

1 Henry VI

2.2

Enter Lord Talbot, the Dukes of Bedford and Burgundy, a Captain, [and soldiers]

BEDFORD

The day begins to break and night is fled,
Whose pitchy mantle overveiled the earth.
Here sound retreat and cease our hot pursuit.
Retreat is sounded

TALBOT

Bring forth the body of old Salisbury
And here advance it in the market place, 5
The middle centre of this curse—A town.
[Exit one or more]
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 10
What ruin happened in revenge of him,
Within their chiefest temple I'll erect
A tomb, wherein his corpse shall be interred—
Upon the which, that everyone may read,
Shall be engraved the sack of Orleans, 15
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, 20
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. 25

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 30
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 35
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 40
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, 45
When ladies crave to be encountered 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 overruled.±± 50
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, 'tis more than manners will.
And I have heard it said, 'Unbidden guests 55
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.

He whispers

You perceive my mind?

CAPTAIN

I do, my lord, and mean accordingly.

Exeunt [severally]

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