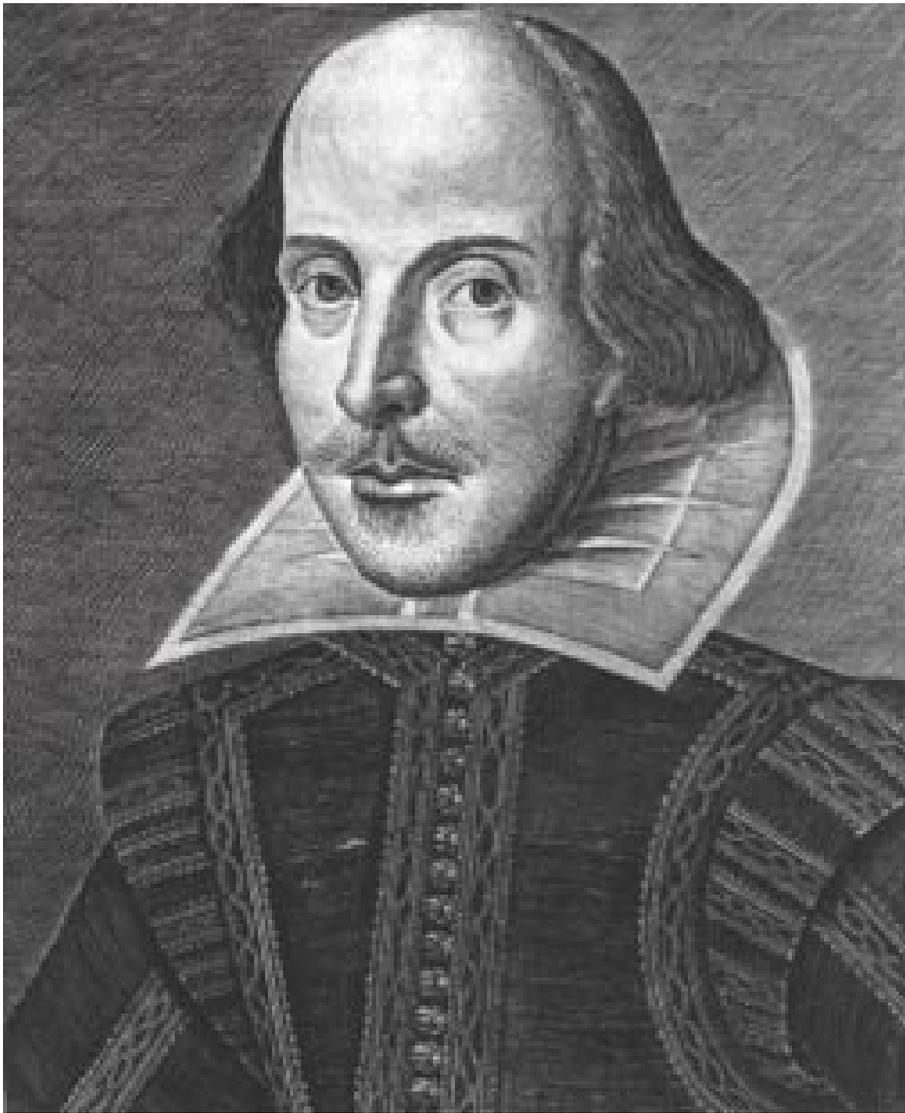


VOLUME II BOOK IV



1 KING HENRY VI



By William Shakespeare

Dramatis Personae



KING HENRY THE SIXTH. (*KING HENRY VI*)

DUKE OF GLOUCESTER *uncle to the King, and Protector.* (*GLOUCESTER*)

DUKE OF BEDFORD *uncle to the King, and Regent of France.* (*BEDFORD*)

THOMAS BEAUFORT *Duke of Exeter, great-uncle to the King.* (*EXETER*)

HENRY BEAUFORT *great-uncle to the King, Bishop of Winchester, and afterwards Cardinal.* (*BISHOP OF WINCHESTER*)

JOHN BEAUFORT *Earl, afterwards Duke of Somerset.* (*SOMERSET*)

RICHARD PLANTAGENET *son of Richard late Earl of Cambridge, afterwards Duke Of York.* (*YORK*)

EARL OF WARWICK. (*WARWICK*)

EARL OF SALISBURY. (*SALISBURY*)

EARL OF SUFFOLK. (*SUFFOLK*)

LORD TALBOT *afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury.* (*TALBOT*)

JOHN TALBOT *his son.* (*SON*)

EDMUND MORTIMER *Earl of March.* (*MORTIMER*)

SIR JOHN FASTOLFE. (*FASTOLFE*)

SIR WILLIAM LUCY. (*LUCY*)

SIR WILLIAM GLANSDALE. (*GLANSDALE*)

SIR THOMAS GARGRAVE. (*GARGRAVE*)
Mayor of London. (*MAYOR*)

WOODVILE *Lieutenant of the Tower.*

VERNON *of the White-Rose or York faction.*

BASSET *of the Red-Rose or Lancaster faction.*
A lawyer. (*LAWYER*)

Mortimer's Keepers. (*FIRST GAOLER*)

CHARLES *Dauphin, and afterwards King of France.*

REIGNIER *Duke of Anjou, and titular King of Naples.*

DUKE OF BURGUNDY. (*BURGUNDY*)

DUKE OF ALENÇON. (*ALENÇON*)

Bastard of Orleans.
Governor of Paris.

Master-Gunner of Orleans. (*MASTER-GUNNER*)
His Son. (*BOY*)

General of the French forces in Bourdeaux. (*GENERAL*)
A French Sergeant. (*SERGEANT*)
A Porter. (*PORTER*)

An old shepherd, father to Joan La Pucelle.
(*SHEPHERD*)

MARGARET *daughter to Reignier, afterwards married to King Henry.*

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE.

JOAN LA PUCELLE *commonly called Joan of Arc.*

Lords, Warders of the Tower, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers, Messengers, and Attendants, fiends appearing to La Pucelle. (*FIRST WARDER*), (*SECOND WARDER*), (*CAPTAIN*), (*OFFICER*), (*SOLDIER*), (*FIRST SOLDIER*), (*WATCH*), (*SCOUT*), (*FIRST SENTINEL*), (*SERVANT*), (*FIRST SERVING-MAN*), (*SECOND SERVING-MAN*), (*THIRD SERVING-MAN*)

SCENE *Partly in England, and partly in France.*

1 King Henry VI



ACT I

SCENE I

Westminster Abbey.

[Dead March. Enter the Funeral of KING HENRY the Fifth, attended on by the Dukes of BEDFORD, Regent of France; GLOUCESTER, Protector; and EXETER; the Earl of WARWICK, the BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, Heralds, &c.]

BEDFORD Hung be the heavens with black,
yield day to night!
Comets, importing change of times and states,
Brandish your crystal tresses in the sky,
And with them scourge the bad revolting stars
That have consented unto Henry's death!
King Henry the Fifth, too famous to live long!
England ne'er lost a king of so much worth.

GLOUCESTER England ne'er had a king until his time.
Virtue he had, deserving to command:
His brandish'd sword did blind men with his beams:
His arms spread wider than a dragon's wings;
His sparkling eyes, replete with wrathful fire,
More dazzled and drove back his enemies
Than mid-day sun fierce bent against their faces.
What should I say? His deeds exceed all speech:
He ne'er lift up his hand but conquered.

EXETER We mourn in black: why mourn
we not in blood?
Henry is dead and never shall revive:
Upon a wooden coffin we attend,
And death's dishonourable victory
We with our stately presence glorify,
Like captives bound to a triumphant car.
What! Shall we curse the planets of mishap

That plotted thus our glory's overthrow?
Or shall we think the subtle-witted French
Conjurers and sorcerers, that afraid of him
By magic verses have contrived his end?

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER He was a king bless'd
of the King of kings.
Unto the French the dreadful judgement-day
So dreadful will not be as was his sight.
The battles of the Lord of hosts he fought:
The church's prayers made him so prosperous.

GLOUCESTER The church! Where is it?
Had not churchmen pray'd,
His thread of life had not so soon decay'd:
None do you like but an effeminate prince,
Whom, like a school-boy, you may over-awe.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Gloucester, whate'er we like,
thou art protector
And lookest to command the prince and realm.
Thy wife is proud; she holdeth thee in awe,
More than God or religious churchmen may.

GLOUCESTER Name not religion,
for thou lovest the flesh,
And ne'er throughout the year to church thou go'st
Except it be to pray against thy foes.

BEDFORD Cease, cease these jars and
rest your minds in peace:
Let's to the altar: heralds, wait on us:
Instead of gold, we'll offer up our arms:
Since arms avail not now that Henry's dead.
Posterity, await for wretched years,
When at their mothers' moist eyes babes shall suck,
Our isle be made a nourish of salt tears,

And none but women left to wail the dead.
Henry the Fifth, thy ghost I invoke:
Prosper this realm, keep it from civil broils,
Combat with adverse planets in the heavens!
A far more glorious star thy soul will make
Than Julius Caesar or bright—

[Enter a Messenger]

MESSENGER My honourable lords, health to you all!
Sad tidings bring I to you out of France,
Of loss, of slaughter and discomfiture:
Guienne, Champagne, Rheims, Orleans,
Paris, Guysors, Poictiers, are all quite lost.

BEDFORD What say'st thou, man,
before dead Henry's corse?
Speak softly, or the loss of those great towns
Will make him burst his lead and rise from death.

GLOUCESTER Is Paris lost? Is Rouen yielded up?
If Henry were recall'd to life again,
These news would cause him once more yield
the ghost.

EXETER How were they lost? What treachery was used?

MESSENGER No treachery; but want of men and money.
Amongst the soldiers this is muttered,
That here you maintain several factions,
And whilst a field should be dispatch'd and fought,
You are disputing of your generals:
One would have lingering wars with little cost;
Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings;
A third thinks, without expense at all,
By guileful fair words peace may be obtain'd.
Awake, awake, English nobility!
Let not sloth dim your horrors new-begot:
Cropp'd are the flower-de-luces in your arms;
Of England's coat one half is cut away.

EXETER Were our tears wanting to this funeral,
These tidings would call forth their flowing tides.

BEDFORD Me they concern; Regent I am of France.
Give me my steeled coat. I'll fight for France.
Away with these disgraceful wailing robes!
Wounds will I lend the French instead of eyes,
To weep their intermissive miseries.

[Enter to them another Messenger]

MESSENGER Lords, view these letters
full of bad mischance.
France is revolted from the English quite,
Except some petty towns of no import:

The Dauphin Charles is crowned king of Rheims;
The Bastard of Orleans with him is join'd;
Reignier, Duke of Anjou, doth take his part;
The Duke of Aleçon fieth to his side.

EXETER The Dauphin crowned king! All fly to him!
O, whither shall we fly from this reproach?

GLOUCESTER We will not fly, but to our enemies'
throats.
Bedford, if thou be slack, I'll fight it out.

BEDFORD Gloucester, why doubt'st
thou of my forwardness?
An army have I muster'd in my thoughts,
Wherewith already France is overrun.

[Enter another Messenger]

MESSENGER My gracious lords, to add to your laments,
Wherewith you now bedew King Henry's hearse,
I must inform you of a dismal fight
Betwixt the stout Lord Talbot and the French.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER What! Wherein Talbot
overcame? Is't so?

MESSENGER O, no; wherein Lord Talbot
was o'erthrown:
The circumstance I'll tell you more at large.
The tenth of August last this dreadful lord,
Retiring from the siege of Orleans,
Having full scarce six thousand in his troop.
By three and twenty thousand of the French
Was round encompassed and set upon.
No leisure had he to enrank his men;
He wanted pikes to set before his archers;
Instead whereof sharp stakes pluck'd out of hedges
They pitched in the ground confusedly,
To keep the horsemen off from breaking in.
More than three hours the fight continued;
Where valiant Talbot above human thought
Enacted wonders with his sword and lance:
Hundreds he sent to hell, and none durst stand him;
Here, there, and every where, enraged he flew:
The French exclaim'd, the devil was in arms;
All the whole army stood amazed on him:
His soldiers spying his undaunted spirit
A Talbot! A Talbot! Cried out amain
And rush'd into the bowels of the battle.
Here had the conquest fully been seal'd up,
If Sir John Fastolfe had not play'd the coward:
He, being in the vaward, placed behind
With purpose to relieve and follow them,
Cowardly fled, not having struck one stroke.

Hence grew the general wreck and massacre;
Enclosed were they with their enemies:
A base Walloon, to win the Dauphin's grace,
Thrust Talbot with a spear into the back,
Whom all France with their chief assembled strength
Durst not presume to look once in the face.

BEDFORD Is Talbot slain? Then I will slay myself,
For living idly here in pomp and ease,
Whilst such a worthy leader, wanting aid,
Unto his dastard foemen is betray'd.

MESSENGER O no, he lives; but is took prisoner,
And Lord Scales with him and Lord Hungerford:
Most of the rest slaughter'd or took likewise.

BEDFORD His ransom there is none but I shall pay:
I'll hale the Dauphin headlong from his throne:
His crown shall be the ransom of my friend;
Four of their lords I'll change for one of ours.
Farewell, my masters; to my task will I;
Bonfires in France forthwith I am to make,
To keep our great Saint George's feast withal:
Ten thousand soldiers with me I will take,
Whose bloody deeds shall make all Europe quake.

MESSENGER So you had need; for Orleans is besieged;
The English army is grown weak and faint:
The Earl of Salisbury craveth supply,
And hardly keeps his men from mutiny,
Since they, so few, watch such a multitude.

EXETER Remember, lords, your oaths to Henry sworn,
Either to quell the Dauphin utterly,
Or bring him in obedience to your yoke.

BEDFORD I do remember it; and here take my leave,
To go about my preparation.

[Exit]

GLOUCESTER I'll to the Tower with all the haste I can,
To view the artillery and munition;
And then I will proclaim young Henry king.

[Exit]

EXETER To Eltham will I, where the young king is,
Being ordain'd his special governor,
And for his safety there I'll best devise.

[Exit]

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Each hath his place and
function to attend:
I am left out; for me nothing remains.
But long I will not be Jack out of office:

The king from Eltham I intend to steal
And sit at chiefest stern of public weal.

[Exeunt]

SCENE II
France. Before Orleans.

[Sound a flourish. Enter CHARLES, ALENÇON,
and REIGNIER, marching with drum
and Soldiers]

CHARLES Mars his true moving, even as in the heavens
So in the earth, to this day is not known:
Late did he shine upon the English side;
Now we are victors; upon us he smiles.
What towns of any moment but we have?
At pleasure here we lie near Orleans;
Otherwhiles the famish'd English, like pale ghosts,
Faintly besiege us one hour in a month.

ALENÇON They want their porridge and their fat
bull-beeves:
Either they must be dieted like mules
And have their provender tied to their mouths
Or piteous they will look, like drowned mice.

REIGNIER Let's raise the siege: why live we idly here?
Talbot is taken, whom we wont to fear:
Remaineth none but mad-brain'd Salisbury;
And he may well in fretting spend his gall,
Nor men nor money hath he to make war.

CHARLES Sound, sound alarum! We will rush on them.
Now for the honour of the forlorn French!
Him I forgive my death that killeth me
When he sees me go back one foot or fly.

[Exeunt]

[Here alarum; they are beaten back by the English
with great loss. Re-enter CHARLES, ALENÇON,
and REIGNIER]

CHARLES Who ever saw the like? What men have I!
Dogs! Cowards! Dastards! I would ne'er have fled,
But that they left me 'midst my enemies.

REIGNIER Salisbury is a desperate homicide;
He fighteth as one weary of his life.
The other lords, like lions wanting food,
Do rush upon us as their hungry prey.

ALENÇON Froissart, a countryman of ours, records,
England all Olivers and Rowlands bred,
During the time Edward the Third did reign.

More truly now may this be verified;
For none but Samsons and Goliases
It sendeth forth to skirmish. One to ten!
Lean, raw-boned rascals! Who would e'er suppose
They had such courage and audacity?

CHARLES Let's leave this town; for they are
hare-brain'd slaves,
And hunger will enforce them to be more eager:
Of old I know them; rather with their teeth
The walls they'll tear down than forsake the siege.

REIGNIER I think, by some odd gimmors or device
Their arms are set like clocks, stiff to strike on;
Else ne'er could they hold out so as they do.
By my consent, we'll even let them alone.

ALENÇON Be it so.

[Enter the BASTARD OF ORLEANS]

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Where's the Prince Dauphin? I
have news for him.

CHARLES Bastard of Orleans, thrice welcome to us.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Methinks your looks are sad,
your cheer appall'd:
Hath the late overthrow wrought this offence?
Be not dismay'd, for succor is at hand:
A holy maid hither with me I bring,
Which by a vision sent to her from heaven
Ordained is to raise this tedious siege
And drive the English forth the bounds of France.
The spirit of deep prophecy she hath,
Exceeding the nine sibyls of old Rome:
What's past and what's to come she can descry.
Speak, shall I call her in? Believe my words,
For they are certain and unfallible.

CHARLES Go, call her in.

[Exit BASTARD OF ORLEANS]

But first, to try her skill,
Reignier, stand thou as Dauphin in my place:
Question her proudly; let thy looks be stern:
By this means shall we sound what skill she hath.

[Re-enter the BASTARD OF ORLEANS, with
JOAN LA PUCELLE]

REIGNIER Fair maid, is't thou wilt do these
wondrous feats?

JOAN LA PUCELLE Reignier, is't thou that
thinkest to beguile me?

Where is the Dauphin? Come, come from behind;
I know thee well, though never seen before.
Be not amazed, there's nothing hid from me:
In private will I talk with thee apart.
Stand back, you lords, and give us leave awhile.

REIGNIER She takes upon her bravely at first dash.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Dauphin, I am by birth
a shepherd's daughter,
My wit untrain'd in any kind of art.
Heaven and our Lady gracious hath it pleased
To shine on my contemptible estate:
Lo, whilst I waited on my tender lambs,
And to sun's parching heat display'd my cheeks,
God's mother deigned to appear to me
And in a vision full of majesty
Will'd me to leave my base vocation
And free my country from calamity:
Her aid she promised and assured success:
In complete glory she reveal'd herself;
And, whereas I was black and swart before,
With those clear rays which she infused on me
That beauty am I bless'd with which you see.
Ask me what question thou canst possible,
And I will answer unpremeditated:
My courage try by combat, if thou darest,
And thou shalt find that I exceed my sex.
Resolve on this, thou shalt be fortunate,
If thou receive me for thy warlike mate.

CHARLES Thou hast astonish'd me with thy high terms:
Only this proof I'll of thy valour make,
In single combat thou shalt buckle with me,
And if thou vanquishest, thy words are true;
Otherwise I renounce all confidence.

JOAN LA PUCELLE I am prepared: here is my
keen-edged sword,
Deck'd with five flower-de-luces on each side;
The which at Touraine, in Saint Katharine's
churchyard,
Out of a great deal of old iron I chose forth.

CHARLES Then come, o' God's name; I fear no woman.

JOAN LA PUCELLE And while I live, I'll ne'er
fly from a man.

[Here they fight, and
JOAN LA PUCELLE overcomes]

CHARLES Stay, stay thy hands! Thou art an Amazon
And fightest with the sword of Deborah.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Christ's mother helps me, else I were
too weak.

CHARLES Who'er helps thee, 'tis thou
that must help me:
Impatiently I burn with thy desire;
My heart and hands thou hast at once subdued.
Excellent Pucelle, if thy name be so,
Let me thy servant and not sovereign be:
'Tis the French Dauphin sueth to thee thus.

JOAN LA PUCELLE I must not yield to any rites of love,
For my profession's sacred from above:
When I have chased all thy foes from hence,
Then will I think upon a recompense.

CHARLES Meantime look gracious on thy
prostrate thrall.

REIGNIER My lord, methinks, is very long in talk.

ALENÇON Doubtless he shrives this
woman to her smock;
Else ne'er could he so long protract his speech.

REIGNIER Shall we disturb him,
since he keeps no mean?

ALENÇON He may mean more than we poor men
do know:
These women are shrewd tempters with their tongues.

REIGNIER My lord, where are you? What devise you on?
Shall we give over Orleans, or no?

JOAN LA PUCELLE Why, no, I say, distrustful recreants!
Fight till the last gasp; I will be your guard.

CHARLES What she says I'll confirm: we'll fight it out.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Assign'd am I to be the
English scourge.
This night the siege assuredly I'll raise:
Expect Saint Martin's summer, halcyon days,
Since I have entered into these wars.
Glory is like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
Till by broad spreading it disperse to nought.
With Henry's death the English circle ends;
Dispersed are the glories it included.
Now am I like that proud insulting ship
Which Caesar and his fortune bare at once.

CHARLES Was Mahomet inspired with a dove?
Thou with an eagle art inspired then.
Helen, the mother of great Constantine,
Nor yet Saint Philip's daughters, were like thee.
Bright star of Venus, fall'n down on the earth,
How may I reverently worship thee enough?

ALENÇON Leave off delays, and let us raise the siege.

REIGNIER Woman, do what thou canst
to save our honours;
Drive them from Orleans and be immortalized.

CHARLES Presently we'll try: come, let's away about it:
No prophet will I trust, if she prove false.

[Exeunt]

SCENE III
London. Before the Tower.

[Enter GLOUCESTER, with his Serving-men
in blue coats]

GLOUCESTER I am come to survey the Tower this day:
Since Henry's death, I fear, there is conveyance.
Where be these warders, that they wait not here?
Open the gates; 'tis Gloucester that calls.

FIRST WARDER [Within] Who's there that knocks
so imperiously?

FIRST SERVING-MAN It is the noble Duke of Gloucester.

SECOND WARDER [Within] Who'e'r he be,
you may not be let in.

FIRST SERVING-MAN Villains, answer you
so the lord protector?

FIRST WARDER [Within] The Lord protect him! So we
answer him: We do no otherwise than we are will'd.

GLOUCESTER Who willed you? Or whose
will stands but mine?
There's none protector of the realm but I.
Break up the gates, I'll be your warrantize.
Shall I be flouted thus by dunghill grooms?

[Gloucester's men rush at the Tower Gates, and
WOODVILLE the Lieutenant speaks within]

WOODVILLE What noise is this? What
traitors have we here?

GLOUCESTER Lieutenant, is it you whose voice I hear?
Open the gates; here's Gloucester that would enter.

WOODVILLE Have patience, noble duke; I may not open;
The Cardinal of Winchester forbids:
From him I have express commandment
That thou nor none of thine shall be let in.

GLOUCESTER Faint-hearted Woodvile,
prizest him 'fore me?
Arrogant Winchester, that haughty prelate,
Whom Henry, our late sovereign, ne'er could brook?
Thou art no friend to God or to the king:
Open the gates, or I'll shut thee out shortly.

SERVING-MEN Open the gates unto the lord protector,
Or we'll burst them open, if that you come not quickly.

[Enter to the Protector at the Tower Gates BISHOP
OF WINCHESTER and his men in tawny coats]

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER How now, ambitious
Humphry! What means this?

GLOUCESTER Peel'd priest, dost thou command
me to be shut out?

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER I do, thou most
usurping proditor,
And not protector, of the king or realm.

GLOUCESTER Stand back, thou manifest conspirator,
Thou that contrivedst to murder our dead lord;
Thou that givest whores indulgences to sin:
I'll canvass thee in thy broad cardinal's hat,
If thou proceed in this thy insolence.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Nay, stand thou back, I will not
budge a foot:
This be Damascus, be thou cursed Cain,
To slay thy brother Abel, if thou wilt.

GLOUCESTER I will not slay thee, but I'll drive thee back:
Thy scarlet robes as a child's bearing-cloth
I'll use to carry thee out of this place.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Do what thou darest; I beard
thee to thy face.

GLOUCESTER What! am I dared and bearded to my face?
Draw, men, for all this privileged place;
Blue coats to tawny coats. Priest, beware your beard,
I mean to tug it and to cuff you soundly:
Under my feet I stamp thy cardinal's hat:
In spite of pope or dignities of church,
Here by the cheeks I'll drag thee up and down.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Gloucester, thou wilt answer
this before the pope.

GLOUCESTER Winchester goose, I cry, a rope! A rope!
Now beat them hence; why do you let them stay?

Thee I'll chase hence, thou wolf in sheep's array.
Out, tawny coats! Out, scarlet hypocrite!

[Here GLOUCESTER's men beat out BISHOP OF
WINCHESTER's men, and enter in the
hurly-burly the Mayor of London and his Officers]

MAYOR Fie, lords! That you, being supreme magistrates,
Thus contumeliously should break the peace!

GLOUCESTER Peace, mayor! Thou know'st little
of my wrongs:
Here's Beaufort, that regards nor God nor king,
Hath here distrain'd the Tower to his use.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Here's Gloucester,
a foe to citizens,
One that still motions war and never peace,
O'ercharging your free purses with large fines,
That seeks to overthrow religion,
Because he is protector of the realm,
And would have armour here out of the Tower,
To crown himself king and suppress the prince.

GLOUCESTER I will not answer thee with words,
but blows.

[Here they skirmish again]

MAYOR Naught rests for me in this tumultuous strife
But to make open proclamation:
Come, officer; as loud as e'er thou canst,
Cry.

OFFICER All manner of men assembled
here in arms this day against God's peace and the
king's, we charge and command you, in his highness'
name, to repair to your several dwelling-places; and
not to wear, handle, or use any sword, weapon, or
dagger, henceforward, upon pain of death.

GLOUCESTER Cardinal, I'll be none breaker of the law:
But we shall meet, and break our minds at large.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Gloucester, we will meet; to thy
cost, be sure:
Thy heart-blood I will have for this day's work.

MAYOR I'll call for clubs, if you will not away.
This cardinal's more haughty than the devil.

GLOUCESTER Mayor, farewell: thou dost but what
thou mayst.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Abominable Gloucester, guard thy head;
For I intend to have it ere long.

[*Exeunt, severally, GLOUCESTER and BISHOP OF WINCHESTER with their Serving-men*]

MAYOR See the coast clear'd, and then we will depart.
Good God, these nobles should such stomachs bear!
I myself fight not once in forty year.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE IV
Orleans.

[*Enter, on the walls, a Master-Gunner and his Boy*]

MASTER-GUNNER Sirrah, thou know'st how Orleans is besieged,
And how the English have the suburbs won.

BOY Father, I know; and oft have shot at them,
Howe'er unfortunate I miss'd my aim.

MASTER-GUNNER But now thou shalt not.
Be thou ruled by me:
Chief master-gunner am I of this town;
Something I must do to procure me grace.
The prince's espials have informed me
How the English, in the suburbs close intrench'd,
Wont, through a secret grate of iron bars
In yonder tower to overpeer the city,
And thence discover how with most advantage
They may vex us with shot or with assault.
To intercept this inconvenience,
A piece of ordnance 'gainst it I have placed;
And even these three days have I watch'd,
If I could see them.
Now do thou watch, for I can stay no longer.
If thou spy'st any, run and bring me word;
And thou shalt find me at the governor's.

[*Exit*]

BOY Father, I warrant you; take you no care;
I'll never trouble you, if I may spy them.

[*Exit*]

[*Enter, on the turrets, SALISBURY and TALBOT, GLANSDALE, GARGRAVE, and others*]

SALISBURY Talbot, my life, my joy, again return'd!
How wert thou handled being prisoner?
Or by what means got'st thou to be released?

Discourse, I prithee, on this turret's top.

TALBOT The Duke of Bedford had a prisoner
Call'd the brave Lord Ponton de Santrailles;
For him was I exchanged and ransomed.
But with a baser man of arms by far
Once in contempt they would have barter'd me:
Which I, disdainful, scorn'd; and craved death,
Rather than I would be so vile esteem'd.
In fine, redeem'd I was as I desired.
But, O! The treacherous Fastolfe wounds my heart,
Whom with my bare fists I would execute,
If I now had him brought into my power.

SALISBURY Yet tell'st thou not how
thou wert entertain'd.

TALBOT With scoffs and scorns and
contumelious taunts.
In open market-place produced they me,
To be a public spectacle to all:
Here, said they, is the terror of the French,
The scarecrow that affrights our children so.
Then broke I from the officers that led me,
And with my nails digg'd stones out of the ground,
To hurl at the beholders of my shame:
My grisly countenance made others fly;
None durst come near for fear of sudden death.
In iron walls they deem'd me not secure;
So great fear of my name 'mongst them was spread,
That they supposed I could rend bars of steel,
And spurn in pieces posts of adamant:
Wherefore a guard of chosen shot I had,
That walked about me every minute-while;
And if I did but stir out of my bed,
Ready they were to shoot me to the heart.

[*Enter the Boy with a linstock*]

SALISBURY I grieve to hear what torments you endured,
But we will be revenged sufficiently
Now it is supper-time in Orleans:
Here, through this grate, I count each one
And view the Frenchmen how they fortify:
Let us look in; the sight will much delight thee.
Sir Thomas Gargrave, and Sir William Glansdale,
Let me have your express opinions
Where is best place to make our battery next.

GARGRAVE I think, at the north gate;
for there stand lords.

GLANSDALE And I, here, at the bulwark of the bridge.

TALBOT For aught I see, this city must be famish'd,
Or with light skirmishes enfeebled.

[Here they shoot. SALISBURY and GARGRAVE fall]

SALISBURY O Lord, have mercy on us,
wretched sinners!

GARGRAVE O Lord, have mercy on me, woful man!

TALBOT What chance is this that suddenly
hath cross'd us?
Speak, Salisbury; at least, if thou canst speak:
How farest thou, mirror of all martial men?
One of thy eyes and thy cheek's side struck off!
Accursed tower! Accursed fatal hand
That hath contrived this woful tragedy!
In thirteen battles Salisbury o'ercame;
Henry the Fifth he first train'd to the wars;
Whilst any trump did sound, or drum struck up,
His sword did ne'er leave striking in the field.
Yet livest thou, Salisbury? Though thy speech doth fail,
One eye thou hast, to look to heaven for grace:
The sun with one eye vieweth all the world.
Heaven, be thou gracious to none alive,
If Salisbury wants mercy at thy hands!
Bear hence his body; I will help to bury it.
Sir Thomas Gargrave, hast thou any life?
Speak unto Talbot; nay, look up to him.
Salisbury, cheer thy spirit with this comfort;
Thou shalt not die whiles—
He beckons with his hand and smiles on me.
As who should say "When I am dead and gone,
Remember to avenge me on the French."
Plantagenet, I will; and like thee, Nero,
Play on the lute, beholding the towns burn:
Wretched shall France be only in my name.

[Here an alarum, and it thunders and lightens]

What stir is this? What tumult's in the heavens?
Whence cometh this alarum and the noise?

[Enter a Messenger]

MESSENGER My lord, my lord,
the French have gathered head:
The Dauphin, with one Joan la Pucelle join'd,
A holy prophetess new risen up,
Is come with a great power to raise the siege.

[Here SALISBURY lifteth himself up and groans]

TALBOT Hear, hear how dying Salisbury doth groan!
It irks his heart he cannot be revenged.
Frenchmen, I'll be a Salisbury to you:
Pucelle or puzzel, dolphin or dogfish,
Your hearts I'll stamp out with my horse's heels,

And make a quagmire of your mingled brains.
Convey me Salisbury into his tent,
And then we'll try what these dastard Frenchmen dare.

[Alarum. Exeunt]

SCENE V
The same.

[Here an alarum again: and TALBOT pursueth the DAUPHIN, and driveth him: then enter JOAN LA PUCELLE, driving Englishmen before her, and exit after them then re-enter TALBOT]

TALBOT Where is my strength, my valour,
and my force?
Our English troops retire, I cannot stay them:
A woman clad in armour chaseth them.

[Re-enter JOAN LA PUCELLE]

Here, here she comes. I'll have a bout with thee;
Devil or devil's dam, I'll conjure thee:
Blood will I draw on thee, thou art a witch,
And straightway give thy soul to him thou servest.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Come, come, 'tis only I that
must disgrace thee.

[Here they fight]

TALBOT Heavens, can you suffer hell so to prevail?
My breast I'll burst with straining of my courage
And from my shoulders crack my arms asunder.
But I will chastise this high-minded strumpet.

[They fight again]

JOAN LA PUCELLE Talbot, farewell;
thy hour is not yet come:
I must go victual Orleans forthwith.

[A short alarum; then enter the town with soldiers]

O'ertake me, if thou canst; I scorn thy strength.
Go, go, cheer up thy hungry-starved men;
Help Salisbury to make his testament:
This day is ours, as many more shall be.

[Exit]

TALBOT My thoughts are whirled like a potter's wheel;
I know not where I am, nor what I do;
A witch, by fear, not force, like Hannibal,
Drives back our troops and conquers as she lists:
So bees with smoke and doves with noisome stench

Are from their hives and houses driven away.
They call'd us for our fierceness English dogs;
Now, like to whelps, we crying run away.

[A short alarum]

Hark, countrymen! Either renew the fight,
Or tear the lions out of England's coat;
Renounce your soil, give sheep in lions' stead:
Sheep run not half so treacherous from the wolf,
Or horse or oxen from the leopard,
As you fly from your oft-subdued slaves.

[Alarum. Here another skirmish]

It will not be: retire into your trenches:
You all consented unto Salisbury's death,
For none would strike a stroke in his revenge.
Pucelle is enter'd into Orleans,
In spite of us or aught that we could do.
O, would I were to die with Salisbury!
The shame hereof will make me hide my head.

[Exit TALBOT. Alarum; retreat; flourish]

SCENE VI

The same.

[Enter, on the walls, JOAN LA PUCELLE,
CHARLES, REIGNIER, ALENÇON, and Soldiers]

JOAN LA PUCELLE Advance our waving
colours on the walls;
Rescued is Orleans from the English
Thus Joan la Pucelle hath perform'd her word.

CHARLES Divinest creature, Astraea's daughter,
How shall I honour thee for this success?
Thy promises are like Adonis' gardens
That one day bloom'd and fruitful were the next.
France, triumph in thy glorious propheticess!
Recover'd is the town of Orleans:
More blessed hap did ne'er befall our state.

REIGNIER Why ring not out the bells aloud
throughout the town?
Dauphin, command the citizens make bonfires
And feast and banquet in the open streets,
To celebrate the joy that God hath given us.

ALENÇON All France will be replete with mirth and joy,
When they shall hear how we have play'd the men.

CHARLES 'Tis Joan, not we, by whom the day is won;
For which I will divide my crown with her,
And all the priests and friars in my realm
Shall in procession sing her endless praise.
A statelier pyramis to her I'll rear
Than Rhodope's or Memphis' ever was:
In memory of her when she is dead,
Her ashes, in an urn more precious
Than the rich-jewel'd of Darius,
Transported shall be at high festivals
Before the kings and queens of France.
No longer on Saint Denis will we cry,
But Joan la Pucelle shall be France's saint.
Come in, and let us banquet royally,
After this golden day of victory.

[Flourish. Exeunt]



ACT II

SCENE I
Before Orleans.

[Enter a Sergeant of a band with two Sentinels]

SERGEANT Sirs, take your places and be vigilant:
If any noise or soldier you perceive
Near to the walls, by some apparent sign
Let us have knowledge at the court of guard.

FIRST SENTINEL Sergeant, you shall.

[Exit Sergeant]

Thus are poor servitors,
When others sleep upon their quiet beds,
Constrain'd to watch in darkness, rain and cold.

[Enter TALBOT, BEDFORD, BURGUNDY, and
forces, with scaling-ladders, their drums beating a
dead march]

TALBOT Lord Regent, and redoubted Burgundy,
By whose approach the regions of Artois,
Wallon and Picardy are friends to us,
This happy night the Frenchmen are secure,
Having all day caroused and banqueted:

Embrace we then this opportunity
As fitting best to quittance their deceit
Contrived by art and baleful sorcery.

BEDFORD Coward of France! How much
he wrongs his fame,
Despairing of his own arm's fortitude,
To join with witches and the help of hell!

BURGUNDY Traitors have never other company.
But what's that Pucelle whom they term so pure?

TALBOT A maid, they say.

BEDFORD A maid! And be so martial!

BURGUNDY Pray God she prove not masculine ere long,
If underneath the standard of the French
She carry armour as she hath begun.

TALBOT Well, let them practise and
converse with spirits:
God is our fortress, in whose conquering name
Let us resolve to scale their flinty bulwarks.

BEDFORD Ascend, brave Talbot; we will follow thee.

TALBOT Not all together: better far, I guess,
That we do make our entrance several ways;
That, if it chance the one of us do fail,
The other yet may rise against their force.

BEDFORD Agreed: I'll to yond corner.

BURGUNDY And I to this.

TALBOT And here will Talbot mount,
or make his grave.
Now, Salisbury, for thee, and for the right
Of English Henry, shall this night appear
How much in duty I am bound to both.

SENTINELS Arm! Arm! The enemy doth make assault!

[*Cry: "St. George," A "Talbot."*]

[*The French leap over the walls in their shirts.
Enter, several ways, the BASTARD OF ORLEANS,
ALENÇON, and REIGNIER, half ready, and
half unready*]

ALENÇON How now, my lords! What, all unready so?

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Unready! Ay, and glad
we 'scaped so well.

REIGNIER 'Twas time, I trow, to wake
and leave our beds,
Hearing alarums at our chamber-doors.

ALENÇON Of all exploits since first I follow'd arms,
Ne'er heard I of a warlike enterprise
More venturous or desperate than this.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS I think this Talbot be a fiend
of hell.

REIGNIER If not of hell, the heavens, sure, favour him.

ALENÇON Here cometh Charles: I marvel how he sped.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Tut, holy Joan was
his defensive guard.

[*Enter CHARLES and JOAN LA PUCELLE*]

CHARLES Is this thy cunning, thou deceitful dame?
Didst thou at first, to flatter us withal,
Make us partakers of a little gain,
That now our loss might be ten times so much?

JOAN LA PUCELLE Wherefore is Charles impatient
with his friend!
At all times will you have my power alike?
Sleeping or waking must I still prevail,
Or will you blame and lay the fault on me?
Improvident soldiers! Had your watch been good,
This sudden mischief never could have fall'n.

CHARLES Duke of Alençon, this was your default,
That, being captain of the watch to-night,
Did look no better to that weighty charge.

ALENÇON Had all your quarters been as safely kept
As that whereof I had the government,
We had not been thus shamefully surprised.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Mine was secure.

REIGNIER And so was mine, my lord.

CHARLES And, for myself, most part of all this night,
Within her quarter and mine own precinct
I was employ'd in passing to and fro,
About relieving of the sentinels:
Then how or which way should they first break in?

JOAN LA PUCELLE Question, my lords,
no further of the case,
How or which way: 'tis sure they found some place
But weakly guarded, where the breach was made.

And now there rests no other shift but this;
To gather our soldiers, scatter'd and dispersed,
And lay new platforms to endamage them.

[*Alarum. Enter an English Soldier, crying
"A Talbot! A Talbot!" They fly, leaving their
clothes behind*]

SOLDIER I'll be so bold to take what they have left.
The cry of Talbot serves me for a sword;
For I have loaden me with many spoils,
Using no other weapon but his name.

[*Exit*]

SCENE II

Orleans. Within the town.

[*Enter TALBOT, BEDFORD, BURGUNDY, a
Captain, and others*]

BEDFORD The day begins to break, and night is fled,
Whose pitchy mantle over-veil'd the earth.
Here sound retreat, and cease our hot pursuit.

[*Retreat sounded*]

TALBOT Bring forth the body of old Salisbury,
And here advance it in the market-place,
The middle centre of this cursed town.
Now have I paid my vow unto his soul;
For every drop of blood was drawn from him,
There hath at least five Frenchmen died tonight.
And that hereafter ages may behold
What ruin happen'd in revenge of him,
Within their chiefest temple I'll erect
A tomb, wherein his corpse shall be interr'd:
Upon the which, that every one may read,
Shall be engraved the sack of Orleans,
The treacherous manner of his mournful death
And what a terror he had been to France.
But, lords, in all our bloody massacre,
I muse we met not with the Dauphin's grace,
His new-come champion, virtuous Joan of Arc,
Nor any of his false confederates.

BEDFORD 'Tis thought, Lord Talbot,
when the fight began,
Roused on the sudden from their drowsy beds,
They did amongst the troops of armed men
Leap o'er the walls for refuge in the field.

BURGUNDY Myself, as far as I could well discern
For smoke and dusky vapours of the night,
Am sure I scared the Dauphin and his trull,
When arm in arm they both came swiftly running,
Like to a pair of loving turtle-doves
That could not live asunder day or night.
After that things are set in order here,
We'll follow them with all the power we have.

[*Enter a Messenger*]

MESSENGER All hail, my lords! Which
of this princely train
Call ye the warlike Talbot, for his acts
So much applauded through the realm of France?

TALBOT Here is the Talbot: who would speak with him?

MESSENGER The virtuous lady, Countess of Auvergne,
With modesty admiring thy renown,
By me entreats, great lord, thou wouldst vouchsafe
To visit her poor castle where she lies,
That she may boast she hath beheld the man
Whose glory fills the world with loud report.

BURGUNDY Is it even so? Nay, then, I see our wars
Will turn unto a peaceful comic sport,
When ladies crave to be encounter'd with.
You may not, my lord, despise her gentle suit.

TALBOT Ne'er trust me then; for when a world of men
Could not prevail with all their oratory,
Yet hath a woman's kindness over-ruled:
And therefore tell her I return great thanks,
And in submission will attend on her.
Will not your honours bear me company?

BEDFORD No, truly; it is more than manners will:
And I have heard it said, unbidden guests
Are often welcomest when they are gone.

TALBOT Well then, alone, since there's no remedy,
I mean to prove this lady's courtesy.
Come hither, captain.

[*Whispers*]

You perceive my mind?

CAPTAIN I do, my lord, and mean accordingly.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE III

Auvergne. The COUNTESS's castle.

[Enter the COUNTESS and her Porter]

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE Porter, remember what I gave in charge;
And when you have done so, bring the keys to me.

PORTER Madam, I will.

[Exit]

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE The plot is laid: if all things fall out right,

I shall as famous be by this exploit
As Scythian Tomyris by Cyrus' death.
Great is the rumor of this dreadful knight,
And his achievements of no less account:
Fain would mine eyes be witness with mine ears,
To give their censure of these rare reports.

[Enter Messenger and TALBOT]

MESSENGER Madam,
According as your ladyship desired,
By message craved, so is Lord Talbot come.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE And he is welcome.
What! Is this the man?

MESSENGER Madam, it is.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE Is this the scourge of France?
Is this the Talbot, so much fear'd abroad
That with his name the mothers still their babes?
I see report is fabulous and false:
I thought I should have seen some Hercules,
A second Hector, for his grim aspect,
And large proportion of his strong-knit limbs.
Alas, this is a child, a silly dwarf!
It cannot be this weak and writhled shrimp
Should strike such terror to his enemies.

TALBOT Madam, I have been bold to trouble you;
But since your ladyship is not at leisure,
I'll sort some other time to visit you.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE What means he now? Go ask him whither he goes.

MESSENGER Stay, my Lord Talbot; for my lady craves
To know the cause of your abrupt departure.

TALBOT Marry, for that she's in a wrong belief,
I go to certify her Talbot's here.

[Re-enter Porter with keys]

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE If thou be he,
then art thou prisoner.

TALBOT Prisoner! To whom?

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE To me, blood-thirsty lord;
And for that cause I trained thee to my house.
Long time thy shadow hath been thrall to me,
For in my gallery thy picture hangs:
But now the substance shall endure the like,
And I will chain these legs and arms of thine,
That hast by tyranny these many years
Wasted our country, slain our citizens
And sent our sons and husbands captivate.

TALBOT Ha, ha, ha!

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE Laughest thou, wretch? Thy mirth shall turn to moan.

TALBOT I laugh to see your ladyship so fond
To think that you have aught but Talbot's shadow
Whereon to practise your severity.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE Why, art not thou the man?

TALBOT I am indeed.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE Then have I substance too.

TALBOT No, no, I am but shadow of myself:
You are deceived, my substance is not here;
For what you see is but the smallest part
And least proportion of humanity:
I tell you, madam, were the whole frame here,
It is of such a spacious lofty pitch,
Your roof were not sufficient to contain't.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE This is a riddling merchant for the nonce;
He will be here, and yet he is not here:
How can these contrarieties agree?

TALBOT That will I show you presently.

[Winds his horn. Drums strike up: a peal of ordnance. Enter Soldiers]

How say you, madam? Are you now persuaded
That Talbot is but shadow of himself?
These are his substance, sinews, arms and strength,
With which he yoketh your rebellious necks,
Razeth your cities and subverts your towns
And in a moment makes them desolate.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE Victorious Talbot!

Pardon my abuse:
I find thou art no less than fame hath bruited
And more than may be gather'd by thy shape.
Let my presumption not provoke thy wrath;
For I am sorry that with reverence
I did not entertain thee as thou art.

TALBOT Be not dismay'd, fair lady; nor misconstrue
The mind of Talbot, as you did mistake
The outward composition of his body.
What you have done hath not offended me;
Nor other satisfaction do I crave,
But only, with your patience, that we may
Taste of your wine and see what cates you have;
For soldiers' stomachs always serve them well.

COUNTESS OF AUVERGNE With all my heart,
and think me honoured
To feast so great a warrior in my house.

[Exeunt]

SCENE IV

London. The Temple-garden.

[Enter the Earls of SOMERSET, SUFFOLK, and
WARWICK; RICHARD PLANTAGENET,
VERNON, and another Lawyer]

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Great lords and gentlemen,
what means this silence?
Dare no man answer in a case of truth?

SUFFOLK Within the Temple-hall we were too loud;
The garden here is more convenient.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Then say at once if I maintain'd
the truth;
Or else was wrangling Somerset in the error?

SUFFOLK Faith, I have been a truant in the law,
And never yet could frame my will to it;
And therefore frame the law unto my will.

SOMERSET Judge you, my Lord of Warwick,
then, between us.

WARWICK Between two hawks,
which flies the higher pitch;
Between two dogs, which hath the deeper mouth;
Between two blades, which bears the better temper:
Between two horses, which doth bear him best;
Between two girls, which hath the merriest eye;
I have perhaps some shallow spirit of judgement;

But in these nice sharp quillets of the law,
Good faith, I am no wiser than a daw.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Tut, tut, here is a
mannerly forbearance:
The truth appears so naked on my side
That any purblind eye may find it out.

SOMERSET And on my side it is so well apparell'd,
So clear, so shining and so evident
That it will glimmer through a blind man's eye.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Since you are tongue-tied and
so loath to speak,
In dumb significants proclaim your thoughts:
Let him that is a true-born gentleman
And stands upon the honour of his birth,
If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From off this brier pluck a white rose with me.

SOMERSET Let him that is no coward nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.

WARWICK I love no colours, and without all colour
Of base insinuating flattery
I pluck this white rose with Plantagenet.

SUFFOLK I pluck this red rose with young Somerset
And say withal I think he held the right.

VERNON Stay, lords and gentlemen,
and pluck no more,
Till you conclude that he upon whose side
The fewest roses are cropp'd from the tree
Shall yield the other in the right opinion.

SOMERSET Good Master Vernon, it is well objected:
If I have fewest, I subscribe in silence.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET And I.

VERNON Then for the truth and plainness of the case.
I pluck this pale and maiden blossom here,
Giving my verdict on the white rose side.

SOMERSET Prick not your finger as you pluck it off,
Lest bleeding you do paint the white rose red
And fall on my side so, against your will.

VERNON If I my lord, for my opinion bleed,
Opinion shall be surgeon to my hurt
And keep me on the side where still I am.

SOMERSET Well, well, come on: who else?

LAWYER Unless my study and my books be false,
The argument you held was wrong in you:

[To SOMERSET]

In sign whereof I pluck a white rose too.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Now, Somerset,
where is your argument?

SOMERSET Here in my scabbard, meditating that
Shall dye your white rose in a bloody red.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Meantime your cheeks do
counterfeit our roses;
For pale they look with fear, as witnessing
The truth on our side.

SOMERSET No, Plantagenet,
’Tis not for fear but anger that thy cheeks
Blush for pure shame to counterfeit our roses,
And yet thy tongue will not confess thy error.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Hath not thy rose a
canker, Somerset?

SOMERSET Hath not thy rose a thorn, Plantagenet?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Ay, sharp and piercing, to
maintain his truth;
Whiles thy consuming canker eats his falsehood.

SOMERSET Well, I’ll find friends to wear my
bleeding roses,
That shall maintain what I have said is true,
Where false Plantagenet dare not be seen.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Now, by this maiden blossom
in my hand,
I scorn thee and thy fashion, peevish boy.

SUFFOLK Turn not thy scorns this way, Plantagenet.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Proud Pole, I will,
and scorn both him and thee.

SUFFOLK I’ll turn my part thereof into thy throat.

SOMERSET Away, away, good William de la Pole!
We grace the yeoman by conversing with him.

WARWICK Now, by God’s will,
thou wrong’st him, Somerset;
His grandfather was Lionel Duke of Clarence,
Third son to the third Edward King of England:
Spring crestless yeomen from so deep a root?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET He bears him
on the place’s privilege,
Or durst not, for his craven heart, say thus.

SOMERSET By him that made me,
I’ll maintain my words
On any plot of ground in Christendom.
Was not thy father, Richard Earl of Cambridge,
For treason executed in our late king’s days?
And, by his treason, stand’st not thou attainted,
Corrupted, and exempt from ancient gentry?
His trespass yet lives guilty in thy blood;
And, till thou be restored, thou art a yeoman.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET My father was attached,
not attainted,
Condemn’d to die for treason, but no traitor;
And that I’ll prove on better men than Somerset,
Were growing time once ripen’d to my will.
For your partaker Pole and you yourself,
I’ll note you in my book of memory,
To scourge you for this apprehension:
Look to it well and say you are well warn’d.

SOMERSET Ah, thou shalt find us ready for thee still;
And know us by these colours for thy foes,
For these my friends in spite of thee shall wear.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET And, by my soul,
this pale and angry rose,
As cognizance of my blood-drinking hate,
Will I for ever and my faction wear,
Until it wither with me to my grave
Or flourish to the height of my degree.

SUFFOLK Go forward and be choked with thy ambition!
And so farewell until I meet thee next.

[Exit]

SOMERSET Have with thee, Pole. Farewell,
ambitious Richard.

[Exit]

RICHARD PLANTAGENET How I am braved and
must perforce endure it!

WARWICK This blot that they object against your house
Shall be wiped out in the next parliament
Call’d for the truce of Winchester and Gloucester;
And if thou be not then created York,
I will not live to be accounted Warwick.
Meantime, in signal of my love to thee,
Against proud Somerset and William Pole,

Will I upon thy party wear this rose:
And here I prophesy: this brawl to-day,
Grown to this faction in the Temple-garden,
Shall send between the red rose and the white
A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Good Master Vernon,
I am bound to you,
That you on my behalf would pluck a flower.

VERNON In your behalf still will I wear the same.

LAWYER And so will I.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Thanks, gentle sir.
Come, let us four to dinner: I dare say
This quarrel will drink blood another day.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE V
The Tower of London.

[*Enter MORTIMER, brought in a chair,
and Gaolers*]

MORTIMER Kind keepers of my weak decaying age,
Let dying Mortimer here rest himself.
Even like a man new haled from the rack,
So fare my limbs with long imprisonment.
And these grey locks, the pursuivants of death,
Nestor-like aged in an age of care,
Argue the end of Edmund Mortimer.
These eyes, like lamps whose wasting oil is spent,
Wax dim, as drawing to their exigent;
Weak shoulders, overborne with burthening grief,
And pithless arms, like to a wither'd vine
That droops his sapless branches to the ground;
Yet are these feet, whose strengthless stay is numb,
Unable to support this lump of clay,
Swift-winged with desire to get a grave,
As witting I no other comfort have.
But tell me, keeper, will my nephew come?

FIRST GAOLER Richard Plantagenet, my lord, will come:
We sent unto the Temple, unto his chamber;
And answer was return'd that he will come.

MORTIMER Enough: my soul shall then be satisfied.
Poor gentleman! His wrong doth equal mine.
Since Henry Monmouth first began to reign,
Before whose glory I was great in arms,
This loathsome sequestration have I had:
And even since then hath Richard been obscured,
Deprived of honour and inheritance.

But now the arbitrator of despairs,
Just death, kind umpire of men's miseries,
With sweet unglamourment doth dismiss me hence:
I would his troubles likewise were expired,
That so he might recover what was lost.

[*Enter RICHARD PLANTAGENET*]

FIRST GAOLER My lord, your loving
nephew now is come.

MORTIMER Richard Plantagenet, my friend, is he come?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Ay, noble uncle,
thus ignobly used,
Your nephew, late despised Richard, comes.

MORTIMER Direct mine arms I may embrace his neck,
And in his bosom spend my latter gasp:
O, tell me when my lips do touch his cheeks,
That I may kindly give one fainting kiss.
And now declare, sweet stem from York's great stock,
Why didst thou say, of late thou wert despised?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET First, lean thine aged back
against mine arm;
And, in that ease, I'll tell thee my disease.
This day, in argument upon a case,
Some words there grew 'twixt Somerset and me;
Among which terms he used his lavish tongue
And did upbraid me with my father's death:
Which obloquy set bars before my tongue,
Else with the like I had requited him.
Therefore, good uncle, for my father's sake,
In honour of a true Plantagenet
And for alliance sake, declare the cause
My father, Earl of Cambridge, lost his head.

MORTIMER That cause, fair nephew,
that imprison'd me
And hath detain'd me all my flowering youth
Within a loathsome dungeon, there to pine,
Was cursed instrument of his decease.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Discover more at large what
cause that was,
For I am ignorant and cannot guess.

MORTIMER I will, if that my fading breath permit
And death approach not ere my tale be done.
Henry the Fourth, grandfather to this king,
Deposed his nephew Richard, Edward's son,
The first-begotten and the lawful heir,
Of Edward king, the third of that descent:
During whose reign the Percies of the north,
Finding his usurpation most unjust,

Endeavor'd my advancement to the throne:
 The reason moved these warlike lords to this
 Was, for that—young King Richard thus removed,
 Leaving no heir begotten of his body—
 I was the next by birth and parentage;
 For by my mother I derived am
 From Lionel Duke of Clarence, the third son
 To King Edward the Third; whereas he
 From John of Gaunt doth bring his pedigree,
 Being but fourth of that heroic line.
 But mark: as in this haughty attempt
 They laboured to plant the rightful heir,
 I lost my liberty and they their lives.
 Long after this, when Henry the Fifth,
 Succeeding his father Bolingbroke, did reign,
 Thy father, Earl of Cambridge, then derived
 From famous Edmund Langley, Duke of York,
 Marrying my sister that thy mother was,
 Again in pity of my hard distress
 Levied an army, weening to redeem
 And have install'd me in the diadem:
 But, as the rest, so fell that noble earl
 And was beheaded. Thus the Mortimers,
 In whom the tide rested, were suppress'd.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Of which, my lord, your
 honour is the last.

MORTIMER True; and thou seest that I no issue have
 And that my fainting words do warrant death;
 Thou art my heir; the rest I wish thee gather:
 But yet be wary in thy studious care.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Thy grave admonishments
 prevail with me:
 But yet, methinks, my father's execution
 Was nothing less than bloody tyranny.

MORTIMER With silence, nephew, be thou politic:
 Strong-fixed is the house of Lancaster,

And like a mountain, not to be removed.
 But now thy uncle is removing hence:
 As princes do their courts, when they are cloy'd
 With long continuance in a settled place.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET O, uncle, would some part of
 my young years
 Might but redeem the passage of your age!

MORTIMER Thou dost then wrong me, as that
 slaughterer doth
 Which giveth many wounds when one will kill.
 Mourn not, except thou sorrow for my good;
 Only give order for my funeral:
 And so farewell, and fair be all thy hopes
 And prosperous be thy life in peace and war!

[Dies]

RICHARD PLANTAGENET And peace, no war, befall thy
 parting soul!
 In prison hast thou spent a pilgrimage
 And like a hermit overpass'd thy days.
 Well, I will lock his counsel in my breast;
 And what I do imagine let that rest.
 Keepers, convey him hence, and I myself
 Will see his burial better than his life.

[Exeunt Gaolers, bearing out the body
 of MORTIMER]

Here dies the dusky torch of Mortimer,
 Choked with ambition of the meaner sort:
 And for those wrongs, those bitter injuries,
 Which Somerset hath offer'd to my house:
 I doubt not but with honour to redress;
 And therefore haste I to the parliament,
 Either to be restored to my blood,
 Or make my ill the advantage of my good.

[Exit]



ACT III

SCENE I

London. The Parliament-house.

[Flourish. Enter KING HENRY VI, EXETER,
 GLOUCESTER, WARWICK, SOMERSET, and
 SUFFOLK; the BISHOP OF WINCHESTER,
 RICHARD PLANTAGENET, and others.

GLOUCESTER offers to put up a bill;
WINCHESTER snatches it, and tears it]

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Comest thou with deep
 premeditated lines,
 With written pamphlets studiously devised,
 Humphrey of Gloucester? If thou canst accuse,

Or aught intend'st to lay unto my charge,
Do it without invention, suddenly;
As I with sudden and extemporal speech
Purpose to answer what thou canst object.

GLOUCESTER Presumptuous priest! This place
commands my patience,
Or thou shouldst find thou hast dishonour'd me.
Think not, although in writing I prefer'd
The manner of thy vile outrageous crimes,
That therefore I have forg'd, or am not able
Verbatim to rehearse the method of my pen:
No, prelate; such is thy audacious wickedness,
Thy lewd, pestiferous and dissentious pranks,
As very infants prattle of thy pride.
Thou art a most pernicious usurer,
Forward by nature, enemy to peace;
Lascivious, wanton, more than well beseems
A man of thy profession and degree;
And for thy treachery, what's more manifest?
In that thou laid'st a trap to take my life,
As well at London bridge as at the Tower.
Beside, I fear me, if thy thoughts were sifted,
The king, thy sovereign, is not quite exempt
From envious malice of thy swelling heart.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Gloucester, I do defy thee.
Lords, vouchsafe
To give me hearing what I shall reply.
If I were covetous, ambitious or perverse,
As he will have me, how am I so poor?
Or how haps it I seek not to advance
Or raise myself, but keep my wonted calling?
And for dissension, who preferreth peace
More than I do?—except I be provoked.
No, my good lords, it is not that offends;
It is not that that hath incensed the duke:
It is, because no one should sway but he;
No one but he should be about the king;
And that engenders thunder in his breast
And makes him roar these accusations forth.
But he shall know I am as good—

GLOUCESTER As good!
Thou bastard of my grandfather!

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Ay, lordly sir; for what are you,
I pray,
But one imperious in another's throne?

GLOUCESTER Am I not protector, saucy priest?

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER And am not I a prelate of
the church?

GLOUCESTER Yes, as an outlaw in a castle keeps
And useth it to patronage his theft.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Unreverent Gloster!

GLOUCESTER Thou art reverent
Touching thy spiritual function, not thy life.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Rome shall remedy this.

WARWICK Roam thither, then.

SOMERSET My lord, it were your duty to forbear.

WARWICK Ay, see the bishop be not overborne.

SOMERSET Methinks my lord should be religious
And know the office that belongs to such.

WARWICK Methinks his lordship should be humbler;
It fitteth not a prelate so to plead.

SOMERSET Yes, when his holy state is touch'd so near.

WARWICK State holy or unhallow'd, what of that?
Is not his grace protector to the king?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET [*Aside*] Plantagenet, I see, must
hold his tongue,
Lest it be said "Speak, sirrah, when you should;
Must your bold verdict enter talk with lords?"
Else would I have a fling at Winchester.

KING HENRY VI Uncles of Gloucester and of Winchester,
The special watchmen of our English weal,
I would prevail, if prayers might prevail,
To join your hearts in love and amity.
O, what a scandal is it to our crown,
That two such noble peers as ye should jar!
Believe me, lords, my tender years can tell
Civil dissension is a viperous worm
That gnaws the bowels of the commonwealth.

[*A noise within, "Down with the tawny-coats!"*]

What tumult's this?

WARWICK An uproar, I dare warrant,
Begun through malice of the bishop's men.

[*A noise again, "Stones! Stones!" Enter Mayor*]

MAYOR O, my good lords, and virtuous Henry,
Pity the city of London, pity us!
The bishop and the Duke of Gloucester's men,
Forbidden late to carry any weapon,
Have fill'd their pockets full of pebble stones

And banding themselves in contrary parts
Do pelt so fast at one another's pate
That many have their giddy brains knock'd out:
Our windows are broke down in every street
And we for fear compell'd to shut our shops.

[Enter Serving-men, in skirmish, with
bloody pates]

KING HENRY VI We charge you, on allegiance to ourself,
To hold your slaughtering hands and keep the peace.
Pray, uncle Gloucester, mitigate this strife.

FIRST SERVING-MAN Nay, if we be forbidden stones,
We'll fall to it with our teeth.

SECOND SERVING-MAN Do what ye dare, we are
as resolute.

[Skirmish again]

GLOUCESTER You of my household,
leave this peevish broil
And set this unaccustom'd fight aside.

THIRD SERVING-MAN My lord, we know
your grace to be a man
Just and upright; and, for your royal birth,
Inferior to none but to his majesty:
And ere that we will suffer such a prince,
So kind a father of the commonweal,
To be disgraced by an inkhorn mate,
We and our wives and children all will fight
And have our bodies slaughtered by thy foes.

FIRST SERVING-MAN Ay, and the very parings
of our nails
Shall pitch a field when we are dead.

[Begin again]

GLOUCESTER Stay, stay, I say!
And if you love me, as you say you do,
Let me persuade you to forbear awhile.

KING HENRY VI O, how this discord doth afflict my soul!
Can you, my Lord of Winchester, behold
My sighs and tears and will not once relent?
Who should be pitiful, if you be not?
Or who should study to prefer a peace.
If holy churchmen take delight in broils?

WARWICK Yield, my lord protector; yield, Winchester;
Except you mean with obstinate repulse
To slay your sovereign and destroy the realm.
You see what mischief and what murder too

Hath been enacted through your enmity;
Then be at peace except ye thirst for blood.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER He shall submit,
or I will never yield.

GLOUCESTER Compassion on the king
commands me stoop;
Or I would see his heart out, ere the priest
Should ever get that privilege of me.

WARWICK Behold, my Lord of Winchester, the duke
Hath banish'd moody discontented fury,
As by his smoothed brows it doth appear:
Why look you still so stern and tragical?

GLOUCESTER Here, Winchester, I offer thee my hand.

KING HENRY VI Fie, uncle Beaufort! I have
heard you preach
That malice was a great and grievous sin;
And will not you maintain the thing you teach,
But prove a chief offender in the same?

WARWICK Sweet king! The bishop hath a kindly gird.
For shame, my lord of Winchester, relent!
What, shall a child instruct you what to do?

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER Well, Duke of Gloucester,
I will yield to thee;
Love for thy love and hand for hand I give.

GLOUCESTER [Aside] Ay, but, I fear me, with a
hollow heart.—
See here, my friends and loving countrymen,
This token serveth for a flag of truce
Betwixt ourselves and all our followers:
So help me God, as I dissemble not!

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER [Aside] So help me God,
as I intend it not!

KING HENRY VI O, loving uncle, kind Duke
of Gloucester,
How joyful am I made by this contract!
Away, my masters! Trouble us no more;
But join in friendship, as your lords have done.

FIRST SERVING-MAN Content: I'll to the surgeon's.

SECOND SERVING-MAN And so will I.

THIRD SERVING-MAN And I will see what physic
the tavern affords.

[Exeunt Serving-men, Mayor, &c.]

WARWICK Accept this scroll, most gracious sovereign,
Which in the right of Richard Plantagenet
We do exhibit to your majesty.

GLOUCESTER Well urged, my Lord of Warwick:
or sweet prince,
And if your grace mark every circumstance,
You have great reason to do Richard right;
Especially for those occasions
At Eltham Place I told your majesty.

KING HENRY VI And those occasions, uncle,
were of force:
Therefore, my loving lords, our pleasure is
That Richard be restored to his blood.

WARWICK Let Richard be restored to his blood;
So shall his father's wrongs be recompensed.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER As will the rest, so
willeth Winchester.

KING HENRY VI If Richard will be true, not that alone
But all the whole inheritance I give
That doth belong unto the house of York,
From whence you spring by lineal descent.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET Thy humble servant
vows obedience
And humble service till the point of death.

KING HENRY VI Stoop then and set your
knee against my foot;
And, in reguerdon of that duty done,
I gird thee with the valiant sword of York:
Rise Richard, like a true Plantagenet,
And rise created princely Duke of York.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET And so thrive Richard
as thy foes may fall!
And as my duty springs, so perish they
That grudge one thought against your majesty!

ALL Welcome, high prince, the mighty Duke of York!

SOMERSET *[Aside]* Perish, base prince,
ignoble Duke of York!

GLOUCESTER Now will it best avail your majesty
To cross the seas and to be crown'd in France:
The presence of a king engenders love
Amongst his subjects and his loyal friends,
As it disanimates his enemies.

KING HENRY VI When Gloucester says the word, King
Henry goes;
For friendly counsel cuts off many foes.

GLOUCESTER Your ships already are in readiness.

[Sennet. Flourish. Exeunt all but EXETER]

EXETER Ay, we may march in England or in France,
Not seeing what is likely to ensue.
This late dissension grown betwixt the peers
Burns under feigned ashes of forged love
And will at last break out into a flame:
As fester'd members rot but by degree,
Till bones and flesh and sinews fall away,
So will this base and envious discord breed.
And now I fear that fatal prophecy
Which in the time of Henry named the Fifth
Was in the mouth of every sucking babe;
That Henry born at Monmouth should win all
And Henry born at Windsor lose all:
Which is so plain that Exeter doth wish
His days may finish ere that hapless time.

[Exit]

SCENE II

France. Before Rouen.

*[Enter JOAN LA PUCELLE disguised, with four
Soldiers with sacks upon their backs]*

JOAN LA PUCELLE These are the city gates,
the gates of Rouen,
Through which our policy must make a breach:
Take heed, be wary how you place your words;
Talk like the vulgar sort of market men
That come to gather money for their corn.
If we have entrance, as I hope we shall,
And that we find the slothful watch but weak,
I'll by a sign give notice to our friends,
That Charles the Dauphin may encounter them.

FIRST SOLDIER Our sacks shall be a mean
to sack the city,
And we be lords and rulers over Rouen;
Therefore we'll knock.

[Knocks]

WATCH *[Within]* Qui est la?

JOAN LA PUCELLE Paysans, pauvres gens de France;
Poor market folks that come to sell their corn.

WATCH Enter, go in; the market bell is rung.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Now, Rouen, I'll shake thy bulwarks
to the ground.

[Exeunt]

[Enter CHARLES, the BASTARD OF ORLEANS, ALENÇON, REIGNIER, and forces]

CHARLES Saint Denis bless this happy stratagem!
And once again we'll sleep secure in Rouen.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Here enter'd Pucelle and
her practisants;
Now she is there, how will she specify
Where is the best and safest passage in?

REIGNIER By thrusting out a torch from yonder tower;
Which, once discern'd, shows that her meaning is,
No way to that, for weakness, which she enter'd.

[Enter JOAN LA PUCELLE on the top, thrusting
out a torch burning]

JOAN LA PUCELLE Behold, this is the
happy wedding torch
That joineth Rouen unto her countrymen,
But burning fatal to the Talbotites!

[Exit]

BASTARD OF ORLEANS See, noble Charles,
the beacon of our friend;
The burning torch in yonder turret stands.

CHARLES Now shine it like a comet of revenge,
A prophet to the fall of all our foes!

REIGNIER Defer no time, delays have dangerous ends;
Enter, and cry "The Dauphin!" presently,
And then do execution on the watch.

[Alarum. Exeunt]

[An alarum. Enter TALBOT in an excursion]

TALBOT France, thou shalt rue this treason
with thy tears,
If Talbot but survive thy treachery.
Pucelle, that witch, that damned sorceress,
Hath wrought this hellish mischief unawares,
That hardly we escaped the pride of France.

[Exit]

[An alarum: excursions. BEDFORD, brought in
sick in a chair. Enter TALBOT and BURGUNDY
without: within JOAN LA PUCELLE, CHARLES,
BASTARD OF ORLEANS, ALENÇON, and
REIGNIER, on the walls]

JOAN LA PUCELLE Good morrow, gallants!
Want ye corn for bread?

I think the Duke of Burgundy will fast
Before he'll buy again at such a rate:
'Twas full of darnel; do you like the taste?

BURGUNDY Scoff on, vile fiend and
shameless courtesan!
I trust ere long to choke thee with thine own
And make thee curse the harvest of that corn.

CHARLES Your grace may starve
perhaps before that time.

BEDFORD O, let no words, but deeds, revenge
this treason!

JOAN LA PUCELLE What will you do, good grey-beard?
break a lance,
And run a tilt at death within a chair?

TALBOT Foul fiend of France, and hag of all despite,
Encompass'd with thy lustful paramours!
Becomes it thee to taunt his valiant age
And twit with cowardice a man half dead?
Damsel, I'll have a bout with you again,
Or else let Talbot perish with this shame.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Are ye so hot, sir? Yet, Pucelle,
hold thy peace;
If Talbot do but thunder, rain will follow.

[The English whisper together in council]

God speed the parliament! Who shall be the speaker?

TALBOT Dare ye come forth and meet us in the field?

JOAN LA PUCELLE Belike your lordship
takes us then for fools,
To try if that our own be ours or no.

TALBOT I speak not to that railing Hecate,
But unto thee, Alençon, and the rest;
Will ye, like soldiers, come and fight it out?

ALENÇON Signior, no.

TALBOT Signior, hang! Base muleters of France!
Like peasant foot-boys do they keep the walls
And dare not take up arms like gentlemen.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Away, captains! Let's get us
from the walls;
For Talbot means no goodness by his looks.
God be wi' you, my lord! We came but to tell you
That we are here.

[Exeunt from the walls]

TALBOT And there will we be too, ere it be long,
Or else reproach be Talbot's greatest fame!
Vow, Burgundy, by honour of thy house,
Prick'd on by public wrongs sustain'd in France,
Either to get the town again or die:
And I, as sure as English Henry lives
And as his father here was conqueror,
As sure as in this late-betrayed town
Great Coeur-de-lion's heart was buried,
So sure I swear to get the town or die.

BURGUNDY My vows are equal partners with thy vows.

TALBOT But, ere we go, regard this dying prince,
The valiant Duke of Bedford. Come, my lord,
We will bestow you in some better place,
Fitter for sickness and for crazy age.

BEDFORD Lord Talbot, do not so dishonour me:
Here will I sit before the walls of Rouen
And will be partner of your weal or woe.

BURGUNDY Courageous Bedford, let us now
persuade you.

BEDFORD Not to be gone from hence; for once I read
That stout Pendragon in his litter sick
Came to the field and vanquished his foes:
Methinks I should revive the soldiers' hearts,
Because I ever found them as myself.

TALBOT Undaunted spirit in a dying breast!
Then be it so: heavens keep old Bedford safe!
And now no more ado, brave Burgundy,
But gather we our forces out of hand
And set upon our boasting enemy.

[Exeunt all but BEDFORD and Attendants]

[An alarum: excursions. Enter FASTOLFE
and a Captain]

CAPTAIN Whither away, Sir John Fastolfe,
in such haste?

FASTOLFE Whither away! To save myself by flight:
We are like to have the overthrow again.

CAPTAIN What! Will you fly, and leave Lord Talbot?

FASTOLFE Ay,
All the Talbots in the world, to save my life!

[Exit]

CAPTAIN Cowardly knight! Ill fortune follow thee!

[Exit]

[Retreat: excursions. JOAN LA PUCELLE,
ALENÇON, and CHARLES fly]

BEDFORD Now, quiet soul, depart when heaven please,
For I have seen our enemies' overthrow.
What is the trust or strength of foolish man?
They that of late were daring with their scoffs
Are glad and fain by flight to save themselves.

[BEDFORD dies, and is carried in by two in
his chair]

[An alarum. Re-enter TALBOT, BURGUNDY,
and the rest]

TALBOT Lost, and recover'd in a day again!
This is a double honour, Burgundy:
Yet heavens have glory for this victory!

BURGUNDY Warlike and martial Talbot, Burgundy
Enshrines thee in his heart and there erects
Thy noble deeds as valour's monuments.

TALBOT Thanks, gentle duke. But where is
Pucelle now?

I think her old familiar is asleep:
Now where's the Bastard's braves, and Charles
his gleeks?

What, all amort? Rouen hangs her head for grief
That such a valiant company are fled.
Now will we take some order in the town,
Placing therein some expert officers,
And then depart to Paris to the king,
For there young Henry with his nobles lie.

BURGUNDY What wills Lord Talbot pleaseth Burgundy.

TALBOT But yet, before we go, let's not forget
The noble Duke of Bedford late deceased,
But see his exequies fulfill'd in Rouen:
A braver soldier never couched lance,
A gentler heart did never sway in court;
But kings and mightiest potentates must die,
For that's the end of human misery.

[Exeunt]

SCENE III

The plains near Rouen.

[Enter CHARLES, the BASTARD OF ORLEANS,
ALENÇON, JOAN LA PUCELLE, and forces]

JOAN LA PUCELLE Dismay not, princes, at this accident,
Nor grieve that Rouen is so recovered:
Care is no cure, but rather corrosive,

For things that are not to be remedied.
Let frantic Talbot triumph for a while
And like a peacock sweep along his tail;
We'll pull his plumes and take away his train,
If Dauphin and the rest will be but ruled.

CHARLES We have been guided by thee hitherto,
And of thy cunning had no diffidence:
One sudden foil shall never breed distrust.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Search out thy wit for
secret policies,
And we will make thee famous through the world.

ALENÇON We'll set thy statue in some holy place,
And have thee revered like a blessed saint:
Employ thee then, sweet virgin, for our good.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Then thus it must be;
this doth Joan devise:
By fair persuasions mix'd with sugar'd words
We will entice the Duke of Burgundy
To leave the Talbot and to follow us.

CHARLES Ay, marry, sweeting, if we could do that,
France were no place for Henry's warriors;
Nor should that nation boast it so with us,
But be extirped from our provinces.

ALENÇON For ever should they be expelled
from France
And not have title of an earldom here.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Your honours shall perceive how I
will work
To bring this matter to the wished end.

[*Drum sounds afar off*]

Hark! By the sound of drum you may perceive
Their powers are marching unto Paris-ward.

[*Here sound an English march. Enter, and pass
over at a distance, TALBOT and his forces*]

There goes the Talbot, with his colours spread,
And all the troops of English after him.

[*French march. Enter BURGUNDY and forces*]

Now in the rearward comes the duke and his:
Fortune in favour makes him lag behind.
Summon a parley; we will talk with him.

[*Trumpets sound a parley*]

CHARLES A parley with the Duke of Burgundy!

BURGUNDY Who craves a parley with the Burgundy?

JOAN LA PUCELLE The princely Charles of France,
thy countryman.

BURGUNDY What say'st thou, Charles? For I am
marching hence.

CHARLES Speak, Pucelle, and enchant him with
thy words.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Brave Burgundy, undoubted hope
of France!
Stay, let thy humble handmaid speak to thee.

BURGUNDY Speak on; but be not over-tedious.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Look on thy country, look on
fertile France,
And see the cities and the towns defaced
By wasting ruin of the cruel foe.
As looks the mother on her lowly babe
When death doth close his tender dying eyes,
See, see the pining malady of France;
Behold the wounds, the most unnatural wounds,
Which thou thyself hast given her woful breast.
O, turn thy edged sword another way;
Strike those that hurt, and hurt not those that help.
One drop of blood drawn from thy country's bosom
Should grieve thee more than streams of foreign gore:
Return thee therefore with a flood of tears,
And wash away thy country's stained spots.

BURGUNDY Either she hath bewitch'd
me with her words,
Or nature makes me suddenly relent.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Besides, all French and France
exclaims on thee,
Doubting thy birth and lawful progeny.
Who joint'st thou with but with a lordly nation
That will not trust thee but for profit's sake?
When Talbot hath set footing once in France
And fashion'd thee that instrument of ill,
Who then but English Henry will be lord
And thou be thrust out like a fugitive?
Call we to mind, and mark but this for proof,
Was not the Duke of Orleans thy foe?
And was he not in England prisoner?
But when they heard he was thine enemy,
They set him free without his ransom paid,
In spite of Burgundy and all his friends.
See, then, thou fight'st against thy countrymen
And joint'st with them will be thy slaughtermen.
Come, come, return; return, thou wandering lord:
Charles and the rest will take thee in their arms.

BURGUNDY I am vanquished; these haughty words of hers
Have batter'd me like roaring cannon-shot,
And made me almost yield upon my knees.
Forgive me, country, and sweet countrymen,
And, lords, accept this hearty kind embrace:
My forces and my power of men are yours:
So farewell, Talbot; I'll no longer trust thee.

JOAN LA PUCELLE [*Aside*] Done like a Frenchman: turn,
and turn again!

CHARLES Welcome, brave duke! Thy friendship makes
us fresh.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS And doth beget new courage in
our breasts.

ALENÇON Pucelle hath bravely play'd her part in this,
And doth deserve a coronet of gold.

CHARLES Now let us on, my lords, and join our powers,
And seek how we may prejudice the foe.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE IV
Paris. The palace.

[*Enter KING HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER, BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, YORK, SUFFOLK, SOMERSET, WARWICK, EXETER, VERNON, BASSET, and others. To them with his Soldiers, TALBOT*]

TALBOT My gracious prince, and honourable peers,
Hearing of your arrival in this realm,
I have awhile given truce unto my wars,
To do my duty to my sovereign:
In sign, whereof, this arm, that hath reclaim'd
To your obedience fifty fortresses,
Twelve cities and seven walled towns of strength,
Beside five hundred prisoners of esteem,
Lets fall his sword before your highness' feet,
And with submissive loyalty of heart
Ascribes the glory of his conquest got
First to my God and next unto your grace.

[*Kneels*]

KING HENRY VI Is this the Lord Talbot,
uncle Gloucester,
That hath so long been resident in France?

GLOUCESTER Yes, if it please your majesty, my liege.

KING HENRY VI Welcome, brave captain and
victorious lord!

When I was young, as yet I am not old,
I do remember how my father said
A stouter champion never handled sword.
Long since we were resolved of your truth,
Your faithful service and your toil in war;
Yet never have you tasted our reward,
Or been reguerdon'd with so much as thanks,
Because till now we never saw your face:
Therefore, stand up; and, for these good deserts,
We here create you Earl of Shrewsbury;
And in our coronation take your place.

[*Sennet. Flourish. Exeunt all but VERNON and BASSET*]

VERNON Now, sir, to you, that were so hot at sea,
Disgracing of these colours that I wear
In honour of my noble Lord of York:
Darest thou maintain the former words thou spakest?

BASSET Yes, sir; as well as you dare patronage
The envious barking of your saucy tongue
Against my lord the Duke of Somerset.

VERNON Sirrah, thy lord I honour as he is.

BASSET Why, what is he? As good a man as York.

VERNON Hark ye; not so: in witness, take ye that.

[*Strikes him*]

BASSET Villain, thou know'st the law of arms is such
That whoso draws a sword, 'tis present death,
Or else this blow should broach thy dearest blood.
But I'll unto his majesty, and crave
I may have liberty to venge this wrong;
When thou shalt see I'll meet thee to thy cost.

VERNON Well, miscreant, I'll be there as soon as you;
And, after, meet you sooner than you would.

[*Exeunt*]



ACT IV

SCENE I

Paris. A hall of state.

[Enter KING HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER, BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, YORK, SUFFOLK, SOMERSET, WARWICK, TALBOT, EXETER, the Governor of Paris, and others]

GLOUCESTER Lord bishop, set the crown upon his head.

BISHOP OF WINCHESTER God save King Henry, of that name the sixth!

GLOUCESTER Now, governor of Paris, take your oath, That you elect no other king but him; Esteem none friends but such as are his friends, And none your foes but such as shall pretend Malicious practises against his state: This shall ye do, so help you righteous God!

[Enter FASTOLFE]

FASTOLFE My gracious sovereign, as I rode from Calais, To haste unto your coronation, A letter was deliver'd to my hands, Writ to your grace from the Duke of Burgundy.

TALBOT Shame to the Duke of Burgundy and thee! I vow'd, base knight, when I did meet thee next, To tear the garter from thy craven's leg,

[Plucking it off]

Which I have done, because unworthily Thou wast installed in that high degree. Pardon me, princely Henry, and the rest This dastard, at the battle of Patay, When but in all I was six thousand strong And that the French were almost ten to one, Before we met or that a stroke was given, Like to a trusty squire did run away: In which assault we lost twelve hundred men; Myself and divers gentlemen beside Were there surprised and taken prisoners. Then judge, great lords, if I have done amiss; Or whether that such cowards ought to wear This ornament of knighthood, yea or no.

GLOUCESTER To say the truth, this fact was infamous And ill beseeming any common man, Much more a knight, a captain and a leader.

TALBOT When first this order was ordain'd, my lords, Knights of the garter were of noble birth, Valiant and virtuous, full of haughty courage, Such as were grown to credit by the wars; Not fearing death, nor shrinking for distress, But always resolute in most extremes. He then that is not furnish'd in this sort Doth but usurp the sacred name of knight, Profaning this most honourable order, And should, if I were worthy to be judge, Be quite degraded, like a hedge-born swain That doth presume to boast of gentle blood.

KING HENRY VI Stain to thy countrymen, thou hear'st thy doom! Be packing, therefore, thou that wast a knight: Henceforth we banish thee, on pain of death.

[Exit FASTOLFE]

And now, my lord protector, view the letter Sent from our uncle Duke of Burgundy.

GLOUCESTER What means his grace, that he hath changed his style? No more but, plain and bluntly, "To the king!" Hath he forgot he is his sovereign? Or doth this churlish superscription Pretend some alteration in good will? What's here?

[Reads]

"I have, upon especial cause, Moved with compassion of my country's wreck, Together with the pitiful complaints Of such as your oppression feeds upon, Forsaken your pernicious faction And join'd with Charles, the rightful King of France." O monstrous treachery! Can this be so, That in alliance, amity and oaths, There should be found such false dissembling guile?

KING HENRY VI What! Doth my uncle Burgundy revolt?

GLOUCESTER He doth, my lord, and is become your foe.

KING HENRY VI Is that the worst this letter doth contain?

GLOUCESTER It is the worst, and all, my lord, he writes.

KING HENRY VI Why, then, Lord Talbot there shall talk with him

And give him chastisement for this abuse.
How say you, my lord? Are you not content?

TALBOT Content, my liege! Yes, but that I
am prevented,
I should have begg'd I might have been employ'd.

KING HENRY VI Then gather strength and march unto
him straight:
Let him perceive how ill we brook his treason
And what offence it is to flout his friends.

TALBOT I go, my lord, in heart desiring still
You may behold confusion of your foes.

[Exit]

[Enter *VERNON* and *BASSET*]

VERNON Grant me the combat, gracious sovereign.

BASSET And me, my lord, grant me the combat too.

YORK This is my servant: hear him, noble prince.

SOMERSET And this is mine: sweet Henry, favour him.

KING HENRY VI Be patient, lords; and give them
leave to speak.

Say, gentlemen, what makes you thus exclaim?
And wherefore crave you combat? Or with whom?

VERNON With him, my lord; for he hath done
me wrong.

BASSET And I with him; for he hath done me wrong.

KING HENRY VI What is that wrong whereof you
both complain?
First let me know, and then I'll answer you.

BASSET Crossing the sea from England into France,
This fellow here, with envious carping tongue,
Upbraided me about the rose I wear;
Saying, the sanguine colour of the leaves
Did represent my master's blushing cheeks,
When stubbornly he did repugn the truth
About a certain question in the law
Argued betwixt the Duke of York and him;
With other vile and ignominious terms:
In confutation of which rude reproach
And in defence of my lord's worthiness,
I crave the benefit of law of arms.

VERNON And that is my petition, noble lord:
For though he seem with forged quaint conceit
To set a gloss upon his bold intent,
Yet know, my lord, I was provoked by him;

And he first took exceptions at this badge,
Pronouncing that the paleness of this flower
Bewray'd the faintness of my master's heart.

YORK Will not this malice, Somerset, be left?

SOMERSET Your private grudge, my Lord of York,
will out,
Though ne'er so cunningly you smother it.

KING HENRY VI Good Lord, what madness rules in
brainsick men,
When for so slight and frivolous a cause
Such factious emulations shall arise!
Good cousins both, of York and Somerset,
Quiet yourselves, I pray, and be at peace.

YORK Let this dissension first be tried by fight,
And then your highness shall command a peace.

SOMERSET The quarrel toucheth none but us alone;
Betwixt ourselves let us decide it then.

YORK There is my pledge; accept it, Somerset.

VERNON Nay, let it rest where it began at first.

BASSET Confirm it so, mine honourable lord.

GLOUCESTER Confirm it so! Confounded be your strife!
And perish ye, with your audacious prate!
Presumptuous vassals, are you not ashamed
With this immodest clamorous outrage
To trouble and disturb the king and us?
And you, my lords, methinks you do not well
To bear with their perverse objections;
Much less to take occasion from their mouths
To raise a mutiny betwixt yourselves:
Let me persuade you take a better course.

EXETER It grieves his highness: good my lords,
be friends.

KING HENRY VI Come hither, you that would
be combatants:
Henceforth I charge you, as you love our favour,
Quite to forget this quarrel and the cause.
And you, my lords, remember where we are,
In France, amongst a fickle wavering nation:
If they perceive dissension in our looks
And that within ourselves we disagree,
How will their grudging stomachs be provoked
To wilful disobedience, and rebel!
Beside, what infamy will there arise,
When foreign princes shall be certified
That for a toy, a thing of no regard,
King Henry's peers and chief nobility

Destroy'd themselves, and lost the realm of France!
 O, think upon the conquest of my father,
 My tender years, and let us not forego
 That for a trifle that was bought with blood
 Let me be umpire in this doubtful strife.
 I see no reason, if I wear this rose,

[Putting on a red rose]

That any one should therefore be suspicious
 I more incline to Somerset than York:
 Both are my kinsmen, and I love them both:
 As well they may upbraid me with my crown,
 Because, forsooth, the king of Scots is crown'd.
 But your discretions better can persuade
 Than I am able to instruct or teach:
 And therefore, as we hither came in peace,
 So let us still continue peace and love.
 Cousin of York, we institute your grace
 To be our regent in these parts of France:
 And, good my Lord of Somerset, unite
 Your troops of horsemen with his bands of foot;
 And, like true subjects, sons of your progenitors,
 Go cheerfully together and digest.
 Your angry cholera on your enemies.
 Ourselves, my lord protector and the rest
 After some respite will return to Calais;
 From thence to England; where I hope ere long
 To be presented, by your victories,
 With Charles, Alençon and that traitorous rout.

[Flourish. Exeunt all but YORK, WARWICK,
 EXETER and VERNON]

WARWICK My Lord of York, I promise you, the king
 Prettily, methought, did play the orator.

YORK And so he did; but yet I like it not,
 In that he wears the badge of Somerset.

WARWICK Tush, that was but his fancy, blame him not;
 I dare presume, sweet prince, he thought no harm.

YORK An if I wist he did,—but let it rest;
 Other affairs must now be managed.

[Exeunt all but EXETER]

EXETER Well didst thou, Richard, to suppress thy voice;
 For, had the passions of thy heart burst out,
 I fear we should have seen decipher'd there
 More rancorous spite, more furious raging broils,
 Than yet can be imagined or supposed.
 But howsoe'er, no simple man that sees
 This jarring discord of nobility,
 This shouldering of each other in the court,

This factious bandying of their favourites,
 But that it doth presage some ill event.
 'Tis much when sceptres are in children's hands;
 But more when envy breeds unkind division;
 There comes the rain, there begins confusion.

[Exit]

SCENE II
 Before Bourdeaux.

[Enter TALBOT, with trump and drum]

TALBOT Go to the gates of Bourdeaux, trumpeter:
 Summon their general unto the wall.

[Trumpet sounds. Enter General and others, aloft]

English John Talbot, captains, calls you forth,
 Servant in arms to Harry King of England;
 And thus he would: Open your city gates;
 Be humble to us; call my sovereign yours,
 And do him homage as obedient subjects;
 And I'll withdraw me and my bloody power:
 But, if you frown upon this proffer'd peace,
 You tempt the fury of my three attendants,
 Lean famine, quartering steel, and climbing fire;
 Who in a moment even with the earth
 Shall lay your stately and air-braving towers,
 If you forsake the offer of their love.

GENERAL Thou ominous and fearful owl of death,
 Our nation's terror and their bloody scourge!
 The period of thy tyranny approacheth.
 On us thou canst not enter but by death;
 For, I protest, we are well fortified
 And strong enough to issue out and fight:
 If thou retire, the Dauphin, well appointed,
 Stands with the snares of war to tangle thee:
 On either hand thee there are squadrons pitch'd,
 To wall thee from the liberty of flight;
 And no way canst thou turn thee for redress,
 But death doth front thee with apparent spoil
 And pale destruction meets thee in the face.
 Ten thousand French have ta'en the sacrament
 To rive their dangerous artillery
 Upon no Christian soul but English Talbot.
 Lo, there thou stand'st, a breathing valiant man,
 Of an invincible unconquer'd spirit!
 This is the latest glory of thy praise
 That I, thy enemy, due thee withal;
 For ere the glass, that now begins to run,
 Finish the process of his sandy hour,
 These eyes, that see thee now well coloured,
 Shall see thee wither'd, bloody, pale and dead.

[*Drum afar off*]

Hark! Hark! The Dauphin's drum, a warning bell,
Sings heavy music to thy timorous soul;
And mine shall ring thy dire departure out.

[*Exeunt General, &c.*]

TALBOT He fables not; I hear the enemy:
Out, some light horsemen, and peruse their wings.
O, negligent and heedless discipline!
How are we park'd and bounded in a pale,
A little herd of England's timorous deer,
Mazed with a yelping kennel of French curs!
If we be English deer, be then in blood;
Not rascal-like, to fall down with a pinch,
But rather, moody-mad and desperate stags,
Turn on the bloody hounds with heads of steel
And make the cowards stand aloof at bay:
Sell every man his life as dear as mine,
And they shall find dear deer of us, my friends.
God and Saint George, Talbot and England's right,
Prosper our colours in this dangerous fight!

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE III
Plains in Gascony.

[*Enter a Messenger that meets YORK. Enter YORK with trumpet and many Soldiers*]

YORK Are not the speedy scouts return'd again,
That dogg'd the mighty army of the Dauphin?

MESSENGER They are return'd, my lord, and give it out
That he is march'd to Bourdeaux with his power,
To fight with Talbot: as he march'd along,
By your espials were discovered
Two mightier troops than that the Dauphin led,
Which join'd with him and made their march
for Bourdeaux.

YORK A plague upon that villain Somerset,
That thus delays my promised supply
Of horsemen, that were levied for this siege!
Renowned Talbot doth expect my aid,
And I am lowted by a traitor villain
And cannot help the noble chevalier:
God comfort him in this necessity!
If he miscarry, farewell wars in France.

[*Enter Sir William LUCY*]

LUCY Thou princely leader of our English strength,
Never so needful on the earth of France,

Spur to the rescue of the noble Talbot,
Who now is girdled with a waist of iron
And hemm'd about with grim destruction:
To Bourdeaux, warlike duke! To Bourdeaux, York!
Else, farewell Talbot, France, and England's honour.

YORK O God, that Somerset, who in proud heart
Doth stop my cornets, were in Talbot's place!
So should we save a valiant gentleman
By forfeiting a traitor and a coward.
Mad ire and wrathful fury makes me weep,
That thus we die, while remiss traitors sleep.

LUCY O, send some succor to the distress'd lord!

YORK He dies, we lose; I break my warlike word;
We mourn, France smiles; we lose, they daily get;
All 'long of this vile traitor Somerset.

LUCY Then God take mercy on brave Talbot's soul;
And on his son young John, who two hours since
I met in travel toward his warlike father!
This seven years did not Talbot see his son;
And now they meet where both their lives are done.

YORK Alas, what joy shall noble Talbot have
To bid his young son welcome to his grave?
Away! Vexation almost stops my breath,
That sunder'd friends greet in the hour of death.
Lucy, farewell; no more my fortune can,
But curse the cause I cannot aid the man.
Maine, Blois, Poitiers, and Tours, are won away,
'Long all of Somerset and his delay.

[*Exit, with his soldiers*]

LUCY Thus, while the vulture of sedition
Feeds in the bosom of such great commanders,
Sleeping neglectation doth betray to loss
The conquest of our scarce cold conqueror,
That ever living man of memory,
Henry the Fifth: whiles they each other cross,
Lives, honours, lands and all hurry to loss.

[*Exit*]

SCENE IV
Other plains in Gascony.

[*Enter SOMERSET, with his army; a Captain of TALBOT's with him*]

SOMERSET It is too late; I cannot send them now:
This expedition was by York and Talbot
Too rashly plotted: all our general force
Might with a sally of the very town

Be buckled with: the over-daring Talbot
Hath sullied all his gloss of former honour
By this unheedful, desperate, wild adventure:
York set him on to fight and die in shame,
That, Talbot dead, great York might bear the name.

CAPTAIN Here is Sir William Lucy, who with me
Set from our o'ermatch'd forces forth for aid.

[Enter Sir William LUCY]

SOMERSET How now, Sir William! Whither were
you sent?

LUCY Whither, my lord? From bought and sold
Lord Talbot;
Who, ring'd about with bold adversity,
Cries out for noble York and Somerset,
To beat assailing death from his weak legions:
And whiles the honourable captain there
Drops bloody sweat from his war-wearied limbs,
And, in advantage lingering, looks for rescue,
You, his false hopes, the trust of England's honour,
Keep off aloof with worthless emulation.
Let not your private discord keep away
The levied succors that should lend him aid,
While he, renowned noble gentleman,
Yields up his life unto a world of odds:
Orleans the Bastard, Charles, Burgundy,
Alençon, Reignier, compass him about,
And Talbot perisheth by your default.

SOMERSET York set him on; York should have
sent him aid.

LUCY And York as fast upon your grace exclaims;
Swearing that you withhold his levied host,
Collected for this expedition.

SOMERSET York lies; he might have sent and
had the horse;
I owe him little duty, and less love;
And take foul scorn to fawn on him by sending.

LUCY The fraud of England, not the force of France,
Hath now entrapp'd the noble-minded Talbot:
Never to England shall he bear his life;
But dies, betray'd to fortune by your strife.

SOMERSET Come, go; I will dispatch the
horsemen straight:
Within six hours they will be at his aid.

LUCY Too late comes rescue: he is ta'en or slain;
For fly he could not, if he would have fled;
And fly would Talbot never, though he might.

SOMERSET If he be dead, brave Talbot, then adieu!

LUCY His fame lives in the world, his shame in you.

[Exeunt]

SCENE V

The English camp near Bourdeaux.

[Enter TALBOT and JOHN his son]

TALBOT O young John Talbot! I did send for thee
To tutor thee in stratagems of war,
That Talbot's name might be in thee revived
When sapless age and weak unable limbs
Should bring thy father to his drooping chair.
But, O malignant and ill-boding stars!
Now thou art come unto a feast of death,
A terrible and unavoided danger:
Therefore, dear boy, mount on my swiftest horse;
And I'll direct thee how thou shalt escape
By sudden flight: come, dally not, be gone.

JOHN TALBOT Is my name Talbot? And am I your son?
And shall I fly? O if you love my mother,
Dishonour not her honourable name,
To make a bastard and a slave of me!
The world will say, he is not Talbot's blood,
That basely fled when noble Talbot stood.

TALBOT Fly, to revenge my death, if I be slain.

JOHN TALBOT He that flies so will ne'er return again.

TALBOT If we both stay, we both are sure to die.

JOHN TALBOT Then let me stay; and, father, do you fly:
Your loss is great, so your regard should be;
My worth unknown, no loss is known in me.
Upon my death the French can little boast;
In yours they will, in you all hopes are lost.
Flight cannot stain the honour you have won;
But mine it will, that no exploit have done:
You fled for vantage, everyone will swear;
But, if I bow, they'll say it was for fear.
There is no hope that ever I will stay,
If the first hour I shrink and run away.
Here on my knee I beg mortality,
Rather than life preserved with infamy.

TALBOT Shall all thy mother's hopes lie in one tomb?

JOHN TALBOT Ay, rather than I'll shame my
mother's womb.

TALBOT Upon my blessing, I command thee go.

JOHN TALBOT To fight I will, but not to fly the foe.

TALBOT Part of thy father may be saved in thee.

JOHN TALBOT No part of him but will be shame in me.

TALBOT Thou never hadst renown, nor canst not lose it.

JOHN TALBOT Yes, your renowned name: shall flight abuse it?

TALBOT Thy father's charge shall clear thee from that stain.

JOHN TALBOT You cannot witness for me, being slain. If death be so apparent, then both fly.

TALBOT And leave my followers here to fight and die? My age was never tainted with such shame.

JOHN TALBOT And shall my youth be guilty of such blame?

No more can I be sever'd from your side,
Than can yourself yourself in twain divide:
Stay, go, do what you will, the like do I;
For live I will not, if my father die.

TALBOT Then here I take my leave of thee, fair son,
Born to eclipse thy life this afternoon.
Come, side by side together live and die.
And soul with soul from France to heaven fly.

[Exeunt]

SCENE VI
A field of battle.

[Alarum: excursions, wherein JOHN TALBOT is hemmed about, and TALBOT rescues him]

TALBOT Saint George and victory! Fight, soldiers, fight.
The regent hath with Talbot broke his word
And left us to the rage of France his sword.
Where is John Talbot? Pause, and take thy breath;
I gave thee life and rescued thee from death.

JOHN TALBOT O, twice my father, twice am I thy son!
The life thou gavest me first was lost and done,
Till with thy warlike sword, despite of late,
To my determined time thou gavest new date.

TALBOT When from the Dauphin's crest thy sword struck fire,
It warm'd thy father's heart with proud desire

Of bold-faced victory. Then leaden age,
Quicken'd with youthful spleen and warlike rage,
Beat down Alençon, Orleans, Burgundy,
And from the pride of Gallia rescued thee.
The ireful bastard Orleans, that drew blood
From thee, my boy, and had the maidenhood
Of thy first fight, I soon encountered,
And interchanging blows I quickly shed
Some of his bastard blood; and in disgrace
Bespoke him thus; "Contaminated, base
And misbegotten blood I spill of thine,
Mean and right poor, for that pure blood of mine
Which thou didst force from Talbot, my brave boy:"
Here, purposing the Bastard to destroy,
Came in strong rescue. Speak, thy father's care,
Art thou not weary, John? How dost thou fare?
Wilt thou yet leave the battle, boy, and fly,
Now thou art seal'd the son of chivalry?
Fly, to revenge my death when I am dead:
The help of one stands me in little stead.
O, too much folly is it, well I wot,
To hazard all our lives in one small boat!
If I to-day die not with Frenchmen's rage,
To-morrow I shall die with mickle age:
By me they nothing gain an if I stay;
'Tis but the shortening of my life one day:
In thee thy mother dies, our household's name,
My death's revenge, thy youth, and England's fame:
All these and more we hazard by thy stay;
All these are saved if thou wilt fly away.

JOHN TALBOT The sword of Orleans hath not made me smart;
These words of yours draw life-blood from my heart:
On that advantage, bought with such a shame,
To save a paltry life and slay bright fame,
Before young Talbot from old Talbot fly,
The coward horse that bears me fail and die!
And like me to the peasant boys of France,
To be shame's scorn and subject of mischance!
Surely, by all the glory you have won,
An if I fly, I am not Talbot's son:
Then talk no more of flight, it is no boot;
If son to Talbot, die at Talbot's foot.

TALBOT Then follow thou thy desperate sire of Crete,
Thou Icarus; thy life to me is sweet:
If thou wilt fight, fight by thy father's side;
And, commendable proved, let's die in pride.

[Exeunt]

SCENE VII

Another part of the field.

[Alarum: excursions. Enter TALBOT led by a Servant]

TALBOT Where is my other life? Mine own is gone;
O, where's young Talbot? Where is valiant John?
Triumphant death, smear'd with captivity,
Young Talbot's valour makes me smile at thee:
When he perceived me shrink and on my knee,
His bloody sword he brandish'd over me,
And, like a hungry lion, did commence
Rough deeds of rage and stern impatience;
But when my angry guardant stood alone,
Tendering my ruin and assail'd of none,
Dizzy-eyed fury and great rage of heart
Suddenly made him from my side to start
Into the clustering battle of the French;
And in that sea of blood my boy did drench
His over-mounting spirit, and there died,
My Icarus, my blossom, in his pride.

SERVANT O, my dear lord, lo, where your son is borne!

[Enter Soldiers, with the body of JOHN TALBOT]

TALBOT Thou antic death, which laugh'st us
here to scorn,
Anon, from thy insulting tyranny,
Coupled in bonds of perpetuity,
Two Talbots, winged through the lither sky,
In thy despite shall 'scape mortality.
O, thou, whose wounds become hard-favour'd death,
Speak to thy father ere thou yield thy breath!
Brave death by speaking, whether he will or no;
Imagine him a Frenchman and thy foe.
Poor boy! He smiles, methinks, as who should say,
Had death been French, then death had died to-day.
Come, come and lay him in his father's arms:
My spirit can no longer bear these harms.
Soldiers, adieu! I have what I would have,
Now my old arms are young John Talbot's grave.

[Dies]

[Enter CHARLES, ALENÇON, BURGUNDY, BASTARD OF ORLEANS, JOAN LA PUCELLE, and forces]

CHARLES Had York and Somerset brought rescue in,
We should have found a bloody day of this.

BASTARD OF ORLEANS How the young whelp of Talbot's,
raging-wood,
Did flesh his puny sword in Frenchmen's blood!

JOAN LA PUCELLE Once I encounter'd him, and
thus I said:
"Thou maiden youth, be vanquish'd by a maid:"
But, with a proud majestic high scorn,
He answer'd thus: "Young Talbot was not born
To be the pillage of a giglot wench:"
So, rushing in the bowels of the French,
He left me proudly, as unworthy fight.

BURGUNDY Doubtless he would have made a
noble knight;
See, where he lies inhearsed in the arms
Of the most bloody nurser of his harms!

BASTARD OF ORLEANS Hew them to pieces, hack their
bones asunder
Whose life was England's glory, Gallia's wonder.

CHARLES O, no, forbear! For that which we have fled
During the life, let us not wrong it dead.

[Enter Sir William LUCY, attended; Herald of the French preceding]

LUCY Herald, conduct me to the Dauphin's tent,
To know who hath obtained the glory of the day.

CHARLES On what submissive message art thou sent?

LUCY Submission, Dauphin! 'Tis a mere French word;
We English warriors wot not what it means.
I come to know what prisoners thou hast ta'en
And to survey the bodies of the dead.

CHARLES For prisoners ask'st thou? Hell our prison is.
But tell me whom thou seek'st.

LUCY But where's the great Alcides of the field,
Valiant Lord Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury,
Created, for his rare success in arms,
Great Earl of Washford, Waterford and Valence;
Lord Talbot of Goodrig and Urchinfield,
Lord Strange of Blackmere, Lord Verdun of Alton,
Lord Cromwell of Wingfield, Lord Furnival
of Sheffield,
The thrice-victorious Lord of Falconbridge;
Knight of the noble order of Saint George,
Worthy Saint Michael and the Golden Fleece;
Great marshal to Henry the Sixth
Of all his wars within the realm of France?

JOAN LA PUCELLE Here is a silly stately style indeed!
The Turk, that two and fifty kingdoms hath,
Writes not so tedious a style as this.
Him that thou magnifiest with all these titles
Stinking and fly-blown lies here at our feet.

LUCY Is Talbot slain, the Frenchmen's only scourge,
Your kingdom's terror and black Nemesis?
O, were mine eye-balls into bullets turn'd,
That I in rage might shoot them at your faces!
O, that I could but call these dead to life!
It were enough to fright the realm of France:
Were but his picture left amongst you here,
It would amaze the proudest of you all.
Give me their bodies, that I may bear them hence
And give them burial as beseems their worth.

JOAN LA PUCELLE I think this upstart is old
Talbot's ghost,
He speaks with such a proud commanding spirit.
For God's sake let him have 'em; to keep them here,
They would but stink, and putrefy the air.

CHARLES Go, take their bodies hence.

LUCY I'll bear them hence; but from their ashes shall
be rear'd
A phoenix that shall make all France afeard.

CHARLES So we be rid of them, do with 'em what
thou wilt.
And now to Paris, in this conquering vein:
All will be ours, now bloody Talbot's slain.

[*Exeunt*]



ACT V

SCENE I

London. The palace.

[*Sennet. Enter KING HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER,
and EXETER*]

KING HENRY VI Have you perused the letters from
the pope,
The emperor and the Earl of Armagnac?

GLOUCESTER I have, my lord: and their intent is this:
They humbly sue unto your excellence
To have a godly peace concluded of
Between the realms of England and of France.

KING HENRY VI How doth your grace affect
their motion?

GLOUCESTER Well, my good lord; and as the
only means
To stop effusion of our Christian blood
And 'stablish quietness on every side.

KING HENRY VI Ay, marry, uncle; for I always thought
It was both impious and unnatural
That such immanity and bloody strife
Should reign among professors of one faith.

GLOUCESTER Beside, my lord, the sooner to effect
And surer bind this knot of amity,
The Earl of Armagnac, near knit to Charles,

A man of great authority in France,
Proffers his only daughter to your grace
In marriage, with a large and sumptuous dowry.

KING HENRY VI Marriage, uncle! Alas, my years
are young!
And fitter is my study and my books
Than wanton dalliance with a paramour.
Yet call the ambassador; and, as you please,
So let them have their answers every one:
I shall be well content with any choice
Tends to God's glory and my country's weal.

[*Enter CARDINAL OF WINCHESTER in
Cardinal's habit, a Legate and two Ambassadors*]

EXETER What! Is my Lord of Winchester install'd,
And call'd unto a cardinal's degree?
Then I perceive that will be verified
Henry the Fifth did sometime prophesy,
"If once he come to be a cardinal,
He'll make his cap co-equal with the crown."

KING HENRY VI My lords ambassadors,
your several suits
Have been consider'd and debated on.
And therefore are we certainly resolved
To draw conditions of a friendly peace;
Which by my Lord of Winchester we mean
Shall be transported presently to France.

GLOUCESTER And for the proffer of my lord
 your master,
 I have inform'd his highness so at large
 As liking of the lady's virtuous gifts,
 Her beauty and the value of her dower,
 He doth intend she shall be England's queen.

KING HENRY VI In argument and proof of
 which contract,
 Bear her this jewel, pledge of my affection.
 And so, my lord protector, see them guarded
 And safely brought to Dover; where inshipp'd
 Commit them to the fortune of the sea.

*[Exeunt all but CARDINAL OF WINCHESTER
and Legate]*

CARDINAL OF WINCHESTER Stay, my lord legate: you
 shall first receive
 The sum of money which I promised
 Should be deliver'd to his holiness
 For clothing me in these grave ornaments.

LEGATE I will attend upon your lordship's leisure.

CARDINAL OF WINCHESTER *[Aside]* Now Winchester
 will not submit, I trow,
 Or be inferior to the proudest peer.
 Humphrey of Gloucester, thou shalt well perceive
 That, neither in birth or for authority,
 The bishop will be overborne by thee:
 I'll either make thee stoop and bend thy knee,
 Or sack this country with a mutiny.

[Exeunt]

SCENE II

France. Plains in Anjou.

*[Enter CHARLES, BURGUNDY, ALENÇON,
BASTARD OF ORLEANS, REIGNIER, JOAN LA
PUCELLE, and forces]*

CHARLES These news, my lord, may cheer our
 drooping spirits:
 'Tis said the stout Parisians do revolt
 And turn again unto the warlike French.

ALENÇON Then march to Paris, royal Charles
 of France,
 And keep not back your powers in dalliance.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Peace be amongst them, if they
 turn to us;
 Else, ruin combat with their palaces!

[Enter Scout]

SCOUT Success unto our valiant general,
 And happiness to his accomplices!

CHARLES What tidings send our scouts?
 I prithee, speak.

SCOUT The English army, that divided was
 Into two parties, is now conjoined in one,
 And means to give you battle presently.

CHARLES Somewhat too sudden, sirs, the warning is;
 But we will presently provide for them.

BURGUNDY I trust the ghost of Talbot is not there:
 Now he is gone, my lord, you need not fear.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Of all base passions, fear is
 most accursed.
 Command the conquest, Charles, it shall be thine,
 Let Henry fret and all the world repine.

CHARLES Then on, my lords; and France be fortunate!

[Exeunt]

SCENE III

Before Angiers.

[Alarum. Excursions. Enter JOAN LA PUCELLE]

JOAN LA PUCELLE The regent conquers, and the
 Frenchmen fly.
 Now help, ye charming spells and periapts;
 And ye choice spirits that admonish me
 And give me signs of future accidents.

[Thunder]

You speedy helpers, that are substitutes
 Under the lordly monarch of the north,
 Appear and aid me in this enterprise.

[Enter Fiends]

This speedy and quick appearance argues proof
 Of your accustom'd diligence to me.
 Now, ye familiar spirits, that are cull'd
 Out of the powerful regions under earth,
 Help me this once, that France may get the field.

[They walk, and speak not]

O, hold me not with silence over-long!
 Where I was wont to feed you with my blood,
 I'll lop a member off and give it you

In earnest of further benefit,
So you do condescend to help me now.

[*They hang their heads*]

No hope to have redress? My body shall
Pay recompense, if you will grant my suit.

[*They shake their heads*]

Cannot my body nor blood-sacrifice
Entreat you to your wonted furtherance?
Then take my soul, my body, soul and all,
Before that England give the French the foil.

[*They depart*]

See, they forsake me! Now the time is come
That France must veil her lofty-plumed crest
And let her head fall into England's lap.
My ancient incantations are too weak,
And hell too strong for me to buckle with:
Now, France, thy glory droopeth to the dust.

[*Exit*]

[*Excursions. Re-enter JOAN LA PUCELLE fight
ing hand to hand with YORK: JOAN LA PUCELLE
is taken. The French fly*]

YORK Damsel of France, I think I have you fast:
Unchain your spirits now with spelling charms
And try if they can gain your liberty.
A goodly prize, fit for the devil's grace!
See, how the ugly wench doth bend her brows,
As if with Circe she would change my shape!

JOAN LA PUCELLE Changed to a worser shape thou
canst not be.

YORK O, Charles the Dauphin is a proper man;
No shape but his can please your dainty eye.

JOAN LA PUCELLE A plaguing mischief light on Charles
and thee!

And may ye both be suddenly surprised
By bloody hands, in sleeping on your beds!

YORK Fell banning hag, enchantress, hold thy tongue!

JOAN LA PUCELLE I prithee, give me leave to
curse awhile.

YORK Curse, miscreant, when thou comest to the stake.

[*Exeunt*]

[*Alarum. Enter SUFFOLK with MARGARET in
his hand*]

SUFFOLK Be what thou wilt, thou art my prisoner.

[*Gazes on her*]

O fairest beauty, do not fear nor fly!
For I will touch thee but with reverent hands;
I kiss these fingers for eternal peace,
And lay them gently on thy tender side.
Who art thou? Say, that I may honour thee.

MARGARET Margaret my name, and daughter to a king,
The King of Naples, whosoe'er thou art.

SUFFOLK An earl I am, and Suffolk am I call'd.
Be not offended, nature's miracle,
Thou art allotted to be ta'en by me:
So doth the swan her downy cygnets save,
Keeping them prisoner underneath her wings.
Yet, if this servile usage once offend.
Go, and be free again, as Suffolk's friend.

[*She is going*]

O, stay! I have no power to let her pass;
My hand would free her, but my heart says no
As plays the sun upon the glassy streams,
Twinkling another counterfeited beam,
So seems this gorgeous beauty to mine eyes.
Fain would I woo her, yet I dare not speak:
I'll call for pen and ink, and write my mind.
Fie, de la Pole! Disable not thyself;
Hast not a tongue? Is she not here?
Wilt thou be daunted at a woman's sight?
Ay, beauty's princely majesty is such,
Confounds the tongue and makes the senses rough.

MARGARET Say, Earl of Suffolk—if thy name be so—
What ransom must I pay before I pass?
For I perceive I am thy prisoner.

SUFFOLK How canst thou tell she will deny thy suit,
Before thou make a trial of her love?

MARGARET Why speak'st thou not? What ransom
must I pay?

SUFFOLK She's beautiful, and therefore to be woo'd;
She is a woman, therefore to be won.

MARGARET Wilt thou accept of ransom? Yea, or no.

SUFFOLK Fond man, remember that thou hast a wife;
Then how can Margaret be thy paramour?

MARGARET I were best to leave him, for he will not hear.

SUFFOLK There all is marr'd; there lies a cooling card.

MARGARET He talks at random; sure, the man is mad.

SUFFOLK And yet a dispensation may be had.

MARGARET And yet I would that you would answer me.

SUFFOLK I'll win this Lady Margaret. For whom?
Why, for my king: tush, that's a wooden thing!

MARGARET He talks of wood: it is some carpenter.

SUFFOLK Yet so my fancy may be satisfied,
And peace established between these realms
But there remains a scruple in that too;
For though her father be the King of Naples,
Duke of Anjou and Maine, yet is he poor,
And our nobility will scorn the match.

MARGARET Hear ye, captain, are you not at leisure?

SUFFOLK It shall be so, disdain they ne'er so much.
Henry is youthful and will quickly yield.
Madam, I have a secret to reveal.

MARGARET What though I be enthrall'd?
he seems a knight,
And will not any way dishonour me.

SUFFOLK Lady, vouchsafe to listen what I say.

MARGARET Perhaps I shall be rescued by the French;
And then I need not crave his courtesy.

SUFFOLK Sweet madam, give me a hearing in a cause—

MARGARET Tush, women have been captivate ere now.

SUFFOLK Lady, wherefore talk you so?

MARGARET I cry you mercy, 'tis but Quid for Quo.

SUFFOLK Say, gentle princess, would you not suppose
Your bondage happy, to be made a queen?

MARGARET To be a queen in bondage is more vile
Than is a slave in base servility;
For princes should be free.

SUFFOLK And so shall you,
If happy England's royal king be free.

MARGARET Why, what concerns his freedom unto me?

SUFFOLK I'll undertake to make thee Henry's queen,
To put a golden sceptre in thy hand

And set a precious crown upon thy head,
If thou wilt condescend to be my—

MARGARET What?

SUFFOLK His love.

MARGARET I am unworthy to be Henry's wife.

SUFFOLK No, gentle madam; I unworthy am
To woo so fair a dame to be his wife,
And have no portion in the choice myself.
How say you, madam, are ye so content?

MARGARET An if my father please, I am content.

SUFFOLK Then call our captains and our colours forth.
And, madam, at your father's castle walls
We'll crave a parley, to confer with him.

[*A parley sounded. Enter REIGNIER on the walls*]

See, Reignier, see, thy daughter prisoner!

REIGNIER To whom?

SUFFOLK To me.

REIGNIER Suffolk, what remedy?
I am a soldier, and unapt to weep,
Or to exclaim on fortune's fickleness.

SUFFOLK Yes, there is remedy enough, my lord:
Consent, and for thy honour give consent,
Thy daughter shall be wedded to my king;
Whom I with pain have woo'd and won thereto;
And this her easy-held imprisonment
Hath gained thy daughter princely liberty.

REIGNIER Speaks Suffolk as he thinks?

SUFFOLK Fair Margaret knows
That Suffolk doth not flatter, face, or feign.

REIGNIER Upon thy princely warrant, I descend
To give thee answer of thy just demand.

[*Exit from the walls*]

SUFFOLK And here I will expect thy coming.

[*Trumpets sound. Enter REIGNIER, below*]

REIGNIER Welcome, brave earl, into our territories:
Command in Anjou what your honour pleases.

SUFFOLK Thanks, Reignier, happy for so sweet a child,
Fit to be made companion with a king:
What answer makes your grace unto my suit?

REIGNIER Since thou dost deign to woo her little worth
To be the princely bride of such a lord;
Upon condition I may quietly
Enjoy mine own, the country Maine and Anjou,
Free from oppression or the stroke of war,
My daughter shall be Henry's, if he please.

SUFFOLK That is her ransom; I deliver her;
And those two counties I will undertake
Your grace shall well and quietly enjoy.

REIGNIER And I again, in Henry's royal name,
As deputy unto that gracious king,
Give thee her hand, for sign of plighted faith.

SUFFOLK Reignier of France, I give thee kingly thanks,
Because this is in traffic of a king.

[Aside]

And yet, methinks, I could be well content
To be mine own attorney in this case.
I'll over then to England with this news,
And make this marriage to be solemnized.
So farewell, Reignier: set this diamond safe
In golden palaces, as it becomes.

REIGNIER I do embrace thee, as I would embrace
The Christian prince, King Henry, were he here.

MARGARET Farewell, my lord: good wishes,
praise and prayers
Shall Suffolk ever have of Margaret.

[Going]

SUFFOLK Farewell, sweet madam:
but hark you, Margaret;
No princely commendations to my king?

MARGARET Such commendations as becomes a maid,
A virgin and his servant, say to him.

SUFFOLK Words sweetly placed and modestly directed.
But madam, I must trouble you again;
No loving token to his majesty?

MARGARET Yes, my good lord, a pure unspotted heart,
Never yet taint with love, I send the king.

SUFFOLK And this withal.

[Kisses her]

MARGARET That for thyself: I will not so presume
To send such peevish tokens to a king.

[Exeunt REIGNIER and MARGARET]

SUFFOLK O, wert thou for myself! But, Suffolk, stay;
Thou mayst not wander in that labyrinth;
There Minotaurs and ugly treasons lurk.
Solicit Henry with her wondrous praise:
Bethink thee on her virtues that surmount,
And natural graces that extinguish art;
Repeat their semblance often on the seas,
That, when thou comest to kneel at Henry's feet,
Thou mayst bereave him of his wits with wonder.

[Exit]

SCENE IV

Camp of the DUKE OF YORK in Anjou.

[Enter YORK, WARWICK, and others]

YORK Bring forth that sorceress condemn'd to burn.

[Enter JOAN LA PUCELLE, guarded, and
a Shepherd]

SHEPHERD Ah, Joan, this kills thy father's
heart outright!
Have I sought every country far and near,
And, now it is my chance to find thee out,
Must I behold thy timeless cruel death?
Ah, Joan, sweet daughter Joan, I'll die with thee!

JOAN LA PUCELLE Decrepit miser! Base ignoble wretch!
I am descended of a gentler blood:
Thou art no father nor no friend of mine.

SHEPHERD Out, out! My lords, an please you,
'tis not so;
I did beget her, all the parish knows:
Her mother liveth yet, can testify
She was the first fruit of my bachelorship.

WARWICK Graceless! Wilt thou deny thy parentage?

YORK This argues what her kind of life hath been,
Wicked and vile; and so her death concludes.

SHEPHERD Fie, Joan, that thou wilt be so obstacle!
God knows thou art a collop of my flesh;
And for thy sake have I shed many a tear:
Deny me not, I prithee, gentle Joan.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Peasant, avaunt! You have suborn'd
this man,
Of purpose to obscure my noble birth.

SHEPHERD 'Tis true, I gave a noble to the priest
The morn that I was wedded to her mother.
Kneel down and take my blessing, good my girl.

Wilt thou not stoop? Now cursed be the time
Of thy nativity! I would the milk
Thy mother gave thee when thou suck'dst her breast,
Had been a little ratsbane for thy sake!
Or else, when thou didst keep my lambs a-field,
I wish some ravenous wolf had eaten thee!
Dost thou deny thy father, cursed drab?
O, burn her, burn her! Hanging is too good.

[Exit]

YORK Take her away; for she hath lived too long,
To fill the world with vicious qualities.

JOAN LA PUCELLE First, let me tell you whom
you have condemn'd:
Not me begotten of a shepherd swain,
But issued from the progeny of kings;
Virtuous and holy; chosen from above,
By inspiration of celestial grace,
To work exceeding miracles on earth.
I never had to do with wicked spirits:
But you, that are polluted with your lusts,
Stain'd with the guiltless blood of innocents,
Corrupt and tainted with a thousand vices,
Because you want the grace that others have,
You judge it straight a thing impossible
To compass wonders but by help of devils.
No, misconceived! Joan of Arc hath been
A virgin from her tender infancy,
Chaste and immaculate in very thought;
Whose maiden blood, thus rigorously effused,
Will cry for vengeance at the gates of heaven.

YORK Ay, ay: away with her to execution!

WARWICK And hark ye, sirs; because she is a maid,
Spare for no faggots, let there be enow:
Place barrels of pitch upon the fatal stake,
That so her torture may be shortened.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Will nothing turn your
unrelenting hearts?
Then, Joan, discover thine infirmity,
That warranteth by law to be thy privilege.
I am with child, ye bloody homicides:
Murder not then the fruit within my womb,
Although ye hale me to a violent death.

YORK Now heaven forfend! The holy maid with child!

WARWICK The greatest miracle that e'er ye wrought:
Is all your strict preciseness come to this?

YORK She and the Dauphin have been juggling:
I did imagine what would be her refuge.

WARWICK Well, go to; we'll have no bastards live;
Especially since Charles must father it.

JOAN LA PUCELLE You are deceived; my child is
none of his:
It was Alençon that enjoy'd my love.

YORK Alençon! That notorious Machiavel!
It dies, an if it had a thousand lives.

JOAN LA PUCELLE O, give me leave, I have deluded you:
'Twas neither Charles nor yet the duke I named,
But Reignier, king of Naples, that prevail'd.

WARWICK A married man! That's most intolerable.

YORK Why, here's a girl! I think she knows not well,
There were so many, whom she may accuse.

WARWICK It's sign she hath been liberal and free.

YORK And yet, forsooth, she is a virgin pure.
Strumpet, thy words condemn thy brat and thee:
Use no entreaty, for it is in vain.

JOAN LA PUCELLE Then lead me hence; with whom I
leave my curse:
May never glorious sun reflex his beams
Upon the country where you make abode;
But darkness and the gloomy shade of death
Environ you, till mischief and despair
Drive you to break your necks or hang yourselves!

[Exit, guarded]

YORK Break thou in pieces and consume to ashes,
Thou foul accursed minister of hell!

[Enter CARDINAL OF WINCHESTER, attended]

CARDINAL OF WINCHESTER Lord regent, I do greet
your excellence
With letters of commission from the king.
For know, my lords, the states of Christendom,
Moved with remorse of these outrageous broils,
Have earnestly implored a general peace
Betwixt our nation and the aspiring French;
And here at hand the Dauphin and his train
Approacheth, to confer about some matter.

YORK Is all our travail turn'd to this effect?
After the slaughter of so many peers,
So many captains, gentlemen and soldiers,
That in this quarrel have been overthrown
And sold their bodies for their country's benefit,
Shall we at last conclude effeminate peace?
Have we not lost most part of all the towns,

By treason, falsehood and by treachery,
Our great progenitors had conquered?
O Warwick, Warwick! I foresee with grief
The utter loss of all the realm of France.

WARWICK Be patient, York: if we conclude a peace,
It shall be with such strict and severe covenants
As little shall the Frenchmen gain thereby.

[Enter CHARLES, ALENÇON, BASTARD OF
ORLEANS, REIGNIER, and others]

CHARLES Since, lords of England, it is thus agreed
That peaceful truce shall be proclaim'd in France,
We come to be informed by yourselves
What the conditions of that league must be.

YORK Speak, Winchester; for boiling choler chokes
The hollow passage of my poison'd voice,
By sight of these our baleful enemies.

CARDINAL OF WINCHESTER Charles, and the rest, it is
enacted thus:

That, in regard King Henry gives consent,
Of mere compassion and of lenity,
To ease your country of distressful war,
And suffer you to breathe in fruitful peace,
You shall become true liegemen to his crown:
And Charles, upon condition thou wilt swear
To pay him tribute, submit thyself,
Thou shalt be placed as viceroy under him,
And still enjoy thy regal dignity.

ALENÇON Must he be then as shadow of himself?
Adorn his temples with a coronet,
And yet, in substance and authority,
Retain but privilege of a private man?
This proffer is absurd and reasonless.

CHARLES 'Tis known already that I am possess'd
With more than half the Gallian territories,
And therein revered for their lawful king:
Shall I, for lucre of the rest unvanquish'd,
Detract so much from that prerogative,
As to be call'd but viceroy of the whole?
No, lord ambassador, I'll rather keep
That which I have than, coveting for more,
Be cast from possibility of all.

YORK Insulting Charles! Hast thou by secret means
Used intercession to obtain a league,
And, now the matter grows to compromise,
Stand'st thou aloof upon comparison?
Either accept the title thou usurp'st,

Of benefit proceeding from our king
And not of any challenge of desert,
Or we will plague thee with incessant wars.

REIGNIER My lord, you do not well in obstinacy
To cavil in the course of this contract:
If once it be neglected, ten to one
We shall not find like opportunity.

ALENÇON To say the truth, it is your policy
To save your subjects from such massacre
And ruthless slaughters as are daily seen
By our proceeding in hostility;
And therefore take this compact of a truce,
Although you break it when your pleasure serves.

WARWICK How say'st thou, Charles? Shall our
condition stand?

CHARLES It shall;
Only reserved, you claim no interest
In any of our towns of garrison.

YORK Then swear allegiance to his majesty,
As thou art knight, never to disobey
Nor be rebellious to the crown of England,
Thou, nor thy nobles, to the crown of England.
So, now dismiss your army when ye please:
Hang up your ensign, let your drums be still,
For here we entertain a solemn peace.

[Exeunt]

SCENE V

London. The palace.

[Enter SUFFOLK in conference with KING
HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER and EXETER]

KING HENRY VI Your wondrous rare description,
noble earl,
Of beauteous Margaret hath astonish'd me:
Her virtues graced with external gifts
Do breed love's settled passions in my heart:
And like as rigor of tempestuous gusts
Provokes the mightiest hulk against the tide,
So am I driven by breath of her renown
Either to suffer shipwreck or arrive
Where I may have fruition of her love.

SUFFOLK Tush, my good lord, this superficial tale
Is but a preface of her worthy praise;
The chief perfections of that lovely dame
Had I sufficient skill to utter them,

Would make a volume of enticing lines,
Able to ravish any dull conceit:
And, which is more, she is not so divine,
So full-replete with choice of all delights,
But with as humble lowliness of mind
She is content to be at your command;
Command, I mean, of virtuous chaste intents,
To love and honour Henry as her lord.

KING HENRY VI And otherwise will Henry
ne'er presume.
Therefore, my lord protector, give consent
That Margaret may be England's royal queen.

GLOUCESTER So should I give consent to flatter sin.
You know, my lord, your highness is betroth'd
Unto another lady of esteem:
How shall we then dispense with that contract,
And not deface your honour with reproach?

SUFFOLK As doth a ruler with unlawful oaths;
Or one that, at a triumph having vow'd
To try his strength, forsaketh yet the lists
By reason of his adversary's odds:
A poor earl's daughter is unequal odds,
And therefore may be broke without offence.

GLOUCESTER Why, what, I pray, is Margaret more
than that?
Her father is no better than an earl,
Although in glorious titles he excel.

SUFFOLK Yes, my lord, her father is a king,
The King of Naples and Jerusalem;
And of such great authority in France
As his alliance will confirm our peace
And keep the Frenchmen in allegiance.

GLOUCESTER And so the Earl of Armagnac may do,
Because he is near kinsman unto Charles.

EXETER Beside, his wealth doth warrant a
liberal dower,
Where Reignier sooner will receive than give.

SUFFOLK A dower, my lords! Disgrace not so your king,
That he should be so abject, base and poor,
To choose for wealth and not for perfect love.
Henry is able to enrich his queen
And not seek a queen to make him rich:
So worthless peasants bargain for their wives,
As market-men for oxen, sheep, or horse.
Marriage is a matter of more worth
Than to be dealt in by attorneyship;

Not whom we will, but whom his grace affects,
Must be companion of his nuptial bed:
And therefore, lords, since he affects her most,
It most of all these reasons bindeth us,
In our opinions she should be preferr'd.
For what is wedlock forced but a hell,
An age of discord and continual strife?
Whereas the contrary bringeth bliss,
And is a pattern of celestial peace.
Whom should we match with Henry, being a king,
But Margaret, that is daughter to a king?
Her peerless feature, joined with her birth,
Approves her fit for none but for a king:
Her valiant courage and undaunted spirit,
More than in women commonly is seen,
Will answer our hope in issue of a king:
For Henry, son unto a conqueror,
Is likely to beget more conquerors,
If with a lady of so high resolve
As is fair Margaret he be link'd in love.
Then yield, my lords; and here conclude with me
That Margaret shall be queen, and none but she.

KING HENRY VI Whether it be through force of
your report,
My noble Lord of Suffolk, or for that
My tender youth was never yet attain'd
With any passion of inflaming love,
I cannot tell; but this I am assured,
I feel such sharp dissension in my breast,
Such fierce alarms both of hope and fear,
As I am sick with working of my thoughts.
Take, therefore, shipping; post, my lord, to France;
Agree to any covenants, and procure
That Lady Margaret do vouchsafe to come
To cross the seas to England and be crown'd
King Henry's faithful and anointed queen:
For your expenses and sufficient charge,
Among the people gather up a tenth.
Be gone, I say; for, till you do return,
I rest perplexed with a thousand cares.
And you, good uncle, banish all offence:
If you do censure me by what you were,
Not what you are, I know it will excuse
This sudden execution of my will.
And so, conduct me where, from company,
I may revolve and ruminate my grief.

[Exit]

GLOUCESTER Ay, grief, I fear me, both at first and last.

[Exeunt *GLOUCESTER* and *EXETER*]

SUFFOLK Thus Suffolk hath prevail'd; and thus he goes,
As did the youthful Paris once to Greece,
With hope to find the like event in love,

But prosper better than the Trojan did.
Margaret shall now be queen, and rule the king;
But I will rule both her, the king and realm.

[Exit]

