

1 Henry VI

3.5

An alarum. Excursions. The Duke of Bedford brought in sick, in a chair. Enter Lord Talbot and the Duke of Burgundy, without; within, Joan la Pucelle, Charles the Dauphin, the Bastard of Orleães, [the Duke of Alenc on, and Rene  Duke of Anjou] on the walls

JOAN

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. 5
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

What will you do, good graybeard? Break a lance 10
And run a-tilt at death within a chair?

TALBOT

Foul fiend of France, and hag of all despite,
Encompassed with thy lustful paramours,
Becomes it thee to taunt his valiant age
And twit with cowardice a man half dead? 15
Damsel, I'll have a bout with you again,
Or else let Talbot perish with this shame.

JOAN

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

The English whisper together in counsel

God speed the parliament; who shall be the Speaker? 20

TALBOT

Dare ye come forth and meet us in the field?

JOAN

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, Alenc on, and the rest. 25
Will ye, like soldiers, come and fight it out?

ALENC ON

Seigneur, no.

TALBOT Seigneur, hang! Base muleteers of France,
Like peasant footboys do they keep the walls
And dare not take up arms like gentlemen.

JOAN

Away, captains, let's get us from the walls, 30
For Talbot means no goodness by his looks.
Goodbye, my lord. We came but to tell you
That we are here.

Exeunt French from the walls

TALBOT

And there will we be, too, ere it be long,
Or else reproach be Talbot's greatest fame. 35
Vow Burgundy, by honour of thy house,
Pricked on by public wrongs sustained 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; 40
As sure as in this late betraye d town
Great Coeur-de-lion's heart was burie d  
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, 45
The valiant Duke of Bedford. *(To 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, 50
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 vanquish'd his foes. 55
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, 60
But gather we our forces out of hand,
And set upon our boasting enemy.

Exit with Burgundy

An alarum. Excursions. Enter Sir John Fastolf and a Captain

CAPTAIN

Whither away, Sir John Fastolf, in such haste?

FASTOLF

Whither away? To save myself by flight.
We are like to have the overthrow again. 65

CAPTAIN

What, will you fly, and leave Lord Talbot?

FASTOLF

Ay, all the Talbots in the world, to save my life.

Exit

CAPTAIN

Cowardly knight, ill fortune follow thee!

Exit

Retreat. Excursions. Joan, Alenc on, and Charles fly

BEDFORD

Now, quiet soul, depart when heaven please,
For I have seen our enemies' overthrow. 70

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