

# 1 Henry VI

## 5.5

*Alarum. Enter the Earl of Suffolk with Margaret in his hand*

**SUFFOLK**

Be what thou wilt, thou art my prisoner.

*He gazes on her*

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

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**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 called.  
Be not offended, nature's miracle,  
Thou art allotted to be ta'en by me.  
So doth the swan his downy cygnets save,  
Keeping them prisoner underneath his wings.  
Yet if this servile usage once offend,  
Go, and be free again, as Suffolk's friend.

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*She is going*

O stay! *(Aside)* 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 stream,  
Twinkling another counterfeited beam,  
So seems this gorgeous beauty to mine eyes.

20

Fain would I woo her, yet I dare not speak.

I'll call for pen and ink, and write my mind.

Fie, de le Pole, disable not thyself!

Hast not a tongue? Is she not here to hear?

Wilt thou be daunted at a woman's sight?

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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. 30

**SUFFOLK** *(aside)*  
 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** *(aside)*  
 She's beautiful, and therefore to be wooed;  
 She is a woman, therefore to be won. 35

**MARGARET**  
 Wilt thou accept of ransom, yea or no?

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

**MARGARET** *(aside)*  
 I were best to leave him, for he will not hear.

**SUFFOLK** *(aside)*  
 There all is marred; there lies a cooling card. 40

**MARGARET** *(aside)*  
 He talks at random; sure the man is mad.

**SUFFOLK** *(aside)*  
 And yet a dispensation may be had.

**MARGARET**  
 And yet I would that you would answer me.

**SUFFOLK** *(aside)*  
 I'll win this Lady Margaret. For whom?  
 Why, for my king's tush, that's a wooden thing. 45

**MARGARET** *(aside)*  
 He talks of wood. It is some carpenter.

**SUFFOLK** *(aside)*  
 Yet so my fancy may be satisfied,  
 And peace establish'd between these realms.  
 But there remains a scruple in that too,  
 For though her father be the King of Naples, 50  
 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** *(aside)*

It shall be so, disdain they ne'er so much.  
Henry is youthful, and will quickly yield. 55  
(To Margaret) Madam, I have a secret to reveal.

**MARGARET** (*aside*)

What though I be enthralled, he seems a knight  
And will not any way dishonour me.

**SUFFOLK**

Lady, vouchsafe to listen what I say.

**MARGARET** (*aside*)

Perhaps I shall be rescued by the French, 60  
And then I need not crave his courtesy.

**SUFFOLK**

Sweet madam, give me hearing in a cause.

**MARGARET** (*aside*)

Tush, women have been captivate ere now.

**SUFFOLK** Lady, wherefore talk you so?

**MARGARET**

I cry you mercy, 'tis but *quid* for *quo*. 65

**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, 70  
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, 75  
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 80

(Aside) 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,

*[Enter captains, colours, and trumpeters]*

And, madam, at your father's castle walls 85

We'll crave a parley to confer with him.

*Sound a parley. Enter ReneÂ Duke of Anjou on the walls*

See, ReneÂ, see thy daughter prisoner.

**RENEÂ**

To whom?

**SUFFOLK** To me.

**RENEÂ** Suffolk, what remedy?

I am a soldier, and unapt to weep

Or to exclaim on fortune's fickleness. 90

**SUFFOLK**

Yes, there is remedy enough, my lord.

Assent, and for thy honour give consent

Thy daughter shall be wedded to my king,

Whom I with pain have wooed and won thereto;

And this her easy-held imprisonment 95

Hath gained thy daughter princely liberty.

**RENEÂ**

Speaks Suffolk as he thinks?

**SUFFOLK** Fair Margaret knows

That Suffolk doth not flatter, face or feign.

**RENEÂ**

Upon thy princely warrant I descend

To give thee answer of thy just demand. 100

**SUFFOLK**

And here I will expect thy coming.

*[Exit ReneÂ above]*

*Trumpets sound. Enter ReneÂ*

**RENEÂ**

Welcome, brave Earl, into our territories.

Command in Anjou what your honour pleases.

**SUFFOLK**

Thanks, ReneÂ, happy for so sweet a child,

Fit to be made companion with a king. 105  
 What answer makes your grace unto my suit?

**RENEÂ**  
 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 countries Maine and Anjou, 110  
 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. 115

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

**SUFFOLK**  
 ReneÂ of France, I give thee kingly thanks,  
 Because this is in traffic of a king. 120  
*(Aside)* And yet methinks I could be well content  
 To be mine own attorney in this case.  
*(To ReneÂ)* I'll over then to England with this news,  
 And make this marriage to be solemnized.  
 So farewell, ReneÂ; set this diamond safe 125  
 In golden palaces, as it becomes.

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

**MARGARET** *(to Suffolk)*  
 Farewell, my lord. Good wishes, praise, and prayers  
 Shall Suffolk ever have of Margaret. 130  
*She is 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. 135

*[She is going]*

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. 140

*He kisses her*

**MARGARET**

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

*[Exeunt ReneÂ and Margaret]*

**SUFFOLK** *[aside]*

O, wert thou for myself!±±but Suffolk, stay.  
Thou mayst not wander in that labyrinth.  
There Minotaurs and ugly treasons lurk.

145

Solicit Henry with her wondrous praise.  
Bethink thee on her virtues that surmount,  
Mad natural graces that extinguish art.  
Repeat their semblance often on the seas,  
That when thou com'st to kneel at Henry's feet  
Thou mayst bereave him of his wits with wonder.

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*[Exeunt]*