

1 Henry VI

3.8

[Flourish.] Enter King Henry, the Duke of Gloucester, the Bishop of Winchester, the Duke of Exeter; Richard Duke of York, the Earl of Warwick, and Vernon [with white roses]; the Earl of Suffolk, the Duke of Somerset, and Basset [with red roses]. To them, with his soldiers, enter Lord Talbot

TALBOT

My gracious prince and honourable peers,
Hearing of your arrival in this realm
I have a while given truce unto my wars
To do my duty to my sovereign;
In sign whereof, this arm that hath reclaimed 5
To your obedience fifty fortresses,
Twelve cities, and seven walled towns of strength,
Beside five hundred prisoners of esteem,
Lest fall his sword before your highness' feet,
And with submissive loyalty of heart 10
Ascribes the glory of his conquest got
First to my God, and next unto your grace.
[He kneels]

KING HENRY

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

GLOUCESTER

Yes, if it please your majesty, my liege. 15

KING HENRY (to Talbot)

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 resolveÁd of your truth, 20
Your faithful service and your toil in war,
Yet never have you tasted our reward,
Or been reguerdoned with so much as thanks,
Because till now we never saw your face.

Therefore stand up,
Talbot rises

and for these good deserts

25

We here create you Earl of Shrewsbury;
And in our coronation take your place.

Sennet. 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, 30
Dar'st thou maintain the former words thou spak'st?

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. 35

BASSET

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

VERNON

Hark ye, not so. In witness, take ye that.
Vernon 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. 40
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. 45
Exeunt