

The First Part of the Contention

3.3

Enter King Henry and the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick. Then the curtains be drawn revealing Cardinal Beaufort in his bed raving and staring as if he were mad

KING HENRY (to Cardinal Beaufort)

How fares my lord? Speak, Beaufort, to thy sovereign.

CARDINAL BEAUFORT

If thou beest death, I'll give thee England's treasure
Enough to purchase such another island,
So thou wilt let me live and feel no pain.

KING HENRY

Ah, what a sign it is of evil life 5
Where death's approach is seen so terrible.

WARWICK

Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks to thee.

CARDINAL BEAUFORT

Bring me unto my trial when you will.
Died he not in his bed? Where should he die?
Can I make men live whe'er they will or no? 10
O, torture me no more±±I will confess.
Alive again? Then show me where he is.
I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him.
He hath no eyes! The dust hath blinded them.
Comb down his hair±±look, look: it stands upright, 15
Like lime twigs set to catch my wingeÁd soul.
Give me some drink, and bid the apothecary
Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.

KING HENRY

O Thou eternal mover of the heavens,
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch. 20
O, beat away the busy meddling fiend
That lays strong siege unto this wretch's soul,
And from his bosom purge this black despair.

WARWICK

See how the pangs of death do make him grin.

SALISBURY

Disturb him not; let him pass peaceably. 25

KING HENRY

Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure be.
Lord Card'nal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.

Cardinal Beaufort dies

He dies and makes no sign. O God, forgive him.

WARWICK

So bad a death argues a monstrous life.

30

KING HENRY

Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.
Close up his eyes and draw the curtain close,
And let us all to meditation.

Exeunt, [drawing the curtains. The bed is removed]