

# The First Part of the Contention

## 4.4

*Enter King Henry [reading] a supplication, Queen Margaret carrying Suffolk's head, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Lord Saye, [with others]*

**QUEEN MARGARET** *[aside]*

Oft have I heard that grief softens the mind,  
And makes it fearful and degenerate;  
Think, therefore, on revenge, and cease to weep.  
But who can cease to weep and look on this?  
Here may his head lie on my throbbing breast, 5  
But where's the body that I should embrace?

**BUCKINGHAM** *(to King Henry)*

What answer makes your grace to the rebels'  
supplication?

**KING HENRY**

I'll send some holy bishop to entreat,  
For God forbid so many simple souls  
Should perish by the sword. And I myself, 10  
Rather than bloody war shall cut them short,  
Will parley with Jack Cade their general.  
But stay, I'll read it over once again.

*He reads*

**QUEEN MARGARET** *(to Suffolk's head)*

Ah, barbarous villains! Hath this lovely face  
Ruled like a wandering planet over me, 15  
And could it not enforce them to relent,  
That were unworthy to behold the same?

**KING HENRY**

Lord Saye, Jack Cade hath sworn to have thy head.

**SAYE**

Ay, but I hope your highness shall have his.

**KING HENRY** *(to Queen Margaret)*

How now, madam? Still lamenting and mourning  
Suffolk's death? 20

I fear me, love, if that I had been dead,  
Thou wouldest not have mourned so much for me.

**QUEEN MARGARET**

No, my love, I should not mourn, but die for thee.

*Enter a Messenger, [in haste]*

**KING HENRY**

How now? What news? Why com'st thou in such  
haste? 25

**MESSENGER**

The rebels are in Southwark±±fly, my lord!  
Jack Cade proclaims himself Lord Mortimer,  
Descended from the Duke of Clarence' house,  
And calls your grace usurper, openly, 30  
And vows to crown himself in Westminster.  
His army is a ragged multitude  
Of hinds and peasants, rude and merciless.  
Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother's death  
Hath given them heart and courage to proceed.  
All scholars, lawyers, courtiers, gentlemen, 35  
They call false caterpillars and intend their death.

**KING HENRY**

O, graceless men; they know not what they do.

**BUCKINGHAM**

My gracious lord, retire to Kenilworth  
Until a power be raised to put them down.

**QUEEN MARGARET**

Ah, were the Duke of Suffolk now alive 40  
These Kentish rebels would be soon appeased!

**KING HENRY**

Lord Saye, the trait'rous rabble hateth thee±±  
Therefore away with us to Kenilworth.

**SAYE**

So might your grace's person be in danger.  
The sight of me is odious in their eyes, 45  
And therefore in this city will I stay  
And live alone as secret as I may.

*Enter another Messenger*

**SECOND MESSENGER** (to King Henry)

Jack Cade hath almost gotten London Bridge;  
The citizens fly and forsake their houses;  
The rascal people, thirsting after prey, 50  
Join with the traitor; and they jointly swear  
To spoil the city and your royal court.

**BUCKINGHAM** (to King Henry)

Then linger not, my lord; away, take horse!

**KING HENRY**

Come, Margaret. God, our hope, will succour us.

**QUEEN MARGARET** *[aside]*

My hope is gone, now Suffolk is deceased.

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**KING HENRY** *(to Saye)*

Farewell, my lord. Trust not the Kentish rebels.

**BUCKINGHAM** *(to Saye)*

Trust nobody, for fear you be betrayed.

**SAYE**

The trust I have is in mine innocence,

And therefore am I bold and resolute.

*Exeunt [Saye at one door, the rest at another]*