

HENRY VI, PART 2

A line-by-line translation

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Flourish of trumpets: then hautboys. Enter KING HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER, SALISBURY, WARWICK, and CARDINAL, on the one side; QUEEN MARGARET, SUFFOLK, YORK, SOMERSET, and BUCKINGHAM, on the other

SUFFOLK

As by your high imperial majesty
I had in charge at my depart for France,
As procurator to your excellence,
To marry Princess Margaret for your grace,
5 So, in the famous ancient city, Tours,
In presence of the Kings of France and Sicil,
The Dukes of Orleans, Calaber, Bretagne and Alencon,
Seven earls, twelve barons and twenty reverend bishops,
I have perform'd my task and was espoused:
10 And humbly now upon my bended knee,
In sight of England and her lordly peers,
Deliver up my title in the queen
To your most gracious hands, that are the substance
Of that great shadow I did represent;
15 The happiest gift that ever marquess gave,
The fairest queen that ever king received.

KING HENRY VI

Suffolk, arise. Welcome, Queen Margaret:
I can express no kinder sign of love
Than this kind kiss. O Lord, that lends me life,
20 Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness!
For thou hast given me in this beauteous face
A world of earthly blessings to my soul,
If sympathy of love unite our thoughts.

QUEEN MARGARET

Great King of England and my gracious lord,
25 The mutual conference that my mind hath had,
By day, by night, waking and in my dreams,
In courtly company or at my beads,
With you, mine alder-liefest sovereign,
Makes me the bolder to salute my king
30 With ruder terms, such as my wit affords
And over-joy of heart doth minister.

KING HENRY VI

Her sight did ravish; but her grace in speech,
Her words y-clad with wisdom's majesty,
Makes me from wondering fall to weeping joys;
35 Such is the fulness of my heart's content.
Lords, with one cheerful voice welcome my love.

ALL

[Kneeling] Long live Queen Margaret, England's happiness!

QUEEN MARGARET

40 We thank you all.

Flourish

Shakescleare Translation

A sound of trumpets, then oboe-like instruments. KING HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER, SALISBURY, WARWICK, and CARDINAL enter from one side, and QUEEN MARGARET, SUFFOLK, YORK, SOMERSET, and BUCKINGHAM enter from the other.

SUFFOLK

I was commanded by your majesty to travel to France as your representative and arrange a marriage with Princess Margaret on your behalf. And so in that famous ancient city Tours--in the presence of the Kings of France and Sicily and the Dukes of Orleans, Calaber, Bretagne and Alencon, seven earls, twelve barons and twenty bishops--I carried out my task and married her by proxy ¹. And now, humbly on my knees in front of England and her lords, I turn the queen over to your gracious hands, since you are the substance of the shadow that I represented when I was abroad. She is the best gift that a marquess ² has ever given anyone, and the most beautiful queen that any king has ever married.

¹ Because King Henry was not physically present at the wedding, Suffolk stood for him as "proxy" during the ceremony.

² A marquess is an English nobleman.

KING HENRY VI

Stand up, Suffolk. Welcome, Queen Margaret! *[Kisses her]*
This kind kiss is the most affectionate sign of love that I can give you. Oh, Lord, that gives me life, let me also have a heart full of gratitude! Because you have given my soul a whole world of earthly blessings in this beautiful face, if she and I can learn to love each other.

QUEEN MARGARET

Great king of England and my good husband, I've already been in intimate conversation with you in my mind--I thought of you during the day and during the night, when I was awake and in my dreams, when I was with people at court or when I was praying alone. So after all this imagined conversation, my dear lord, I feel bold enough to greet my king in a friendly way, as my heart and mind directs me.

KING HENRY VI

The sight of her enchants me, but her speech is even more graceful. Her words, clothed with the power of wisdom, make me go from admiration to tears of joy. That's how happy I am. Lords, welcome my love with one cheerful voice.

ALL

[Kneeling] Long live Queen Margaret, England's happiness!

QUEEN MARGARET

Thank you, everyone.

Sound of a trumpet.

SUFFOLK

My lord protector, so it please your grace,
Here are the articles of contracted peace
Between our sovereign and the French king Charles,
For eighteen months concluded by consent.

GLOUCESTER

45 [Reads] "Imprimis, it is agreed between the French
king Charles, and William de la Pole, Marquess of
Suffolk, ambassador for Henry King of England, that
the said Henry shall espouse the Lady Margaret,
daughter unto Reignier King of Naples, Sicilia and
50 Jerusalem, and crown her Queen of England ere the
thirtieth of May next ensuing. Item, that the duchy
of Anjou and the county of Maine shall be released
and delivered to the king her father"--

Lets the paper fall

KING HENRY VI

Uncle, how now!

GLOUCESTER

55 Pardon me, gracious lord;
Some sudden qualm hath struck me at the heart
And dimm'd mine eyes, that I can read no further.

KING HENRY VI

Uncle of Winchester, I pray, read on.

CARDINAL

60 [Reads] "Item, It is further agreed between them,
that the duchies of Anjou and Maine shall be
released and delivered over to the king her father,
and she sent over of the King of England's own
proper cost and charges, without having any dowry."

KING HENRY VI

They please us well. Lord marquess, kneel down:
65 We here create thee the first duke of Suffolk,
And gird thee with the sword. Cousin of York,
We here discharge your grace from being regent
I' the parts of France, till term of eighteen months
Be full expired. Thanks, uncle Winchester,
70 Gloucester, York, Buckingham, Somerset,
Salisbury, and Warwick;
We thank you all for the great favour done,
In entertainment to my princely queen.
Come, let us in, and with all speed provide
75 To see her coronation be perform'd.

Exeunt KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, and SUFFOLK

GLOUCESTER

Brave peers of England, pillars of the state,
To you Duke Humphrey must unload his grief,
Your grief, the common grief of all the land.
What! Did my brother Henry spend his youth,
80 His valour, coin and people, in the wars?
Did he so often lodge in open field,
In winter's cold and summer's parching heat,
To conquer France, his true inheritance?
And did my brother Bedford toil his wits,
85 To keep by policy what Henry got?
Have you yourselves, Somerset, Buckingham,
Brave York, Salisbury, and victorious Warwick,
Received deep scars in France and Normandy?
Or hath mine uncle Beaufort and myself,
90 With all the learned council of the realm,
Studied so long, sat in the council-house
Early and late, debating to and fro
How France and Frenchmen might be kept in awe,
And had his highness in his infancy
95

SUFFOLK

[To GLOUCESTER] My lord protector ⁸, if it's all right with you, here are the conditions of the peace negotiation between our king and the French king Charles. The peace will last for eighteenth months.

GLOUCESTER

[Reads] "Firstly, it is agreed between the French king Charles and William de la Pole, Marquess of Suffolk, ambassador for Henry King of England, that the said Henry shall marry the Lady Margaret, daughter of King Reignier of Naples, Sicilia and Jerusalem, and crown her Queen of England before the next thirtieth of May. Likewise, that the dukedom of Anjou and the county of Maine will be released from English control and given to her father the king - "

GLOUCESTER drops the paper on the floor.

KING HENRY VI

Uncle, what are you doing?

GLOUCESTER

Excuse me, my good lord. Something has suddenly made me feel sick and blurred my vision, so that I can't read any more.

KING HENRY VI

Please, uncle of Winchester, keep reading.

CARDINAL

[Reads] "Likewise, it is also agreed between them, that the dukedoms of Anjou and Maine shall be released from English control and given to her father the king, and she will be sent over at the King of England's personal cost, with no dowry ⁹ .

KING HENRY VI

That's fine with us. Lord marquess, kneel down. We'll make you the first duke of Suffolk, giving you a new title with our sword ⁸ . Cousin ⁸ of York, we dismiss you from your post as regent ⁷ in those territories in France, until the period of eighteenth months is over. Thanks, uncle Winchester, Gloucester, York, Buckingham, Somerset, Salisbury, and Warwick. We thank you for all that you have done to welcome my royal queen. Come, let's go inside and quickly prepare everything for her coronation.

KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, and SUFFOLK exit.

GLOUCESTER

Noblemen of England, since you're the leading men in this country, Duke Humphrey has to unload his grief on you-- which is your grief too, and the grief of everyone in England. What? Didn't my brother Henry ⁸ spend his young days, his bravery, his money, and English lives in the wars? To conquer France, which was his birthright, didn't he so often sleep in an open field through cold winters and hot summers? And didn't my brother Bedford work so hard to maintain by good politics the lands that Henry had conquered? Haven't you, Somerset, Buckingham, brave York, Salisbury and victorious Warwick, received deep scars fighting in France and Normandy? Haven't my uncle Beaufort and I studied hard, with all the country's council ⁹ , sitting in the council house early and staying until late, debating back and forth how to defeat the French and keep our territories? And wasn't his highness crowned in Paris as a baby, against the will of his enemies? And shall all this work and all our victories be for nothing? Shall Henry's conquest, Bedford's skill in politics, your bravery in war,

⁸ The king's Protector makes decisions in his place if the king is deemed too young to rule himself.

⁹ Money or land given from the bride's family to her husband at the time of marriage.

⁸ Refers to the formal ceremony of elevation, in which the king would "dub" his noblemen with his sword.

⁸ "Cousin" was a common form of address used among nobles.

⁷ "Regent" was one who ruled in the king's absence.

⁸ Henry V.

⁹ "Council" was the Privy Council of the king's ministers and advisers.

Crowned in Paris in despite of foes?
 And shall these labours and these honours die?
 Shall Henry's conquest, Bedford's vigilance,
 Your deeds of war and all our counsel die?
 O peers of England, shameful is this league!
 100 Fatal this marriage, cancelling your fame,
 Blotting your names from books of memory,
 Razing the characters of your renown,
 Defacing monuments of conquer'd France,
 Undoing all, as all had never been!

CARDINAL

105 Nephew, what means this passionate discourse,
 This peroration with such circumstance?
 For France, 'tis ours; and we will keep it still.

GLOUCESTER

Ay, uncle, we will keep it, if we can;
 But now it is impossible we should:
 110 Suffolk, the new-made duke that rules the roast,
 Hath given the duchy of Anjou and Maine
 Unto the poor King Reignier, whose large style
 Agrees not with the leanness of his purse.

SALISBURY

Now, by the death of Him that died for all,
 115 These counties were the keys of Normandy.
 But wherefore weeps Warwick, my valiant son?

WARWICK

For grief that they are past recovery:
 For, were there hope to conquer them again,
 My sword should shed hot blood, mine eyes no tears.
 120 Anjou and Maine! Myself did win them both;
 Those provinces these arms of mine did conquer:
 And are the cities, that I got with wounds,
 Delivered up again with peaceful words?
 Mort Dieu!

YORK

125 For Suffolk's duke, may he be suffocate,
 That dims the honour of this warlike isle!
 France should have torn and rent my very heart,
 Before I would have yielded to this league.
 I never read but England's kings have had
 130 Large sums of gold and dowries with their wives:
 And our King Henry gives away his own,
 To match with her that brings no vantages.

GLOUCESTER

A proper jest, and never heard before,
 That Suffolk should demand a whole fifteenth
 135 For costs and charges in transporting her!
 She should have stayed in France and starved
 in France, Before--

CARDINAL

My Lord of Gloucester, now ye grow too hot:
 It was the pleasure of my lord the King.

GLOUCESTER

140 My Lord of Winchester, I know your mind;
 'Tis not my speeches that you do mislike,
 But 'tis my presence that doth trouble ye.
 Rancour will out: proud prelate, in thy face
 I see thy fury: if I longer stay,
 145 We shall begin our ancient bickerings.
 Lordings, farewell; and say, when I am gone,
 I prophesied France will be lost ere long.

Exit

and all our advice be for nothing? Oh, men of England, this is a shameful union! This marriage is disastrous! It destroys your reputations, smudging your names from the history books, erasing the written records of our famous actions, disfiguring the memorials of conquered France, undoing everything as if it had never happened!

CARDINAL

What does this passionate argument mean, nephew? Why all this elaborate speech? France is ours and we'll keep it.

GLOUCESTER

Yes, uncle, we will keep it, if we can. But now it seems impossible. Suffolk, the new-made duke, has the power now. And he's given the dukedom of Anjou and Maine to the poor King Reignier, who doesn't have any money to back up his great title.

SALISBURY

By Christ's death, who died for us all, these countries were our foothold in Normandy. But why do you cry, my brave son Warwick?

WARWICK

Because they are not going to be saved. And if there was a hope that we could conquer them again, my sword would shed hot blood and my eyes wouldn't cry. Anjou and Maine! I conquered both of them! My own arms conquered those provinces. So how can those cities that I won in battle be given back with peaceful words? God's death!

YORK

As for the Duke of Suffolk, who dishonors this brave island, may he be suffocated! France would have had to tear and rip up my heart before I'd surrender to this union. I have only ever read about English kings that have gained large amounts of gold and property by marrying. And our King Henry gives away his own money to marry a woman who has nothing to her name.

GLOUCESTER

It's a real joke I've never heard before, that Suffolk demands large reimbursements for the cost of transporting her here! She should have stayed in France and starved in France, before --

CARDINAL

My Lord of Gloucester, you're too angry now. You have to remember that it was what the King wanted.

GLOUCESTER

I know what you think, my Lord of Winchester. It's not my speeches that you don't like but my presence that bothers you. Your anger will explode, proud priest. I see your rage in your face. If I stay longer we'll bring up old grudges. Therefore, goodbye, my lords. And when I'm gone, say that I predicted France will be lost before long.

GLOUCESTER exits.

CARDINAL

So, there goes our protector in a rage.
 'Tis known to you he is mine enemy,
 150 Nay, more, an enemy unto you all,
 And no great friend, I fear me, to the king.
 Consider, lords, he is the next of blood,
 And heir apparent to the English crown:
 Had Henry got an empire by his marriage,
 155 And all the wealthy kingdoms of the west,
 There's reason he should be displeas'd at it.
 Look to it, lords! Let not his smoothing words
 Bewitch your hearts; be wise and circumspect.
 What though the common people favour him,
 160 Calling him 'Humphrey, the good Duke of
 Gloucester,'
 Clapping their hands, and crying with loud voice,
 'Jesu maintain your royal excellence!'
 With 'God preserve the good Duke Humphrey!'
 165 I fear me, lords, for all this flattering gloss,
 He will be found a dangerous protector.

BUCKINGHAM

Why should he, then, protect our sovereign,
 He being of age to govern of himself?
 Cousin of Somerset, join you with me,
 170 And all together, with the Duke of Suffolk,
 We'll quickly hoise Duke Humphrey from his seat.

CARDINAL

This weighty business will not brook delay:
 I'll to the Duke of Suffolk presently.

Exit

SOMERSET

175 Cousin of Buckingham, though Humphrey's pride
 And greatness of his place be grief to us,
 Yet let us watch the haughty cardinal:
 His insolence is more intolerable
 Than all the princes in the land beside:
 180 If Gloucester be displaced, he'll be protector.

BUCKINGHAM

Or thou or I, Somerset, will be protector,
 Despite Duke Humphrey or the cardinal.

Exeunt BUCKINGHAM and SOMERSET

SALISBURY

Pride went before, ambition follows him.
 185 While these do labour for their own preferment,
 Behoves it us to labour for the realm.
 I never saw but Humphrey Duke of Gloucester
 Did bear him like a noble gentleman.
 Oft have I seen the haughty cardinal,
 190 More like a soldier than a man o' the church,
 As stout and proud as he were lord of all,
 Swear like a ruffian and demean himself
 Unlike the ruler of a commonweal.
 Warwick, my son, the comfort of my age,
 195 Thy deeds, thy plainness and thy housekeeping,
 Hath won the greatest favour of the commons,
 Excepting none but good Duke Humphrey:
 And, brother York, thy acts in Ireland,
 In bringing them to civil discipline,
 200 Thy late exploits done in the heart of France,
 When thou wert regent for our sovereign,
 Have made thee fear'd and honour'd of the people:
 Join we together, for the public good,
 In what we can, to bridle and suppress
 205 The pride of Suffolk and the cardinal,
 With Somerset's and Buckingham's ambition;
 And, as we may, cherish Duke Humphrey's deeds,
 While they do tend the profit of the land.

CARDINAL

So, there goes our protector in anger. It's known to you that
 he is my enemy. No, more than that. He's an enemy to all of
 you and no friend to the king, I'm afraid. Consider, lords,
 that he is the next in line and heir to the English throne. And
 if Henry got an empire by his marriage and all the rich
 countries in the west, there is no reason we would have
 been unhappy about this. But be careful, lords! Don't let his
 flattering words enchant your hearts. Be smart and
 cautious. What does it matter that the common people like
 him, calling him "Humphrey, the good Duke of Gloucester",
 applauding him and shouting loudly: "Let Jesus keep your
 royal excellence!" and "God save the good Duke
 Humphrey!" I am afraid, lords, that for all his smooth
 words, he will turn out to be a dangerous protector.

BUCKINGHAM

Why should he rule for the king, then, since the king is
 already old enough to rule for himself? Cousin of Somerset,
 if you support me in this and we all work together with the
 Duke of Suffolk, we can quickly take Duke Humphrey down
 from his throne.

CARDINAL

We shouldn't wait any longer when the problem is so
 serious. I'll go to the Duke of Suffolk immediately.

CARDINAL exits.

SOMERSET

Cousin of Buckingham, though Humphrey's pride and his
 great position disturbs us, we should be suspicious of the
 proud cardinal too. He is more arrogant than all the nobles
 in this country. If Gloucester is pushed aside, the cardinal
 will be protector.

BUCKINGHAM

Or you or I, Somerset, will be the protector, in spite of Duke
 Humphrey and the cardinal.

BUCKINGHAM and SOMERSET exit.

SALISBURY

The proud cardinal left before and the ambitious
 Buckingham and Somerset follow him. While they work for
 their own advancement, some of us work hard for the
 country. I have always seen Humphrey Duke of Gloucester
 behave like a noble gentleman. But I have often seen the
 proud cardinal looking more like a soldier than a man of the
 church, as arrogant and proud as if he were lord of
 everything. He swears like a hooligan and does not behave
 like the ruler of the commonwealth. *[To WARWICK]*
 Warwick, my son--who comforts me in my old age--your
 good behavior and open and generous nature have made
 you the most popular with the people, except for good
 Duke Humphrey. *[To YORK]* And my brother-in-law York,
 your bravery in Ireland when you defeated the rebellion
 there, and your recent remarkable actions in the heart of
 France, when you were the regent for your king, have made
 you feared and honored by the people. Let's join together
 for the general good, and do what we can to control and
 rein in the pride of Suffolk and the cardinal, as well as
 Somerset's and Buckingham's ambition. And we'll support
 Duke Humphrey's actions as much as we can, while they
 promote the good of the country.

WARWICK

210 So God help Warwick, as he loves the land,
And common profit of his country!

YORK

[*Aside*] And so says York, for he hath greatest cause.

SALISBURY

Then let's make haste away, and look unto the main.

WARWICK

215 Unto the main! O father, Maine is lost;
That Maine which by main force Warwick did win,
And would have kept so long as breath did last!
Main chance, father, you meant; but I meant Maine,
Which I will win from France, or else be slain.

Exeunt WARWICK and SALISBURY

YORK

220 Anjou and Maine are given to the French;
Paris is lost; the state of Normandy
Stands on a tickle point, now they are gone:
Suffolk concluded on the articles,
The peers agreed, and Henry was well pleased
To change two dukedoms for a duke's fair daughter.
I cannot blame them all: what is 't to them?
225 'Tis thine they give away, and not their own.
Pirates may make cheap pennyworths of their pillage
And purchase friends and give to courtzans,
Still revelling like lords till all be gone;
While as the silly owner of the goods
230 Weeps over them and wrings his hapless hands
And shakes his head and trembling stands aloof,
While all is shared and all is borne away,
Ready to starve and dare not touch his own:
So York must sit and fret and bite his tongue,
235 While his own lands are bargain'd for and sold.
Methinks the realms of England, France and Ireland
Bear that proportion to my flesh and blood
As did the fatal brand Althaea burn'd
Unto the prince's heart of Calydon.
240 Anjou and Maine both given unto the French!
Cold news for me, for I had hope of France,
Even as I have of fertile England's soil.
A day will come when York shall claim his own;
And therefore I will take the Nevils' parts
245 And make a show of love to proud Duke Humphrey,
And, when I spy advantage, claim the crown,
For that's the golden mark I seek to hit:
Nor shall proud Lancaster usurp my right,
Nor hold the sceptre in his childish fist,
250 Nor wear the diadem upon his head,
Whose church-like humours fits not for a crown.
Then, York, be still awhile, till time do serve:
Watch thou and wake when others be asleep,
To pry into the secrets of the state;
255 Till Henry, surfeiting in joys of love,
With his new bride and England's dear-bought queen,
And Humphrey with the peers be fall'n at jars:
Then will I raise aloft the milk-white rose,
With whose sweet smell the air shall be perfumed;
260 And in my standard bear the arms of York
To grapple with the house of Lancaster;
And, force perforce, I'll make him yield the crown,
Whose bookish rule hath pull'd fair England down.

Exit

WARWICK

So God help Warwick, since he loves the land and common good of his country!

YORK

[*To himself*] And York agrees, since he has the **biggest reason** ¹⁰.

¹⁰ York's "greatest cause" refers to his claim to the throne.

SALISBURY

Then let's get started and see to the most important business at hand.

WARWICK

Let's see to the most important business! Oh, father, Maine is lost. I won it in battle and would have kept it for as long as I breathe! You meant the **most important business** ¹¹ but I meant Maine, which I will win back from France, or otherwise die trying.

¹¹ Shakespeare puns on main and Maine, a French province.

WARWICK and SALISBURY exit.

YORK

Anjou and Maine are given to the French; Paris is lost; we're barely hanging on to Normandy. Now that they're all gone, Suffolk decided the terms and conditions, everyone agreed, and Henry was happy enough to exchange two dukedoms for a beautiful daughter of the duke. I can't blame them all, for what's it to them? It's **your** ¹² inheritance that they give away and not their own. Pirates may exchange what they stole for virtually nothing and so buy friends and give to prostitutes, enjoying their ill-gotten gains like lords until it's all gone. Meanwhile the helpless owner of the stolen stuff cries over it, and wrings his poor hands, and shakes his head, but stands aside and does nothing while the pirates take his property. He is about to starve and doesn't dare to touch what's his own. In the same way, York has to sit and fret and stay silent, while his own lands are exchanged and sold. I think that the countries of England, France and Ireland are as part of my flesh and blood as was the deadly branding iron **Althea** ¹³ burned on the prince of Calydon's heart. Anjou and Maine are both surrendered to the French! This is sad news for me, because I had as much hope to rule France as I do to rule fertile England. A day will come when York will claim what belongs to him; and so I'll support Salisbury and Warwick and pretend to be loyal to the proud Duke Humphrey. But when I find a way, I'll claim the crown, since that's the golden target I'm aiming for. The proud **Lancaster** ¹⁴ won't take my throne, or hold the scepter in his childish hand, or wear the crown on his head. He's too simple and religious to make a good king. Then, York, be patient for a while, until the right opportunity arises. Be on your guard and awake when others are asleep, to find out the secrets of the government--until Henry enjoys the love of his new bride and England's expensively-purchased queen too much, and until Humphrey falls out with his friends. Then I will raise high the **milk-white rose** ¹⁵, whose sweet smell will perfume the air. With the banner of the house of York, I'll challenge the house of Lancaster and make the king give up his crown, with force if necessary--since his silly bookishness and bad government has dragged our beautiful England down.

¹² By "thine" York addresses himself.

¹³ It was predicted that the Prince Calydon (a character in Greek mythology) when a log in the fire was completely burned up. His mother took the log out of the fire, but returned it, killing her son, after she learned that he had killed her brothers.

¹⁴ "Lancaster" refers to Henry VI.

¹⁵ White rose was the emblem of the House of York.

YORK exits.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

*Enter GLOUCESTER and his DUCHESS***DUCHESS**

Why droops my lord, like over-ripen'd corn,
 Hanging the head at Ceres' plenteous load?
 Why doth the great Duke Humphrey knit his brows,
 As frowning at the favours of the world?
 5 Why are thine eyes fixed to the sullen earth,
 Gazing on that which seems to dim thy sight?
 What seest thou there? King Henry's diadem,
 Enchased with all the honours of the world?
 If so, gaze on, and grovel on thy face,
 10 Until thy head be circled with the same.
 Put forth thy hand, reach at the glorious gold.
 What, is't too short? I'll lengthen it with mine:
 And, having both together heaved it up,
 We'll both together lift our heads to heaven,
 15 And never more abase our sight so low
 As to vouchsafe one glance unto the ground.

GLOUCESTER

O Nell, sweet Nell, if thou dost love thy lord,
 Banish the canker of ambitious thoughts.
 And may that thought, when I imagine ill
 20 Against my king and nephew, virtuous Henry,
 Be my last breathing in this mortal world!
 My troublous dream this night doth make me sad.

DUCHESS

What dream'd my lord? Tell me, and I'll requite it
 With sweet rehearsal of my morning's dream.

GLOUCESTER

25 Methought this staff, mine office-badge in court,
 Was broke in twain; by whom I have forgot,
 But, as I think, it was by the cardinal;
 And on the pieces of the broken wand
 Were placed the heads of Edmund Duke of Somerset,
 30 And William de la Pole, first duke of Suffolk.
 This was my dream: what it doth bode, God knows.

DUCHESS

Tut, this was nothing but an argument
 That he that breaks a stick of Gloucester's grove
 Shall lose his head for his presumption.
 35 But list to me, my Humphrey, my sweet duke:
 Methought I sat in seat of majesty
 In the cathedral church of Westminster,
 And in that chair where kings and queens are crown'd;
 Where Henry and dame Margaret kneel'd to me
 40 And on my head did set the diadem.

GLOUCESTER


Nay, Eleanor, then must I chide outright:
 Presumptuous dame, ill-nurtured Eleanor,
 Art thou not second woman in the realm,
 And the protector's wife, beloved of him?
 45 Hast thou not worldly pleasure at command,
 Above the reach or compass of thy thought?
 And wilt thou still be hammering treachery,
 To tumble down thy husband and thyself
 From top of honour to disgrace's feet?
 50 Away from me, and let me hear no more!


DUCHESS

What, what, my lord! Are you so choleric
 With Eleanor, for telling but her dream?
 Next time I'll keep my dreams unto myself,

Shakescleare Translation

*GLOUCESTER enters with his wife ELEANOR.***DUCHESS**

Why does my lord droop like an over-ripened corn, hanging its head at Ceres'  rich harvest? Why does the great Duke Humphrey frown as though he were frowning at all his good fortune? Why are your eyes focused on the dull-colored ground, staring at something that seems to darken your sight? What do you see there? King Henry's crown, decorated with all the titles of the world? If that's so, keep looking and lie face down, until your head wears the same crown. Put your hand out and reach for that glorious golden crown. What? Is your arm too short? I'll make it longer by adding mine. And once we've lifted it up together, we'll lift our heads to heaven, and will never degrade ourselves again by taking a single look at the ground.

 "Ceres" was the Roman goddess of agriculture and the harvest.

GLOUCESTER

Oh, Nell, sweet Nell, if you love your husband, stop the infection of ambitious thoughts. And if I ever think to plot against my king and nephew, virtuous Henry, let it be the last time I take a breath in this mortal world! Last night's troubling dream has made me sad.

DUCHESS

What did you dream about? Tell me and I'll repay it by telling you sweetly about my morning dream.

GLOUCESTER

I dreamed that this staff, my badge of office in court, was broken in two. I have forgotten who did it, but I think it was the cardinal. And the heads of Edmund, Duke of Somerset, and William de la Pole, first duke of Suffolk, were placed on the pieces of the broken stick. That was my dream. God knows what it means.

DUCHESS

Oh, please, that was nothing if not evidence that anyone who challenges Gloucester in the slightest will lose his head for trying. But listen to me, my Humphrey, my sweet duke. I imagined that I sat on the royal throne in the cathedral in Westminster, and on that throne where kings and queens were crowned, Henry and Margaret knelt to me and put the crown on my head.

GLOUCESTER

No, Eleanor, then I must reprimand you for this. Bold woman, ill-mannered Eleanor! Aren't you the second highest-ranked woman in the country, the protector's wife, and loved by him? Don't you have everything in this world you could desire, beyond what you can even imagine? And will you then still be talking about treason, which would make both you and your husband fall down from the top of honor to the feet of disgrace? Get away from me and don't let me hear about that!

DUCHESS

But, but, my lord! Are you so angry with Eleanor only because she told you about her dream? I'll keep my dreams to myself next time and won't be told off for them.

And not be cheque'd.

GLOUCESTER

55 Nay, be not angry; I am pleased again.

Enter Messenger

MESSENGER

My lord protector, 'tis his highness' pleasure
You do prepare to ride unto Saint Alban's,
Where as the king and queen do mean to hawk.

GLOUCESTER

60 I go. Come, Nell, thou wilt ride with us?

DUCHESS

Yes, my good lord, I'll follow presently.

Exeunt GLOUCESTER and Messenger

DUCHESS

Follow I must; I cannot go before,
While Gloucester bears this base and humble mind.
65 Were I a man, a duke, and next of blood,
I would remove these tedious stumbling-blocks
And smooth my way upon their headless necks;
And, being a woman, I will not be slack
To play my part in Fortune's pageant.
70 Where are you there? Sir John! Nay, fear not, man,
We are alone; here's none but thee and I.

Enter HUME

HUME

Jesus preserve your royal majesty!

DUCHESS

What say'st thou? Majesty! I am but grace.

HUME

75 But, by the grace of God, and Hume's advice,
Your grace's title shall be multiplied.

DUCHESS

What say'st thou, man? Hast thou as yet conferr'd
With Margery Jourdain, the cunning witch,
With Roger Bolingbroke, the conjurer?
And will they undertake to do me good?

HUME

80 This they have promised, to show your highness
A spirit raised from depth of under-ground,
That shall make answer to such questions
As by your grace shall be propounded him.

DUCHESS

85 It is enough; I'll think upon the questions:
When from St. Alban's we do make return,
We'll see these things effected to the full.
Here, Hume, take this reward; make merry, man,
With thy confederates in this weighty cause.

Exit

HUME

Hume must make merry with the duchess' gold;
90 Marry, and shall. But how now, Sir John Hume!
Seal up your lips, and give no words but mum:
The business asketh silent secrecy.
Dame Eleanor gives gold to bring the witch:
Gold cannot come amiss, were she a devil.
95 Yet have I gold flies from another coast;
I dare not say, from the rich cardinal


GLOUCESTER

No, don't be angry. I am all right again.

A messenger enters.

MESSENGER

My lord protector, your highness would like you to prepare
to ride to [Saint Alban's](#), where the king and queen are
planning to hunt with hawks.

 "Saint Alban's" is a town just north of London.

GLOUCESTER

I'll go. Come, Nell. You will come with us, yes?

DUCHESS

Yes, my good husband. I'll come in a moment.

GLOUCESTER and messenger exit.

DUCHESS

I have to follow because I can't go in front of you, while
Gloucester is of this unambitious and humble mind. If I
were a man, a duke, and next in line to the throne, I would
remove these annoying stumbling blocks and clear my way
to the crown on their headless necks. And being a woman, I
won't mind playing the part that fate has prepared for us.
Where are you? Sir John! No, don't be afraid, man. We are
alone. There's no one here but you and me.

HUME enters.

HUME

Jesus preserve your royal majesty!

DUCHESS

What did you say? "Majesty?" I am only a duchess.

HUME

But thanks to the help of God and advice from Hume, you'll
have a better title.

DUCHESS

What are you saying, man? Have you spoken with Margery
Jourdain, the skillful witch, and with Roger Bolingbroke,
the magician? And will they help me out?

HUME

That's what they have promised--to show your highness a
spirit summoned from deep underground. He will answer
any questions that your grace would like to ask him.

DUCHESS

That's all. I'll think about these questions. When I come
back from St. Alban's, we'll make sure this will happen.
[Gives him gold] Here, Hume, take your reward. Celebrate
with your partners in this important business.

DUCHESS exits.

HUME

Hume must enjoy the duchess' money! And so he will. But
what's this, Sir John Hume! Close your lips and give no
words, only silence. The business requires silence and
secrecy. Dame Eleanor gives gold so I'll bring her a witch.
Gold is always useful, even if she were a devil. Yet I have
gold that comes from another source. I dare not say that it's
from the rich cardinal and from the great and newly-
appointed Duke of Suffolk. But yes, that's right. To say it

And from the great and new-made Duke of Suffolk,
 Yet I do find it so; for to be plain,
 They, knowing Dame Eleanor's aspiring humour,
 100 Have hired me to undermine the duchess
 And buz these conjurations in her brain.
 They say 'A crafty knave does need no broker;
 Yet am I Suffolk and the cardinal's broker.
 Hume, if you take not heed, you shall go near
 105 To call them both a pair of crafty knaves.
 Well, so it stands; and thus, I fear, at last
 Hume's knavery will be the duchess' wreck,
 And her attainture will be Humphrey's fall:
 Sort how it will, I shall have gold for all.

Exit

simply, they--knowing the ambitious frame of Dame Eleanor's mind--have hired me to undermine the duchess and whisper these spells to her. They say "a cunning villain doesn't need a go-between." Yet I am a go-between for Suffolk and the cardinal. Hume, if you aren't careful, you'll come close to calling them both a pair of cunning villains. Well, that's how it is, and I'm afraid that at last Hume's villainy will ruin the duchess, and when she's convicted of treason, it will be the end of Humphrey. However it ends, I'll get my reward.

HUME exits.

Act 1, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter three or four Petitioners, PETER, the Armourer's man, being one

FIRST PETITIONER

My masters, let's stand close: my lord protector will come this way by and by, and then we may deliver our supplications in the quill.

SECOND PETITIONER

Marry, the Lord protect him, for he's a good man!
 5 Jesu bless him!

Enter SUFFOLK and QUEEN MARGARET

PETER

Here a' comes, methinks, and the queen with him.
 I'll be the first, sure.

SECOND PETITIONER

10 Come back, fool; this is the Duke of Suffolk, and not my lord protector.

SUFFOLK

How now, fellow! Would'st anything with me?

FIRST PETITIONER

I pray, my lord, pardon me; I took ye for my lord protector.

QUEEN MARGARET

15 *[Reading]* 'To my Lord Protector!' Are your supplications to his lordship? Let me see them: what is thine?

FIRST PETITIONER

Mine is, an't please your grace, against John Goodman, my lord cardinal's man, for keeping my house, and lands, and wife and all, from me.

SUFFOLK

20 Thy wife, too! That's some wrong, indeed. What's yours? What's here!

SUFFOLK

[Reading] 'Against the Duke of Suffolk, for enclosing the commons of Melford.' How now, sir knave!

Shakescleare Translation

Three or four citizens with petitions enter with PETER, a servant of the maker of armor.

FIRST PETITIONER

Gentlemen, let's stand near one another. My lord protector will come this way soon, and then we can tell him our requests as a group.

SECOND PETITIONER

Yes, may the Lord protect him, since he is a good man!
 Jesus bless him!

SUFFOLK and QUEEN MARGARET enter.

PETER

I think he's coming now, with the queen. I have to be the first to talk to him.

SECOND PETITIONER

Step back, you idiot! This is the Duke of Suffolk and not my lord protector.

SUFFOLK

What's this, man? What do you want from me?

FIRST PETITIONER

Please, my lord, I am sorry, I thought you were the lord protector.

QUEEN MARGARET

[Reading] "To my Lord Protector!" Do you have requests to his lordship? Let me see them. What's yours?

FIRST PETITIONER


Mine is, if it's all right with your grace, against John Goodman, the lord cardinal's servant. He has taken my house, lands, wife and everything from me.

SUFFOLK

Your wife as well! Something is wrong about that, for sure. What's yours? What do we have here?

SUFFOLK

[Reading] "Against the Duke of Suffolk, for fencing in the communal land of Melford." What's this, you villain!

 "The commons" was communal land available to all and Duke Suffolk is being accused of converting it to private use.

SECOND PETITIONER

25 Alas, sir, I am but a poor petitioner of our whole township.

PETER

[Giving his petition] Against my master, Thomas Horner, for saying that the Duke of York was rightful heir to the crown.

QUEEN MARGARET

30 What sayst thou? Did the Duke of York say he was rightful heir to the crown?

PETER

That my master was? No, forsooth: my master said that he was, and that the king was an usurper.

SUFFOLK

35 Who is there?

Enter Servant

SUFFOLK

Take this fellow in, and send for his master with a pursuivant presently: we'll hear more of your matter before the King.

Exit Servant with PETER

QUEEN MARGARET

40 And as for you, that love to be protected Under the wings of our protector's grace, Begin your suits anew, and sue to him.

Tears the supplication

QUEEN MARGARET

45 Away, base cullions! Suffolk, let them go.

ALL

Come, let's be gone.

Exeunt

QUEEN MARGARET

My Lord of Suffolk, say, is this the guise,
Is this the fashion in the court of England?
50 Is this the government of Britain's isle,
And this the royalty of Albion's king?
What shall King Henry be a pupil still
Under the surly Gloucester's governance?
Am I a queen in title and in style,
55 And must be made a subject to a duke?
I tell thee, Pole, when in the city Tours
Thou ran'st a tilt in honour of my love
And stolest away the ladies' hearts of France,
I thought King Henry had resembled thee
60 In courage, courtship and proportion:
But all his mind is bent to holiness,
To number Ave-Maries on his beads;
His champions are the prophets and apostles,
His weapons holy saws of sacred writ,
65 His study is his tilt-yard, and his loves
Are brazen images of canonized saints.
I would the college of the cardinals
Would choose him pope, and carry him to Rome,
And set the triple crown upon his head:
70 That were a state fit for his holiness.

SUFFOLK

Madam, be patient: as I was cause
Your highness came to England, so will I
In England work your grace's full content.

SECOND PETITIONER

But, sir, I am only one poor petitioner from our whole town.

PETER

[Offering his petition] This is against my master, Thomas Horner, for saying that the Duke of York was the true heir to the crown.

QUEEN MARGARET

What did you say? Did the Duke of York say that he was the true heir to the crown?

PETER

That my master was the true heir? No, my master said that he was and that the king is ruling wrongfully.

SUFFOLK

Who is there?

A servant enters.

SUFFOLK

Take this man inside and get his master to come immediately with a messenger. We'll hear more about your issue in front of the king.

The servant exits with PETER.

QUEEN MARGARET

And as for you, since you love to be protected under our protector's wings, you can start your requests all over again and ask him.

MARGARET tears the requests.

QUEEN MARGARET

Get out, you lowly peasants! Suffolk, send them away.

ALL

Come, let's go.


All exit but MARGARET and SUFFOLK.


QUEEN MARGARET


My Lord Suffolk, tell me, is this what happens, is this the custom in the court of England? Is this the government of the British island, and is this the royalty of Albion's king? Should King Henry be a student under the teaching of the grumpy Gloucester? Am I a queen in title and mode of address, and do I have to obey a duke? I'm telling you, Pole, when you took part in the tournament in the city of Tours and jousted for my love, stealing away the hearts of all the ladies of France, I thought that King Henry was like you—in courage, flirting, and looks. But all he thinks about is religion and counting Hail Marys on his rosary. The heroes that he admires are the prophets and apostles, his weapons are holy books, his study is his tournament ground, and his loves are his bronze statues of glorified saints. I wish that the highest council of the Catholic Church's cardinal would choose him to be a pope and take him to Rome, and set the pope's triple crown on his head. That would be an appropriate job for his holiness.

SUFFOLK

Madam, be patient. I was the reason why your highness came to England and so I will do everything here in England to please you.

 "Albion" is an ancient name for England.

 Suffolk's family name was

 "Ave-Maries" prayers frequently recited over a rosary.

QUEEN MARGARET

75 Beside the haughty protector, have we Beaufort,
The imperious churchman, Somerset, Buckingham,
And grumbling York: and not the least of these
But can do more in England than the king.

SUFFOLK

80 And he of these that can do most of all
Cannot do more in England than the Nevils:
Salisbury and Warwick are no simple peers.

QUEEN MARGARET

Not all these lords do vex me half so much
As that proud dame, the lord protector's wife.
She sweeps it through the court with troops of ladies,
More like an empress than Duke Humphrey's wife:
85 Strangers in court do take her for the queen:
She bears a duke's revenues on her back,
And in her heart she scorns our poverty:
Shall I not live to be avenged on her?
Contemptuous base-born callet as she is,
90 She vaunted 'mongst her minions t'other day,
The very train of her worst wearing gown
Was better worth than all my father's lands,
Till Suffolk gave two dukedoms for his daughter.

SUFFOLK

95 Madam, myself have limed a bush for her,
And placed a quire of such enticing birds,
That she will light to listen to the lays,
And never mount to trouble you again.
So, let her rest: and, madam, list to me;
For I am bold to counsel you in this.
100 Although we fancy not the cardinal,
Yet must we join with him and with the lords,
Till we have brought Duke Humphrey in disgrace.
As for the Duke of York, this late complaint
Will make but little for his benefit.
105 So, one by one, we'll weed them all at last,
And you yourself shall steer the happy helm.

Sound a sennet. Enter KING HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER, CARDINAL, BUCKINGHAM, YORK, SOMERSET, SALISBURY, WARWICK, and the DUCHESS

KING HENRY VI

For my part, noble lords, I care not which;
Or Somerset or York, all's one to me.

YORK

110 If York have ill demean'd himself in France,
Then let him be deny'd the regentship.

SOMERSET

If Somerset be unworthy of the place,
Let York be regent; I will yield to him.

WARWICK

Whether your grace be worthy, yea or no,
Dispute not that: York is the worthier.

CARDINAL

115 Ambitious Warwick, let thy betters speak.

WARWICK

The cardinal's not my better in the field.

BUCKINGHAM

All in this presence are thy betters, Warwick.


WARWICK


Warwick may live to be the best of all.

QUEEN MARGARET

In addition to the arrogant protector, we have Beaufort, the bossy churchman, Somerset, Buckingham and the sulky York. And even the least important of them can do more in England than the king.

SUFFOLK

And he who can do most of them all can't do more in England than the Nevilles . Salisbury and Warwick aren't any ordinary men.

 Nevilles was the family name of Salisbury and Warwick.

QUEEN MARGARET

All of these lords don't annoy me half as much as that proud woman, the lord protector's wife. She parades through the court with a group of ladies, more like an empress than Duke Humphrey's wife. Foreigners in the court think she is the queen. She dresses in a magnificent style thanks to the duke's income and secretly she makes fun of me for being poor. Shouldn't I be revenged on her? She is a contemptible lowly-born whore! She boasted to her friends the other day that the train of her most unfashionable dress was worth what my father's lands were, until Suffolk gave him two dukedoms for his daughter.

SUFFOLK

Madam, I have already laid a trap and placed a group of little birds around her, so that she will fall from her nest to listen to their pretty songs, and never trouble you again. So, let her go for now and listen to me, madam, because I am bold enough to advise you on this. Although we don't like the cardinal, we have to join him and his lords, until we have brought Duke Humphrey down. As for the Duke of York, this allegation about him being the true king we just heard will do him little good. So, one by one, we'll uproot them all, until at last you alone will rule the happy kingdom.

Sound of a trumpet. KING HENRY VI enters with GLOUCESTER, CARDINAL, BUCKINGHAM, YORK, SOMERSET, SALISBURY, WARWICK, and the DUCHESS.

KING HENRY VI

When it comes to me, my lords, I don't really care which one--Somerset or York. They're all the same to me.

YORK

If York has behaved badly in France, then don't make him regent.

SOMERSET

If Somerset isn't worthy of the position, then York should be regent. I'll surrender to him.

WARWICK

Don't discuss whether you are worthy or not. York is clearly more worthy.

CARDINAL

Let others better than you speak, ambitious Warwick.

WARWICK

The cardinal isn't better than me on the battlefield.

BUCKINGHAM

Everyone around you is better than you, Warwick.

WARWICK

Warwick could still end up to be the best of you all.

SALISBURY

120 Peace, son! And show some reason, Buckingham,
Why Somerset should be preferred in this.

QUEEN MARGARET

Because the king, forsooth, will have it so.

GLOUCESTER

Madam, the king is old enough himself
To give his censure: these are no women's matters.

QUEEN MARGARET

125 If he be old enough, what needs your grace
To be protector of his excellence?

GLOUCESTER

Madam, I am protector of the realm;
And, at his pleasure, will resign my place.

SUFFOLK

130 Resign it then and leave thine insolence.
Since thou wert king--as who is king but thou?--
The commonwealth hath daily run to wreck;
The Dauphin hath prevail'd beyond the seas;
And all the peers and nobles of the realm
Have been as bondmen to thy sovereignty.

CARDINAL

135 The commons hast thou rack'd; the clergy's bags
Are lank and lean with thy extortions.

SOMERSET

Thy sumptuous buildings and thy wife's attire
Have cost a mass of public treasury.

BUCKINGHAM

140 Thy cruelty in execution
Upon offenders, hath exceeded law,
And left thee to the mercy of the law.

QUEEN MARGARET

Thy sale of offices and towns in France,
If they were known, as the suspect is great,
Would make thee quickly hop without thy head.

Exit GLOUCESTER. QUEEN MARGARET drops her fan

QUEEN MARGARET

Give me my fan: what, minion! Can ye not?

She gives the DUCHESS a box on the ear

QUEEN MARGARET

145 I cry you mercy, madam; was it you?

DUCHESS

Was't I! Yea, I it was, proud Frenchwoman:
Could I come near your beauty with my nails,
I'd set my ten commandments in your face.

KING HENRY VI

150 Sweet aunt, be quiet; 'twas against her will.

DUCHESS

Against her will! Good king, look to't in time;
She'll hamper thee, and dandle thee like a baby:
Though in this place most master wear no breeches,
She shall not strike Dame Eleanor unrevenged.

Exit

SALISBURY

Calm down, son! And give us a reason, Buckingham, why
Somerset should be regent instead.

QUEEN MARGARET

Because the king wants it that way.

GLOUCESTER

Madam, the king is old enough to give us his opinion. These
issues are not for women.


QUEEN MARGARET


If he's old enough, why does your grace need to be
protector of his excellence?

GLOUCESTER

Madam, I am the protector of this country and if he wants
me to, I will resign my place.

SUFFOLK

Resign it then and stop being so arrogant. Since you've
been king--who else is king but you?--the country has been
driven into ruin. The Dauphin  gained in strength beyond
the seas and all the noblemen in the country have been like
slaves to your government.

 "Dauphin" is the title of the
French king's eldest son, heir to the
throne.

CARDINAL

You have ruined the common people; the moneybags of the
church are shrunken and poor because of your taxes.

SOMERSET

Your luxurious buildings and your wife's dresses have cost a
lot of public money.

BUCKINGHAM

Your cruelty when punishing offenders is beyond law and
has left you to the mercy of the law.

QUEEN MARGARET

If we knew about your selling of official positions and towns
in France (since there is already suspicion about it), you'd
be beheaded.

GLOUCESTER exits. QUEEN MARGARET drops her fan.

QUEEN MARGARET

[To DUCHESS] Give me my fan. What, servant? Can't you do
that?

QUEEN MARGARET slaps the DUCHESS.

QUEEN MARGARET

I beg your pardon, madam. Was it you?


DUCHESS


Was it? Yes, it was, you proud Frenchwoman! If only I could
come closer to your beautiful face with my nails, I'd scratch
it with my fingernails!

KING HENRY VI

Sweet aunt, be quiet. She didn't mean to do it.

DUCHESS

She didn't mean to do it! Good king, beware of her. She'll
manipulate you and pet you like a baby. But although the
greatest master  in this place doesn't wear trousers, she
won't slap Dame Eleanor without paying for it.

 Eleanor means Queen Margaret
by "most master".

DUCHESS exits.

BUCKINGHAM

155 Lord cardinal, I will follow Eleanor,
And listen after Humphrey, how he proceeds:
She's tickled now; her fume needs no spurs,
She'll gallop far enough to her destruction.

Exit

Re-enter GLOUCESTER

GLOUCESTER

Now, lords, my choler being over-blown
160 With walking once about the quadrangle,
I come to talk of commonwealth affairs.
As for your spiteful false objections,
Prove them, and I lie open to the law:
But God in mercy so deal with my soul,
165 As I in duty love my king and country!
But, to the matter that we have in hand:
I say, my sovereign, York is meetest man
To be your regent in the realm of France.

SUFFOLK

Before we make election, give me leave
170 To show some reason, of no little force,
That York is most unmeet of any man.

YORK

I'll tell thee, Suffolk, why I am unmeet:
First, for I cannot flatter thee in pride;
Next, if I be appointed for the place,
175 My Lord of Somerset will keep me here,
Without discharge, money, or furniture,
Till France be won into the Dauphin's hands:
Last time, I danced attendance on his will
Till Paris was besieged, famish'd, and lost.

WARWICK

180 That can I witness; and a fouler fact
Did never traitor in the land commit.

SUFFOLK

Peace, headstrong Warwick!

WARWICK

Image of pride, why should I hold my peace?

Enter HORNER, the Armourer, and his man PETER, guarded

SUFFOLK

185 Because here is a man accused of treason:
Pray God the Duke of York excuse himself!

YORK

Doth any one accuse York for a traitor?

KING HENRY VI

What mean'st thou, Suffolk; tell me, what are these?

SUFFOLK

190 Please it your majesty, this is the man
That doth accuse his master of high treason:
His words were these: that Richard, Duke of York,
Was rightful heir unto the English crown
And that your majesty was a usurper.

KING HENRY VI

Say, man, were these thy words?

BUCKINGHAM

Lord cardinal, I'll follow Eleanor and watch out for
Humphrey and what he's going to do next. She is provoked
now; we don't need to make her any angrier. She'll run fast
and far enough towards her own destruction.

BUCKINGHAM exits.

GLOUCESTER re-enters.

GLOUCESTER

Now, lords, I calmed down as I walked around the
quadrangle once, so I have come to talk about the
government. As for your hateful, false accusations, show
your proof and let the law judge my case. But God will have
mercy on my soul, since God knows I love my king and
country! But, let's talk about the matter in hand. I say, my
king, that York is the right man to be your regent in France.

SUFFOLK

Before we make a choice, let me show you why York is the
most unsuitable out of all men.

YORK

I'll tell you why I am unsuitable, Suffolk. First of all, because
my self-respect will not allow me to flatter you. Next,
because if I am appointed to the position, my lord of
Somerset will keep me here without payment, money or
military equipment, until France is won by the Dauphin.
Last time I had to listen to his commands, Paris was
attacked, our people starved, and the city was lost.

WARWICK


I can bear witness to that. A traitor has never committed
worse crimes.


SUFFOLK

Calm yourself, stubborn Warwick!

WARWICK

You're the embodiment of pride! Why should I be calm?

*HORNER enters with the armorer , and his servant
PETER, under guard.*

 "Armourer" is someone who is
responsible for manufacturing
weapons.

SUFFOLK

Because he is a man accused of treason. I pray God that the
Duke of York excuses himself!

YORK

Does anyone accuse York of being a traitor?

KING HENRY VI

What do you mean, Suffolk? Tell me, who are these people?

SUFFOLK

Please, majesty, this *[points to PETER]* is the man that
accuses his master of high treason. He said that Richard,
Duke of York is the true heir to the English crown and that
your majesty has no right to the throne.

KING HENRY VI

Is this what you said, man?

HORNER

195 An't shall please your majesty, I never said nor thought any such matter: God is my witness, I am falsely accused by the villain.

PETER

By these ten bones, my lords, he did speak them to me in the garret one night, as we were scouring my
200 Lord of York's armour.

YORK

Base dunghill villain and mechanical,
I'll have thy head for this thy traitor's speech.
I do beseech your royal majesty,
Let him have all the rigor of the law.

HORNER

205 Alas, my lord, hang me, if ever I spake the words. My accuser is my 'prentice; and when I did correct him for his fault the other day, he did vow upon his knees he would be even with me: I have good witness of this: therefore I beseech your majesty,
210 do not cast away an honest man for a villain's accusation.

KING HENRY VI

Uncle, what shall we say to this in law?

GLOUCESTER

This doom, my lord, if I may judge:
Let Somerset be regent over the French,
215 Because in York this breeds suspicion:
And let these have a day appointed them
For single combat in convenient place,
For he hath witness of his servant's malice:
This is the law, and this Duke Humphrey's doom.

SOMERSET

220 I humbly thank your royal majesty.

HORNER

And I accept the combat willingly.

PETER

Alas, my lord, I cannot fight; for God's sake, pity my case. The spite of man prevaileth against me. O
225 Lord, have mercy upon me! I shall never be able to fight a blow. O Lord, my heart!

GLOUCESTER

Sirrah, or you must fight, or else be hang'd.

KING HENRY VI

Away with them to prison; and the day of combat shall be the last of the next month. Come,
230 Somerset, we'll see thee sent away.

Flourish. Exeunt

HORNER

If it makes your majesty happy, I never said nor thought that! God is my witness that I am accused falsely by this villain.

PETER

By these fingers, my lords, he said those words to me in the watch-tower one night as we were cleaning the armor of my Lord of York.

YORK

Lowly foul villain, peasant! I'll have your head for your treachery. I ask your royal majesty to punish him with all the harshness of the law.

HORNER

Ah, hang me if I have ever spoken those words, my lord. My apprentice is the one who accuses me and when I punished him for his mistake the other day, he swore on his knees that he would get even with me. I have witnesses to prove it. So I beg your majesty, don't cast away an honest man because of a villain's accusation.

KING HENRY VI

Uncle, how should we answer to this?

GLOUCESTER

My advice, my lord, would be to let Somerset be the regent of France because this makes us suspicious of York. Let the two of them set a date to duel in a suitable place, for he has seen how evil his servant is. This is the law and this is Duke Humphrey's sentence.

SOMERSET

I humbly thank you, your royal majesty.

HORNER

And I willingly accept the fight.

PETER

Ah, but my lord, I can't fight! For God's sake, take pity on my situation. The viciousness of mankind is against me. Oh, Lord, have mercy on me! I shall never be able to fight. Oh, Lord, my heart!

GLOUCESTER

Sir, either you fight or you'll be hanged.

KING HENRY VI

Take them away to prison; the day of the fight will be the last day of the next month. Come, Somerset, we'll make sure that they're sent away.

A trumpet sounds. All exit.

Act 1, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter MARGARET JOURDAIN, HUME, SOUTHWELL, and BOLINGBROKE

HUME

Come, my masters; the duchess, I tell you, expects performance of your promises.

Shakesclore Translation

MARGARET JOURDAIN, HUME, SOUTHWELL, and BOLINGBROKE enter.

HUME

Come on, everyone! I tell you, the duchess is expecting quite a show based on what you promised her.

BOLINGBROKE

Master Hume, we are therefore provided: will her ladyship behold and hear our exorcisms?

HUME

5 Ay, what else? Fear you not her courage.

BOLINGBROKE

I have heard her reported to be a woman of an invincible spirit: but it shall be convenient, Master Hume, that you be by her aloft, while we be busy below; and so, I pray you, go, in God's name, and leave us.

Exit HUME

BOLINGBROKE

10 Mother Jourdain, be you prostrate and grovel on the earth; John Southwell, read you; and let us to our work.

Enter the DUCHESS aloft, HUME following

DUCHESS

15 Well said, my masters; and welcome all. To this gear the sooner the better.

BOLINGBROKE

Patience, good lady; wizards know their times: Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night, The time of night when Troy was set on fire; The time when screech-owls cry and ban-dogs howl,
20 And spirits walk and ghosts break up their graves, That time best fits the work we have in hand. Madam, sit you and fear not: whom we raise, We will make fast within a hallow'd verge.

Here they do the ceremonies belonging, and make the circle; BOLINGBROKE or SOUTHWELL reads, Conjuro te, & c. It thunders and lightens terribly; then the Spirit riseth

SPIRIT

Adsum.

MARGARET JOURDAIN

25 Asmath,
By the eternal God, whose name and power
Thou tremblest at, answer that I shall ask;
For, till thou speak, thou shalt not pass from hence.

SPIRIT

Ask what thou wilt. That I had said and done!

BOLINGBROKE

30 *[Reads out of a paper]* 'First of the king: what shall of him become?'

SPIRIT

The duke yet lives that Henry shall depose;
But him outlive, and die a violent death.

As the Spirit speaks, SOUTHWELL writes the answer

BOLINGBROKE

35 'What fates await the Duke of Suffolk?'

SPIRIT

By water shall he die, and take his end.

BOLINGBROKE

Master Hume, we are ready for that. Will her ladyship come to see and hear us summon the spirit?

HUME

Yes, what else would she do? Don't doubt her courage.

BOLINGBROKE

I have heard that she is a woman of an unbreakable spirit. But it might be good if you and her stand above us and watch, while we're busy below. And so please, in God's name, go and leave us.

HUME exits.

BOLINGBROKE

Mother Jourdain, lay down on the floor and crawl on the ground. John Southwell, you read. Let's get to work.

The DUCHESS enters above, with HUME following her.

DUCHESS

That's well said, my masters. And welcome to you all. The sooner this business is started, the better.

BOLINGBROKE

Be patient, good lady. Wizards know when it's the best time. Deep night, dark night, silent night, the time of night when Troy ¹ was set on fire, the time when barn owls ² cry and watchdogs howl, when spirits walk and ghosts come out of their graves--that's the time that 's best for the work we are doing here. Sit yourself down, madam, and don't be afraid. Whoever it is that we raise, we will confine them within the magic circle.

Now they do the appropriate ceremonies and make the circle. BOLINGBROKE or SOUTHWELL reads: "I conjure you." ³ "There is a terrible thunder and lightning. Then, the spirit rises.

SPIRIT

I am here. ⁴

MARGARET JOURDAIN

Satan ⁵, answer what I ask by the eternal God, whose name and power makes you tremble. Until you speak, you won't leave this place.

SPIRIT

Ask whatever you want. I wish that I had answered it and could be done with this!

BOLINGBROKE

[Reads out from a paper] "At first, about the king: what will happen to him?"

SPIRIT

Although the duke that Henry shall depose still lives, Henry will outlive him and he will die a violent death.

As the spirit speaks, SOUTHWELL writes the answer.

BOLINGBROKE

"What will happen to the Duke of Suffolk?"

SPIRIT

He will die by water.

¹ In the mythological Trojan War, the Greeks set the city of Troy on fire after hiding in a wooden horse which the Trojans brought into their gates, believing it to be a gift of surrender.

² "Screech-owls" were barn owls, named after their disharmonious cry and were considered to bring bad luck.

³ "Conjuro te" is Latin for "I conjure you". It is a beginning of an invocation.

⁴ "Adsum" is "I am here" in Latin.

⁵ "Asmath" is an anagram of "Sathan"--Satan.

BOLINGBROKE

'What shall befall the Duke of Somerset?'

SPIRIT

Let him shun castles;
Safer shall he be upon the sandy plains
40 Than where castles mounted stand.
Have done, for more I hardly can endure.

BOLINGBROKE

Descend to darkness and the burning lake!
False fiend, avoid!

Thunder and lightning. Exit Spirit

Enter YORK and BUCKINGHAM with their Guard and break in

YORK

45 Lay hands upon these traitors and their trash.
Beldam, I think we watch'd you at an inch.
What, madam, are you there? The king and commonweal
Are deeply indebted for this piece of pains:
My lord protector will, I doubt it not,
50 See you well guerdon'd for these good deserts.

DUCHESS

Not half so bad as thine to England's king,
Injurious duke, that threatest where's no cause.

BUCKINGHAM

True, madam, none at all: what call you this?
Away with them! Let them be clapp'd up close.
55 And kept asunder. You, madam, shall with us.
Stafford, take her to thee.

Exeunt above DUCHESS and HUME, guarded

BUCKINGHAM

We'll see your trinkets here all forthcoming.
All, away!

Exeunt guard with MARGARET JOURDAIN, SOUTHWELL, & c

YORK

60 Lord Buckingham, methinks, you watch'd her well:
A pretty plot, well chosen to build upon!
Now, pray, my lord, let's see the devil's writ.
What have we here?

YORK

[Reads] 'The duke yet lives, that Henry shall depose;
65 But him outlive, and die a violent death.'
Why, this is just
'Aio te, AEacida, Romanos vincere posse.'
Well, to the rest:
'Tell me what fate awaits the Duke of Suffolk?
70 By water shall he die, and take his end.
What shall betide the Duke of Somerset?
Let him shun castles;
Safer shall he be upon the sandy plains
Than where castles mounted stand.'
75 Come, come, my lords;
These oracles are hardly attain'd,
And hardly understood.
The king is now in progress towards Saint Alban's,
With him the husband of this lovely lady:
80 Thither go these news, as fast as horse can
carry them:
A sorry breakfast for my lord protector.

BOLINGBROKE

"What will happen to the Duke of Somerset?"

SPIRIT

He should avoid castles. He'll be safer on the sandy lands
than where castles stand on a hill. That's all. I can't take any
more.

BOLINGBROKE

Go down to the darkness and the burning lake! Be gone,
treacherous demon!

Thunder and lightning. The spirit exits.

YORK and BUCKINGHAM break in with soldiers.

YORK

Arrest these traitors and take away their rubbish. Witch,
we've been watching you very closely. *[To DUCHESS]* What,
are you there, madam? The king and the commonwealth
are very thankful to you for this trouble you have taken. I
am sure that my lord protector will see you well rewarded
for these good actions.

DUCHESS

My actions aren't half as bad as yours towards the king of
England, you insulting duke that threatens me for no
reason.

BUCKINGHAM

That's true, madam. No reason at all. What do you call all
this? Take them away! Lock them up under close guard, and
make sure they're in solitary confinement. Madam, you
shall come with us. Stafford, take her with you.

DUCHESS and HUME exit from above, under guard.

BUCKINGHAM

We'll make sure that all your silly trinkets here are kept safe
and ready to be shown as evidence in court. Go away, all of
you!

*Guards exit with MARGARET JOURDAIN, SOUTHWELL and
others.*

YORK

Lord Buckingham, I think that you watched her closely
enough. It's a cunning scheme, and a good foundation to
build on! Now please, my lord, let's see the what the devil
has written. *[Picks up paper]* What do we have here?

YORK

[Reads] "Although the duke that Henry shall depose still
lives, Henry will outlive him and he will die a violent death."
This is exactly like "I proclaim that you, the descendant of
Aeacus, can conquer the Romans ⁶". Well, let's see the
rest. "What will happen to the Duke of Suffolk? He shall die
by water. What will happen to the Duke of Somerset? He
should avoid castles. He'll be safer on the sandy lands than
where castles stand on a hill." Come on, my lords, after all
this trouble, these prophecies make no sense. The king is
now on his way towards Saint Alban's and the husband of
this lovely lady is with him. Let's bring them this news, as
fast as horse can carry us. It will be a sad breakfast for my
lord protector.

⁶ These are the Latin words that the
Oracle of Delphi was said to have
spoken to Pyrrhus in mythology.

BUCKINGHAM

Your grace shall give me leave, my Lord of York,
To be the post, in hope of his reward.

YORK

85 At your pleasure, my good lord. Who's within
there, ho!

Enter a Servingman

YORK

Invite my Lords of Salisbury and Warwick
To sup with me to-morrow night. Away!

90

Exeunt

BUCKINGHAM

Please, my Lord of York, let me be the messenger. I'm
hoping I'll get a reward from him.

YORK

As you wish, my good lord. Hey, who's there?

A servant enters.

YORK

Invite my Lords of Salisbury and Warwick to have dinner
with me tomorrow night. Go!

All exit.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare

*Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, GLOUCESTER, CARDINAL,
and SUFFOLK, with Falconers halloing*

QUEEN MARGARET

Believe me, lords, for flying at the brook,
I saw not better sport these seven years' day:
Yet, by your leave, the wind was very high;
And, ten to one, old Joan had not gone out.

KING HENRY VI

5 But what a point, my lord, your falcon made,
And what a pitch she flew above the rest!
To see how God in all his creatures works!
Yea, man and birds are fain of climbing high.

SUFFOLK

10 No marvel, an it like your majesty,
My lord protector's hawks do tower so well;
They know their master loves to be aloft,
And bears his thoughts above his falcon's pitch.

GLOUCESTER

My lord, 'tis but a base ignoble mind
That mounts no higher than a bird can soar.

CARDINAL

15 I thought as much; he would be above the clouds.

GLOUCESTER

Ay, my lord cardinal? How think you by that?
Were it not good your grace could fly to heaven?

KING HENRY VI

The treasury of everlasting joy.

CARDINAL

20 Thy heaven is on earth; thine eyes and thoughts
Beat on a crown, the treasure of thy heart;
Pernicious protector, dangerous peer,
That smooth'st it so with king and commonweal!

GLOUCESTER

What, cardinal, is your priesthood grown peremptory?
Tantaene animis coelestibus irae?
25 Churchmen so hot? Good uncle, hide such malice;
With such holiness can you do it?

Shakescleare Translation

*KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, GLOUCESTER,
CARDINAL, and SUFFOLK enter, with falconers calling out to
the dogs.*

QUEEN MARGARET

Believe me, lords, in seven years I haven't seen better
entertainment than hunting waterbirds by using dogs. But
the wind was very high, and I bet you ten to one 🦅 that the
old Joan hasn't been able to fly.

🦅 Queen Margaret doesn't think the hawk that they call Joan will be allowed to fly because she might be lost in the powerful wind.

KING HENRY VI

But your falcon flew very high, my lord, higher than anyone
else! Ah, to see how God moves all his creatures! Yes, man
and birds like to climb high.

SUFFOLK

No wonder, if your majesty allows me to say, that my lord
protector's hawks soar so high above us. They know that
their master loves to be above others, and that his thoughts
are at the highest point the falcon can fly.

GLOUCESTER

My lord, it's your lowly and dishonorable brain that cannot
fly higher than a bird can.

CARDINAL

I thought as much. He wants to be above the clouds.

GLOUCESTER

Yes, my lord cardinal? What do you mean by that? Wouldn't
it be good if your grace could fly to heaven?

KING HENRY VI

Heaven is the place of never-ending joy.

CARDINAL

[To GLOUCESTER] Your heaven is on earth; your eyes and
thoughts are set on the crown. That's the treasure you're
after, you wicked protector, dangerous man, who so
smoothly flatters the king and country!

GLOUCESTER

Cardinal, is your office suddenly all-powerful? "Is there so
much anger in heavenly minds 🦅?" Are the men of church
so angry? Good uncle, hide your ill will. How can a holy man
behave this way?

🦅 "Tantaene animis coelestibus irae?" is a Latin phrase from Virgil's Aeneid.

SUFFOLK

No malice, sir; no more than well becomes
So good a quarrel and so bad a peer.

GLOUCESTER

As who, my lord?

SUFFOLK

30 Why, as you, my lord,
An't like your lordly lord-protectorship.

GLOUCESTER

Why, Suffolk, England knows thine insolence.

QUEEN MARGARET

And thy ambition, Gloucester.

KING HENRY VI

I prithee, peace, good queen,
35 And whet not on these furious peers;
For blessed are the peacemakers on earth.

CARDINAL

Let me be blessed for the peace I make,
Against this proud protector, with my sword!

GLOUCESTER

40 *[Aside to CARDINAL]* Faith, holy uncle, would
'twere come to that!

CARDINAL

[Aside to GLOUCESTER] Marry, when thou darest.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside to CARDINAL] Make up no factious
numbers for the matter;
In thine own person answer thy abuse.

CARDINAL

45 *[Aside to GLOUCESTER]* Ay, where thou darest
not peep: an if thou darest,
This evening, on the east side of the grove.

KING HENRY VI

How now, my lords!

CARDINAL

50 Believe me, cousin Gloucester,
Had not your man put up the fowl so suddenly,
We had had more sport. *[Aside to GLOUCESTER]* Come with
thy two-hand sword.

GLOUCESTER

True, uncle. *[Aside to CARDINAL]* Are ye advised? The
east side of the grove.

CARDINAL

55 *[Aside to GLOUCESTER]* I am with you.

KING HENRY VI

Why, how now, uncle Gloucester!

GLOUCESTER

Talking of hawking; nothing else, my lord.

GLOUCESTER

60 *[Aside to CARDINAL]* Now, by God's mother, priest, I'll
shave your crown for this,
Or all my fence shall fail.

SUFFOLK

No ill will, sir. Or no more than is fit for such a good fight
and such a bad man.

GLOUCESTER

Which bad man do you mean, my lord?

SUFFOLK

You, my lord! If it please your lord-protectorship.

GLOUCESTER

Suffolk, England knows how disrespectful you are!

QUEEN MARGARET

And England also knows how ambitious you are,
Gloucester.

KING HENRY VI

Please, be calm, good queen and don't encourage these
enraged men. Because the ones who make peace on earth
are blessed!

CARDINAL

Let me be blessed for the peace that I make against this
proud protector--with my sword!

GLOUCESTER

[Whispers to CARDINAL] Ah, holy uncle, how could it come
to this?

CARDINAL

[Whispers to GLOUCESTER] Indeed, when you encouraged
it.

GLOUCESTER

[Whispers to CARDINAL] Don't bring any of your supporters
into this business. You alone should be accountable for
your insult to me.

CARDINAL

[Whispers to GLOUCESTER] Yes, if you dare to show up. If
you do, meet me this evening on the east side of the forest.

KING HENRY VI

What's this, my lords?

CARDINAL

Believe me, cousin Gloucester, if your falconer hadn't
provoked the fowl so suddenly, we would have had more
fun. *[Whispers to GLOUCESTER]* Bring your heavy sword.

GLOUCESTER

That's true, uncle. *[Whispers to CARDINAL]* Do you
understand? The east side of the forest.

CARDINAL

[Whispers to GLOUCESTER] I understand.


KING HENRY VI


What's going on, uncle Gloucester?

GLOUCESTER

We're talking about hawking. Nothing else, my lord!

GLOUCESTER

[Whispers to CARDINAL] Now, by the Virgin Mary, I'll shave
your tonsure  for this, or otherwise all my fencing skills
shall fail me.

 By "crown", Gloucester means
"tonsure", the shaved part of a priest's
head in shape of a crown.

CARDINAL

[Aside to GLOUCESTER] Medice, teipsum--
Protector, see to't well, protect yourself.

KING HENRY VI

The winds grow high; so do your stomachs, lords.
65 How irksome is this music to my heart!
When such strings jar, what hope of harmony?
I pray, my lords, let me compound this strife.

Enter a Townsman of Saint Alban's, crying 'A miracle!'

GLOUCESTER

What means this noise?
Fellow, what miracle dost thou proclaim?

TOWNSMAN

70 A miracle! A miracle!

SUFFOLK

Come to the king and tell him what miracle.

TOWNSMAN

Forsooth, a blind man at Saint Alban's shrine,
Within this half-hour, hath received his sight;
A man that ne'er saw in his life before.

KING HENRY VI

75 Now, God be praised, that to believing souls
Gives light in darkness, comfort in despair!

*Enter the Mayor of Saint Alban's and his brethren, bearing SIMPCOX,
between two in a chair; SIMPCOX's Wife following*

CARDINAL

Here comes the townsmen on procession,
To present your highness with the man.

KING HENRY VI

80 Great is his comfort in this earthly vale,
Although by his sight his sin be multiplied.

GLOUCESTER

Stand by, my masters: bring him near the king;
His highness' pleasure is to talk with him.

KING HENRY VI

Good fellow, tell us here the circumstance,
85 That we for thee may glorify the Lord.
What, hast thou been long blind and now restored?

SIMPCOX

Born blind, an't please your grace.

WIFE

Ay, indeed, was he.

SUFFOLK

What woman is this?

WIFE

90 His wife, an't like your worship.


GLOUCESTER


Hadst thou been his mother, thou couldst have
better told.

KING HENRY VI

Where wert thou born?

CARDINAL

[Whispers to GLOUCESTER] "Doctor, heal yourself.  "

 "Medice, teipsum" is a quote from the Bible.

KING HENRY VI

The winds blow high and so do your tempers, lords. This
music sounds out of tune in my heart! When such strings
sound discordant, is there any hope they'll ever be
harmonious? Please, my lords, let me settle this fight.

Enter a townsman from Saint Alban's, shouting "a miracle!"

GLOUCESTER

What is this noise? What miracle do you mean, man?


TOWNSMAN


A miracle, a miracle!

SUFFOLK

Come to the king and tell him what this miracle is.

TOWNSMAN

I speak the truth when I say that a blind man at Saint Alban  's
holy place, has gotten his sight back in this last half an
hour. He's a man that has never seen before in his life.

 "Saint Alban" was allegedly the first Christian martyr in England. He was executed in the early fourth century for sheltering Christian converts.

KING HENRY VI

Now we give thanks to God, he who gives light in darkness
and comfort in despair to those that believe!

*The mayor of Saint Alban's enters with the members of the
town corporation. Two are carrying SIMPCOX in a chair
between them. SIMPCOX's Wife is following them.*

CARDINAL

The men of the town have marched here to show you this
man, your highness.

KING HENRY VI

His comfort is great in this mortal world, although by
gaining his sight, he will be subject to more temptations.

GLOUCESTER

Stand aside, my masters. Bring him close to the king. His
highness would like to talk to him.

KING HENRY VI

Good man, tell us the details of this so that we may
celebrate the Lord in your name. Have you always been
blind, has your sight now been restored?

SIMPCOX

I was born blind, as it pleases your grace.

WIFE

Yes, he was, indeed.

SUFFOLK

Who's this woman?

WIFE

I'm his wife, your worship.

GLOUCESTER

If you had been his mother, you would have been in a better
position to say that he was blind from his birth.

KING HENRY VI

Where were you born?

SIMPCOX

At Berwick in the north, an't like your grace.

KING HENRY VI

95 Poor soul, God's goodness hath been great to thee:
Let never day nor night unhallow'd pass,
But still remember what the Lord hath done.

QUEEN MARGARET

Tell me, good fellow, camest thou here by chance,
Or of devotion, to this holy shrine?

SIMPCOX

100 God knows, of pure devotion; being call'd
A hundred times and oftener, in my sleep,
By good Saint Alban; who said, 'Simpcox, come,
Come, offer at my shrine, and I will help thee.'

WIFE

105 Most true, forsooth; and many time and oft
Myself have heard a voice to call him so.

CARDINAL

What, art thou lame?

SIMPCOX

Ay, God Almighty help me!

SUFFOLK

How camest thou so?

SIMPCOX

A fall off of a tree.

WIFE

110 A plum-tree, master.

GLOUCESTER

How long hast thou been blind?

SIMPCOX

Born so, master.

GLOUCESTER

What, and wouldst climb a tree?

SIMPCOX

But that in all my life, when I was a youth.

WIFE

115 Too true; and bought his climbing very dear.

GLOUCESTER

Mass, thou lovedst plums well, that wouldst
venture so.

SIMPCOX

Alas, good master, my wife desired some damsons,
And made me climb, with danger of my life.

GLOUCESTER


120 A subtle knave! But yet it shall not serve.
Let me see thine eyes: wink now: now open them:
In my opinion yet thou seest not well.

SIMPCOX

Yes, master, clear as day, I thank God and
Saint Alban.

SIMPCOX

At [Berwick](#) in the north, if your grace pleases.

 "Berwick" is a town on the border between Scotland and England.

KING HENRY VI

You are a poor soul. God's goodness has been great to you.
Let not a day or night pass without saying your prayers, but
remember what the Lord has done for you.

QUEEN MARGARET

Tell me, good man, did you come here by accident or
because of your devotion to this holy place?

SIMPCOX

God knows that I came here because of pure devotion. I was
called a hundred times and more, in my sleep by the good
Saint Alban. He said: "Simpcox, come, come, make an
offering at this holy place and I will help you."

WIFE

That's true, really. And I have heard a voice call him that
way many times.

CARDINAL

Are you crippled?

SIMPCOX

Yes, God Almighty help me!

SUFFOLK

How did it happen?

SIMPCOX

I fell off a tree.

WIFE

A plum-tree, master.

GLOUCESTER

How long have you been blind?

SIMPCOX

I was born that way, master.

GLOUCESTER

Then how could you have climbed a tree?

SIMPCOX

I've only done it that once time, when I was young.

WIFE

That's true! And the climbing has cost him dearly.

GLOUCESTER

God, you must really love plums, in order to do that.

SIMPCOX

Ah, good master, my wife wanted some of them and she
made me climb, even though it was dangerous for me.

GLOUCESTER

You are a crafty villain! But it won't do. Let me see your
eyes. Now wink. Now open then. I think that you can't see
well.

SIMPCOX

Yes I can, master. As clear as day. I thank God and Saint
Alban.

GLOUCESTER

125 Say'st thou me so? What colour is this cloak of?

SIMPCOX

Red, master; red as blood.

GLOUCESTER

Why, that's well said. What colour is my gown of?

SIMPCOX

Black, forsooth: coal-black as jet.

KING HENRY VI

Why, then, thou know'st what colour jet is of?

SUFFOLK

130 And yet, I think, jet did he never see.

GLOUCESTER

But cloaks and gowns, before this day, a many.

WIFE

Never, before this day, in all his life.

GLOUCESTER

Tell me, sirrah, what's my name?

SIMPCOX

Alas, master, I know not.

GLOUCESTER

135 What's his name?

SIMPCOX

I know not.

GLOUCESTER

Nor his?

SIMPCOX

No, indeed, master.

GLOUCESTER

What's thine own name?

SIMPCOX

140 Saunder Simpcox, an if it please you, master.

GLOUCESTER

145 Then, Saunder, sit there, the lyingest knave in Christendom. If thou hadst been born blind, thou mightest as well have known all our names as thus to name the several colours we do wear. Sight may distinguish of colours, but suddenly to nominate them all, it is impossible. My lords, Saint Alban here hath done a miracle; and would ye not think his cunning to be great, that could restore this cripple to his legs again?

SIMPCOX

150 O master, that you could!

GLOUCESTER

My masters of Saint Alban's, have you not beadles in your town, and things called whips?

MAYOR

Yes, my lord, if it please your grace.

GLOUCESTER

Do you say that to me? What color is this cloak?


SIMPCOX


Red, master. Red as blood.

GLOUCESTER

Well, that's correct. What color is my robe?

SIMPCOX

It's black. Coal-black as jet .

 "Jet" is a hard black form of coal that takes a brilliant polish and is used in jewelry and ornamentation.

KING HENRY VI

Well, how do you know what color jet is, then?

SUFFOLK

I don't think he's ever seen jet.

GLOUCESTER

But he has seen many cloaks and robes before today.

WIFE

Never before today, in all his life!

GLOUCESTER

Tell me sir, what's my name?

SIMPCOX

Ah, master, I don't know.

GLOUCESTER

What's his name?

SIMPCOX

I don't know.

GLOUCESTER

Or his?

SIMPCOX

No, indeed, master.

GLOUCESTER

What's your own name?

SIMPCOX

Saunder Simcox, if it pleases you, master.

GLOUCESTER

Then, Saunder, stay there, you villain who lies the most in the whole of the Christian world! If you have been born blind, you might as well have know all our names in the same way you name the several colors that we wear. Sight may distinguish between colors, but to suddenly name them all is impossible! My lords, Saint Alban here has done a miracle. Wouldn't you think that his skill is so great that he would restore this cripple his legs again?

SIMPCOX

Oh, master, if only you could!

GLOUCESTER

My masters of Saint Alban's, don't you have constables in your town and things called whips?

MAYOR

Yes, my lord, if it pleases your grace.

GLOUCESTER

Then send for one presently.

MAYOR

155 Sirrah, go fetch the beadle hither straight.

Exit an Attendant

GLOUCESTER

Now fetch me a stool hither by and by. Now, sirrah, if you mean to save yourself from whipping, leap me over this stool and run away.

SIMPCOX

160 Alas, master, I am not able to stand alone:
You go about to torture me in vain.

Enter a Beadle with whips

GLOUCESTER

Well, sir, we must have you find your legs. Sirrah beadle, whip him till he leap over that same stool.

BEADLE

165 I will, my lord. Come on, sirrah; off with your doublet quickly.

SIMPCOX

Alas, master, what shall I do? I am not able to stand.

After the Beadle hath hit him once, he leaps over the stool and runs away; and they follow and cry, 'A miracle!'

KING HENRY VI

O God, seest Thou this, and bearest so long?

QUEEN MARGARET

170 It made me laugh to see the villain run.

GLOUCESTER

Follow the knave; and take this drab away.

WIFE

Alas, sir, we did it for pure need.

GLOUCESTER

Let them be whipped through every market-town, till they come to Berwick, from whence they came.

175

Exeunt Wife, Beadle, Mayor, & c

CARDINAL

Duke Humphrey has done a miracle to-day.

SUFFOLK

True; made the lame to leap and fly away.

GLOUCESTER

But you have done more miracles than I;
You made in a day, my lord, whole towns to fly.

180

Enter BUCKINGHAM

KING HENRY VI

What tidings with our cousin Buckingham?

BUCKINGHAM

Such as my heart doth tremble to unfold.
A sort of naughty persons, lewdly bent,
Under the countenance and confederacy

185

GLOUCESTER

Then send for one immediately.

MAYOR

Sir, go get the constable straight away.

A servant exits.

GLOUCESTER

Now get me a stool immediately. Now, sir, if you want to save yourself from whipping, jump across this stool and run away.

SIMPCOX

Ah, but master, I am not able to stand unsupported. You are about to torture me for nothing.

A constable enters with whips.

GLOUCESTER

Well, sir, we must make you find your legs. Sir constable, whip him until he jumps over that stool there.

CONSTABLE

I will, my lord. Come on, sir, take off your jacket!

SIMPCOX

Ah, master, what shall I do? I am not able to stand.

After the constable has hit him once, he jumps over the stool and runs away. They follow and shout, "a miracle!"

KING HENRY VI

Oh, God, can you see this and can you endure it for so long?

QUEEN MARGARET

It made me laugh to see the villain run.

GLOUCESTER

Follow the villain and take this whore away.

WIFE

Ah, sir, we did it because we really needed the money.

GLOUCESTER

Let them be whipped through every market town, until they come back to Berwick, from where they came.

The Wife, Constable, Mayor and people from the town exit.

CARDINAL


Duke Humphrey has done a miracle today.

SUFFOLK

True, he made the crippled jump and run away.

GLOUCESTER

But you have done more miracles than I. You made whole towns run away in a day, my lord.

 Gloucester here refers to the "whole towns"; the French towns that were given away as part of Margaret's dowry.

BUCKINGHAM enters.

KING HENRY VI

What's the news, cousin Buckingham?

BUCKINGHAM

My heart trembles to reveal it. A gang of wicked people bent on evil, supported by and in collusion with Lady Eleanor, the protector's wife--the leader and head of this gang--have

Of Lady Eleanor, the protector's wife,
The ringleader and head of all this rout,
Have practised dangerously against your state,
Dealing with witches and with conjurers:
Whom we have apprehended in the fact;

190 Raising up wicked spirits from under ground,
Demanding of King Henry's life and death,
And other of your highness' privy-council;
As more at large your grace shall understand.

CARDINAL

And so, my lord protector, by this means
Your lady is forthcoming yet at London.
195 This news, I think, hath turn'd your weapon's edge;
'Tis like, my lord, you will not keep your hour.

GLOUCESTER

Ambitious churchman, leave to afflict my heart:
Sorrow and grief have vanquish'd all my powers;
200 And, vanquish'd as I am, I yield to thee,
Or to the meanest groom.

KING HENRY VI

O God, what mischiefs work the wicked ones,
Heaping confusion on their own heads thereby!

QUEEN MARGARET

Gloucester, see here the tainture of thy nest.
205 And look thyself be faultless, thou wert best.

GLOUCESTER

Madam, for myself, to heaven I do appeal,
How I have loved my king and commonweal:
And, for my wife, I know not how it stands;
Sorry I am to hear what I have heard:
210 Noble she is, but if she have forgot
Honour and virtue and conversed with such
As, like to pitch, defile nobility,
I banish her my bed and company
And give her as a prey to law and shame,
215 That hath dishonour'd Gloucester's honest name.

KING HENRY VI

Well, for this night we will repose us here:
To-morrow toward London back again,
To look into this business thoroughly
And call these foul offenders to their answers
220 And poise the cause in justice' equal scales,
Whose beam stands sure, whose rightful cause prevails.

Flourish. Exeunt

made a dangerous plot against you. They employed
witches and magicians, whom we have caught in the act,
raising wicked spirits from underground. They wanted to
know when King Henry would die, and others from your
highness' council, as your grace shall find out at length.

CARDINAL

And so, my lord protector, your lady is awaiting a trial in
London. This news has blunted the edge of your weapon, I
think. It seems like you won't come to your duel at the
appointed time.

GLOUCESTER

Ambitious churchman, stop torturing my heart. Sorrow and
grief have defeated all my powers and defeated as I am, I
surrender to you or to the humblest servant.

KING HENRY VI

Oh God, what mischief do the wicked ones do, so that they
pile up destruction on their heads by doing so!

QUEEN MARGARET

Gloucester, this corruption in your own family. Make sure
that you aren't guilty too.

GLOUCESTER

Madam, I turn to heaven to clear my name. I have loved my
king and the country so much. As for my wife, I don't know
how things stand; I am sorry for what I have heard, since
she is noble. But if she has forgotten about honor and virtue
and has been associated with the sort of company that,
like pitch ⁹, defiles nobility, I banish her from my bed and
company. I'll turn her over to the law to be punished and
shamed, because she has dishonored Gloucester's honest
name.

⁹ "Pitch" is a black, tar-like substance.

KING HENRY VI

Well, we will sleep here tonight. We'll head towards London
again tomorrow, to look into this business properly and
bring these criminals to trial. We'll put the case to justice,
whose scales are evenly balanced and who always finds out
what's right.

Trumpet. All exit.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter YORK, SALISBURY, and WARWICK

YORK

Now, my good Lords of Salisbury and Warwick,
Our simple supper ended, give me leave
In this close walk to satisfy myself,
In craving your opinion of my title,
5 Which is infallible, to England's crown.

SALISBURY

My lord, I long to hear it at full.

Shakescleare Translation

YORK, SALISBURY, and WARWICK enter.

YORK

Now that our simple dinner is over and we're alone in this
garden together, my good Lords of Salisbury and Warwick,
I'd like to know your opinion of my certain title to England's
crown.

SALISBURY

My lord, I long to hear more about your claim.

WARWICK

Sweet York, begin: and if thy claim be good,
The Nevils are thy subjects to command.

YORK

Then thus:

- 10 Edward the Third, my lords, had seven sons:
The first, Edward the Black Prince, Prince of Wales;
The second, William of Hatfield, and the third,
Lionel Duke of Clarence: next to whom
Was John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster;
15 The fifth was Edmund Langley, Duke of York;
The sixth was Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester;
William of Windsor was the seventh and last.
Edward the Black Prince died before his father
And left behind him Richard, his only son,
20 Who after Edward the Third's death reign'd as king;
Till Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster,
The eldest son and heir of John of Gaunt,
Crown'd by the name of Henry the Fourth,
Seized on the realm, deposed the rightful king,
25 Sent his poor queen to France, from whence she came,
And him to Pomfret; where, as all you know,
Harmless Richard was murder'd traitorously.

WARWICK

Father, the duke hath told the truth:
Thus got the house of Lancaster the crown.

YORK

- 30 Which now they hold by force and not by right;
For Richard, the first son's heir, being dead,
The issue of the next son should have reign'd.

SALISBURY

But William of Hatfield died without an heir.

YORK

- 35 The third son, Duke of Clarence, from whose line
I claimed the crown, had issue, Philippe, a daughter,
Who married Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March:
Edmund had issue, Roger Earl of March;
Roger had issue, Edmund, Anne and Eleanor.

SALISBURY

- 40 This Edmund, in the reign of Bolingbroke,
As I have read, laid claim unto the crown;
And, but for Owen Glendower, had been king,
Who kept him in captivity till he died.
But to the rest.

YORK

- 45 His eldest sister, Anne,
My mother, being heir unto the crown
Married Richard Earl of Cambridge; who was son
To Edmund Langley, Edward the Third's fifth son.
By her I claim the kingdom: she was heir
To Roger Earl of March, who was the son
50 Of Edmund Mortimer, who married Philippe,
Sole daughter unto Lionel Duke of Clarence:
So, if the issue of the elder son
Succeed before the younger, I am king.

WARWICK

- 55 What plain proceeding is more plain than this?
Henry doth claim the crown from John of Gaunt,
The fourth son; York claims it from the third.
Till Lionel's issue fails, his should not reign:
It fails not yet, but flourishes in thee
And in thy sons, fair slips of such a stock.
60 Then, father Salisbury, kneel we together;
And in this private plot be we the first
That shall salute our rightful sovereign
With honour of his birthright to the crown.

WARWICK

Sweet York, tell us. And if your claim is good, you can
command the whole of my family.

YORK

It goes like this: Edward the Third, my lords, had seven
sons. The first, Edward the Black Prince, Prince of Wales;
the second was William of Hatfield, and the third was Lionel
Duke of Clarence; next to whom was John of Gaunt, the
Duke of Lancaster. The fifth was Edmund Langley, Duke of
York; the sixth was Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of
Gloucester; William of Windsor was the seventh and last.
Edward the Black Prince died before his father and left
Richard the Second, his only son, behind him. Richard ruled
as king after Edward the Third's death, until Henry
Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster, the eldest son and heir of
John of Gaunt, crowned by the name of Henry the Fourth,
took over the country and deposed the rightful king. He
sent his poor queen to France, from where she came, and
sent Richard to Pomfret, where, as you all know, the
harmless Richard was murdered treacherously.

WARWICK

Father, the duke told the truth. That's how the house of
Lancaster got the crown.

YORK

Which now they hold by force and not by their right. Since
Richard, the first son's heir, is dead, the child of the next son
should have ruled.


SALISBURY


But William of Hatfield died without an heir.

YORK

The third son, Duke of Clarence, from whose line I have a
claim of the crown, had a child, Philippe, a daughter, who
married Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March. Edmund had a
child, Roger Earl of March. Roger had children: Edmund,
Anne and Eleanor.

SALISBURY

This Edmund made his case for the crown during the reign
of Bolingbroke, as I have read, and if it weren't for [Owen
Glendower](#) , he would have been king. Glendower kept
him in captivity until he died. But let's talk about the rest.

 *Owen Glendower was a Welsh
rebel leader who captured Edmund
Mortimer.*

YORK

His oldest sister, Anne--my mother--is an heir to the crown
and she married Richard Earl of Cambridge, who was son to
Edmund Langley, Edward the Third's fifth son. I claim the
kingdom by her right. She was heir to Roger Earl of March,
who was the son of Edmund Mortimer, who married
Philippe, the only daughter of Lionel Duke of Clarence. So, if
the child of the elder son succeeds before the younger, I am
king.

WARWICK

What plain line of descent is simpler than this? Henry
claims the crown from John of Gaunt, the fourth son. York
claims it from the third son. Until Lionel's child dies, he
should not rule. The line isn't dead, but lives in you and in
your sons, fair cuttings of such a tree. Then, father
Salisbury, let's kneel together. And on this secret ground,
let us be the first to acknowledge our rightful king with the
title he deserves by his birthright.

BOTH

Long live our sovereign Richard, England's king!

YORK

- 65 We thank you, lords. But I am not your king
Till I be crown'd and that my sword be stain'd
With heart-blood of the house of Lancaster;
And that's not suddenly to be perform'd,
But with advice and silent secrecy.
- 70 Do you as I do in these dangerous days:
Wink at the Duke of Suffolk's insolence,
At Beaufort's pride, at Somerset's ambition,
At Buckingham and all the crew of them,
Till they have snared the shepherd of the flock,
- 75 That virtuous prince, the good Duke Humphrey:
'Tis that they seek, and they in seeking that
Shall find their deaths, if York can prophesy.

SALISBURY

My lord, break we off; we know your mind at full.

WARWICK

- My heart assures me that the Earl of Warwick
80 Shall one day make the Duke of York a king.

YORK

And, Nevil, this I do assure myself:
Richard shall live to make the Earl of Warwick
The greatest man in England but the king.

Exeunt

BOTH

Long live our ruler, Richard, England's king!

YORK

We thank you, lords. But I am not your king until I am
crowned and my sword is stained with the blood of the
house of Lancaster. And that won't happen all of a sudden,
but after much plotting and secrecy. Ignore the Duke of
Suffolk's arrogance, like I have done, and Beaufort's pride,
Somerset's ambition, Buckingham and all of them, until
they have caught the shepherd of the group—that virtuous
nobleman, the good Duke Humphrey. That's what they're
trying to do. And in doing that, they'll destroy themselves, if
York can tell the future.

SALISBURY

My lord, let's end this talk. We know what you mean.

WARWICK

My heart tells me that the Earl of Warwick will one day
make the Duke of York a king.

YORK

And, I assure myself of this, Warwick: that Richard will live
to make the Earl of Warwick the greatest man in England
apart from the king.

All exit.

Act 2, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Sound trumpets. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, GLOUCESTER, YORK, SUFFOLK, and SALISBURY; the DUCHESS, MARGARET JOURDAIN, SOUTHWELL, HUME, and BOLINGBROKE, under guard

KING HENRY VI

- Stand forth, Dame Eleanor Cobham, Gloucester's wife:
In sight of God and us, your guilt is great:
Receive the sentence of the law for sins
Such as by God's book are adjudged to death.
- 5 You four, from hence to prison back again;
From thence unto the place of execution:
The witch in Smithfield shall be burn'd to ashes,
And you three shall be strangled on the gallows.
You, madam, for you are more nobly born,
- 10 Despoiled of your honour in your life,
Shall, after three days' open penance done,
Live in your country here in banishment,
With Sir John Stanley, in the Isle of Man.

DUCHESS

Welcome is banishment; welcome were my death.

GLOUCESTER

- 15 Eleanor, the law, thou see'st, hath judged thee:
I cannot justify whom the law condemns.

Exeunt DUCHESS and other prisoners, guarded


GLOUCESTER

- Mine eyes are full of tears, my heart of grief.
Ah, Humphrey, this dishonour in thine age
- 20 Will bring thy head with sorrow to the ground!

Shakescleare Translation

Trumpets sound. KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, GLOUCESTER, YORK, SUFFOLK, and SALISBURY enter with the DUCHESS, MARGARET JOURDAIN, SOUTHWELL, HUME, and BOLINGBROKE, under guard.

KING HENRY VI

Stand forward, Dame Eleanor Cobham, Gloucester's wife. In
sight of God and us, your guilt is great. Accept the sentence
of the law for sins that the Bible punishes with death. You
four will be sent back to prison again and from there to the
place of execution. The witch will be burned to ashes in
Smithfield , and you three will be hanged on the
gallows. *[To DUCHESS]* Madam, because you are more nobly
born, will be stripped of your honor in your life. After three
days of public suffering is done, you'll live in your country
here in banishment in the custody of Sir John Stanley, in
the Isle of Man.

DUCHESS

My banishment is welcome; I wish I were dead.


GLOUCESTER

Eleanor, you see that it was the law that has judged you. I
cannot excuse someone condemned by the law.

DUCHESS exits with the other prisoners, under guard.

GLOUCESTER

My eyes are full of tears, my heart full of grief. Ah,
Humphrey, this dishonor in your old age will bring your

 "Smithfield" is an area in the City of London and the customary place for the execution of heretics.

I beseech your majesty, give me leave to go;
Sorrow would solace and mine age would ease.

KING HENRY VI

Stay, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester: ere thou go,
Give up thy staff: Henry will to himself
25 Protector be; and God shall be my hope,
My stay, my guide and lantern to my feet:
And go in peace, Humphrey, no less beloved
Than when thou wert protector to thy King.

QUEEN MARGARET

I see no reason why a king of years
30 Should be to be protected like a child.
God and King Henry govern England's realm.
Give up your staff, sir, and the king his realm.

GLOUCESTER

My staff? Here, noble Henry, is my staff:
As willingly do I the same resign
35 As e'er thy father Henry made it mine;
And even as willingly at thy feet I leave it
As others would ambitiously receive it.
Farewell, good king: when I am dead and gone,
May honourable peace attend thy throne!

Exit

QUEEN MARGARET

Why, now is Henry king, and Margaret queen;
And Humphrey Duke of Gloucester scarce himself,
That bears so shrewd a maim; two pulls at once;
His lady banish'd, and a limb lopp'd off.
This staff of honour raught, there let it stand
45 Where it best fits to be, in Henry's hand.

SUFFOLK

Thus droops this lofty pine and hangs his sprays;
Thus Eleanor's pride dies in her youngest days.

YORK

Lords, let him go. Please it your majesty,
This is the day appointed for the combat;
50 And ready are the appellant and defendant,
The armourer and his man, to enter the lists,
So please your highness to behold the fight.

QUEEN MARGARET

Ay, good my lord; for purposely therefore
Left I the court, to see this quarrel tried.

KING HENRY VI

55 O God's name, see the lists and all things fit:
Here let them end it; and God defend the right!

YORK

I never saw a fellow worse bested,
Or more afraid to fight, than is the appellant,
60 The servant of this armourer, my lords.

Enter at one door, HORNER, the Armourer, and his Neighbours, drinking to him so much that he is drunk; and he enters with a drum before him and his staff with a sand-bag fastened to it; and at the other door PETER, his man, with a drum and sand-bag, and 'Prentices drinking to him

FIRST NEIGHBOUR

Here, neighbour Horner, I drink to you in a cup of sack: and fear not, neighbour, you shall do well enough.

head to the ground with sorrow! I beg your majesty, let me go. My sorrow and old age needs comfort.

KING HENRY VI

Wait, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. Before you go, give up your staff of office. Henry will be a Protector to himself, and God will be my hope, my support, my guide, and light to my feet. And go in peace, Humphrey, not less beloved than when you were Protector to your king.

QUEEN MARGARET

I don't see why an adult king should be protected like a child. God and King Henry rule England's kingdom. Give up your staff, sir and give up the kingdom to the king.

GLOUCESTER

My staff? [*Hands over the staff of office*] Here, noble Henry, is my staff. I give it up as willingly as your father Henry gave it to me, and I leave it at your feet as willingly as others would ambitiously take it. Goodbye, good king. When I am dead and gone, may you reign in honorable peace!

GLOUCESTER exits.

QUEEN MARGARET

Now Henry is king and Margaret is queen and Humphrey Duke of Gloucester is no longer himself, since he suffers such a serious injury. Two wounds at once: his lady is banished and his limb is cut off. Since we've taken his staff, let's leave it where it should be, in Henry's hand.

SUFFOLK

And so drops this majestic tree and hangs his branches. And so Eleanor's pride dies in its prime.

YORK

Lords, forget him. If it pleases your majesty, this is the day agreed for the duel. The challenger and defendant, the armourer and his man, are ready to enter the designated fighting area, if your highness would like to see the fight.

QUEEN MARGARET

Yes, that's all right, my lord. Since I have left the court specifically so I can see this fight.

KING HENRY VI

Oh, God's name, let's prepare the fighting area and everything else. Let them end it here and God defend whoever's in the right!

YORK

My lords, I've never seen a man worse prepared or more afraid to fight than this challenger, the servant of the armourer.

HORNER, the Armourer, enters from one door with his neighbors, giving him so much to drink that he is drunk. He enters with a drum in front of him and his staff with a sand-bag fastened to it. PETER, his servant, enters from the other door with a drummer and sand-bag, with apprentices drinking to him.

FIRST NEIGHBOUR

Here, neighbor Horner! I drink to you with a cup of white wine. Don't be afraid, neighbor. You'll do all right.

SECOND NEIGHBOUR

And here, neighbour, here's a cup of charneco.

THIRD NEIGHBOUR

65 And here's a pot of good double beer, neighbour: drink, and fear not your man.

HORNER

Let it come, i' faith, and I'll pledge you all; and a fig for Peter!

FIRST 'PRENTICE

Here, Peter, I drink to thee: and be not afraid.

SECOND 'PRENTICE

70 Be merry, Peter, and fear not thy master: fight for credit of the 'prentices.

PETER

I thank you all: drink, and pray for me, I pray you; for I think I have taken my last draught in this world. Here, Robin, an if I die, I give thee
75 my apron: and, Will, thou shalt have my hammer: and here, Tom, take all the money that I have. O Lord bless me! I pray God! For I am never able to deal with my master, he hath learnt me so much fence already.

SALISBURY

80 Come, leave your drinking, and fall to blows. Sirrah, what's thy name?

PETER

Peter, forsooth.

SALISBURY

Peter! What more?

PETER

Thump.

SALISBURY

85 Thump! Then see thou thump thy master well.

HORNER

Masters, I am come hither, as it were, upon my man's instigation, to prove him a knave and myself an honest man: and touching the Duke of York, I will take my death, I never meant him any ill, nor the
90 king, nor the queen: and therefore, Peter, have at thee with a downright blow!

YORK

Dispatch: this knave's tongue begins to double. Sound, trumpets, alarum to the combatants!

Alarum. They fight, and PETER strikes him down

HORNER

95 Hold, Peter, hold! I confess, I confess treason.

Dies

YORK

Take away his weapon. Fellow, thank God, and the good wine in thy master's way.

SECOND NEIGHBOUR

And here, neighbor, here's a cup of a port wine.

THIRD NEIGHBOUR

And here's a pot of good very strong beer, neighbor. Drink and don't be afraid.

HORNER

Let it come! I toast you all, and a fig ² for Peter!

FIRST 'PRENTICE

Here, Peter. I drink to you! And don't be afraid.

SECOND 'PRENTICE

Be happy, Peter and do not be afraid of your master. Fight for the apprentices.

PETER

Thank you all! Drink and pray for me and I'll pray for you. I think I have drunk my last drink in this world. Here, Robin. If I die, I give you my apron. And Will, you shall have my hammer. And here, Tom, take all the money I have. Oh, Lord bless me! I am praying to God! Because I'll never be able to defeat my master, since he taught me everything I know about fencing.

SALISBURY

Come, stop your drinking and start fighting. Sir, what's your name?

PETER

Peter, please.

SALISBURY

Peter, and what else!?

PETER

Thump.

SALISBURY

Thump! Then hopefully you hit your master well.

HORNER

Masters, I am here, as it were, because my servant provoked me to prove that he's a villain and I'm an honest man. And concerning the Duke of York, I stake my life on it—I never meant to do him any wrong, nor the king, nor the queen. And so, Peter, here I come with my first blow!

YORK

Get on with it. This villain's tongue is starting to annoy us. Sound, trumpets, call the fighters to arms!

Sound of trumpets. PETER and HORNER fight. PETER strikes him down.

HORNER

Stop, Peter, stop! I confess, I confess treason.

HORNER dies.

YORK

Take away his weapon.

[To PETER] You, thank God and the good wine that prevented your master from fighting well.

² "Fig" is from old Spanish "figo"; an exclamation of contempt, often accompanied by an obscene gesture that consisted of thrusting the thumb between the index and middle fingers.

PETER

O God, have I overcome mine enemy in this presence?
100 O Peter, thou hast prevailed in right!

KING HENRY VI

Go, take hence that traitor from our sight;
For his death we do perceive his guilt:
And God in justice hath revealed to us
The truth and innocence of this poor fellow,
105 Which he had thought to have murder'd wrongfully.
Come, fellow, follow us for thy reward.

Sound a flourish. Exeunt

PETER

Oh God, have I defeated my enemy in the presence of the king? Oh, Peter, you have won rightfully!

KING HENRY VI

Go, take the traitor from our sight. His death proves that he was guilty, and God in justice has revealed to us the truth and innocence of this poor man, who would have been murdered wrongfully. Come, man, follow us for your reward.

A celebratory trumpet sounds. All exit.

Act 2, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter GLOUCESTER and his Servingmen, in mourning cloaks

GLOUCESTER

Thus sometimes hath the brightest day a cloud;
And after summer evermore succeeds
Barren winter, with his wrathful nipping cold:
So cares and joys abound, as seasons fleet.
5 Sirs, what's o'clock?

SERVANTS

Ten, my lord.

GLOUCESTER

Ten is the hour that was appointed me
To watch the coming of my punish'd duchess:
Uneath may she endure the flinty streets,
10 To tread them with her tender-feeling feet.
Sweet Nell, ill can thy noble mind abrook
The abject people gazing on thy face,
With envious looks, laughing at thy shame,
That erst did follow thy proud chariot-wheels
15 When thou didst ride in triumph through the streets.
But, soft! I think she comes; and I'll prepare
My tear-stain'd eyes to see her miseries.

Enter the DUCHESS in a white sheet, and a taper burning in her hand; with STANLEY, the Sheriff, and Officers

SERVANT

So please your grace, we'll take her from the sheriff.

GLOUCESTER

No, stir not, for your lives; let her pass by.

DUCHESS

20 Come you, my lord, to see my open shame?
Now thou dost penance too. Look how they gaze!
See how the giddy multitude do point,
And nod their heads, and throw their eyes on thee!
Ah, Gloucester, hide thee from their hateful looks,
25 And, in thy closet pent up, rue my shame,
And ban thine enemies, both mine and thine!

GLOUCESTER

Be patient, gentle Nell; forget this grief.

Shakescleare Translation

GLOUCESTER and his servants enter in mourning clothes.

GLOUCESTER

And so just like a cloud appears even on the brightest day, and bleak winter always follows after summer with its angry biting coldness, so problems and joys come and go like the seasons. Sir, what's the time?

SERVANTS

It's ten o'clock, my lord.

GLOUCESTER

I was told to watch the arrival of my punished duchess at ten o'clock. It won't be easy for her to walk on the stony streets with her soft, delicate feet. Sweet Nell, your noble mind won't be able to endure the lowly people staring at your face with malicious looks, laughing at your shame. Before, those people followed your luxurious carriage when you rode triumphantly through the streets. But, quiet! I think she's coming. And I'll prepare my teary eyes to see her suffering.

The DUCHESS enters in a white cloth dress, carrying a candle burning in her hand; with STANLEY, the sheriff, and officers.

SERVANT

If your grace wants us to, we'll take her from the sheriff.

GLOUCESTER

No, stop! Let her pass by.

DUCHESS

Are you here to see my public shame, my husband? You're also punishing yourself. Look at how they're staring! See how the excited crowd point and nod their heads and look at you! Ah, Gloucester, hide yourself from their hateful looks and mourn my shame in your private rooms. And curse your enemies, both mine and yours!

GLOUCESTER

Be patient, gentle Nell and forget about this sorrow.

DUCHESS

Ah, Gloucester, teach me to forget myself!
 For whilst I think I am thy married wife
 30 And thou a prince, protector of this land,
 Methinks I should not thus be led along,
 Mail'd up in shame, with papers on my back,
 And followed with a rabble that rejoice
 To see my tears and hear my deep-fet groans.
 35 The ruthless flint doth cut my tender feet,
 And when I start, the envious people laugh
 And bid me be advised how I tread.
 Ah, Humphrey, can I bear this shameful yoke?
 Trow'st thou that e'er I'll look upon the world,
 40 Or count them happy that enjoy the sun?
 No; dark shall be my light and night my day;
 To think upon my pomp shall be my hell.
 Sometime I'll say, I am Duke Humphrey's wife,
 And he a prince and ruler of the land:
 45 Yet so he ruled and such a prince he was
 As he stood by whilst I, his forlorn duchess,
 Was made a wonder and a pointing-stock
 To every idle rascal follower.
 But be thou mild and blush not at my shame,
 50 Nor stir at nothing till the axe of death
 Hang over thee, as, sure, it shortly will;
 For Suffolk, he that can do all in all
 With her that hateth thee and hates us all,
 And York and impious Beaufort, that false priest,
 55 Have all limed bushes to betray thy wings,
 And, fly thou how thou canst, they'll tangle thee:
 But fear not thou, until thy foot be snared,
 Nor never seek prevention of thy foes.

GLOUCESTER

Ah, Nell, forbear! Thou aimest all awry;
 60 I must offend before I be attained;
 And had I twenty times so many foes,
 And each of them had twenty times their power,
 All these could not procure me any scathe,
 So long as I am loyal, true and crimeless.
 65 Wouldst have me rescue thee from this reproach?
 Why, yet thy scandal were not wiped away
 But I in danger for the breach of law.
 Thy greatest help is quiet, gentle Nell:
 I pray thee, sort thy heart to patience;
 70 These few days' wonder will be quickly worn.

Enter a Herald

HERALD

I summon your grace to his majesty's parliament,
 Holden at Bury the first of this next month.

GLOUCESTER

And my consent ne'er ask'd herein before!
 This is close dealing. Well, I will be there.
 75

Exit Herald

GLOUCESTER

My Nell, I take my leave: and, master sheriff,
 Let not her penance exceed the king's commission.

SHERIFF

An't please your grace, here my commission stays,
 80 And Sir John Stanley is appointed now
 To take her with him to the Isle of Man.


GLOUCESTER


Must you, Sir John, protect my lady here?

STANLEY

So am I given in charge, may't please your grace.

DUCHESS

Ah, Gloucester, teach me how to forget myself! I think that
 because I am your wife and you are a nobleman, protector
 of this land, I shouldn't be handled like this, wrapped up in
 shame, with papers  on my back, and followed by a
 crowd that is happy to see my tears and hear my sad
 groans. The merciless stone cuts my delicate feet and when
 I flinch in pain, the jealous peasants laugh and tell me to be
 careful how I walk. Ah, Humphrey, can I bear this shameful
 burden? Do you think that I'll ever look on the world again,
 or say that those who enjoy the sun are the happy ones?
 No, dark will be my light and night my day. Thinking about
 my past splendor be my hell. Sometimes I'll say that I am
 Duke Humphrey's wife, and that he is a nobleman and ruler
 of the land. Yet even such a ruler and nobleman as he was,
 he stood by while I--his forsaken duchess--was made a
 spectacle and an object of ridicule to every foolish low-born
 man. But you should be calm and not blush at my shame,
 and don't let anything bother you until your life is
 threatened. I am sure that it shortly will be, because Suffolk
 can do everything he wants along with Margaret who hates
 you and hates us all. And York and wicked Beaufort, that
 false priest, have all laid out traps for you. You should fly as
 best as you may, or else they'll catch you. But don't be
 afraid until your foot is in the trap, and don't expect that
 you'll be able to stop your enemies.


 The "papers" on Eleanor's back would have been verses that the wrongdoers undertaking public penance were required to wear. They listed their crimes.


GLOUCESTER

Ah, Nell, let it go! You guess it all wrong. I must commit a
 crime before I can be convicted of treason. And if I had
 twenty times as many enemies and each of them had
 twenty times more power, none of them could do me any
 harm, as long as I am loyal, true and innocent of any crime.
 Do you want me to rescue you from your shame? Your
 disgrace would not be wiped away, but I would immediately
 be in danger for breaking the law. The best way you can help
 yourself, gentle Nell, is by being calm. I ask you, be patient
 so that this passing spectacle will be quickly forgotten.

A messenger enters.

HERALD

I am sent to summon your grace to his majesty's
 parliament, which is to be held at Bury  on the first day of
 next month.

 "Bury" was Bury St Edmunds, a town in Suffolk.

GLOUCESTER

And I wasn't asked to give my agreement! This is some
 secretive business. Well, I will be there.

The messenger exits.

GLOUCESTER

My Nell, I have to go. Master sheriff, don't let her public
 shame be longer than the king's order said.

SHERIFF

As you like, your grace. It's over now. And Sir John Stanley is
 appointed to take her with him to the Isle of Man.

GLOUCESTER

Do you have to take custody of my lady here, Sir John?

STANLEY

Yes, I was given that order, if it pleases your grace.

GLOUCESTER

Entreat her not the worse in that I pray
 85 You use her well: the world may laugh again;
 And I may live to do you kindness if
 You do it her: and so, Sir John, farewell!

DUCHESS

What, gone, my lord, and bid me not farewell!

GLOUCESTER

Witness my tears, I cannot stay to speak.
 90

Exeunt GLOUCESTER and Servingmen

DUCHESS

Art thou gone too? All comfort go with thee!
 For none abides with me: my joy is death;
 Death, at whose name I oft have been afraid,
 Because I wish'd this world's eternity.
 95 Stanley, I prithee, go, and take me hence;
 I care not whither, for I beg no favour,
 Only convey me where thou art commanded.

STANLEY

Why, madam, that is to the Isle of Man;
 There to be used according to your state.

DUCHESS

100 That's bad enough, for I am but reproach:
 And shall I then be used reproachfully?

STANLEY

Like to a duchess, and Duke Humphrey's lady;
 According to that state you shall be used.

DUCHESS

105 Sheriff, farewell, and better than I fare,
 Although thou hast been conduct of my shame.

SHERIFF

It is my office; and, madam, pardon me.

DUCHESS

Ay, ay, farewell; thy office is discharged.
 Come, Stanley, shall we go?

STANLEY

110 Madam, your penance done, throw off this sheet,
 And go we to attire you for our journey.

DUCHESS

My shame will not be shifted with my sheet:
 No, it will hang upon my richest robes
 And show itself, attire me how I can.
 Go, lead the way; I long to see my prison.

Exeunt

GLOUCESTER

Don't treat her badly on my account, please. Treat her well.
 My fortunes may turn, and I may live to be kind to you if you
 are to her. And so, Sir John, goodbye!

DUCHESS

My husband is leaving without saying goodbye?

GLOUCESTER

Look at my tears. I can't stay here to speak without crying.

GLOUCESTER exits with servants.

DUCHESS

Are you gone as well? All comfort goes away with you! For
 no one stays with me. My joy is death--death, whose name I
 was often afraid of, because I wished for eternal enjoyment
 of this world. Stanley, please, go and take me from here. I
 don't care where, because I am not asking for a favor. Just
 take me where you are told to do so.

STANLEY

Madam, it's to the Isle of Man. There you'll be treated
 according to your rank.

DUCHESS

That's bad enough, because I am disgrace itself. And shall I
 then be treated disgracefully?

STANLEY

Like a duchess, and Duke Humphrey's wife--you will be
 treated according to that rank.

DUCHESS

Sheriff, goodbye. I hope you'll do better than I, although it
 was you who conducted my shame.

SHERIFF

It is my job, madam, and I am sorry.

DUCHESS

Yes, yes, goodbye! Your job has been carried out. Come,
 Stanley, shall we go?

STANLEY

Madam, your punishment is done. Throw away your
 clothing and we'll go dress you for your journey.

DUCHESS

My shame won't be removed with this clothing. No, it will
 hang on my richest dresses and show itself, however you
 dress me. Go, lead the way. I want to see my prison.

All exit.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Sound a sennet. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, CARDINAL, SUFFOLK, YORK, BUCKINGHAM, SALISBURY and WARWICK to the Parliament

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet sounds in the Parliament. KING HENRY VI enters with QUEEN MARGARET, CARDINAL, SUFFOLK, YORK, BUCKINGHAM, SALISBURY and WARWICK.

KING HENRY VI

I muse my Lord of Gloucester is not come:
'Tis not his wont to be the hindmost man,
Whate'er occasion keeps him from us now.

QUEEN MARGARET

Can you not see? Or will ye not observe
5 The strangeness of his alter'd countenance?
With what a majesty he bears himself,
How insolent of late he is become,
How proud, how peremptory, and unlike himself?
We know the time since he was mild and affable,
10 And if we did but glance a far-off look,
Immediately he was upon his knee,
That all the court admired him for submission:
But meet him now, and, be it in the morn,
When every one will give the time of day,
15 He knits his brow and shows an angry eye,
And passeth by with stiff unbowed knee,
Disdaining duty that to us belongs.
Small curs are not regarded when they grin;
But great men tremble when the lion roars;
20 And Humphrey is no little man in England.
First note that he is near you in descent,
And should you fall, he as the next will mount.
Me seemeth then it is no policy,
Respecting what a rancorous mind he bears
25 And his advantage following your decease,
That he should come about your royal person
Or be admitted to your highness' council.
By flattery hath he won the commons' hearts,
And when he please to make commotion,
30 'Tis to be fear'd they all will follow him.
Now 'tis the spring, and weeds are shallow-rooted;
Suffer them now, and they'll o'ergrow the garden
And choke the herbs for want of husbandry.
The reverent care I bear unto my lord
35 Made me collect these dangers in the duke.
If it be fond, call it a woman's fear;
Which fear if better reasons can supplant,
I will subscribe and say I wrong'd the duke.
My Lord of Suffolk, Buckingham, and York,
40 Reprove my allegation, if you can;
Or else conclude my words effectual.

SUFFOLK

Well hath your highness seen into this duke;
And, had I first been put to speak my mind,
I think I should have told your grace's tale.
45 The duchess, by his subornation,
Upon my life, began her devilish practises:
Or, if he were not privy to those faults,
Yet, by reputing of his high descent,
As next the king he was successive heir,
50 And such high vaunts of his nobility,
Did instigate the bedlam brain-sick duchess
By wicked means to frame our sovereign's fall.
Smooth runs the water where the brook is deep;
And in his simple show he harbours treason.
55 The fox barks not when he would steal the lamb.
No, no, my sovereign; Gloucester is a man
Unsounded yet and full of deep deceit.

CARDINAL

Did he not, contrary to form of law,
Devise strange deaths for small offences done?

YORK

60 And did he not, in his protectorship,
Levy great sums of money through the realm
For soldiers' pay in France, and never sent it?
By means whereof the towns each day revolted.


KING HENRY VI

I wonder why my Lord Gloucester hasn't come. It's not like
him to be the last one to arrive. I wonder what's
keeping him.

QUEEN MARGARET

Can't you see? Or will you not see how strangely he's
behaving? How he walks like a king, how arrogant he's
become lately, how proud, how bossy he is now--unlike he
how he was before? We remember the time when he was
mild and kind, and if we only looked at him unkindly once,
he was on his knee immediately. All the court admired his
humility. But if you met him now in the morning, when
everyone usually greets one another, he frowns and looks
at you angrily and walks by you, without bending his knee
as he used to. He doesn't show us the respect we deserve.
Small dogs are not noticed when they show their teeth, but
great men are afraid when the lion roars. And Humphrey is
not a little man in England. Notice that he's next in line to
the throne, and if you fall, he will rise. It seems imprudent
to me, considering how bitter he is and that he stands to
gain from anything bad happening to you, that you let him
come and see you in person and sit on your highness'
council. He won the people's hearts by flattering them, and
if he wants to start a rebellion, I'm afraid they'll all join him.
Now it's the spring, and the weeds are easily pulled up. But
if you let them grow, they'll cover the whole garden and
choke the plants, for lack of good gardening. My love and
concern for you, my husband, makes me point out that the
duke is dangerous. If you think it's foolish, call it a woman's
fear. If better logic can prove that I was wrong to be afraid, I
will give in and say that I was wrong about the duke. My
Lords of Suffolk, Buckingham, and York, disprove my
accusation, if you can, or otherwise say that my words are
true.

SUFFOLK


Your highness is right to notice these things about the duke.
And if the king had asked me first to say what I think, I
would have said the same. The duchess, encouraged by
him, plotted to murder me. Even if he isn't aware of those
faults, by boasting of his nobility and high position as heir
to the king, he provoked the insane and foolish duchess to
plot the death of our king with her wicked ways. The water
flows smoothly when the river is deep , and in his
innocent appearance he is hiding his treason. The fox
doesn't bark when it's about to steal the lamb. No, no, my
king, you don't know what Gloucester is capable of; he's full
of deceit.

CARDINAL

Didn't he condemn some people to death for petty crimes,
going outside the law?

YORK

And didn't he, during his protectorship, raise taxes
throughout the country to pay our soldiers in France, but
never sent it there? And the towns rose up in rebellion as a
result.

 "Smooth runs the water where the brook is deep": towards the end of his speech, Suffolk uses the metaphor of the deep river to show that Gloucester has hidden his deceit deep because he is so trusted by the king and has such a strong position that no one would be suspicious of him at the height of his power. In the last line, Suffolk describes Gloucester as "Unsounded yet and full of deep deceit", which evokes the image of unexplored depths of the river/sea, implying the unknown danger hiding there.

BUCKINGHAM

Tut, these are petty faults to faults unknown.
65 Which time will bring to light in smooth
Duke Humphrey.

KING HENRY VI

My lords, at once: the care you have of us,
To mow down thorns that would annoy our foot,
Is worthy praise: but, shall I speak my conscience,
70 Our kinsman Gloucester is as innocent
From meaning treason to our royal person
As is the sucking lamb or harmless dove:
The duke is virtuous, mild and too well given
To dream on evil or to work my downfall.

QUEEN MARGARET

75 Ah, what's more dangerous than this fond affiance!
Seems he a dove? His feathers are but borrowed,
For he's disposed as the hateful raven:
Is he a lamb? His skin is surely lent him,
For he's inclined as is the ravenous wolf.
80 Who cannot steal a shape that means deceit?
Take heed, my lord; the welfare of us all
Hangs on the cutting short that fraudulent man.

Enter SOMERSET

SOMERSET

All health unto my gracious sovereign!

KING HENRY VI

Welcome, Lord Somerset. What news from France?

SOMERSET

85 That all your interest in those territories
Is utterly bereft you; all is lost.

KING HENRY VI

Cold news, Lord Somerset: but God's will be done!

YORK

[Aside] Cold news for me; for I had hope of France
As firmly as I hope for fertile England.
90 Thus are my blossoms blasted in the bud
And caterpillars eat my leaves away;
But I will remedy this gear ere long,
Or sell my title for a glorious grave.

Enter GLOUCESTER

GLOUCESTER

All happiness unto my lord the king!
95 Pardon, my liege, that I have stay'd so long.

SUFFOLK

Nay, Gloucester, know that thou art come too soon,
Unless thou wert more loyal than thou art:
I do arrest thee of high treason here.

GLOUCESTER

Well, Suffolk, thou shalt not see me blush
100 Nor change my countenance for this arrest:
A heart unspotted is not easily daunted.
The purest spring is not so free from mud
As I am clear from treason to my sovereign:
Who can accuse me? Wherein am I guilty?

YORK

105 'Tis thought, my lord, that you took bribes from France,
And, being protector, stayed the soldiers' pay;
By means whereof his highness hath lost France.

BUCKINGHAM

Oh please, these are only small crimes compared to the
crimes we don't now about. But time will bring those to
light, to show the truth about the apparently amiable Duke
Humphrey.

KING HENRY VI

My lords, once and for all: we appreciate your concern and
eagerness to cut down thorns that would injure our feet.
But I'll say what I think. Our uncle Gloucester is as innocent
of treasonous behavior to the crown as the sucking lamb or
the harmless dove. The duke is virtuous, kind, and too loyal
to dream of doing evil or to plan my downfall.

QUEEN MARGARET

Ah, what's more dangerous than this misguided trust? Does
he seem like a dove? His feathers are only borrowed, then,
because he's a hateful raven ². Is he a lamb? Then surely
he's borrowed another skin, because he's a hungry wolf ³.
Who can't put on a disguise in order to deceive? Be careful,
my lord; the well-being of us all depends on the cutting ⁴
short of that treacherous man.

² The raven is a symbolic bad omen.

³ The proverbial wolf would wear sheep's clothing as a disguise.

⁴ Margaret's

SOMERSET enters.

SOMERSET

I wish all health to my gracious king!

KING HENRY VI

Welcome, Lord Somerset. What's the news from France?

SOMERSET

That you have lost all your legal claim in those territories.

KING HENRY VI

Sad news, Lord Somerset. But God's will be done!

YORK

[To himself] This news isn't good for me either, since I had
hoped to rule France as I hope to rule England. My flowers
are torn apart as buds and caterpillars eat my leaves away.
But I will fix this situation before it's too late, or sell my title
for a glorious grave.

GLOUCESTER enters.

GLOUCESTER

Happiness to my lord the king! I am sorry, my lord, that I
have been absent for so long.

SUFFOLK

No, Gloucester, you have come too soon, unless you were
more loyal than you are. I arrest you for high treason here.

GLOUCESTER

Well, Suffolk, you won't see me blush nor change my
expression in response to this arrest. A heart as free of
crime as mine is not easily frightened. The purest spring is
not so free from mud as I am clear from treason to my king.
Who can accuse me? What am I guilty of?

YORK

It's thought, my lord, that you took bribes from France, and
as protector withheld the soldiers' pay, and due to that his
highness has lost France.

GLOUCESTER

Is it but thought so? What are they that think it?
I never robb'd the soldiers of their pay,
110 Nor ever had one penny bribe from France.
So help me God, as I have watch'd the night,
Ay, night by night, in studying good for England,
That do it that e'er I wrested from the king,
Or any groat I hoarded to my use,
115 Be brought against me at my trial-day!
No; many a pound of mine own proper store,
Because I would not tax the needy commons,
Have I disbursed to the garrisons,
And never ask'd for restitution.

CARDINAL

120 It serves you well, my lord, to say so much.

GLOUCESTER

I say no more than truth, so help me God!

YORK

In your protectorship you did devise
Strange tortures for offenders never heard of,
That England was defamed by tyranny.

GLOUCESTER

125 Why, 'tis well known that, whiles I was
protector,
Pity was all the fault that was in me;
For I should melt at an offender's tears,
And lowly words were ransom for their fault.
130 Unless it were a bloody murderer,
Or foul felonious thief that fleeced poor passengers,
I never gave them condign punishment:
Murder indeed, that bloody sin, I tortured
Above the felon or what trespass else.

SUFFOLK

135 My lord, these faults are easy, quickly answered:
But mightier crimes are laid unto your charge,
Whereof you cannot easily purge yourself.
I do arrest you in his highness' name;
And here commit you to my lord cardinal
140 To keep, until your further time of trial.

KING HENRY VI

My lord of Gloucester, 'tis my special hope
That you will clear yourself from all suspect:
My conscience tells me you are innocent.

GLOUCESTER

Ah, gracious lord, these days are dangerous:
145 Virtue is choked with foul ambition
And charity chased hence by rancour's hand;
Foul subornation is predominant
And equity exiled your highness' land.
I know their complot is to have my life,
150 And if my death might make this island happy,
And prove the period of their tyranny,
I would expend it with all willingness:
But mine is made the prologue to their play;
For thousands more, that yet suspect no peril,
155 Will not conclude their plotted tragedy.
Beaufort's red sparkling eyes blab his heart's malice,
And Suffolk's cloudy brow his stormy hate;
Sharp Buckingham unburthens with his tongue
The envious load that lies upon his heart;
160 And dogged York, that reaches at the moon,
Whose overweening arm I have pluck'd back,
By false accuse doth level at my life:
And you, my sovereign lady, with the rest,
Causeless have laid disgraces on my head,
165 And with your best endeavour have stirr'd up
My liefest liege to be mine enemy:

GLOUCESTER

Is it only *thought* that I did this? Who *thinks* it then? I never
robbed the soldiers of their pay, nor have I ever taken one
penny in bribes from France. So God help me, I've stayed
awake night by night, thinking how I can do good for
England. Let that coin that I got unfairly from the king, or
any other coin that I have taken for my own use, be brought
to court on the day of my trial! No, I have paid out many
pounds from my own personal wealth to the army, because
I didn't want to tax the needy poor. And I've never asked for
compensation.

CARDINAL

It serves you well, my lord, to say as much.

GLOUCESTER

I say no more than truth, so God help me!

YORK

You came up with illegal tortures that were never heard of
before for criminals during your protectorship, so that
England became infamous for tyranny.

GLOUCESTER

It's well known that while I was protector, my only fault was
pity and that I would be weakened by a criminal's tears,
thinking that humble words of penance were payment
enough for their crime. Unless it were a bloody murderer, or
a wicked thief that robbed poor travelers, I never gave them
appropriate punishment. Although indeed I did punish
murder, that bloody sin, even more severely than other
offences.

SUFFOLK

My lord, these accusations are small and they can be
quickly answered. But there are bigger crimes that you are
accused of, and you can't excuse yourself from those so
easily. I arrest you in his highness' name, and make the lord
cardinal your jailer until your trial.

KING HENRY VI

My lord Gloucester, I do hope that you will clear yourself
from all this suspicion. My conscience tells me you are
innocent.

GLOUCESTER

Ah, gracious lord, these are dangerous days. Virtue is
choked by evil ambition and charity is pursued by jealousy.
Filthy bribery is common practice and justice is exiled from
your highness' land. I know their plot is to take my life, and
if my death can make this island happy, and mean the end
of their tyranny, I would pay the price of my death willingly.
But my death would only be a prologue to their play, since
thousands more, that don't expect it yet, won't put an end
to this tragedy. Beaufort's red sparkling eyes reveal the evil
of his heart, and Suffolk's frowns show his hate; merciless
Buckingham reveals the malice he feels in his heart with his
sharp words; and stubborn York, that reaches for the moon,
whose overreaching arm I have pulled back, wants to kill
me with these false accusations. And you, my queen, have
joined with them to accuse me of dishonorable behavior for
no reason, and have done your best to turn my dearest king
against me. And all of you have put your heads together--I
have noticed your secret meetings--to end my guiltless life.
I know I won't lack false witnesses to condemn me, nor an
abundance of supposed "treasons" to make me look guilty.
The ancient proverb fits well here: "It is easy to find a stick
to beat a dog."

Ay, all you have laid your heads together--
Myself had notice of your conventicles--
And all to make away my guiltless life.

170 I shall not want false witness to condemn me,
Nor store of treasons to augment my guilt;
The ancient proverb will be well effected:
'A staff is quickly found to beat a dog.'

CARDINAL

My liege, his railing is intolerable:

175 If those that care to keep your royal person
From treason's secret knife and traitors' rage
Be thus upbraided, chid and rated at,
And the offender granted scope of speech,
'Twill make them cool in zeal unto your grace.

SUFFOLK

180 Hath he not twit our sovereign lady here
With ignominious words, though clerklly couch'd,
As if she had suborned some to swear
False allegations to o'erthrow his state?

QUEEN MARGARET

But I can give the loser leave to chide.

GLOUCESTER

185 Far truer spoke than meant: I lose, indeed;
Beshrew the winners, for they play'd me false!
And well such losers may have leave to speak.

BUCKINGHAM

He'll wrest the sense and hold us here all day:
Lord cardinal, he is your prisoner.

CARDINAL

190 Sirs, take away the duke, and guard him sure.

GLOUCESTER

Ah! Thus King Henry throws away his crutch
Before his legs be firm to bear his body.
Thus is the shepherd beaten from thy side,
And wolves are gnarling who shall gnaw thee first.
195 Ah, that my fear were false! Ah, that it were!
For, good King Henry, thy decay I fear.

Exit, guarded

KING HENRY VI

My lords, what to your wisdoms seemeth best,
Do or undo, as if ourself were here.

QUEEN MARGARET

What, will your highness leave the parliament?

KING HENRY VI

Ay, Margaret; my heart is drown'd with grief,
Whose flood begins to flow within mine eyes,
My body round engirt with misery,
For what's more miserable than discontent?
Ah, uncle Humphrey! In thy face I see
The map of honour, truth and loyalty:
And yet, good Humphrey, is the hour to come
That e'er I proved thee false or fear'd thy faith.
What lurking star now envies thy estate,
That these great lords and Margaret our queen
Do seek subversion of thy harmless life?
Thou never didst them wrong, nor no man wrong;
And as the butcher takes away the calf
And binds the wretch, and beats it when it strays,
Bearing it to the bloody slaughter-house,
Even so remorseless have they borne him hence;
And as the dam runs lowing up and down,
Looking the way her harmless young one went,

CARDINAL

My lord, his ranting is intolerable. If those that are trying to save your royal life from treason and murder can be criticized, rebuked and berated this way, and the offender given free opportunity to say such things, it will make them less likely to have so much care for you.

SUFFOLK

Hasn't he insulted our queen with humiliating words (although they were skillfully expressed), as if she had bribed some of us to falsely accuse him in order to bring him down?

QUEEN MARGARET

But I can let the loser insult me all he likes.

GLOUCESTER

That's more truthful than you meant! I lose, indeed; curse the winners because they have played me falsely! And so the losers can speak.

BUCKINGHAM

He'll twist the meaning and keep us here all day. Lord cardinal, he is your prisoner.

CARDINAL

Sirs, take away the duke and make sure he's guarded well.

GLOUCESTER

Ah! And so King Henry throws away his crutch before his legs are strong enough to hold his body up. So the shepherd is beaten from your side, and wolves are growling over who will eat you first. Ah, I wish that my fear was wrong! Ah, if only it were! I am afraid, good King Henry, that your downfall will come soon!

GLOUCESTER exits, under guard.

KING HENRY VI

My lords, do or undo whatever you think best, as if I were here.

QUEEN MARGARET

What? Will your highness leave the parliament?

KING HENRY VI

Yes, Margaret. My heart is drowned with grief. Its flood begins to flow in my eyes and my body is encircled with misery. What's more miserable than unhappiness? Ah, uncle Humphrey! I see the image of honor, truth and loyalty in your face. And good Humphrey, the time has not yet come when I ever found you disloyal or was worried about your faith. What angry star now envies your position, that these great lords and our queen Margaret want the destruction of your harmless life? You never wronged them, nor wronged any man. And just like the butcher takes away the calf and binds the poor thing, beating it when it tries to get away and taking it to the bloody slaughter-house, so they have taken him here without pity. And just as the mother runs up and down, looking for where her harmless young one went, and can do nothing but cry after losing her, so I cry at the case of the good Gloucester with sad unhelpful tears, looking after him with blurred eyes. I look after him, but I can't help him because my sworn enemies

And can do nought but wail her darling's loss,
 Even so myself bewails good Gloucester's case
 With sad unhelpful tears, and with dimm'd eyes
 Look after him and cannot do him good,
 So mighty are his vowed enemies.
 His fortunes I will weep; and, 'twixt each groan
 Say 'Who's a traitor? Gloucester he is none.'

*Exeunt all but QUEEN MARGARET, CARDINAL, SUFFOLK, and YORK;
 SOMERSET remains apart*

QUEEN MARGARET

200 Free lords, cold snow melts with the sun's hot beams.
 Henry my lord is cold in great affairs,
 Too full of foolish pity, and Gloucester's show
 Beguiles him as the mournful crocodile
 With sorrow snares relenting passengers,
 205 Or as the snake roll'd in a flowering bank,
 With shining chequer'd slough, doth sting a child
 That for the beauty thinks it excellent.
 Believe me, lords, were none more wise than I--
 And yet herein I judge mine own wit good--
 210 This Gloucester should be quickly rid the world,
 To rid us of the fear we have of him.

CARDINAL

That he should die is worthy policy;
 But yet we want a colour for his death:
 'Tis meet he be condemn'd by course of law.

SUFFOLK

215 But, in my mind, that were no policy:
 The king will labour still to save his life,
 The commons haply rise, to save his life;
 And yet we have but trivial argument,
 More than mistrust, that shows him worthy death.

YORK

220 So that, by this, you would not have him die.

SUFFOLK

Ah, York, no man alive so fain as I!

YORK

'Tis York that hath more reason for his death.
 But, my lord cardinal, and you, my Lord of Suffolk,
 Say as you think, and speak it from your souls,
 225 Were't not all one, an empty eagle were set
 To guard the chicken from a hungry kite,
 As place Duke Humphrey for the king's protector?

QUEEN MARGARET

So the poor chicken should be sure of death.

SUFFOLK

Madam, 'tis true; and were't not madness, then,
 230 To make the fox surveyor of the fold?
 Who being accused a crafty murderer,
 His guilt should be but idly posted over,
 Because his purpose is not executed.
 No; let him die, in that he is a fox,
 235 By nature proved an enemy to the flock,
 Before his chaps be stain'd with crimson blood,
 As Humphrey, proved by reasons, to my liege.
 And do not stand on quilllets how to slay him:
 Be it by gins, by snares, by subtlety,
 240 Sleeping or waking, 'tis no matter how,
 So he be dead; for that is good deceit
 Which mates him first that first intends deceit.


QUEEN MARGARET


Thrice-noble Suffolk, 'tis resolutely spoke.

are so powerful. I will cry at his fortunes and in between
 each groan, I will say: "Who's a traitor? Not Gloucester."

*Exit all but QUEEN MARGARET, CARDINAL, SUFFOLK, and
 YORK. SOMERSET stands alone on the side.*

QUEEN MARGARET

Noble lords, cold snow melts with the sun's hot rays. My
 husband Henry knows nothing about politics. He is full of
 foolish pity, and Gloucester's false appearance deceives him
 like the mournful crocodile  entices pitying passengers
 with sorrow, or like the snake in the grass stings a child who
 likes his shining skin--and thinks that because it's beautiful
 it's safe to touch. Believe me, lords, if any of you are wiser
 than me--and yet I judge that my own intellect is good--this
 Gloucester should quickly depart this life, to rid us of the
 fear we have of him.

 The "mournful crocodile" refers to the belief that crocodiles shed tears as a means of enticing victims crossing a river. Hence, the saying "crocodile's tears" (fake tears).

CARDINAL

His death is good politics. But we still need an excuse for his
 death. If it's appropriate, he will be condemned by law.

SUFFOLK

But I think that no matter what clever strategy we come up
 with, the king will continually try to save his life and the
 people may perhaps rebel to save him. And anyway, we
 only have some scant evidence besides our suspicions to
 show that he should die.

YORK

So based on what you just said, you'd rather not have him
 die.

SUFFOLK

Ah, York, there is no man alive so eager to see him dead!


YORK


It's York who has more reasons to want him dead. But, my
 lord cardinal, and you, my Lord of Suffolk, say what you
 think and speak it from your souls. Isn't placing Duke
 Humphrey as the king's protector just as bad as sending a
 hungry eagle to guard the chicken from a bird of prey?

QUEEN MARGARET

That poor chicken would be sure to die.

SUFFOLK

That's true, madam. And wouldn't it be then mad to make
 the fox the keeper of the sheep? We've accused him of
 being a cunning murderer--so should we foolishly let him
 slip from our grasp, simply because he had yet to kill one of
 the sheep? No, let him die. Because he's a fox, he is an
 enemy to the flock by nature, even before his jaws are
 colored with blood. It's the same with Humphrey, who
 we've proven is a threat to the king. And do not insist on
 some crafty scheme to kill him. Let it be by any kind of traps 
 , or by a secret plot, sleeping or awake--it doesn't matter
 how, as long as he's dead. It's a good trick to catch him first,
 before he has the chance to trick us.

 "Gins" and "snares" are two types of traps for catching game.

QUEEN MARGARET

Three times noble Suffolk, you speak decisively.

SUFFOLK

Not resolute, except so much were done;
 245 For things are often spoke and seldom meant:
 But that my heart accordeth with my tongue,
 Seeing the deed is meritorious,
 And to preserve my sovereign from his foe,
 Say but the word, and I will be his priest.

CARDINAL

But I would have him dead, my Lord of Suffolk,
 Ere you can take due orders for a priest:
 Say you consent and censure well the deed,
 And I'll provide his executioner,
 I tender so the safety of my liege.

SUFFOLK

255 Here is my hand, the deed is worthy doing.

QUEEN MARGARET

And so say I.

YORK

And I and now we three have spoke it,
 It skills not greatly who impugns our doom.

Enter a Post

POST

260 Great lords, from Ireland am I come again,
 To signify that rebels there are up
 And put the Englishmen unto the sword:
 Send succors, lords, and stop the rage betime,
 Before the wound do grow incurable;
 265 For, being green, there is great hope of help.

CARDINAL

A breach that craves a quick expedient stop!
 What counsel give you in this weighty cause?

YORK

That Somerset be sent as regent thither:
 'Tis meet that lucky ruler be employ'd;
 270 Witness the fortune he hath had in France.

SOMERSET

If York, with all his far-fet policy,
 Had been the regent there instead of me,
 He never would have stay'd in France so long.

YORK

No, not to lose it all, as thou hast done:
 275 I rather would have lost my life betimes
 Than bring a burthen of dishonour home
 By staying there so long till all were lost.
 Show me one scar character'd on thy skin:
 Men's flesh preserved so whole do seldom win.

QUEEN MARGARET

280 Nay, then, this spark will prove a raging fire,
 If wind and fuel be brought to feed it with:
 No more, good York; sweet Somerset, be still:
 Thy fortune, York, hadst thou been regent there,
 Might happily have proved far worse than his.

YORK


285 What, worse than nought? Nay, then, a shame take all!

SOMERSET

And, in the number, thee that wishest shame!

SUFFOLK

Not decisively, unless it is actually done. Because things are often said that are not always meant. But to show that my heart believes what I've said--seeing that the deed is worthy, and that I do it to save my king from his enemy--say the word and I will kill him.

 Suffolk uses the phrase "be his priest" which means that he would preside over his death like a priest administering the last rites.

CARDINAL

But I'd want him dead, my Lord of Suffolk, before you have time to arrange a priest to be there. Say that you agree and approve the act, and I'll provide his executioner, since I hold the safety of my king so dear.

SUFFOLK

Here's my hand. This is a good deed.

QUEEN MARGARET

I agree.

YORK

And now that the three of us agree, it doesn't matter who questions our judgement.

A postman enters.

POST


Great lords, I have come quickly from Ireland to report that the rebels are up in arms and have started fighting the Englishmen. Send assistance, lords and stop the rebellion at an early stage, before the wound becomes impossible to heal. Since it's a new injury, there's still hope of help.

CARDINAL

A rebellion that needs to be stopped quickly! [To YORK]
 What advice do you give in this pressing matter?

YORK

That Somerset should be sent there as a regent. It's appropriate that we send a "lucky" ruler, since his luck in France has been so great so far.

 York is being ironic about Somerset here.

SOMERSET

If York, with all his incompetent policies, had been the regent there instead of me, he would have never stayed in France so long.

YORK

No, and I wouldn't have lost it all, as you have done. I would have rather lost my life before bringing a burden of dishonor home by staying there so long until it was all lost. Show me one scar on your skin! Men without battle scars don't tend to win very often.

QUEEN MARGARET

No, this spark will ignite into a raging fire if we feed it with wind and fuel. No more, good York; sweet Somerset, be calm. If you had been there, York, your luck might have perhaps been worse than his.

YORK

What do you mean? Worse than nothing? No, then we would have all died of shame!

SOMERSET

And you with them all, since you brought shame on yourself!

CARDINAL

My Lord of York, try what your fortune is.
The uncivil kerns of Ireland are in arms
And temper clay with blood of Englishmen:
290 To Ireland will you lead a band of men,
Collected choicely, from each county some,
And try your hap against the Irishmen?

YORK

I will, my lord, so please his majesty.

SUFFOLK

Why, our authority is his consent,
295 And what we do establish he confirms:
Then, noble York, take thou this task in hand.

YORK

I am content: provide me soldiers, lords,
Whiles I take order for mine own affairs.

SUFFOLK

A charge, Lord York, that I will see perform'd.
300 But now return we to the false Duke Humphrey.

CARDINAL

No more of him; for I will deal with him
That henceforth he shall trouble us no more.
And so break off; the day is almost spent:
Lord Suffolk, you and I must talk of that event.

YORK

305 My Lord of Suffolk, within fourteen days
At Bristol I expect my soldiers;
For there I'll ship them all for Ireland.

SUFFOLK

I'll see it truly done, my Lord of York.

Exeunt all but YORK

YORK

310 Now, York, or never, steel thy fearful thoughts,
And change misdoubt to resolution:
Be that thou hopest to be, or what thou art
Resign to death; it is not worth the enjoying:
Let pale-faced fear keep with the mean-born man,
315 And find no harbour in a royal heart.
Faster than spring-time showers comes thought
on thought,
And not a thought but thinks on dignity.
My brain more busy than the labouring spider
320 Weaves tedious snares to trap mine enemies.
Well, nobles, well, 'tis politicly done,
To send me packing with an host of men:
I fear me you but warm the starved snake,
Who, cherish'd in your breasts, will sting
325 your hearts.
'Twas men I lack'd and you will give them me:
I take it kindly; and yet be well assured
You put sharp weapons in a madman's hands.
Whiles I in Ireland nourish a mighty band,
330 I will stir up in England some black storm
Shall blow ten thousand souls to heaven or hell;
And this fell tempest shall not cease to rage
Until the golden circuit on my head,
Like to the glorious sun's transparent beams,
335 Do calm the fury of this mad-bred flaw.
And, for a minister of my intent,
I have seduced a headstrong Kentishman,
John Cade of Ashford,
To make commotion, as full well he can,
340 Under the title of John Mortimer.
In Ireland have I seen this stubborn Cade
Oppose himself against a troop of kerns,

CARDINAL

My lord of York, put your luck to the test. The rebellious
Irish soldiers are ready to fight and they're killing
Englishmen. Will you lead a carefully selected group of men
(some from each county) to Ireland and try your luck
against the Irishmen?

YORK

I will, my lord, if his majesty gives permission.

SUFFOLK

Well, we'll give permission for him; what we order, he
confirms. Then, noble York, carry out this task.

YORK

I am happy with it. Provide me soldiers, lords, while I put
my own affairs in order.

SUFFOLK

That's a task that I will take care of, Lord York. But now let's
come back to the false Duke Humphrey.

CARDINAL

No more about him. I will deal with him so that he won't
trouble us from now on. And so let's go our separate ways,
since the day is almost over. Lord Suffolk, you and I must
talk about that event ⁹.

YORK

My Lord of Suffolk, within fourteen days I'll expect my
soldiers at Bristol. From there I'll ship them all to Ireland.

SUFFOLK

I'll see that it's all arranged, my Lord of York.

All exit apart from York.

YORK

Now or never, York. Gather your fearful thoughts, and
exchange uncertainty for determination. Be that which you
hope to be, or die trying, since life is worth nothing without
it. Low-born men are afraid; don't let fear find shelter in a
royal heart. Thoughts come my way faster than spring-time
showers, and there is not a thought which doesn't relate to
kingship. My brain is busier than the hard-working spider
that weaves laborious snares to trap his enemies. Well,
nobles, well, it's strategically done--to send me away with
an army. I am afraid that you are only keeping your enemies
too close, like a hungry snake that you warm with embraces
until it stings you on the heart. I needed soldiers and you
will give them to me. I take them kindly--and yet know that
you've put sharp weapons in a madman's hands. While I
build up a mighty army in Ireland, I'll also start some black
storm in England which will blow ten thousand souls to
heaven or hell. And this cruel tempest won't stop raging
until the crown on my head--like the transparent beams of
the golden sun--come out and calm the anger of this mad
storm. To work on my behalf, I have persuaded a
headstrong Kentishman, John Cade of Ashford ¹⁰, to rouse
a rebellion, as well as he can, to fight for the title of John
Mortimer ¹¹. I saw this stubborn Cade in Ireland as he
stood against a group of Irish soldiers. He fought for so
long, until his thighs were almost pierced by arrows. And as
he was rescued in the end, I saw him nimbly dancing like a
wild Morisco ¹², shaking the bloody arrows as if they were
bells. He often spied on the enemy, pretending to be a wild-
haired cunning Irish soldier, and he came back to me
undiscovered and gave me information on their plans. That
devil will be my substitute. Since John Mortimer ¹³ is now
dead, he looks like him in face, bearing and in speech. By
this I'll bring the common people over to my side, so that

⁹ By "event," the Cardinal means the murder of Gloucester.

¹⁰ Ashford is a town in Kent, south of Canterbury.

¹¹ John Mortimer and York are both descendants of the Mortimer family that claimed they were the rightful heirs to the throne.

¹² A "morisco" was a Spanish person of Muslim descent.

¹³ John Mortimer was executed in 1424.

And fought so long, till that his thighs with darts
 Were almost like a sharp-quill'd porpentine;
 345 And, in the end being rescued, I have seen
 Him caper upright like a wild Morisco,
 Shaking the bloody darts as he his bells.
 Full often, like a shag-hair'd crafty kern,
 Hath he conversed with the enemy,
 350 And undiscover'd come to me again
 And given me notice of their villainies.
 This devil here shall be my substitute;
 For that John Mortimer, which now is dead,
 In face, in gait, in speech, he doth resemble:
 355 By this I shall perceive the commons' mind,
 How they affect the house and claim of York.
 Say he be taken, rack'd and tortured,
 I know no pain they can inflict upon him
 Will make him say I moved him to those arms.
 360 Say that he thrive, as 'tis great like he will,
 Why, then from Ireland come I with my strength
 And reap the harvest which that rascal sow'd;
 For Humphrey being dead, as he shall be,
 And Henry put apart, the next for me.

Exit

they support the house of York and my claim to the throne.
 Even if he's arrested and tortured, I know that no pain they
 can inflict upon him will make him say that I persuaded him
 to start the rebellion. Let's say that he's successful, as it's
 very likely that he will be. Then I'll come back from Ireland
 with my army, and reap the harvest that the rogue has
 sown. Then Humphrey will be dead, and Henry put aside,
 and I'll be next in line.

YORK exits.

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter certain Murderers, hastily

FIRST MURDERER

Run to my Lord of Suffolk; let him know
 We have dispatch'd the duke, as he commanded.

SECOND MURDERER

O that it were to do! What have we done?
 Didst ever hear a man so penitent?

5

Enter SUFFOLK

FIRST MURDER

Here comes my lord.

SUFFOLK

Now, sirs, have you dispatch'd this thing?

FIRST MURDERER

Ay, my good lord, he's dead.

SUFFOLK

Why, that's well said. Go, get you to my house;
 10 I will reward you for this venturous deed.
 The king and all the peers are here at hand.
 Have you laid fair the bed? Is all things well,
 According as I gave directions?

FIRST MURDERER

'Tis, my good lord.

SUFFOLK

15 Away! Be gone.

Exeunt Murderers

*Sound trumpets. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, CARDINAL,
 SOMERSET, with Attendants*

Shakescleare Translation

Some murderers enter in a hurry.

FIRST MURDERER

Run to my Lord of Suffolk and let him know that we have
 killed the duke like he ordered us to.

SECOND MURDERER

Oh, what a thing it was for us to do! What have we done?
 Have you ever heard of a man so religious as the duke?

SUFFOLK enters.

FIRST MURDER

Here comes my lord.

SUFFOLK

Have you done the thing, sirs?

FIRST MURDERER

Yes, my good lord. He's dead.

SUFFOLK

That's good. Now go to my house and I will reward you for
 this risky task. The king and all his people are here near
 him. Have you tidied up the bed? Was everything done
 according to my instructions?

FIRST MURDERER

It was, my good lord.

SUFFOLK

Go then!

Murderers exit.

*Trumpets sound. KING HENRY VI enters with QUEEN
 MARGARET, CARDINAL, SOMERSET, and servants.*

KING HENRY VI

Go, call our uncle to our presence straight;
Say we intend to try his grace to-day.
If he be guilty, as 'tis published.

SUFFOLK

I'll call him presently, my noble lord.

20

Exit

KING HENRY VI

Lords, take your places; and, I pray you all,
Proceed no straiter 'gainst our uncle Gloucester
Than from true evidence of good esteem
He be approved in practise culpable.

QUEEN MARGARET

25

God forbid any malice should prevail,
That faultless may condemn a nobleman!
Pray God he may acquit him of suspicion!

KING HENRY VI

I thank thee, Meg; these words content me much.

Re-enter SUFFOLK

KING HENRY VI

30

How now! Why look'st thou pale? Why tremblest thou?
Where is our uncle? What's the matter, Suffolk?

SUFFOLK

Dead in his bed, my lord; Gloucester is dead.

QUEEN MARGARET

Marry, God forbid!

CARDINAL

35

God's secret judgment: I did dream to-night
The duke was dumb and could not speak a word.

KING HENRY VI swoons

QUEEN MARGARET

How fares my lord? Help, lords! The king is dead.

SOMERSET

Rear up his body; wring him by the nose.

QUEEN MARGARET

Run, go, help, help! O Henry, open thine eyes!

SUFFOLK

40

He doth revive again: madam, be patient.

KING HENRY VI

O heavenly God!

QUEEN MARGARET

How fares my gracious lord?

SUFFOLK

Comfort, my sovereign! Gracious Henry, comfort!

KING HENRY VI

45

What, doth my Lord of Suffolk comfort me?
Came he right now to sing a raven's note,
Whose dismal tune bereft my vital powers;
And thinks he that the chirping of a wren,
By crying comfort from a hollow breast,
Can chase away the first-conceived sound?

50

Hide not thy poison with such sugar'd words;

KING HENRY VI

Go and order our uncle to come here straight away. Tell him
that we are planning to question him today and find out
whether he is guilty, as he was accused.

SUFFOLK

I'll call him at once, my noble lord.

SUFFOLK exits.

KING HENRY VI

Lords, take your places. I ask you all: don't deal more
harshly with our uncle Gloucester than he is proven guilty
by good and solid evidence.

QUEEN MARGARET

God forbid that such a bad thing should happen--that a
guiltless nobleman would be condemned! Pray God that he
may pronounce him not guilty!

KING HENRY VI

Thank you, Meg. Your words make me very happy.

SUFFOLK re-enters.

KING HENRY VI

What's this? Why do you look pale? Why are you shaking?
Where is our uncle? What's the matter, Suffolk?

SUFFOLK

He is dead in his bed, my lord. Gloucester is dead.

QUEEN MARGARET

Oh, no, God forbid it!

CARDINAL


It's God's secret judgement. I dreamed last night that the
duke was numb and couldn't speak a word.


KING HENRY VI faints.

QUEEN MARGARET

How is my lord? Help, lords! The king is dead.

SOMERSET

Support his body, squeeze his nose .

 You could squeeze or twist someone's nose to restore circulation.

QUEEN MARGARET

Run, go and get help! Oh, Henry, open your eyes!

SUFFOLK

He is waking up. Madam, be patient.

KING HENRY VI

Oh, heavenly God!


QUEEN MARGARET


How is my gracious lord?

SUFFOLK

Be calm, my king! Gracious Henry, be calm!

KING HENRY VI

Why is Lord Suffolk comforting me? Didn't he come just
now to announce this horrible message , whose deadly
sound robbed me of my strength, and does he think that
the singing of a bird can chase away the original horrible
sound, by crying words of comfort from a chest with no
heart? Don't hide your poison with such sweet words. Don't
touch me--stop it, I said! Your touch frightens me like a

 "A raven's note" was associated with death.

Lay not thy hands on me; forbear, I say;
 Their touch affrights me as a serpent's sting.
 Thou baleful messenger, out of my sight!
 Upon thy eye-balls murderous tyranny
 55 Sits in grim majesty, to fright the world.
 Look not upon me, for thine eyes are wounding:
 Yet do not go away: come, basilisk,
 And kill the innocent gazer with thy sight;
 For in the shade of death I shall find joy;
 60 In life but double death, now Gloucester's dead.

QUEEN MARGARET

Why do you rate my Lord of Suffolk thus?
 Although the duke was enemy to him,
 Yet he most Christian-like laments his death:
 And for myself, foe as he was to me,
 65 Might liquid tears or heart-offending groans
 Or blood-consuming sighs recall his life,
 I would be blind with weeping, sick with groans,
 Look pale as primrose with blood-drinking sighs,
 And all to have the noble duke alive.
 70 What know I how the world may deem of me?
 For it is known we were but hollow friends:
 It may be judged I made the duke away;
 So shall my name with slander's tongue be wounded,
 And princes' courts be fill'd with my reproach.
 75 This get I by his death: ay me, unhappy!
 To be a queen, and crown'd with infamy!

KING HENRY VI

Ah, woe is me for Gloucester, wretched man!

QUEEN MARGARET

Be woe for me, more wretched than he is.
 What, dost thou turn away and hide thy face?
 80 I am no loathsome leper; look on me.
 What! Art thou, like the adder, waxen deaf?
 Be poisonous too and kill thy forlorn queen.
 Is all thy comfort shut in Gloucester's tomb?
 Why, then, dame Margaret was ne'er thy joy.
 85 Erect his statue and worship it,
 And make my image but an alehouse sign.
 Was I for this nigh wreck'd upon the sea
 And twice by awkward wind from England's bank
 Drove back again unto my native clime?
 90 What boded this, but well forewarning wind
 Did seem to say 'Seek not a scorpion's nest,
 Nor set no footing on this unkind shore?'
 What did I then, but cursed the gentle gusts
 And he that loosed them forth their brazen caves:
 95 And bid them blow towards England's blessed shore,
 Or turn our stern upon a dreadful rock
 Yet AEolus would not be a murderer,
 But left that hateful office unto thee:
 The pretty-vaulting sea refused to drown me,
 100 Knowing that thou wouldst have me drown'd on shore,
 With tears as salt as sea, through thy unkindness:
 The splitting rocks cower'd in the sinking sands
 And would not dash me with their ragged sides,
 Because thy flinty heart, more hard than they,
 105 Might in thy palace perish Margaret.
 As far as I could ken thy chalky cliffs,
 When from thy shore the tempest beat us back,
 I stood upon the hatches in the storm,
 And when the dusky sky began to rob
 110 My earnest-gaping sight of thy land's view,
 I took a costly jewel from my neck,
 A heart it was, bound in with diamonds,
 And threw it towards thy land: the sea received it,
 And so I wish'd thy body might my heart:
 115 And even with this I lost fair England's view
 And bid mine eyes be packing with my heart
 And call'd them blind and dusky spectacles,
 For losing ken of Albion's wished coast.
 How often have I tempted Suffolk's tongue,
 120

snake's sting. You deadly messenger, get out of my sight!
 Murderous cruelty is hiding in your eyes; it sits in dreadful
 majesty, to frighten the whole world. Don't look at me,
 because your eyes hurt. But don't go away either. Come,
 basilisk ⁴, and kill the innocent onlooker with your sight.
 I'll find joy in the shade of death. In life, I'll only find double
 death, now that Gloucester is dead.

⁴ "Basilisk" was a mythological reptile whose gaze had the power to kill.

QUEEN MARGARET

Why do you treat my Lord Suffolk like this? The duke was his enemy, but he mourns for his death like a true Christian. And as for me--although he was my enemy too--if my tears, heart-wounding groans, and consuming sighs could bring back his life, I would be blind with crying, sick with groans, and look pale as a primrose from sighing, if only it would keep the noble duke alive. What do I know about how the world may judge me? It's well-known that we were not friends. It may be said that I was responsible for killing the duke, and so my name shall be ruined by gossips, and princes' courts will be filled with talk of my disgrace. This is what I get by his death. Yes, unhappy me! To be a queen and to be crowned with such a bad reputation!

KING HENRY VI

Ah, I am so sorry for Gloucester, the wretched man!

QUEEN MARGARET

But I am sorry for myself, because I am more wretched than he is. What? Do you turn away and hide your face? I am no hateful disease, look at me! Are you like the adder--deaf ⁴? Then be poisonous too and kill your neglected queen. Do you only care about Gloucester now? Well, then, you never loved Margaret. Put up his statue and worship it, and make my image only into a pub sign. Did I travel across the sea--and was twice by harsh winds driven back from England's shore to my native country--for *this*? Who could have predicted this, apart from the warning wind that seemed to have said: "Don't go into the scorpion's nest, or set a food on this hostile land?" What did I do then but curse the kindly winds and he that sent them from their strong caves, ⁵ urging them to blow towards England's shores, or change the direction towards the dreadful rock. Yet since Aeolus ⁶ wouldn't be a murderer, he left that hateful job to you. The clever leaping sea refused to drown me, knowing that you would have drowned me on the shore anyway--with tears as salty as the sea, through your unkindness. The jagged rocks covered by the sands would not dash me with their sharp edges, so that your merciless heart, harder than the rocks, might destroy Margaret in your palace. When the storm kept us back from shore, I stood on the deck in the storm and looked at your chalky cliffs ⁷, and when the dark sky prevented me from eagerly looking at the view of your land, I took an expensive jewel from my neck (it was a heart surrounded by diamonds) and threw it towards your land. The sea took it and so I wished that you would receive my heart in the same way. And when I lost sight of England, I told my eyes to be gone with my jewel and called them blind and dark spectacles, since they had lost sight of Albion ⁸'s wished-for coast. How often I tried to persuade Suffolk (since his tongue was the agent of your unfaithful love) to sit with me and bewitch me, as Ascanius ⁹ did when he would tell the frantic Dido about his father's successes in the battle of Troy! Am I not as bewitched as her? And are you not as disloyal as him ¹⁰? I can do no more. Die, Margaret! Henry's told you that you've lived too long!

⁴ "Waxen deaf"--the adder supposedly blocked one ear with its tail in order to resist snake charmers.

⁵ In classical mythology, Aeolus' island is described as being surrounded by "brazen", hence "bronze" or "strong" walls.

⁶ "Aeolus" is the ruler of winds in Greek mythology.

⁷ The White Cliffs of Dover are visible from the English Channel.

⁸ "Albion" is an ancient name for England.

⁹ In mythology, Ascanius was the son of Aeneas, the lover of Dido. Cupid disguised as Aeneas to tell Dido stories about Aeneas' achievements in the Trojan War.

¹⁰ Aeneas responded to Dido's love but he abandoned her eventually.

The agent of thy foul inconstancy,
To sit and witch me, as Ascanius did
When he to madding Dido would unfold
His father's acts commenced in burning Troy!
Am I not witch'd like her? Or thou not false like him?
125 Ay me, I can no more! Die, Margaret!
For Henry weeps that thou dost live so long.

Noise within. Enter WARWICK, SALISBURY, and many Commons

WARWICK

It is reported, mighty sovereign,
That good Duke Humphrey traitorously is murder'd
By Suffolk and the Cardinal Beaufort's means.
130 The commons, like an angry hive of bees
That want their leader, scatter up and down
And care not who they sting in his revenge.
Myself have calm'd their spleenful mutiny,
Until they hear the order of his death.

KING HENRY VI

135 That he is dead, good Warwick, 'tis too true;
But how he died God knows, not Henry:
Enter his chamber, view his breathless corpse,
And comment then upon his sudden death.

WARWICK

140 That shall I do, my liege. Stay, Salisbury,
With the rude multitude till I return.

Exit

KING HENRY VI

O Thou that judgest all things, stay my thoughts,
My thoughts, that labour to persuade my soul
Some violent hands were laid on Humphrey's life!
145 If my suspect be false, forgive me, God,
For judgment only doth belong to thee.
Fain would I go to chafe his paly lips
With twenty thousand kisses, and to drain
Upon his face an ocean of salt tears,
150 To tell my love unto his dumb deaf trunk,
And with my fingers feel his hand unfeeling:
But all in vain are these mean obsequies;
And to survey his dead and earthly image,
What were it but to make my sorrow greater?

Re-enter WARWICK and others, bearing GLOUCESTER'S body on a bed

WARWICK

155 Come hither, gracious sovereign, view this body.

KING HENRY VI

That is to see how deep my grave is made;
For with his soul fled all my worldly solace,
For seeing him I see my life in death.

WARWICK

As surely as my soul intends to live
160 With that dread King that took our state upon him
To free us from his father's wrathful curse,
I do believe that violent hands were laid
Upon the life of this thrice-famed duke.

SUFFOLK

165 A dreadful oath, sworn with a solemn tongue!
What instance gives Lord Warwick for his vow?

WARWICK

See how the blood is settled in his face.
Oft have I seen a timely-parted ghost,
Of ashy semblance, meagre, pale and bloodless,

Noise inside. WARWICK and SALISBURY enter with many commoners.

WARWICK

It is rumored that good Duke Humphrey was traitorously murdered by Suffolk and the Cardinal Beaufort, my king. The commoners went wild and didn't care who they hurt in their revenge, like an angry crowd of bees without their leader. I have convinced them to stop their enraged rebellion until they find out who was responsible for his death.

KING HENRY VI

It is true that he's dead, good Warwick. But only God knows how he died and not Henry. Go into his room, look at his breathless corpse, and then explain how he died so suddenly.

WARWICK

I'll do this, my king. Salisbury, stay here with the ignorant crowd until I come back.

WARWICK exits.

KING HENRY VI

Oh, God, that judges everything, stop my thoughts--my thoughts that try to convince my soul that some violent hands were laid on Humphrey's life! If my suspicion is wrong, God forgive me; my judgement belongs only to you. I'd like to restore warmth to his bloodless lips with twenty thousand kisses, and drown his face with an ocean of salty tears, just so I can show my love to his dumb, deaf body and touch his unfeeling hand with my fingers. But these meager funeral rites are not worth anything. And wouldn't it make my sorrow worse if I were to go look at his dead body?

WARWICK re-enters with others, carrying GLOUCESTER'S body on a bed.


WARWICK


Come closer, gracious king and look at his body.

KING HENRY VI

To come closer is to see how deep my grave has been made. When his soul left this earth, so did all my happiness here. I see an image of my own death by seeing him.

WARWICK

I believe that this famous duke was violently murdered, as surely as my soul plans to carry on living with that awe-inspiring King  who took our sin on himself to free us from his father's angry curse.

 "King" here refers to Christ.

SUFFOLK

That was a dreadful oath sworn in a serious tone. What evidence does Lord Warwick give for his vow?

WARWICK

See how the blood is not flowing in his face? I've seen a corpse of a person who died naturally and it had an ashy, emaciated, pale and bloodless look, because all the blood

Being all descended to the labouring heart;
 170 Who, in the conflict that it holds with death,
 Attracts the same for aidance 'gainst the enemy;
 Which with the heart there cools and ne'er returneth
 To blush and beautify the cheek again.
 But see, his face is black and full of blood,
 175 His eye-balls further out than when he lived,
 Staring full ghastly like a strangled man;
 His hair uprear'd, his nostrils stretched with
 struggling;
 His hands abroad display'd, as one that grasp'd
 180 And tugg'd for life and was by strength subdued:
 Look, on the sheets his hair you see, is sticking;
 His well-proportion'd beard made rough and rugged,
 Like to the summer's corn by tempest lodged.
 It cannot be but he was murder'd here;
 185 The least of all these signs were probable.

SUFFOLK

Why, Warwick, who should do the duke to death?
 Myself and Beaufort had him in protection;
 And we, I hope, sir, are no murderers.

WARWICK

But both of you were vow'd Duke Humphrey's foes,
 190 And you, forsooth, had the good duke to keep:
 'Tis like you would not feast him like a friend;
 And 'tis well seen he found an enemy.

QUEEN MARGARET

Then you, belike, suspect these noblemen
 As guilty of Duke Humphrey's timeless death.

WARWICK

Who finds the heifer dead and bleeding fresh
 And sees fast by a butcher with an axe,
 But will suspect 'twas he that made the slaughter?
 Who finds the partridge in the puttock's nest,
 But may imagine how the bird was dead,
 200 Although the kite soar with unbloodied beak?
 Even so suspicious is this tragedy.

QUEEN MARGARET

Are you the butcher, Suffolk? Where's your knife?
 Is Beaufort term'd a kite? Where are his talons?

SUFFOLK

I wear no knife to slaughter sleeping men;
 205 But here's a vengeful sword, rusted with ease,
 That shall be scoured in his rancorous heart
 That slanders me with murder's crimson badge.
 Say, if thou darest, proud Lord of Warwickshire,
 That I am faulty in Duke Humphrey's death.

Exeunt CARDINAL, SOMERSET, and others

WARWICK

210 What dares not Warwick, if false Suffolk dare him?

QUEEN MARGARET

He dares not calm his contumelious spirit
 Nor cease to be an arrogant controller,
 Though Suffolk dare him twenty thousand times.

WARWICK

Madam, be still; with reverence may I say;
 215 For every word you speak in his behalf
 Is slander to your royal dignity.

SUFFOLK

Blunt-witted lord, ignoble in demeanor!
 If ever lady wrong'd her lord so much,
 Thy mother took into her blameful bed
 220

had gone to the heart. The heart, threatened by death,
 attracts all the blood in the body to fight its enemy, and the
 blood never returns to the cheeks again. But you can see
 that *his* face is black and full of blood, his eyeballs are
 further out than they were when he lived and he's staring
 alarmingly like a strangled man. His hair is standing on end,
 his nostrils are stretched as if he were struggling to breathe,
 and his hands are spread out widely, suggesting that he
 grasped and fought for his life and was overpowered by
 force. Look, you can see that his hair is sticking on the
 sheets; his well-shaped beard is made rough and shaggy,
 like the summer's corn when it's flattened by a storm.
 Murder must have happened here. Even the smallest of
 these signs is sufficient evidence.

SUFFOLK

Warwick, who would have killed the duke? Beaufort and I
 were responsible for his protection, and I hope that we, sir,
 are not the murderers.

WARWICK

Both of you were Duke Humphrey's sworn enemies. And
 you also had to guard the good duke. It seems likely you
 wouldn't have treated him like a friend, and it's obvious
 that he has met an enemy.

QUEEN MARGARET

Then you perhaps suspect these noblemen are guilty of
 Duke Humphrey's untimely death.

WARWICK

Who can find a dead cow freshly bleeding, and see the
 butcher standing nearby with an ax, and not suspect it was
 him that killed the cow? Who can find a partridge in the kite
 's nest, and not assume that was how the bird died, even
 if the kite flew away with an clean beak? This tragedy is as
 suspicious as those.

QUEEN MARGARET

Are you the killer, Suffolk? Where is your knife? Is Beaufort
 the kite, then? Where are his claws?

SUFFOLK

I don't carry a knife to murder sleeping men. But here's a
 vengeful sword, not often used, that will plunge into the
 jealous heart of the one who sullies my good name with an
 accusation of murder. Say, if you dare, proud Lord of
 Warwickshire, that I am guilty of Duke Humphrey's death.

CARDINAL, SOMERSET, and others exit.

WARWICK

What doesn't Warwick dare to do, if false Suffolk dares him?

QUEEN MARGARET

He doesn't dare to calm his anger, nor stop being an
 arrogant busybody, although Suffolk dared him twenty
 thousand times.

WARWICK

Madam, be calm. With courtesy, I may say that every word
 you speak on his behalf is an attack to your royal dignity.

SUFFOLK

You are a stupid man and lack manners! If ever a lady did
 such a thing to her husband, your mother took some coarse
 ignorant person into her bed. Your noble family tree was

Some stern untutor'd churl, and noble stock
Was graft with crab-tree slip; whose fruit thou art,
And never of the Nevils' noble race.

WARWICK

But that the guilt of murder bucklers thee
And I should rob the deathsman of his fee,
225 Quitting thee thereby of ten thousand shames,
And that my sovereign's presence makes me mild,
I would, false murderous coward, on thy knee
Make thee beg pardon for thy passed speech,
And say it was thy mother that thou meant'st
230 That thou thyself was born in bastardy;
And after all this fearful homage done,
Give thee thy hire and send thy soul to hell,
Pernicious blood-sucker of sleeping men!

SUFFOLK

235 Thou shall be waking well I shed thy blood,
If from this presence thou darest go with me.

WARWICK

Away even now, or I will drag thee hence:
Unworthy though thou art, I'll cope with thee
And do some service to Duke Humphrey's ghost.

Exeunt SUFFOLK and WARWICK

KING HENRY VI

240 What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted!
Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just,
And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

A noise within

QUEEN MARGARET

245 What noise is this?

Re-enter SUFFOLK and WARWICK, with their weapons drawn

KING HENRY VI

Why, how now, lords! Your wrathful weapons drawn
Here in our presence! Dare you be so bold?
Why, what tumultuous clamour have we here?

SUFFOLK

250 The traitorous Warwick with the men of Bury
Set all upon me, mighty sovereign.

SALISBURY

[To the Commons, entering] Sirs, stand apart;
the king shall know your mind.
Dread lord, the commons send you word by me,
Unless Lord Suffolk straight be done to death,
255 Or banished fair England's territories,
They will by violence tear him from your palace
And torture him with grievous lingering death.
They say, by him the good Duke Humphrey died;
They say, in him they fear your highness' death;
260 And mere instinct of love and loyalty,
Free from a stubborn opposite intent,
As being thought to contradict your liking,
Makes them thus forward in his banishment.
They say, in care of your most royal person,
265 That if your highness should intend to sleep
And charge that no man should disturb your rest
In pain of your dislike or pain of death,
Yet, notwithstanding such a strait edict,
Were there a serpent seen, with forked tongue,
270 That slyly glided towards your majesty,
It were but necessary you were waked,
Lest, being suffer'd in that harmful slumber,
The mortal worm might make the sleep eternal;

joined by cutting a wild apple tree--you're the fruit of that,
not of the Nevils' noble race!

WARWICK

If you weren't made brave by your guilt, I would have killed
you myself rather than let you be executed for the murder,
exonerating you of ten thousand shames. But my king's
presence makes me restrain myself. Otherwise I would
make you beg for a pardon on your knees for what you said,
you false murderous coward! I would make you say that it
was your mother that you meant, that you were born a
bastard. And after you'd admitted all this, I'd kill you and
send your soul to hell, you wicked blood-sucker of sleeping
men!

SUFFOLK

You'll know you're awake when I shed your blood, if you
won't go with me from this royal presence.

WARWICK

Let's go away now or I will drag you away, although you are
not worthy. And I'll fight with you and do some favor for
Duke Humphrey's ghost.

SUFFOLK and WARWICK exit.

KING HENRY VI

An innocent heart is the strongest breastplate! He is armed
three times as much if his fight is justified. And the man
whose conscience is corrupted with injustice is naked, even
if he wears his armor.

A noise inside.

QUEEN MARGARET


What's this noise?


SUFFOLK and WARWICK re-enter, with their weapons out.

KING HENRY VI

What's this, lords? You draw your weapons out angrily here
in our presence? Do you dare to be so bold? What riotous
noise did we hear?

SUFFOLK

The traitorous Warwick attached me with the men of Bury 
, my king.

 Bury is an English town in Greater Manchester.

SALISBURY

[To the commoners coming in] Sirs, stand aside, the king
will hear you out. Respected lord, the commoners send you
a message from me: unless Lord Suffolk is killed straight
away or banished from England, they will tear him from
your palace by violence and torture him with a slow brutal
death. They say that he killed Duke Humphrey; they say
that they are afraid he might kill you too. A simple instinct
of love and loyalty, free from stubborn hostile intention (or
any desire to oppose your wishes) makes them demand his
banishment. They say, since they care about your royal
person, that if your highness planned to sleep and ordered
that no man should disturb you on pain of death--yet
despite such a strict rule, if they saw a serpent with a split
tongue slyly gliding towards your majesty, they would wake
you up. Otherwise you might keep sleeping and the
poisonous snake would make that sleep last forever. And so
they would shout, although you forbade it, and they will
guard you, whether you want or not, from a dangerous
serpent like lying Suffolk. His poisonous and deadly sting
shamefully killed your loving uncle (whose life was worth
twenty times more), so they say.

And therefore do they cry, though you forbid,
 275 That they will guard you, whether you will or no,
 From such fell serpents as false Suffolk is,
 With whose envenomed and fatal sting,
 Your loving uncle, twenty times his worth,
 They say, is shamefully bereft of life.

COMMONS

280 *[Within]* An answer from the king, my
 Lord of Salisbury!

SUFFOLK

'Tis like the commons, rude unpolish'd hinds,
 Could send such message to their sovereign:
 But you, my lord, were glad to be employ'd,
 285 To show how quaint an orator you are:
 But all the honour Salisbury hath won
 Is, that he was the lord ambassador
 Sent from a sort of tinkers to the king.

COMMONS

290 *[Within]* An answer from the king, or we will all break
 in!

KING HENRY VI

Go, Salisbury, and tell them all from me.
 I thank them for their tender loving care;
 And had I not been cited so by them,
 Yet did I purpose as they do entreat;
 295 For, sure, my thoughts do hourly prophesy
 Mischance unto my state by Suffolk's means:
 And therefore, by His majesty I swear,
 Whose far unworthy deputy I am,
 He shall not breathe infection in this air
 300 But three days longer, on the pain of death.

Exit SALISBURY

QUEEN MARGARET

O Henry, let me plead for gentle Suffolk!

KING HENRY VI

Ungentle queen, to call him gentle Suffolk!
 No more, I say: if thou dost plead for him,
 Thou wilt but add increase unto my wrath.
 305 Had I but said, I would have kept my word,
 But when I swear, it is irrevocable.
 If, after three days' space, thou here be'st found
 On any ground that I am ruler of,
 The world shall not be ransom for thy life.
 310 Come, Warwick, come, good Warwick, go with me;
 I have great matters to impart to thee.

Exeunt all but QUEEN MARGARET and SUFFOLK

QUEEN MARGARET

Mischance and sorrow go along with you!
 Heart's discontent and sour affliction
 Be playfellows to keep you company!
 315 There's two of you; the devil make a third!
 And threefold vengeance tend upon your steps!

SUFFOLK

Cease, gentle queen, these execrations,
 And let thy Suffolk take his heavy leave.

QUEEN MARGARET

320 Fie, coward woman and soft-hearted wretch!
 Hast thou not spirit to curse thine enemy?

COMMONS

[Inside] We want an answer from the king, my Lord of
 Salisbury!

SUFFOLK

We expect those rude rough peasants to send such a
 message to their king. But you, my lord, were happy to be
 their messenger, so you can show what a skillful speaker
 you are. But all the honor that Salisbury has won is that he
 was the lord ambassador a gang of beggars and thieves¹⁴
 sent to the king.

¹⁴ "Tinkers" refers to menders of metal pots and kettles but it can be applied to beggars and thieves as well.

COMMONS

[Inside] We want an answer from the king, or we'll break in!

KING HENRY VI

Go, Salisbury, and tell them everything from me. I thank
 them for their loving care for me, and even if they hadn't
 urged me, I was still planning to do what they propose. I
 predict that Suffolk means to overthrow me. And therefore,
 I swear by God, whose unworthy agent I am, that he shall
 not contaminate this air for longer than three days, on pain
 of death.

SALISBURY exits.

QUEEN MARGARET

Oh Henry, let me speak on kind Suffolk's behalf.

KING HENRY VI

You are an unkind queen to call him kind Suffolk! I'm not
 going to say anything else. If you speak for him, you will
 increase my anger. Had I only said it, I would have kept my
 word, but when I swear it, it is irreversible. *[To SUFFOLK]* If
 you are found on any part of the land that I rule after three
 days, the whole world won't be a price big enough to
 ransom your life. Come, Warwick; good Warwick, come with
 me. I have things that I want to discuss with you.

Exit all but QUEEN MARGARET and SUFFOLK.

QUEEN MARGARET

Let bad luck and sorrow go away with you! Heart's
 discontent and sour suffering can keep you company!
 There's two of you, then, and the devil will make a third
 one! And vengeance three times over will follow you!

SUFFOLK

Stop these curses, kind queen, and let your Suffolk leave
 sadly.

QUEEN MARGARET

Ugh, you are like a coward woman and a girl with a
 sensitive heart! Don't you have the courage to curse your
 enemy?

SUFFOLK

A plague upon them! Wherefore should I curse them?
 Would curses kill, as doth the mandrake's groan,
 I would invent as bitter-searching terms,
 As curst, as harsh and horrible to hear,
 325 Deliver'd strongly through my fixed teeth,
 With full as many signs of deadly hate,
 As lean-faced Envy in her loathsome cave:
 My tongue should stumble in mine earnest words;
 Mine eyes should sparkle like the beaten flint;
 330 Mine hair be fixed on end, as one distract;
 Ay, every joint should seem to curse and ban:
 And even now my burthen'd heart would break,
 Should I not curse them. Poison be their drink!
 Gall, worse than gall, the daintiest that they taste!
 335 Their sweetest shade a grove of cypress trees!
 Their chiefest prospect murdering basilisks!
 Their softest touch as smart as lizards' sting!
 Their music frightful as the serpent's hiss,
 And boding screech-owls make the concert full!
 340 All the foul terrors in dark-seated hell--

QUEEN MARGARET

Enough, sweet Suffolk; thou torment'st thyself;
 And these dread curses, like the sun 'gainst glass,
 Or like an overcharged gun, recoil,
 And turn the force of them upon thyself.

SUFFOLK

345 You bade me ban, and will you bid me leave?
 Now, by the ground that I am banish'd from,
 Well could I curse away a winter's night,
 Though standing naked on a mountain top,
 Where biting cold would never let grass grow,
 350 And think it but a minute spent in sport.

QUEEN MARGARET

O, let me entreat thee cease. Give me thy hand,
 That I may dew it with my mournful tears;
 Nor let the rain of heaven wet this place,
 To wash away my woful monuments.
 355 O, could this kiss be printed in thy hand,
 That thou mightst think upon these by the seal,
 Through whom a thousand sighs are breathed for thee!
 So, get thee gone, that I may know my grief;
 'Tis but surmised whiles thou art standing by,
 360 As one that surfeits thinking on a want.
 I will repeal thee, or, be well assured,
 Adventure to be banished myself:
 And banished I am, if but from thee.
 Go; speak not to me; even now be gone.
 365 O, go not yet! Even thus two friends condemn'd
 Embrace and kiss and take ten thousand leaves,
 Loather a hundred times to part than die.
 Yet now farewell; and farewell life with thee!

SUFFOLK

Thus is poor Suffolk ten times banished;
 370 Once by the king, and three times thrice by thee.
 'Tis not the land I care for, wert thou thence;
 A wilderness is populous enough,
 So Suffolk had thy heavenly company:
 For where thou art, there is the world itself,
 375 With every several pleasure in the world,
 And where thou art not, desolation.
 I can no more: live thou to joy thy life;
 Myself no joy in nought but that thou livest.

*Enter VAUX***QUEEN MARGARET**

Wither goes Vaux so fast? What news, I prithee?

SUFFOLK

A plague on them! Why should I curse them? If curses could
 kill like a mandrake ¹⁵'s shriek, I would come up with such
 piercing words, harsh and horrible to hear, and I would
 deliver them strongly through my clenched teeth, with as
 many signs of deadly hate as Envy in her hateful cave. My
 tongue would stutter when I say those true words, my eyes
 would sparkle like the stone which gives off a spark when it
 is struck, and my hair would stand upright like a madman.
 And even now my heart would break, if I didn't curse
 them. Let them drink poison! Bile, worse than bile, would
 be the most refined thing that they would taste! Their
 sweetest shade would be a forest of cypress trees ¹⁶! Their
 greatest view would be murdering basilisks! Their softest
 touch would be as painful as a lizard's sting! Their music
 would be as frightening as the serpent's hiss, and ominous
 screeching owls would make the concert of noises
 complete! All the horrible terrors in dark hell--

QUEEN MARGARET

Enough, sweet Suffolk. You are torturing yourself. And these
 horrible curses, like the sun against a glass, or like an
 overloaded gun, recoil and turn the force on yourself.

SUFFOLK

You told me to curse and now you tell me to stop? Now, by
 the ground that I am banished from, I could curse away a
 winter's night. If I were standing naked on the top of the
 mountain, where biting cold would never allow grass to
 grow, I'd think it was only a minute of entertainment.

QUEEN MARGARET

Oh, let me beg you to stop this. Give me your hand, so I can
 cover it with my mournful tears. Don't let even the holiest
 rain make this place wet, to wash away my sorrowful
 mementos. Oh, if this kiss could print my lips on your hand,
 so that you could think of the lips which breathe a
 thousand sighs for you! So go, so that I can know how
 terrible my grief is. I can only imagine it if you're still here,
 and I am like one that overindulges and grows sick by
 deprivation. I will recall you from exile, or be sure that I will
 try to be banished as well. And I am banished from you. Go,
 don't speak to me, and be gone. Oh, don't go yet! Two
 condemned friends may embrace and kiss and say goodbye
 ten thousand times, more reluctantly than to die a hundred
 times. Now, goodbye! And goodbye life, with you.

SUFFOLK

So poor Suffolk is banished ten times--once by the king,
 and nine times by you. I don't care about this land, if you
 are not in it. A wilderness is inhabited enough, provided
 that Suffolk has your heavenly company. Because where
 you are, there is the whole world, with all the joys of the
 world, and where you are not, there is desolation. I can't do
 this anymore. Live to enjoy your life. I won't have joy in
 anything except in knowing that you are still alive.

*VAUX enters.***QUEEN MARGARET**

Why are you in a rush, Vaux? What news do you bring?

¹⁵ Do you remember the plants in Harry Potter's Herbology class that shrieked when their roots were pulled out of the soil? Those were mandrakes, mythical creatures that Shakespeare and J. K. Rowling apparently both were fascinated by.

¹⁶ Cypress trees were linked with death in Renaissance literature and imagery.

VAUX

380 To signify unto his majesty
That Cardinal Beaufort is at point of death;
For suddenly a grievous sickness took him,
That makes him gasp and stare and catch the air,
Blaspheming God and cursing men on earth.
385 Sometimes he talks as if Duke Humphrey's ghost
Were by his side; sometime he calls the king,
And whispers to his pillow, as to him,
The secrets of his overcharged soul;
And I am sent to tell his majesty
390 That even now he cries aloud for him.

QUEEN MARGARET

Go tell this heavy message to the king.

Exit VAUX

QUEEN MARGARET

Ay me! What is this world! What news are these!
But wherefore grieve I at an hour's poor loss,
395 Omitting Suffolk's exile, my soul's treasure?
Why only, Suffolk, mourn I not for thee,
And with the southern clouds contend in tears,
Theirs for the earth's increase, mine for my sorrows?
Now get thee hence: the king, thou know'st, is coming;
400 If thou be found by me, thou art but dead.

SUFFOLK

If I depart from thee, I cannot live;
And in thy sight to die, what were it else
But like a pleasant slumber in thy lap?
Here could I breathe my soul into the air,
405 As mild and gentle as the cradle-babe
Dying with mother's dug between its lips:
Where, from thy sight, I should be raging mad,
And cry out for thee to close up mine eyes,
To have thee with thy lips to stop my mouth;
410 So shouldst thou either turn my flying soul,
Or I should breathe it so into thy body,
And then it lived in sweet Elysium.
To die by thee were but to die in jest;
From thee to die were torture more than death:
415 O, let me stay, befall what may befall!

QUEEN MARGARET

Away! Though parting be a fretful corrosive,
It is applied to a deathful wound.
To France, sweet Suffolk: let me hear from thee;
For wheresoe'er thou art in this world's globe,
420 I'll have an Iris that shall find thee out.

SUFFOLK

I go.

QUEEN MARGARET

And take my heart with thee.

SUFFOLK

A jewel, lock'd into the wofull'st cask
That ever did contain a thing of worth.
425 Even as a splitted bark, so sunder we
This way fall I to death.

QUEEN MARGARET

This way for me.

Exeunt severally

VAUX

To tell his majesty that Cardinal Beaufort is almost dead,
because a sudden sickness took over him. It makes him
gasp and stare and breath heavily, cursing God and men on
earth. Sometimes he talks as if Duke Humphrey's ghost is
standing by his side; sometimes he calls the king and
whispers to his pillow as it were him. He confesses the
secrets of his overburdened soul, and I am sent to tell his
majesty that he is screaming loudly for him even at this
moment.

QUEEN MARGARET

Go and give that sad message to the king.

VAUX exits.

QUEEN MARGARET

Poor me! What is this world? What sort of news is this? But
why do I grieve at a loss of an old man, disregarding the
exile of Suffolk, the treasure of my soul? Why do I not
mourn for you, Suffolk, and compete with the southern
cloud ¹⁷ for tears--theirs for the earth's increase, mine for
sorrows? Now go away. The king, as you know, is coming,
and if he found you with me, you are dead.

¹⁷ The rain was thought to come mainly from the south.

SUFFOLK

If I leave you, I cannot live. And what else is it to die ¹⁸ in
front of you, but a pleasant sleep in your lap? Here I could
breathe my last breath, as mild and gentle as the baby
dying with mother's nipple between its lips. Whereas I will
go mad when I'm away from you, and cry out for you to
close my eyes, to have you stop my mouth with your lips.
So you would return my flying soul, or I would breathe it
into your body, where it would live in sweet heaven ¹⁹. To
die by you would not be dying at all. To die away from you is
more torturous than any other death. Oh, let me stay, no
matter what happens!

¹⁸ This use of "die" plays on the double meaning of death as sexual climax. The sexual wordplay continues with "lap."

¹⁹ "Elysium" is heaven or paradise in Greek mythology.

QUEEN MARGARET

Go away! Although saying goodbye to you is like putting an
aggravating corrosive to a deadly wound. Go to France,
sweet Suffolk, and let me hear from you. Because wherever
you may in this world's globe, I'll have an Iris ²⁰ that shall
find you.

²⁰ Iris, the Greek goddess of the rainbow, was also a messenger.

SUFFOLK

I am going.

QUEEN MARGARET

And take my heart with you.

SUFFOLK

It's like a jewel, locked in the saddest casket that never
contained such a worthy thing. We are split in two like a
ship that's broken in half. I go to my death this way.

QUEEN MARGARET

And this way for me.

They exit separately.

Act 3, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter the KING, SALISBURY, WARWICK, to the CARDINAL in bed

KING HENRY VI

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

CARDINAL

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

KING HENRY VI

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

WARWICK

Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks to thee.

CARDINAL

Bring me unto my trial when you will.
10 Died he not in his bed? Where should he die?
Can I make men live, whether they will or no?
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.
15 He hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded them.
Comb down his hair; look, look! It stands upright,
Like lime-twigs set to catch my winged soul.
Give me some drink; and bid the apothecary
Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.

KING HENRY VI

20 O thou eternal Mover of the heavens.
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!
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

25 See, how the pangs of death do make him grin!

SALISBURY

Disturb him not; let him pass peaceably.

KING HENRY VI

Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure be!
Lord cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.
30 He dies, and makes no sign. O God, forgive him!

WARWICK

So bad a death argues a monstrous life.

KING HENRY VI

Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.
Close up his eyes and draw the curtain close;
And let us all to meditation.
35

Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation

The KING, SALISBURY, and WARWICK enter to visit the CARDINAL, who is in bed.

KING HENRY VI

How is my lord? Speak to your king, Beaufort.

CARDINAL

If you were death, I'd give you England's treasure (which would be enough to buy another similar island), just so you will let me live without any pain.



KING HENRY VI


Ah, what does this say about your evil life, that death appears so terribly to you!


WARWICK

Beaufort, it is your king who is speaking to you.

CARDINAL

Bring me to your trial when you want. Didn't Gloucester die in his bed? Where else should he die? Can I make men live, whether they want or not? Oh, don't torture me! I will confess. Is he alive again? Then show me where he is! I'll give a thousand pounds just to look at him. He doesn't have eyes, the dust  has made him blind. Comb his hair and look, look! It stands upright, like twigs smeared with birdlime  that are ready to catch my soul as it takes flight. Give me something to drink, and tell the apothecary to bring the strong poison that I bought from him.

 The "durst"/dust to which all dead bodies turn.

 The twigs are smeared with birdlime to catch birds. Cardinal describes his soul as "winged", therefore referring to the bird image.

KING HENRY VI

Oh, you eternal God of heavens! Look gently on this poor man! Oh, beat back the interfering devil that attacks this man's soul! And wash away this black despair from his heart!

WARWICK

See how the pain of death makes him grimace!

SALISBURY

Don't disturb him; let him die peacefully.

KING HENRY VI

Peace to his soul, if God wants him to have peace! Lord cardinal, if you think of heaven's bliss, hold up your hand and give a signal that you hope to be saved. [The CARDINAL dies] He died without giving a sign. Oh, God, forgive him!

WARWICK

Such a bad death suggests he has lead a monstrous life.

KING HENRY VI

Don't judge him. We are all sinners. Close his eyes and draw the curtain tightly, and let us all reflect and pray.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Alarum. Fight at sea. Ordnance goes off. Enter a Captain, a Master, a Master's-mate, WALTER WHITMORE, and others; with them SUFFOLK, and others, prisoners

CAPTAIN

The gaudy, blabbing and remorseful day
Is crept into the bosom of the sea;
And now loud-howling wolves arouse the jades
That drag the tragic melancholy night;
5 Who, with their drowsy, slow and flagging wings,
Clip dead men's graves and from their misty jaws
Breathe foul contagious darkness in the air.
Therefore bring forth the soldiers of our prize;
For, whilst our pinnace anchors in the Downs,
10 Here shall they make their ransom on the sand,
Or with their blood stain this discolour'd shore.
Master, this prisoner freely give I thee;
And thou that art his mate, make boot of this;
The other, Walter Whitmore, is thy share.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

15 What is my ransom, master? Let me know.

MASTER

A thousand crowns, or else lay down your head.

MASTER'S-MATE

And so much shall you give, or off goes yours.

CAPTAIN

What, think you much to pay two thousand crowns,
And bear the name and port of gentlemen?
20 Cut both the villains' throats; for die you shall:
The lives of those which we have lost in fight
Be counterpoised with such a petty sum!

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I'll give it, sir; and therefore spare my life.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

And so will I and write home for it straight.

WHITMORE

25 [To SUFFOLK] I lost mine eye in laying the prize
aboard,
And therefore to revenge it, shalt thou die;
And so should these, if I might have my will.

CAPTAIN

Be not so rash; take ransom, let him live.

SUFFOLK

30 Look on my George; I am a gentleman:
Rate me at what thou wilt, thou shalt be paid.

WHITMORE

And so am I; my name is Walter Whitmore.
How now! Why start'st thou? What, doth
death affright?


SUFFOLK


35 Thy name affrights me, in whose sound is death.
A cunning man did calculate my birth
And told me that by water I should die:

Shakescleare Translation

Alarm sounds. Fight at sea. Cannon goes off. A captain, a ship's master, a master's servant, and WALTER WHITMORE enter with others. SUFFOLK and prisoners enter with them.

CAPTAIN

The bright day has sunk into the depth of the sea, and now loud-howling wolves awaken the dragons that drag night's sad chariot. Their drowsy, slow and dropping wings hit dead men's graves, and they breathe horrible contagious darkness into the air from their misty jaws. So bring forward the soldiers from the ship we captured. While our boat  stops in the Downs, they will either pay their ransom here on the sand, or we'll stain this gray shore with their blood. Master, I give you this prisoner freely. And since you are his companion, take advantage of this. Walt Whitmore, the other is yours.

 "Pinnace" is a small boat mastered by two men.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

What is the ransom, master? Tell me.

MASTER

A thousand crowns, or else you'll lose your head.

MASTER'S-MATE

And so much you will give us, or else we'll cut off your head.

CAPTAIN

Do you think it's too much to pay two thousand crowns, since you bear the name and wear the clothes of gentlemen? Cut both the villain's throats, because you shall die! Such a small amount isn't worth the lives of the men we lost in battle.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I'll give it to you, sir; so spare my life!

SECOND GENTLEMAN

And so will I; I'll write home for the money straight away.


WHITMORE


[To SUFFOLK] I lost my eye in boarding the captured ship. So to take revenge, you will die and so would all of them, if I have a say in it.

CAPTAIN


Don't be so harsh. Take the money and let them live.


SUFFOLK

Look on my badge of George . I am a gentleman. Whatever amount you think is worthy of me, it shall be paid.

 Suffolk's "George" is a badge or emblem of Saint George, patron saint of England.

WHITMORE

I will do just that. My name is Walter  Whitmore! Oh? Why are you surprised? What? Does death frighten you?

 "Walter" was pronounced as "water", which is why Suffolk is terrified. Eleanor's magician friends prophesied that Suffolk will die by "water".

SUFFOLK

Your name frightens me. It sounds like death in my ears. A man skilled in magic cast my horoscope and told me that I will die by water. But don't let this make you think about

Yet let not this make thee be bloody-minded;
Thy name is Gaultier, being rightly sounded.

WHITMORE

- 40 Gaultier or Walter, which it is, I care not:
Never yet did base dishonour blur our name,
But with our sword we wiped away the blot;
Therefore, when merchant-like I sell revenge,
Broke be my sword, my arms torn and defaced,
45 And I proclaim'd a coward through the world!

SUFFOLK

Stay, Whitmore; for thy prisoner is a prince,
The Duke of Suffolk, William de la Pole.

WHITMORE

The Duke of Suffolk muffled up in rags!

SUFFOLK

- Ay, but these rags are no part of the duke:
50 Jove sometimes went disguised, and why not I?

CAPTAIN

But Jove was never slain, as thou shalt be.

SUFFOLK

- Obscure and lowly swain, King Henry's blood,
The honourable blood of Lancaster,
Must not be shed by such a jaded groom.
55 Hast thou not kiss'd thy hand and held my stirrup?
Bare-headed plodded by my foot-cloth mule
And thought thee happy when I shook my head?
How often hast thou waited at my cup,
Fed from my trencher, kneel'd down at the board,
60 When I have feasted with Queen Margaret?
Remember it and let it make thee crest-fall'n,
Ay, and allay this thy abortive pride;
How in our voiding lobby hast thou stood
And duly waited for my coming forth?
65 This hand of mine hath writ in thy behalf,
And therefore shall it charm thy riotous tongue.

WHITMORE

Speak, captain, shall I stab the forlorn swain?

CAPTAIN

First let my words stab him, as he hath me.

SUFFOLK

Base slave, thy words are blunt and so art thou.

CAPTAIN

- 70 Convey him hence and on our longboat's side
Strike off his head.

SUFFOLK

Thou darest not, for thy own.

CAPTAIN

Yes, Pole.

SUFFOLK

Pole?

my death. Your name is Gaultier, if it is pronounced
correctly.

WHITMORE

Gaultier or Walter, I don't care which it is. Lowly dishonor
has never stained my name, because we wiped away that
spot with our sword. Therefore, if I ransom prisoners like a
merchant, my sword is broken, my coat of arms is torn and
damaged, and I am called a coward throughout the world!

SUFFOLK

No more, Whitmore. Your prisoner is a nobleman--the Duke
of Suffolk, William de la Pole.

WHITMORE

The Duke of Suffolk dressed in rags!

SUFFOLK

Yes, but these rags aren't a part of the duke. Jove ⁴
sometimes disguised himself, so why shouldn't I?

CAPTAIN

But Jove was never killed and you will be.

SUFFOLK

Insignificant and lowly peasant, King Henry's blood--the
honorable blood of Lancaster--won't be spilled by such a
contemptible servant ⁵. Have you not kissed your hand ⁶
and held my stirrup? You walked bare-headed ⁷ by my
mule and considered yourself happy when I acknowledged
you even slightly. How often have you served me drinks,
acted as my taster, and bowed at my table when I was
having dinner with Queen Margaret? Remember that and
let it make you humble! And stop being so proud; it doesn't
work for you. Remember how you used to stand in our
lobby and obediently wait for my arrival? My hand has
written on your behalf, so it has the right to silence your
disrespectful words.

WHITMORE

Speak, captain. Should I stab this wretched fellow?

CAPTAIN

First, let my words stab him, as he has just done with his.

SUFFOLK

Lowly slave, your words are as useless as you are.

CAPTAIN

Take him away and cut off his head on the side of our
largest boat.

SUFFOLK

You wouldn't dare, for fear of losing your own head.

CAPTAIN

Yes I would, Pole.

SUFFOLK

Pole? ⁸

⁴ "Jove" is the Roman king of the gods. He disguised himself as a bull and an eagle for example.

⁵ "Groom" refers to specifically a servant who tended horses.

⁶ This is a gesture of respect.

⁷ Servants did not wear hats in presence of their masters, therefore "bare-headed".

⁸ Suffolk is offended that the Captain calls him by his surname instead of his title.

CAPTAIN

75 Pool! Sir Pool! Lord!
 Ay, kennel, puddle, sink; whose filth and dirt
 Troubles the silver spring where England drinks.
 Now will I dam up this thy yawning mouth
 For swallowing the treasure of the realm:
 80 Thy lips that kiss'd the queen shall sweep the ground;
 And thou that smiledst at good Duke Humphrey's death,
 Against the senseless winds shalt grin in vain,
 Who in contempt shall hiss at thee again:
 And wedded be thou to the hags of hell,
 85 For daring to affy a mighty lord
 Unto the daughter of a worthless king,
 Having neither subject, wealth, nor diadem.
 By devilish policy art thou grown great,
 And, like ambitious Sylla, overgorged
 90 With gobbets of thy mother's bleeding heart.
 By thee Anjou and Maine were sold to France,
 The false revolting Normans thorough thee
 Disdain to call us lord, and Picardy
 Hath slain their governors, surprised our forts,
 95 And sent the ragged soldiers wounded home.
 The princely Warwick, and the Nevils all,
 Whose dreadful swords were never drawn in vain,
 As hating thee, are rising up in arms:
 And now the house of York, thrust from the crown
 100 By shameful murder of a guiltless king
 And lofty proud encroaching tyranny,
 Burns with revenging fire; whose hopeful colours
 Advance our half-faced sun, striving to shine,
 Under the which is writ 'Invitis nubibus.'
 105 The commons here in Kent are up in arms:
 And, to conclude, reproach and beggary
 Is crept into the palace of our king.
 And all by thee. Away! Convey him hence.

SUFFOLK

O that I were a god, to shoot forth thunder
 110 Upon these paltry, servile, abject drudges!
 Small things make base men proud: this villain here,
 Being captain of a pinnace, threatens more
 Than Bargulus the strong Illyrian pirate.
 Drones suck not eagles' blood but rob beehives:
 115 It is impossible that I should die
 By such a lowly vassal as thyself.
 Thy words move rage and not remorse in me:
 I go of message from the queen to France;
 I charge thee waft me safely cross the Channel.

CAPTAIN

120 Walter,--

WHITMORE

Come, Suffolk, I must waft thee to thy death.

SUFFOLK

Gelidus timor occupat artus it is thee I fear.

WHITMORE

Thou shalt have cause to fear before I leave thee.
 What, are ye daunted now? Now will ye stoop?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

125 My gracious lord, entreat him, speak him fair.

SUFFOLK

Suffolk's imperial tongue is stern and rough,
 Used to command, untaught to plead for favour.
 Far be it we should honour such as these
 With humble suit: no, rather let my head
 130 Stoop to the block than these knees bow to any
 Save to the God of heaven and to my king;

CAPTAIN

Pool! Sir Pool! Lord! Yes, gutter, puddle, sewer, whose filth
 and dirt muddies the silver spring where England drinks.
 Now I'll block up your gaping mouth for swallowing the
 treasure of the kingdom. Your lips, that once kissed the
 queen, will feel the ground now. And you that smiled when
 good Duke Humphrey died will grimace in vain against the
 merciless winds, which will hiss at you in contempt. And
 you will be married to the old women of hell ⁹, for daring
 to engage a mighty lord ¹⁰ to the daughter of a worthless
 king who had neither followers, wealth, nor a crown. You
 have grown powerful by devilish tricks, and like ambitious
 Sylla ¹¹, you are stuffed with chunks of raw flesh from your
 country's bleeding heart. Anjou and Maine were sold to
 France because of you, your false rebellious Normans
 refused to call us lords because of you, and Picardy ¹² has
 killed their lords, seized our fortresses, and sent the
 exhausted and wounded soldiers home. The noble Warwick
 and all the Nevils, whose dreadful swords were never
 drawn senselessly, are rising up because they hate you. And
 now the house of York, deprived of the crown by the
 shameful murder of a guiltless king ¹³ and grasping
 ambition, is ready for revenge. Their hopeful military
 banners show a half-faced sun ¹⁴, rising to shine, under
 which is written: "in spite of clouds." ¹⁵ The commons
 here in Kent are ready to fight. And to conclude, disgrace
 and beggary have spread into the palace of our king. And
 this is all because of you! Away! Take him from here.

SUFFOLK

Oh, if only I were a god ¹⁶ and I could shoot thunder on
 these worthless, slavish, cowardly base peasants! Small
 things make small men proud. This villain here, being a
 captain of a boat, threatens me more than Bargulus, the
 strong Illyrian pirate. The non-working male bees ¹⁷ don't
 suck eagles' blood but rob beehives. It is impossible that I'll
 die by the hand of such a lowly servant like you! Your words
 make me angry and not guilty. I'm going to carry a message
 from the queen to France. I demand that you carry me
 safely across the Channel.

CAPTAIN

Walter,--

WHITMORE

Come, Suffolk, I must carry you to your death.

SUFFOLK

"Cold fear almost entirely seizes my limbs." It is you that I'm
 afraid of.

WHITMORE

You'll have a reason to be afraid before I'm done with you.
 Are you scared now? Will you bow now?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

[To SUFFOLK] My gracious lord, beg him. Speak courteously
 to him.

SUFFOLK

Suffolk's commanding tongue is strict and rough; it is used
 to giving commands and not used to asking for a favor. It is
 too much for us ¹⁸ to honor someone like you with humble
 begging. No, I'd rather let my head bow to the cutting block
 than these knees bow to anyone, apart from the God of
 heaven and my king. I would sooner dance on a bloody

⁹ By "the hags of hell", the Captain refers to the three Furies of classical mythology.

¹⁰ This section of the speech recalls Suffolk's marrying of Margaret to King Henry VI.

¹¹ Sylla was a famously violent dictator of Rome.

¹² "Picardy" is a region in northern France.

¹³ The "guiltless king" is Richard II, who was wrongfully deposed by Bullingbrook who later became Henry IV and established the house of Lancaster.

¹⁴ An image of the sun rising above the clouds was the emblem of Edward III and Richard II.

¹⁵ This phrase is in Latin in the original.

¹⁶ Suffolk refers to Jove (Jupiter), the Roman king of the gods who was traditionally armed with a thunderbolt.

¹⁷ In the Renaissance, it believed that drone bees — those bees tasked with mating with the queen bee — both sucked the blood of eagles and stole honey from other beehives.

¹⁸ Suffolk uses the royal pronoun "we"/"us".

And sooner dance upon a bloody pole
Than stand uncover'd to the vulgar groom.
True nobility is exempt from fear:

135 More can I bear than you dare execute.

CAPTAIN

Hale him away, and let him talk no more.

SUFFOLK

Come, soldiers, show what cruelty ye can,
That this my death may never be forgot!
Great men oft die by vile bezonians:
140 A Roman sworder and banditto slave
Murder'd sweet Tully; Brutus' bastard hand
Stabb'd Julius Caesar; savage islanders
Pompey the Great; and Suffolk dies by pirates.

Exeunt Whitmore and others with Suffolk

CAPTAIN

145 And as for these whose ransom we have set,
It is our pleasure one of them depart;
Therefore come you with us and let him go.

Exeunt all but the First Gentleman

Re-enter WHITMORE with SUFFOLK's body

WHITMORE

150 There let his head and lifeless body lie,
Until the queen his mistress bury it.

Exit

FIRST GENTLEMAN

O barbarous and bloody spectacle!
His body will I bear unto the king;
If he revenge it not, yet will his friends;
So will the queen, that living held him dear.

Exit with the body

spike than stand hat-less ¹⁹ next to this vulgar servant.
True nobility is not afraid. I can take more than you dare to
throw at me.

¹⁹ Being "hat-less" was a mark of deference.

CAPTAIN

Drag him away and don't let him talk any more.

SUFFOLK

Come, soldiers and show all the cruelty you can, so that my
death may never be forgotten! Great men often die at the
hands of lowly beggars. A Roman assassin and bandit slave
murdered the sweet Tully ²⁰; the bastard Brutus ²¹
stabbed Julius Caeasar; savage islanders killed Pompey the
Great. ²² And Suffolk will be killed by pirates.

²⁰ "Tully" refers to the famous ancient Roman speaker Cicero.

²¹ There was a rumor that Brutus was Julius Caesar's illegitimate son.

²² Pompey the Great was a renowned Roman general.

WHITMORE and others exit with SUFFOLK.

CAPTAIN

And as for these whose ransom we have accepted, we'll let
one of you go. So you come with us, and let him go.

All exit but the First Gentleman.

WHITMORE re-enters with SUFFOLK's body.

WHITMORE

We'll let his head and lifeless body lie there, until his lover
the queen can bury it.

WHITMORE exits.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Oh, barbaric and bloody spectacle! I will take his body to
the king. If he doesn't take revenge, his friends will and so
will the queen that held him so dear when he was alive.

FIRST GENTLEMAN exits with SUFFOLK's body.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter GEORGE BEVIS and JOHN HOLLAND

BEVIS

Come, and get thee a sword, though made of a lath;
they have been up these two days.

HOLLAND

They have the more need to sleep now, then.

BEVIS

5 I tell thee, Jack Cade the clothier means to dress
the commonwealth, and turn it, and set a new nap upon
it.

HOLLAND

So he had need, for 'tis threadbare. Well, I say it
was never merry world in England since gentlemen came
up.

Shakescleare Translation

GEORGE BEVIS enters with JOHN HOLLAND.

BEVIS

Come and get yourself a sword, even though it's made of
wood. They've been rebelling these past two days.

HOLLAND

They have more reason to sleep now, then.

BEVIS

I am telling you, Jack Cade the cloth worker ¹ means to
clothe and reform the commonwealth, turn it upside down,
and give it a smooth finish.

¹ The "clothier" dealt with cloth after it had been woven.

HOLLAND

He really needs to, since it's worn-out. Well, I say that
England has never been as good as in the old days, ever
since gentlemen came into fashion.

BEVIS

10 O miserable age! Virtue is not regarded in handicrafts-men.

HOLLAND

The nobility think scorn to go in leather aprons.

BEVIS

Nay, more, the king's council are no good workmen.

HOLLAND

15 True; and yet it is said, labour in thy vocation; which is as much to say as, let the magistrates be labouring men; and therefore should we be magistrates.

BEVIS

Thou hast hit it; for there's no better sign of a brave mind than a hard hand.

HOLLAND

20 I see them! I see them! There's Best's son, the tanner of Wingham,--

BEVIS

He shall have the skin of our enemies, to make dog's-leather of.

HOLLAND

And Dick the Butcher,--

BEVIS

25 Then is sin struck down like an ox, and iniquity's throat cut like a calf.

HOLLAND

And Smith the weaver,--

BEVIS

Argo, their thread of life is spun.

HOLLAND

Come, come, let's fall in with them.

30 *Drum. Enter CADE, DICK the Butcher, SMITH the Weaver, and a Sawyer, with infinite numbers*

CADE

We John Cade, so termed of our supposed father,--

DICK

[Aside] Or rather, of stealing a cade of herrings.

CADE

35 For our enemies shall fall before us, inspired with the spirit of putting down kings and princes, --Command silence.

DICK

Silence!

CADE

My father was a Mortimer,--

BEVIS

Oh, it's a miserable time! Virtue is not valued in handicraft workers.

HOLLAND

The nobility consider it lowly to wear leather aprons like working men.

BEVIS

No, it's even worse. The king's council are not good working men.

HOLLAND

True! And yet it is said that each man must do his own job. Which is as much to say the magistrates should be working men. So we should be magistrates.

BEVIS

You have hit the nail on the head, because there is no better sign of a fine mind than a hand toughened by manual labor.

HOLLAND

I see them, I see them! There's Best's son, the craftsman of Wingham--

BEVIS

He'll make gloves out of the skin of our enemies!

HOLLAND

And Dick the Butcher--

BEVIS

He'll shoot down sin like an ox, and cut the throat of injustice like a calf.

HOLLAND

And Smith, the weaver--


BEVIS

So, their fate is determined.


HOLLAND


Come, come, let's join them!

Sound of drums. CADE, DICK the Butcher, SMITH the Weaver, and a Sawyer enter with a large group of people.


 "Sawyer" is a workman who saws timber.


CADE

We  John Cade, named after our supposed father--

 John Cade uses the royal pronoun "we".

DICK

[To himself] Or rather, because he stole a barrel  of herrings.

 The word for "barrel" was also "cade".

CADE

Our enemies will fall before us, since we're inspired to put down kings and noblemen--tell everyone to be quiet.

DICK

Be quiet!

CADE

My father was a Mortimer--

DICK

[Aside] He was an honest man, and a good bricklayer.

CADE

40 My mother a Plantagenet,--

DICK

[Aside] I knew her well; she was a midwife.

CADE

My wife descended of the Lacys,--

DICK

[Aside] She was, indeed, a pedler's daughter, and sold many laces.

SMITH

45 *[Aside]* But now of late, not able to travel with her furred pack, she washes bucks here at home.

CADE

Therefore am I of an honourable house.

DICK

50 *[Aside]* Ay, by my faith, the field is honourable; and there was he borne, under a hedge, for his father had never a house but the cage.

CADE

Valiant I am.

SMITH

[Aside] A' must needs; for beggary is valiant.

CADE

I am able to endure much.

DICK

55 *[Aside]* No question of that; for I have seen him whipped three market-days together.

CADE

I fear neither sword nor fire.

SMITH

[Aside] He need not fear the sword; for his coat is of proof.

DICK

60 *[Aside]* But methinks he should stand in fear of fire, being burnt i' the hand for stealing of sheep.

CADE

65 Be brave, then; for your captain is brave, and vows reformation. There shall be in England seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny: the three-hooped pot; shall have ten hoops and I will make it felony to drink small beer: all the realm shall be in common; and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass: and when I am king, as king I will be,--

DICK

[To himself] He was an honest man, and a good bricklayer ⁵

⁵ "Bricklayer" puns on Mortimer/ mortarer.

CADE

My mother a Plantagenet--

DICK

[To himself] I knew her well, she was a midwife.

CADE

My wife descended from the Lacys ⁶ --

⁶ "Lacys" is the family name of the earls of Lincoln.

DICK

[So only SMITH can hear him] Indeed, she was a pedlar ⁷'s daughter and sold many laces ⁸.

⁷ "Pedlar" was someone who travels around selling his goods.

⁸ "Laces" puns on "Lacys".

SMITH

[So only DICK can hear him] But recently, she is not able to travel ⁹ with her pedlar's pack ¹⁰, so she washes her laundry here at home.

⁹ "Travel" puns on "travail" (work but also have sex, as a whore).

¹⁰ This is probably raunchy wordplay ("furred pack" and "washes bucks") on female genitalia and sexual activity.

CADE

So I come from an honorable house.

DICK

[To himself] Yes, indeed, the field is honorable. In fact he was born in a field, under a hedge, since his father never had a house but only a cage.

CADE

I am brave.

SMITH

[To himself] Yes, he must be. Since being a beggar is brave ¹¹

¹¹ Smith may mean another meaning of "valiant" here, which is "capable of work".

CADE

I am able to endure much.

DICK

[To himself] There is no question of that, because I have seen him whipped at the market three days in a row.

CADE

I am not afraid of sword or fire.

SMITH

[So only DICK can hear him] He is not afraid of the sword, because his coat is so that it serves as an impenetrable armor.

DICK

[So only SMITH can hear him] But I think that he should be afraid of fire, since he was branded ¹² on the hand for stealing sheep.

¹² "Burnt" in this sense means that he was branded with a letter "T" for "thief".

CADE

Be brave, then, because your captain is brave and he promises you major changes. There will be seven halfpenny loaves of bread sold for a penny in England; the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops; ¹³ and I will make it a crime to drink weak beer. Everything in the country will be a common resource. My riding horse will go to graze on Cheapside. And when I am king, because I will be king--

¹³ "Three-hooped pots" contained the equivalent of two pints.

ALL

God save your majesty!

CADE

70 I thank you, good people: there shall be no money;
all shall eat and drink on my score; and I will
apparel them all in one livery, that they may agree
like brothers and worship me their lord.

DICK

The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.

CADE

75 Nay, that I mean to do. Is not this a lamentable
thing, that of the skin of an innocent lamb should
be made parchment? That parchment, being scribbled
o'er, should undo a man? Some say the bee stings:
but I say, 'tis the bee's wax; for I did but seal
80 once to a thing, and I was never mine own man
since. How now! Who's there?

Enter some, bringing forward the Clerk of Chartham

SMITH

The clerk of Chartham: he can write and read and
cast accompt.

CADE

O monstrous!

SMITH

We took him setting of boys' copies.

CADE

85 Here's a villain!

SMITH

Has a book in his pocket with red letters in't.

CADE

Nay, then, he is a conjurer.

DICK

Nay, he can make obligations, and write court-hand.

CADE

90 I am sorry for't: the man is a proper man, of mine
honour; unless I find him guilty, he shall not die.
Come hither, sirrah, I must examine thee: what is thy
name?

CLERK

Emmanuel.

DICK

95 They use to write it on the top of letters: 'twill
go hard with you.

CADE

Let me alone. Dost thou use to write thy name? Or
hast thou a mark to thyself, like an honest
plain-dealing man?

CLERK

100 Sir, I thank God, I have been so well brought up
that I can write my name.

ALL

God save your majesty!

CADE

I thank you, good people. There will be no money. Everyone
will eat and drink on me, and I will dress them all in one
uniform, so that they may get on like brothers and worship
me, their lord.

DICK

The first thing we'll do is kill all the lawyers.

CADE

No, that's my plan. Isn't it a miserable thing, that the skin of
an innocent lamb is made into parchment? And that
parchment is written on and then condemns a man? Some
say that the bee stings, but I say it's the bee's sealing wax,
because I put my name on a document once and I haven't
been my own person ever since. What's this? Who's there?

*A small group enters, bringing forward the Clerk of
Chartham.*

SMITH

The clerk of Chartham. He can write and read and add up
accounts.

CADE

Oh, how unnatural!

SMITH

We found him preparing written exercises for schoolboys.

CADE

Here's a villain!

SMITH

He has a book in his pocket with the saints' days printed in
red.

CADE

Ah, well, then he is a magician.

DICK

No, he can draw up legal bonds and write legal documents.

CADE

I am sorry for that. The man is a fine man, by my honor.
Unless I find him guilty, he won't die. Come here, sir, I must
question you. What's your name?

CLERK

[Emmanuel](#) ¹⁴.

¹⁴ "Emmanuel" means "God with us". It was a phrase often found at the top of letters.

DICK

They used to write it on the top of letters. It will be worse
with you.

CADE

Leave me alone. Do you usually write your name? Or do you
sign your name with a [mark](#) ¹⁵, like an honest simple man?

¹⁵ Illiterate men would sign with a "mark".

CLERK

Sir, I thank God, I have been so well brought up that I can
write my name.

ALL

He hath confessed: away with him! He's a villain and a traitor.

CADE

Away with him, I say! Hang him with his pen and ink-horn about his neck.

Exit one with the Clerk

Enter MICHAEL

MICHAEL

105 Where's our general?

CADE

Here I am, thou particular fellow.

MICHAEL

Fly, fly, fly! Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother are hard by, with the king's forces.

CADE

110 Stand, villain, stand, or I'll fell thee down. He shall be encountered with a man as good as himself: he is but a knight, is a'?

MICHAEL

No.

CADE

To equal him, I will make myself a knight presently.

Kneels

CADE

115 Rise up Sir John Mortimer.

Rises

CADE

Now have at him!

Enter SIR HUMPHREY and WILLIAM STAFFORD, with drum and soldiers

SIR HUMPHREY

120 Rebellious hinds, the filth and scum of Kent, Mark'd for the gallows, lay your weapons down; Home to your cottages, forsake this groom: The king is merciful, if you revolt.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

But angry, wrathful, and inclined to blood, If you go forward; therefore yield, or die.

CADE

125 As for these silken-coated slaves, I pass not: It is to you, good people, that I speak, Over whom, in time to come, I hope to reign; For I am rightful heir unto the crown.

SIR HUMPHREY

130 Villain, thy father was a plasterer; And thou thyself a shearman, art thou not?

CADE

And Adam was a gardener.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

And what of that?

ALL

He has confessed it! Take him away! He's a villain and a traitor.

CADE

Take him away, I say! Hang him with his pen and inkwell around his neck.

Someone exits with the clerk.

MICHAEL enters.

MICHAEL

Where is our general?

CADE

Here I am, man.

MICHAEL

Run, run run! Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother are close with the king's armies.

CADE

Wait, villain, wait! Or I'll stop you. He's picking a fight with a man as good as himself. He's nothing but a knight, right?

MICHAEL

No, nothing but a knight.

CADE

To match him, I'll make myself into a knight right now.

CADE kneels.

CADE

Stand up, Sir John Mortimer.

CADE stands up.

CADE

Now, let's have him!

SIR HUMPHREY and WILLIAM STAFFORD enter with drum and soldiers.

SIR HUMPHREY

Rebellious peasants, the filth and scum of Kent, ready for the gallows--put your weapons down. Go home to your cottages; abandon this servant Cade. The king will have mercy, if you surrender.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

But if you are angry, mad, and bloodthirsty, and if you go ahead, you'll either surrender or you'll die.

CADE

I don't care for these slaves with silk coats on. It is to you, good people, that I speak. I hope to rule over you in time to come, because I am the rightful heir to the crown!

SIR HUMPHREY

Villain, your father was a plasterer. And you yourself are a man who shears wool, aren't you?

CADE

And Adam was a gardener.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

So what?

CADE

Marry, this: Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.
Married the Duke of Clarence' daughter, did he not?

SIR HUMPHREY

135 Ay, sir.

CADE

By her he had two children at one birth.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

That's false.

CADE

140 Ay, there's the question; but I say, 'tis true:
The elder of them, being put to nurse,
Was by a beggar-woman stolen away;
And, ignorant of his birth and parentage,
Became a bricklayer when he came to age:
His son am I; deny it, if you can.

DICK

Nay, 'tis too true; therefore he shall be king.

SMITH

145 Sir, he made a chimney in my father's house, and
the bricks are alive at this day to testify it;
therefore deny it not.

SIR HUMPHREY

And will you credit this base drudge's words,
That speaks he knows not what?

ALL

150 Ay, marry, will we; therefore get ye gone.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

Jack Cade, the Duke of York hath taught you this.

CADE

155 *[Aside]* He lies, for I invented it myself.
Go to, sirrah, tell the king from me, that, for his
father's sake, Henry the Fifth, in whose time boys
went to span-counter for French crowns, I am content
he shall reign; but I'll be protector over him.

DICK

And furthermore, we'll have the Lord Say's head for
selling the dukedom of Maine.

CADE

160 And good reason; for thereby is England maimed, and
fain to go with a staff, but that my puissance holds
it up. Fellow kings, I tell you that that Lord Say
hath gelded the commonwealth, and made it an eunuch:
and more than that, he can speak French; and
therefore he is a traitor.

SIR HUMPHREY

165 O gross and miserable ignorance!

CADE

Nay, answer, if you can: the Frenchmen are our
enemies; go to, then, I ask but this: can he that
speaks with the tongue of an enemy be a good
counsellor, or no?

ALL

170 No, no; and therefore we'll have his head.

CADE

So this: Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March married the Duke
of Clarence's daughter, didn't he?

SIR HUMPHREY

Yes, sir.

CADE

He had twins with her.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

That's not true.

CADE

Yes, that's the question. But I say that it is true. The elder of
them was given to the nurse to be breastfed, and the baby
was stolen away by a beggar woman. He didn't know about
his birth or parentage and so he became a bricklayer when
he grew up. I am his son. Deny it if you can.

DICK

No, it's too true! So he should be king.

SMITH

Sir, he built a chimney in my father's house and the bricks
are still there today to testify it. So don't deny it.

SIR HUMPHREY

And will you believe the words of this lowly slave that
doesn't know what he is talking about?

ALL

Yes, we will. So go away!

WILLIAM STAFFORD

Jack Cade, the Duke of York has told you to do this.

CADE

[To himself] He's wrong, since I made it up myself. *[Aloud]*
Go, sir, tell the king from me that for his father's
sake—Henry the Fifth, in whose time boys fought the
French—I am happy that he's king. But I'll be his protector.

DICK

And moreover, we'll have the Lord Say's head for selling the
dukedom of Maine.

CADE

And for good reason. Because of him, England is now
maimed, obliged to walk with a staff, and only my power
holds it up. Fellow kings, I tell you that Lord Say has
castrated the commonwealth and made it an eunuch. And
worse than that, he can speak French, and therefore he is a
traitor.

SIR HUMPHREY

Oh, utter and pitiable ignorance!

CADE

No, answer if you can. The French are our enemies. You can
leave after I ask you this: can someone who speaks the
language of the enemy be a good counselor, or not?

ALL

No, no; and so we'll have his head!

WILLIAM STAFFORD

Well, seeing gentle words will not prevail,
Assail them with the army of the king.

SIR HUMPHREY

Herald, away; and throughout every town
Proclaim them traitors that are up with Cade;
175 That those which fly before the battle ends
May, even in their wives' and children's sight,
Be hang'd up for example at their doors:
And you that be the king's friends, follow me.

Exeunt WILLIAM STAFFORD and SIR HUMPHREY, and soldiers

CADE

And you that love the commons, follow me.
180 Now show yourselves men; 'tis for liberty.
We will not leave one lord, one gentleman:
Spare none but such as go in clouted shoon;
For they are thrifty honest men, and such
As would, but that they dare not, take our parts.

DICK

185 They are all in order and march toward us.

CADE

But then are we in order when we are most
out of order. Come, march forward.

Exeunt

WILLIAM STAFFORD

Well, since peaceable words won't work, attack them with
the king's army.

SIR HUMPHREY

Messenger, go and proclaim in every town that those who
are fighting alongside Cade are traitors. And announce that
those who try to run away before the battle ends may be
hanged at their own doors as an example, even in the sight
of their wives and children. All of you that fight for the king,
follow me!

WILLIAM STAFFORD and SIR HUMPHREY exit with soldiers.

CADE

And you that love the common people, follow me! Now
show yourselves, men; this fight is for freedom. We won't
spare one lord or one gentleman. Don't spare anyone but
people who wear patched shoes, because they are
respectable honest men and would be on our side, if they
dared.

DICK

They are all in order for battle and are marching towards us!

CADE

But we are most ordered when we are out of order and
rebellious. Come, let's march forward!

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 3

Shakespeare

*Alarums to the fight, wherein SIR HUMPHREY and WILLIAM STAFFORD
are slain. Enter CADE and the rest*

CADE

Where's Dick, the butcher of Ashford?

DICK

Here, sir.

CADE

They fell before thee like sheep and oxen, and thou
behavest thyself as if thou hadst been in thine own
slaughter-house: therefore thus will I reward thee,
5 the Lent shall be as long again as it is; and thou
shalt have a licence to kill for a hundred lacking
one.

DICK

I desire no more.

CADE

10 And, to speak truth, thou deservest no less. This
monument of the victory will I bear;

Putting on SIR HUMPHREY'S brigandine

CADE

and the bodies shall be dragged at my horse' heels
till I do come to London, where we will have the
15 mayor's sword borne before us.

Shakesclore Translation

*Trumpets calling soldiers to battle, where SIR HUMPHREY
and WILLIAM STAFFORD are killed. CADE enters with the
rest.*

CADE

Where's Dick, the butcher of Ashford?

DICK

Here, sir.

CADE

They fell before you like sheep and oxen, and you behaved
as if you had been in your own slaughter-house. Therefore, I
will reward you. Lent will be twice as long and you'll have
receive a special butcher's Lent license to kill ninety-nine
animals.

DICK

I want nothing more.

CADE

And to tell you the truth, you deserve nothing less. I'll take
this memorial trophy of victory--

Putting on SIR HUMPHREY's body armor.

CADE

and the bodies will be dragged behind my horse until I
come to London, where we will have the mayor's sword
carried before us.

DICK

If we mean to thrive and do good, break open the gaols and let out the prisoners.

CADE

20 Fear not that, I warrant thee. Come, let's march towards London.

Exeunt

DICK

If we mean to be successful and do something good, break into the prisons and release the prisoners.

CADE

Don't worry, I assure you I will. Come on, let's march towards London.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter KING HENRY VI with a supplication, and the QUEEN with SUFFOLK'S head, BUCKINGHAM and Lord SAY

QUEEN MARGARET

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?
5 Here may his head lie on my throbbing breast:
But where's the body that I should embrace?

BUCKINGHAM

What answer makes your grace to the rebels' supplication?

KING HENRY VI

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

KING HENRY VI

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

SAY

20 Ay, but I hope your highness shall have his.

KING HENRY VI

How now, madam!
Still lamenting and mourning for Suffolk's death?
I fear me, love, if that I had been dead,
Thou wouldst not have mourn'd so much for me.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

Enter a Messenger

KING HENRY VI

How now! What news? Why comest thou in such haste?

MESSENGER

The rebels are in Southwark; fly, my lord!
Jack Cade proclaims himself Lord Mortimer,
30 Descended from the Duke of Clarence' house,
And calls your grace usurper openly

Shakescleare Translation

KING HENRY VI enters with a petition, and the QUEEN with SUFFOLK'S head, BUCKINGHAM and Lord SAY.

QUEEN MARGARET

I have often heard that grief softens the mind, making it deteriorate with fear. So I should think about revenge and stop crying. But who can stop crying and look at this? His head may lie on my heaving chest, but where is the body that I would like to embrace?

BUCKINGHAM

What do you say to the rebels' petition, your grace?

KING HENRY VI

I'll send a holy bishop to meet with them. God forbid that so many ordinary people should die violently! Rather than let them die in a bloody war, I'll go myself to negotiate with their general Jack Cade. But wait, I'll read it over once again.

QUEEN MARGARET

Oh, barbaric villains! How did this lovely face rule over me like a moving planet, but wasn't able to force them to have mercy, since they were unworthy to look at him?

KING HENRY VI

Lord Say, Jack Cade swore that he will have your head.

SAY

Yes, but I hope that your highness shall have his.

KING HENRY VI

How are you, madam? Are you still sad and grieving Suffolk's death? I am afraid that if I had been dead, love, you wouldn't have grieved so much for me.

QUEEN MARGARET


No, my love. I wouldn't have grieved, but I would have died for you.


A messenger enters.

KING HENRY VI

What's the news? Why are you in such a hurry?

MESSENGER

The rebels are in Southwark . Run away, my lord! Jack Cade claims that he is Lord Mortimer, descended from the Duke of Clarence's house, and he openly calls you a usurper and swears that he will crown himself in Westminster. His

 *An on the outskirts of the city, just south of the river Thames.*

And vows to crown himself in Westminster.
His army is a ragged multitude
Of hinds and peasants, rude and merciless:
35 Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother's death
Hath given them heart and courage to proceed:
All scholars, lawyers, courtiers, gentlemen,
They call false caterpillars, and intend their death.

KING HENRY VI

O graceless men! They know not what they do.

BUCKINGHAM

40 My gracious lord, return to Killingworth,
Until a power be raised to put them down.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

KING HENRY VI

Lord Say, the traitors hate thee;
45 Therefore away with us to Killingworth.

SAY

So might your grace's person be in danger.
The sight of me is odious in their eyes;
And therefore in this city will I stay
And live alone as secret as I may.
50

Enter another Messenger

MESSENGER

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

BUCKINGHAM

Then linger not, my lord, away, take horse.

KING HENRY VI

Come, Margaret; God, our hope, will succor us.

QUEEN MARGARET

My hope is gone, now Suffolk is deceased.

KING HENRY VI

Farewell, my lord: trust not the Kentish rebels.

BUCKINGHAM

60 Trust nobody, for fear you be betray'd.

SAY

The trust I have is in mine innocence,
And therefore am I bold and resolute.

Exeunt

army is a weary large group of servants and peasants, rough and merciless. The deaths of Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother have given them strength and courage to carry on. They call all scholars, lawyers, courtiers and gentlemen treacherous parasites, and plan to kill them.

KING HENRY VI

Oh, ignorant men! They don't know what they're doing.

BUCKINGHAM

My gracious lord, return to Killingworth, until an army is put together to stop them.

QUEEN MARGARET

Ah, if the Duke of Suffolk were alive now, these Kentish rebels would be defeated very soon!

KING HENRY VI

Lord Say, the traitors hate you. So come away with us to Killingworth.

SAY

Then your grace might be in danger. They hate the sight of me. So I will stay in this city and go into hiding.

Another messenger enters.

MESSENGER

Jack Cade has gotten to London bridge. The citizens are running away and abandoning their houses. The rabble, thirsting after their prey, has joined the traitor. They all swear to plunder the city and your royal court.

BUCKINGHAM

Then let's not stay here any longer. My lord, let's go, take a horse!

KING HENRY VI

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

QUEEN MARGARET

My hope is gone now that Suffolk is dead.

KING HENRY VI

Goodbye, my lord. Don't trust these Kentish rebels.

BUCKINGHAM

Don't trust anyone or you may be betrayed.

SAY

I only trust my own innocence, and that's why I am brave and determined.

All exit.


Act 4, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Enter SCALES upon the Tower, walking. Then enter two or three Citizens below

Shakescleare Translation

SCALES enters up on the Tower , walking. Two or three citizens enter below.

 "Tower" here refers to the Tower of London.

SCALES

How now! Is Jack Cade slain?

FIRST CITIZEN

No, my lord, nor likely to be slain; for they have won the bridge, killing all those that withstand them: the lord mayor craves aid of your honour from
5 the Tower, to defend the city from the rebels.

SCALES

Such aid as I can spare you shall command;
But I am troubled here with them myself;
The rebels have assay'd to win the Tower.
But get you to Smithfield, and gather head,
10 And thither I will send you Matthew Goffe;
Fight for your king, your country and your lives;
And so, farewell, for I must hence again.

Exeunt

SCALES

What's this? Is Jack Cade dead?

FIRST CITIZEN

No, my lord. Nor is he likely to be killed, because they have taken over London Bridge, killing everyone who stood in their way. The lord mayor requests your help from the Tower, to defend the city from the rebels.

SCALES

I'll help as much as I can. But I am also struggling to hold them off here. The rebels are trying to conquer the Tower. But go to Smithfield and raise an army there, and I will send Matthew Goffe along with you. Fight for your king, your country, and your lives. And, so goodbye. I have to go back again!

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 6

Shakespeare

Enter CADE and the rest, and strikes his staff on London-stone

CADE

Now is Mortimer lord of this city. And here, sitting upon London-stone, I charge and command that, of the city's cost, the pissing-conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign. And now
5 henceforward it shall be treason for any that calls me other than Lord Mortimer.

Enter a Soldier, running

SOLDIER

Jack Cade! Jack Cade!

CADE

Knock him down there.

They kill him

SMITH

10 If this fellow be wise, he'll never call ye Jack Cade more: I think he hath a very fair warning.

DICK


My lord, there's an army gathered together in Smithfield.


CADE

15 Come, then, let's go fight with them; but first, go and set London bridge on fire; and, if you can, burn down the Tower too. Come, let's away.


Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation

CADE enters with the rest. He puts his staff down on the London-stone .

 "London-stone" is a landmark located in Cannon Street in London.

CADE

Now Mortimer is the lord of this city. And here, sitting on the London-stone, I command that, at the city's cost, the water fountain  will run nothing but red wine for the whole first year of our rule. And from now on, it will be treason for anyone to call me anything else but Lord Mortimer.

A soldier enters, running.

SOLDIER

Jack Cade! Jack Cade!

CADE

Knock him down!

They kill him.

SMITH

If this man is wise, he'll never call you Jack Cade again. I think he's had a fair warning.


DICK

My lord, there is an army gathered in Smithfield.

CADE

Come, then and let's go fight them. But first, go and set London Bridge on fire. And if you can, burn down the Tower too. Come, let's go.

All exit.

 The "pissing-conduit" Cade refers to was the nickname for "Little Conduit", a water fountain used by the lower-class Londoners.

Act 4, Scene 7

Shakespeare

Shakescleare Translation

Alarums. MATTHEW GOFFE is slain, and all the rest. Then enter CADE, with his company.

CADE

So, sirs: now go some and pull down the Savoy; others to the Inns of Court; down with them all.

DICK

I have a suit unto your lordship.

CADE

Be it a lordship, thou shalt have it for that word.

DICK

5 Only that the laws of England may come out of your mouth.

HOLLAND

[Aside] Mass, 'twill be sore law, then; for he was thrust in the mouth with a spear, and 'tis not whole yet.

SMITH

10 *[Aside]* Nay, John, it will be stinking law for his breath stinks with eating toasted cheese.

CADE

I have thought upon it, it shall be so. Away, burn all the records of the realm: my mouth shall be the parliament of England.

HOLLAND

15 *[Aside]* Then we are like to have biting statutes, unless his teeth be pulled out.

CADE

And henceforward all things shall be in common.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

20 My lord, a prize, a prize! Here's the Lord Say, which sold the towns in France; he that made us pay one and twenty fiftens, and one shilling to the pound, the last subsidy.

Enter BEVIS, with Lord SAY

CADE


25 Well, he shall be beheaded for it ten times. Ah, thou say, thou serge, nay, thou buckram lord! Now art thou within point-blank of our jurisdiction regal. What canst thou answer to my majesty for giving up of Normandy unto Mounsieur Basimecu, the dauphin of France? Be it known unto thee by these presence, even the presence of Lord Mortimer, that I
30 am the besom that must sweep the court clean of such filth as thou art. Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school; and whereas, before, our forefathers had no other books but the score and the tally, thou
35 hast caused printing to be used, and, contrary to the king, his crown and dignity, thou hast built a paper-mill. It will be proved to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun and a verb, and such abominable words as no Christian
40 ear can endure to hear. Thou hast appointed justices of peace, to call poor men before them about matters they were not able to answer. Moreover, thou hast put them in prison; and because they could not read, thou hast hanged them; when,
45


Sound of trumpets. MATTHEW GOFFE and all the rest are killed. CADE enters with his followers.

CADE

So, sirs, now let's go and pull down the Savoy. Others, go to the Inns of Court and pull them all down.

DICK

I have a request for your lordship .

 Dick uses the title of a lord--"lordship" when talking to Cade.

CADE

If it is a lordship, your request will be granted for using that word.

DICK

I request that all the laws of England come from your mouth.

HOLLAND

[To SMITH] It will be a painful law, then, because he was stabbed in the mouth with a spear and it's not healed yet.

SMITH

[To HOLLAND] No, John, it will be a stinking law because his breath stinks from eating toasted cheese.

CADE

I have thought about it; it shall be so. Go and burn all the records of the kingdom. My mouth will be the parliament of England.

HOLLAND

[To himself] Then we will have severe statutes, unless his teeth are pulled out.

CADE

And from now on all things will be shared.



A messenger enters.


MESSENGER


My lord, I have a prize for you! Here is the Lord Say, who sold the towns in France. He made us pay a tax of 140 per cent, and the last taxation was one shilling to the pound.

BEVIS enters with Lord SAY.

CADE

Well, he'll be beheaded for it ten times over. Ah, you silk fabric, you woollen fabric--no, you coarse linen! Now you are within the direct range of our legal power. How can you defend yourself to my majesty for giving up Normandy to Monsieur Basimecu , the dauphin of France? Let it be known to you all in the presence of Lord Mortimer, that I am the broom that must sweep the court clean of dirt like you. You have traitorously corrupted the youth of the country by setting up a grammar school, and while our ancestors had no other books but the score and tally  to keep accounts, you've used printing. Against the crown and dignity of the king, you have built a paper mill. It will be proved to your face that you have men around you that usually talk about "nouns" and "verbs" and similar abominable words than no Christian ear can dare to hear. You have appointed justices of peace, to call poor men in front of them and ask them about things they didn't understand. Moreover, you have put them in prison; and because they couldn't read, you have hanged them for the one reason why they were worthy to live. Your horse has an ornamental cloth draped over him when you ride, doesn't he?

 "Basimecu" or "baise mon cul" in French means "kiss my arse".

 "Score and tally" were means of keeping accounts where sticks were scored with a total, then split into halves (tallies). So that the debtor and creditor had a half each.

indeed, only for that cause they have been most worthy to live. Thou dost ride in a foot-cloth, dost thou not?

SAY

What of that?

CADE

50 Marry, thou oughtest not to let thy horse wear a cloak, when honest men than thou go in their hose and doublets.

DICK

And work in their shirt too; as myself, for example, that am a butcher.

SAY

You men of Kent,--

DICK

55 What say you of Kent?

SAY

Nothing but this; 'tis 'bona terra, mala gens.'

CADE

Away with him, away with him! He speaks Latin.

SAY

Hear me but speak, and bear me where you will. Kent, in the Commentaries Caesar writ,
60 Is term'd the civil'st place of this isle:
Sweet is the country, because full of riches;
The people liberal, valiant, active, wealthy;
Which makes me hope you are not void of pity.
I sold not Maine, I lost not Normandy,
65 Yet, to recover them, would lose my life.
Justice with favour have I always done;
Prayers and tears have moved me, gifts could never.
When have I aught exacted at your hands,
But to maintain the king, the realm and you?
70 Large gifts have I bestow'd on learned clerks,
Because my book preferr'd me to the king,
And seeing ignorance is the curse of God,
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven,
Unless you be possess'd with devilish spirits,
75 You cannot but forbear to murder me:
This tongue hath parley'd unto foreign kings
For your behoof,--

CADE

Tut, when struck'st thou one blow in the field?

SAY

80 Great men have reaching hands: oft have I struck Those that I never saw and struck them dead.

BEVIS

O monstrous coward! What, to come behind folks?

SAY

These cheeks are pale for watching for your good.

CADE

Give him a box o' the ear and that will make 'em red again.

SAY

85 Long sitting to determine poor men's causes Hath made me full of sickness and diseases.

SAY

And why does that matter?

CADE

You shouldn't let your horse wear a cloak, when men more honest than you only wear breeches and jacket with no other garment.

DICK

And they work in their shirt too--like myself, for example, a butcher.


SAY

You men of Kent--

DICK

What are you saying about Kent?

SAY

Just this: "a poor land, bad people." 

 This line is in Latin in the original.

CADE

Take him away, take him away! He speaks Latin.

SAY

Hear me speak a little and then take me wherever you like. Kent, in the Commentaries Caesar wrote, is called the most civil place on this island. The country is called sweet, because it's full of wealth. The people are called generous, brave, active and wealthy, which makes me hope you have some pity. I didn't sell Maine, nor did I lose Normandy. To take them back would have killed me. I have always been compassionate when I had to carry out justice. Prayers and tears have moved me, but bribes never could. When have I raised any taxes, except when it was necessary to satisfy the king, the country, and you? I have given large gifts to scholars, because the king valued me for my learning. And seeing ignorance is the curse of God, knowledge is the wing on which we fly to heaven. Unless you are possessed with evil spirits, you can't murder me. This tongue has negotiated with foreign kings for your benefit--

CADE

Please, tell me, when did you fight in the field?

SAY

Great men have hands that can reach far. I have often fought those that I never saw in person, and killed them too.

BEVIS

Oh, you monstrous coward! Did you attack from behind?

SAY

These cheeks are pale because I remained awake for your own good.

CADE

Slap him; that will bring color to his cheeks.

SAY

I've spent a long time sitting as a judge to settle poor men's cases, and it's made me sick and diseased.

CADE

Ye shall have a hempen caudle, then, and the help of hatchet.

DICK

Why dost thou quiver, man?

SAY

90 The palsy, and not fear, provokes me.

CADE

Nay, he nods at us, as who should say, I'll be even with you: I'll see if his head will stand steadier on a pole, or no. Take him away, and behead him.

SAY

Tell me wherein have I offended most?

95 Have I affected wealth or honour? Speak.
Are my chests fill'd up with extorted gold?
Is my apparel sumptuous to behold?
Whom have I injured, that ye seek my death?
These hands are free from guiltless bloodshedding,
100 This breast from harbouring foul deceitful thoughts.
O, let me live!

CADE

[Aside] I feel remorse in myself with his words; but I'll bridle it: he shall die, an it be but for pleading so well for his life. *[Aloud.]* Away with him!

105 He has a familiar under his tongue; he speaks not o' God's name. Go, take him away, I say, and strike off his head presently; and then break into his son-in-law's house, Sir James Cromer, and strike off his head, and bring them both upon two poles hither.

ALL

It shall be done.

SAY

Ah, countrymen! If when you make your prayers, God should be so obdurate as yourselves, How would it fare with your departed souls?

115 And therefore yet relent, and save my life.

CADE

Away with him! And do as I command ye.

Exeunt some with Lord SAY

CADE

The proudest peer in the realm shall not wear a head on his shoulders, unless he pay me tribute; there shall not a maid be married, but she shall pay to me her maidenhead ere they have it: men shall hold of me in capite; and we charge and command that their wives be as free as heart can wish or tongue can tell.

120

DICK

My lord, when shall we go to Cheapside and take up commodities upon our bills?

CADE

125 Marry, presently.

ALL

O, brave!

Re-enter one with the heads

CADE

You will have a hangman's rope, then, and the help of the executioner's axe.

DICK

Why do you shake, man?

SAY

It is palsy and not fear that makes me shake.

CADE

No, he nods at us like one who would say, I'll be fair with you. I'll see if his head will stand steady on a pole or not. Take him away and behead him.

SAY

Tell me, what have I done to offend you? Have I taken your wealth or honor? Tell me. Are my chests filled with stolen money? Do my clothes look luxurious? Whom have I hurt, that you want me dead? These hands are guiltless of shedding innocent blood. This heart is guiltless of having bad, deceitful feelings. Oh, let me live!

CADE

[To himself] I feel pity inside when he speaks. But I'll restrain it. He shall die, even if it's just for pleading for his life. *[Aloud.]* Take him away! He has a demon under his tongue; he doesn't speak God's language. Go and take him away, I say! Chop off his head at once, and then break into his son-in-law Sir James Cromer's house, take his head too, and stick them both on these two poles here.

ALL

It shall be done.

SAY

Oh, my countrymen! If God was as merciless as you when we pray to him, what would happen to your souls? So stop and spare my life.

CADE

Take him away! And do as I ordered you.

Some exit with Lord SAY.

CADE

The proudest man in the country won't wear a head on his shoulders, unless he gives me a payment as an act of homage. A virgin won't be married before she gives me her virginity. Men will hold property directly from the crown, and we charge and command that their wives will be as sexually available as a heart can wish or tongue can tell.

DICK

My lord, when will we go to Cheapside and spear decapitated heads on our weapons?

CADE

Soon.

ALL

Oh, that's marvelous!

Someone re-enters with the heads.

CADE

130 But is not this braver? Let them kiss one another,
for they loved well when they were alive. Now part
them again, lest they consult about the giving up of
some more towns in France. Soldiers, defer the
spoil of the city until night: for with these borne
before us, instead of maces, will we ride through
the streets, and at every corner have them kiss. Away!

Exeunt

CADE

But isn't this even better? Let them kiss each other because
they loved each other well when they were alive. Now break
them apart again, lest they talk about giving up some more
towns in France. Soldiers, delay the plunder of the city until
tonight. We will ride through the streets with these heads
carried before us instead of staffs of office, and have them
kiss at every corner. Let's go!

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 8

Shakespeare

Alarum and retreat. Enter CADE and all his rabblement

CADE

Up Fish Street! Down Saint Magnus' Corner! Kill
and knock down! Throw them into Thames!

Sound a parley

CADE

5 What noise is this I hear? Dare any be so bold to
sound retreat or parley, when I command them kill?

Enter BUCKINGHAM and CLIFFORD, attended

BUCKINGHAM

10 Ay, here they be that dare and will disturb thee:
Know, Cade, we come ambassadors from the king
Unto the commons whom thou hast misled;
And here pronounce free pardon to them all
That will forsake thee and go home in peace.

CLIFFORD

15 What say ye, countrymen? Will ye relent,
And yield to mercy whilst 'tis offer'd you;
Or let a rebel lead you to your deaths?
Who loves the king and will embrace his pardon,
Fling up his cap, and say 'God save his majesty!'
Who hateth him and honours not his father,
Henry the Fifth, that made all France to quake,
Shake he his weapon at us and pass by.

ALL

God save the king! God save the king!

CADE

20 What, Buckingham and Clifford, are ye so brave? And
you, base peasants, do ye believe him? Will you
needs be hanged with your pardons about your necks?
Hath my sword therefore broke through London gates,
that you should leave me at the White Hart in
25 Southwark? I thought ye would never have given out
these arms till you had recovered your ancient
freedom: but you are all recreants and dastards,
and delight to live in slavery to the nobility. Let
them break your backs with burthens, take your
30 houses over your heads, ravish your wives and
daughters before your faces: for me, I will make
shift for one; and so, God's curse light upon you
all!

ALL

We'll follow Cade, we'll follow Cade!

Shakesclore Translation

*Trumpets and then the armies retreat. CADE enters with all
his riotous followers.*

CADE

Let's go up Fish Street! Down Saint Magnus' Corner! Kill and
knock everything down! Throw them into the Thames!

A trumpet sounds, summoning both sides for negotiation.

CADE

What's that noise? Does anyone dare to sound a retreat or
ask for negotiation, when I commanded them to fight?

BUCKINGHAM and CLIFFORD enters with servants.

BUCKINGHAM

Yes, we're here to dare and disturb you. Cade, you should
know that we are ambassadors from the king to the
commoners, whom you have misled. We offer a free pardon
to all of them that will abandon you and go home in peace.

CLIFFORD

What do you say, countrymen? Will you stop and surrender
to the mercy that is offered to you, or let a rebel lead you to
your deaths? Whoever loves the king and will accept his
pardon, throw your cap in the air and say "God save his
majesty!" Whoever hates him and doesn't honor his father,
Henry the Fifth--who made all of France shake--shake your
weapon in defiance and pass us by.

ALL

God save the king! God save the king!

CADE

Are Buckingham and Clifford so bold? And you, lowly
peasants, do you believe him? Will you be hanged with your
pardons around your necks? Has my sword broke through
London gates so you should leave me at the White Hart in
Southwark? I thought you would never have given up these
weapons until you have regained your ancient freedom. But
you are all deserters and cowards, and want to live like
slaves to the nobility. Let them break your backs with
burdens, take your houses over your heads, rape your wives
and daughters in front of you. I, on the other hand, will look
out for myself. and so, God's curse on you all!

ALL

We'll follow Cade, we'll follow Cade!

CLIFFORD

35 Is Cade the son of Henry the Fifth,
That thus you do exclaim you'll go with him?
Will he conduct you through the heart of France,
And make the meanest of you earls and dukes?
Alas, he hath no home, no place to fly to;
40 Nor knows he how to live but by the spoil,
Unless by robbing of your friends and us.
Were't not a shame, that whilst you live at jar,
The fearful French, whom you late vanquished,
Should make a start o'er seas and vanquish you?
45 Methinks already in this civil broil
I see them lording it in London streets,
Crying 'Villiano!' unto all they meet.
Better ten thousand base-born Cades miscarry
Than you should stoop unto a Frenchman's mercy.
50 To France, to France, and get what you have lost;
Spare England, for it is your native coast;
Henry hath money, you are strong and manly;
God on our side, doubt not of victory.

ALL

A Clifford! A Clifford! We'll follow the king and
55 Clifford.

CADE

Was ever feather so lightly blown to and fro as this
multitude? The name of Henry the Fifth hales them
to an hundred mischiefs, and makes them leave me
desolate. I see them lay their heads together to
surprise me. My sword make way for me, for here is
60 no staying. In despite of the devils and hell, have
through the very midst of you? And heavens and
honour be witness, that no want of resolution in me.
But only my followers' base and ignominious
treasons, makes me betake me to my heels.
65

Exit

BUCKINGHAM

What, is he fled? Go some, and follow him;
And he that brings his head unto the king
Shall have a thousand crowns for his reward.

Exeunt some of them

BUCKINGHAM

70 Follow me, soldiers: we'll devise a mean
To reconcile you all unto the king.

Exeunt

CLIFFORD

Is Cade the son of Henry the Fifth? Is that why you scream
that you will follow him? Will he take you through the heart
of France and make the most humble of you earls and
dukes? No, he has no home and no place to run to, and he
doesn't know how to live except by plundering--stealing
from your friends and us. Wouldn't it be a shame if while
you're rebelling, the terrible French, whom you have
recently crushed, were to suddenly invade and crush you? I
think that I can already see them in this civil war, taking
over London streets, screaming "Foreigners!" at everyone
they meet. It would be better if ten thousand lowly-born
Cades should die, rather than leaving you at the mercy of
the French. To France, to France, and go get what you have
lost. Spare England, because it is your native country.
Henry has money, you are strong and manly, and God is on
our side, so don't doubt that we'll win.

ALL

To Clifford! To Clifford! We'll follow the king and Clifford.

CADE

Was there ever a feather blown back and forth as lightly as
this crowd? The name of Henry the Fifth moves them and
makes them abandon me. I can see them putting their
heads together to capture me. Make way for me, my sword,
since I'm not staying here. In spite of the devils and hell, I'll
cut my way through the middle of the crowd. Heavens and
honor be witness that I'm running not because I'm a
coward, but only because the lowly and humiliating
desertion of my followers make me run away from here.

CADE exits.

BUCKINGHAM

Has he run away? Go, some of you, and follow him.
Whoever brings his head to the king will have a reward of
thousand crowns.

Some soldiers exit.

BUCKINGHAM

Follow me, soldiers. We'll come up with a way to reconcile
you all with the king.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 9

Shakespeare

*Sound Trumpets. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, and
SOMERSET, on the terrace*

KING HENRY VI

Was ever king that joy'd an earthly throne,
And could command no more content than I?
No sooner was I crept out of my cradle
But I was made a king, at nine months old.
5 Was never subject long'd to be a king
As I do long and wish to be a subject.

Enter BUCKINGHAM and CLIFFORD

Shakescleare Translation

*Trumpets sound. KING HENRY VI enters on the terrace with
QUEEN MARGARET, and SOMERSET.*

KING HENRY VI

Was there ever a king that enjoyed this earthly throne and
was more miserable than me? As soon as I crept out of my
cradle, nine months old, I was made a king. No commoner
wants to be a king as much as I want to be a commoner.

BUCKINGHAM and CLIFFORD enter.

BUCKINGHAM

Health and glad tidings to your majesty!

KING HENRY VI

Why, Buckingham, is the traitor Cade surprised?
Or is he but retired to make him strong?

10

Enter below, multitudes, with halters about their necks

CLIFFORD

He is fled, my lord, and all his powers do yield;
And humbly thus, with halters on their necks,
Expect your highness' doom of life or death.

KING HENRY VI

Then, heaven, set ope thy everlasting gates,
15 To entertain my vows of thanks and praise!
Soldiers, this day have you redeemed your lives,
And show'd how well you love your prince and country:
Continue still in this so good a mind,
And Henry, though he be unfortunate,
20 Assure yourselves, will never be unkind:
And so, with thanks and pardon to you all,
I do dismiss you to your several countries.

ALL

God save the king! God save the king!

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

25 Please it your grace to be advertised
The Duke of York is newly come from Ireland,
And with a puissant and a mighty power
Of gallowglasses and stout kerns
Is marching hitherward in proud array,
30 And still proclaimeth, as he comes along,
His arms are only to remove from thee
The Duke of Somerset, whom he terms traitor.

KING HENRY VI

Thus stands my state, 'twixt Cade and York distress'd.
Like to a ship that, having 'scaped a tempest,
35 Is straightway calm'd and boarded with a pirate:
But now is Cade driven back, his men dispersed;
And now is York in arms to second him.
I pray thee, Buckingham, go and meet him,
And ask him what's the reason of these arms.
40 Tell him I'll send Duke Edmund to the Tower;
And, Somerset, we'll commit thee thither,
Until his army be dismiss'd from him.

SOMERSET

My lord,
I'll yield myself to prison willingly,
45 Or unto death, to do my country good.

KING HENRY VI

In any case, be not too rough in terms;
For he is fierce and cannot brook hard language.

BUCKINGHAM

I will, my lord; and doubt not so to deal
As all things shall redound unto your good.

KING HENRY VI

50 Come, wife, let's in, and learn to govern better;
For yet may England curse my wretched reign.

Flourish. Exeunt

BUCKINGHAM

We wish health and good news to your majesty!

KING HENRY VI

Is the traitor Cade captured, Buckingham? Or has he
retreated to gather his strength?

Crowds enter below with ropes around their necks.

CLIFFORD

He has escaped, my lord, and all his soldiers surrendered.
With ropes around their necks, they humbly await your
sentence of life or death.

KING HENRY VI

Then, heaven, open your everlasting gates to receive my
vows of thanks and praise! Soldiers, you have redeemed
your lives today and showed how well you love your king
and country. Carry on in this spirit and Henry, although he
is unfortunate, promises you that he will never be unkind.
And so I send you back to your homes, with thanks and
pardon.

ALL

God save the king! God save the king!

A messenger enters.

MESSENGER

Your grace should know that the Duke of York has just come
from Ireland with a powerful and strong army of Irish
soldiers ¹. They are marching this way, ready for a fight.
He continually proclaims as he goes that his weapons are
only there to remove you, the Duke of Somerset, whom he
calls a traitor.

¹ The Messenger names two types of Irish soldiers: "gallowglasses", who were Irish soldiers armed with axes; and "stout kerns", bold lightly armed Irish foot soldiers.

KING HENRY VI

And here is my kingship—it is afflicted between Cade and
York. It is like a ship that, having just escaped a tempest, is
steadied and attacked by a pirate straight away. But now
Cade is driven back, his men are scattered and York is now
armed to support him. Buckingham, please go and meet
him and ask him why is he bringing this army. Tell him I'll
send Duke Edmund ² to the Tower. Somerset, we're
sending you there until his army is gotten rid of.

² "Duke Edmund" is Somerset.

SOMERSET

My lord, I surrender to go to prison willingly. Or go to my
death, to do some good for my country.

KING HENRY VI

Either way, don't be too harsh in your choice of language.
He is fierce and cannot tolerate such language.

BUCKINGHAM

I will, my lord, and don't doubt that I shall negotiate so that
everything will turn out well for you.

KING HENRY VI

Come, wife, let's go in and learn to rule better. England may
curse my horrible rule up until now.

Kingly trumpet. All exit.

Act 4, Scene 10

Shakespeare

*Enter CADE***CADE**

Fie on ambition! Fie on myself, that have a sword,
and yet am ready to famish! These five days have I
hid me in these woods and durst not peep out, for
all the country is laid for me; but now am I so
5 hungry that if I might have a lease of my life for a
thousand years I could stay no longer. Wherefore,
on a brick wall have I climbed into this garden, to
see if I can eat grass, or pick a sallet another
while, which is not amiss to cool a man's stomach
10 this hot weather. And I think this word 'sallet'
was born to do me good: for many a time, but for a
sallet, my brainpan had been cleft with a brown
bill; and many a time, when I have been dry and
bravely marching, it hath served me instead of a
15 quart pot to drink in; and now the word 'sallet'
must serve me to feed on.

*Enter IDEN***IDEN**

Lord, who would live turmoiled in the court,
And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?
This small inheritance my father left me
20 Contenteth me, and worth a monarchy.
I seek not to wax great by others' waning,
Or gather wealth, I care not, with what envy:
Sufficeth that I have maintains my state
And sends the poor well pleased from my gate.

CADE

Here's the lord of the soil come to seize me for a
stray, for entering his fee-simple without leave.
Ah, villain, thou wilt betray me, and get a thousand
crowns of the king carrying my head to him: but
I'll make thee eat iron like an ostrich, and swallow
30 my sword like a great pin, ere thou and I part.

IDEN

Why, rude companion, whatsoe'er thou be,
I know thee not; why, then, should I betray thee?
Is't not enough to break into my garden,
And, like a thief, to come to rob my grounds,
35 Climbing my walls in spite of me the owner,
But thou wilt brave me with these saucy terms?

CADE


Brave thee! Ay, by the best blood that ever was
broached, and beard thee too. Look on me well: I
have eat no meat these five days; yet, come thou and
40 thy five men, and if I do not leave you all as dead
as a doornail, I pray God I may never eat grass more.


IDEN

Nay, it shall ne'er be said, while England stands,
That Alexander Iden, an esquire of Kent,
Took odds to combat a poor famish'd man.
45 Oppose thy steadfast-gazing eyes to mine,
See if thou canst outface me with thy looks:
Set limb to limb, and thou art far the lesser;
Thy hand is but a finger to my fist,
Thy leg a stick compared with this truncheon;
50 My foot shall fight with all the strength thou hast;
And if mine arm be heaved in the air,
Thy grave is digg'd already in the earth.
As for words, whose greatness answers words,

Shakescleare Translation

*CADE enters.***CADE**

To hell with ambition! To hell with me, who has a sword but
will starve anyway! I have been hiding in these woods for
these past five days and didn't dare to come out, because
the entire country is looking for me. But now I am so hungry
that even if I could stay alive for a thousand years here, I
couldn't wait any longer. That's why I have climbed into this
garden over a brick wall, to see if I can eat grass, or pick
salad (leaves and vegetables), which is not bad to satisfy a
man's appetite during this hot weather. And I think that this
word "salad" will do me some good. If I didn't have it ,
my skull would have been cut in half by an ax. And often,
when I have been thirsty and marching, I've used it as a pot
to drink out of. Now the word "salad" has to be enough to
feed me.

 Another meaning for "sallet" is
"light helmet".

*IDEN enters***IDEN**

Who would live stressed in the court when you could enjoy
such quiet walks like these? This small inheritance that my
father left me makes me happy and it is worth a whole
monarchy. I don't want to grow great by others' loss, or
gather wealth, regardless of others' jealousy. It's enough
that I have what I need and can send the poor from my gate
with plenty of food.

CADE

Here is the owner of the garden who has come to catch me
for trespassing, for entering his land without permission.
Oh, villain, you will betray me and get a thousand crowns
from the king when you carry my head to him. But I'll stab
you and make you swallow my sword like an ostrich, before
you and I say goodbye.

IDEN

Rough fellow! Whoever you are, I don't know you. Why,
then, do you think that I will betray you? Isn't it enough to
break into my garden and steal from me like a thief,
climbing my walls without the permission of the owner?
Will you will also defy me with these rude words?

CADE

Defy you! Yes, by the best blood that was ever shed, I defy
you! Look at me. I haven't eaten food for these last five
days. Yet if you and your five servants come at me and I
don't leave you as dead as a doornail, I pray to God that I
never eat grass again.

IDEN

No, as long as England stands, it won't be said that
Alexander Iden, a gentleman of Kent, accepted such an
unequal challenge from a poor hungry man. Look at me
and see if you can defy me with your looks. Compare limb
with limb and you will see that you are the weaker one.
Your hand is only a finger compared to my whole fist, your
leg is a stick compared to my leg. My foot shall fight will all
the strength you have and if I just raise my arm, you're as
good as dead. As for words, the power of my sword answers
them.

Let this my sword report what speech forbears.

CADE

- 55 By my valour, the most complete champion that ever I heard! Steel, if thou turn the edge, or cut not out the burly-boned clown in chins of beef ere thou sleep in thy sheath, I beseech God on my knees thou mayst be turned to hobnails.

Here they fight. CADE falls

CADE

- 60 O, I am slain! Famine and no other hath slain me: let ten thousand devils come against me, and give me but the ten meals I have lost, and I'll defy them all. Wither, garden; and be henceforth a burying-place to all that do dwell in this house,
65 because the unconquered soul of Cade is fled.

IDEN

- Is't Cade that I have slain, that monstrous traitor? Sword, I will hollow thee for this thy deed, And hang thee o'er my tomb when I am dead: Ne'er shall this blood be wiped from thy point;
70 But thou shalt wear it as a herald's coat, To emblaze the honour that thy master got.

CADE

- Iden, farewell, and be proud of thy victory. Tell Kent from me, she hath lost her best man, and exhort all the world to be cowards; for I, that never
75 feared any, am vanquished by famine, not by valour.

Dies

IDEN

- How much thou wrong'st me, heaven be my judge. Die, damned wretch, the curse of her that bare thee; And as I thrust thy body in with my sword, So wish I, I might thrust thy soul to hell.
80 Hence will I drag thee headlong by the heels Unto a dunghill which shall be thy grave, And there cut off thy most ungracious head; Which I will bear in triumph to the king, Leaving thy trunk for crows to feed upon.

Exit

CADE

By my bravery, you are the most accomplished fighter that I have ever heard of! Sword, if you fail me and don't cut this heavily-built clown into strips of beef before you sleep in your sheath, I pray God on my knees that you may be melted down and turned into nails for boots.

CADE and IDEN fight. CADE loses.

CADE

Oh, I'm murdered! Starvation and nothing else has killed me. Give me the ten meals that I have lost, and I could defeat ten thousand devils. Wither, garden, and from now on be a grave for everyone who lives in this house, because the unconquered soul of Cade is gone.

IDEN

Did I just kill the unnatural traitor Cade? Sword, I will bless you for this act and place you over my tomb when I am dead. I'll never wipe off his blood, but you shall wear it like a herald's coat, to display the honor that your master has won.

CADE

Goodbye, Iden, and be proud of your victory. Tell Kent from me that she has lost her best man. Urge everyone to be cowards, because I—who has never been afraid of anyone—am now killed by starvation and not by bravery.

CADE dies.

IDEN

Heaven will judge how you've wronged me. Die, damned man, the curse of the mother that gave birth to you. As I thrust my sword into your body, so I wish that I could send your soul to hell. I will drag you by the heels to a dunghill that will be your grave, and there I'll cut off your ungrateful head, which I will take triumphantly to the king, leaving the rest of your body for the crows to eat.

IDEN exits, dragging the body.

Act 5, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter YORK, and his army of Irish, with drum and colours

YORK

- From Ireland thus comes York to claim his right, And pluck the crown from feeble Henry's head: Ring, bells, aloud; burn, bonfires, clear and bright, To entertain great England's lawful king.
5 Ah! Sancta majestas, who would not buy thee dear? Let them obey that know not how to rule; This hand was made to handle naught but gold. I cannot give due action to my words, Except a sword or sceptre balance it:
10 A sceptre shall it have, have I a soul, On which I'll toss the flower-de-luce of France.

Enter BUCKINGHAM


Shakescleare Translation

YORK enters with his Irish army, drums, and flagbearers.

YORK

Here comes York from Ireland to claim his right and take the crown from the head of weak Henry. Ring the bells loud and start bright bonfires to welcome great England's lawful king. Oh, sacred majesty, who wouldn't do anything to buy you? Those don't know how to rule should obey instead. This hand was made to handle nothing but gold. I can't make my words powerful enough to fit my actions, unless a sword or a scepter supports me. I'll have a scepter, that's as sure as I have a soul, on which I'll toss the flower-de-luce of France.

BUCKINGHAM enters.

 "Flower-de-luce" is "fleur-de-lis", the heraldic lily of the French royal coat of arms.

YORK

[Aside] Whom have we here? Buckingham, to disturb me?
The king hath sent him, sure: I must dissemble.

BUCKINGHAM

York, if thou meanest well, I greet thee well.

YORK

15 Humphrey of Buckingham, I accept thy greeting.
Art thou a messenger, or come of pleasure?

BUCKINGHAM

A messenger from Henry, our dread liege,
To know the reason of these arms in peace;
Or why thou, being a subject as I am,
20 Against thy oath and true allegiance sworn,
Should raise so great a power without his leave,
Or dare to bring thy force so near the court.

YORK

[Aside] Scarce can I speak, my choler is so great:
O, I could hew up rocks and fight with flint,
25 I am so angry at these abject terms;
And now, like Ajax Telamonius,
On sheep or oxen could I spend my fury.
I am far better born than is the king,
More like a king, more kingly in my thoughts:
30 But I must make fair weather yet a while,
Till Henry be more weak and I more strong,--
Buckingham, I prithee, pardon me,
That I have given no answer all this while;
My mind was troubled with deep melancholy.
35 The cause why I have brought this army hither
Is to remove proud Somerset from the king,
Seditious to his grace and to the state.

BUCKINGHAM

That is too much presumption on thy part:
But if thy arms be to no other end,
40 The king hath yielded unto thy demand:
The Duke of Somerset is in the Tower.

YORK

Upon thine honour, is he prisoner?

BUCKINGHAM

Upon mine honour, he is prisoner.

YORK

Then, Buckingham, I do dismiss my powers.
45 Soldiers, I thank you all; disperse yourselves;
Meet me to-morrow in St. George's field,
You shall have pay and every thing you wish.
And let my sovereign, virtuous Henry,
Command my eldest son, nay, all my sons,
50 As pledges of my fealty and love;
I'll send them all as willing as I live:
Lands, goods, horse, armour, any thing I have,
Is his to use, so Somerset may die.

BUCKINGHAM

York, I commend this kind submission:
55 We twain will go into his highness' tent.

Enter KING HENRY VI and Attendants

KING HENRY VI

Buckingham, doth York intend no harm to us,
That thus he marcheth with thee arm in arm?

YORK

[To himself] Who do we have here? Does Buckingham come
to disturb me? I am sure that the king has sent him. I must
disguise the truth.

BUCKINGHAM

York, I welcome you, if you mean well.

YORK

Humphrey of Buckingham, I accept your welcome. Are you
a messenger, or do you come on your own initiative?

BUCKINGHAM

I am a messenger sent from Henry, our respected king, to
find out why you've raised an army during peace time, and
why you--since you're a subject just like me--should do so
without the king's permission and against your promise to
be loyal to him. And how do you dare to bring your army so
close to the court?

YORK

[To himself] I can barely speak, my anger is bubbling. Oh, I
could cut down rocks and fight with a small stone; I am so
angry at these insulting terms. And now, like Ajax
Telamonius, I could slaughter a sheep or oxen to calm
my anger. I have a superior claim to the throne than the
king; I am more like a king, because I have more kingly
thoughts. But I must pretend to be agreeable for a while,
until Henry is weaker and I am stronger. *[Aloud]*
Buckingham, I am sorry, forgive me for not answering you
for all this time. My mind is troubled with deep sadness.
The reason why I have brought this army here is to remove
proud Somerset's influence on the king. He is disloyal to the
king and to the state.

BUCKINGHAM

You expect too much. But if your army is here for no other
reason, the king has agreed to your demand. The Duke of
Somerset is in the Tower.

YORK

Tell me, on your honor: is he a prisoner?

BUCKINGHAM

On my honor, he is a prisoner.

YORK

Then, Buckingham, I will send away my army. Soldiers,
thank you all, scatter yourselves. Meet me tomorrow in St.
George's field and you'll have your wages and anything else
you want. Ask my king, the virtuous Henry, to summon my
eldest son--no, all of my sons, as pledges of my loyalty and
love. I'll send them as willingly as I live. My lands, goods,
horses, armor, and everything I have is his to use, provided
that Somerset dies.

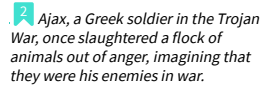
BUCKINGHAM

York, I praise this kind submission. We will go together to
his highness' tent.

KING HENRY VI enters with servants.

KING HENRY VI

Buckingham, does York not intend harm us, since you come
together arm in arm?

 Ajax, a Greek soldier in the Trojan War, once slaughtered a flock of animals out of anger, imagining that they were his enemies in war.

YORK

In all submission and humility

60 York doth present himself unto your highness.

KING HENRY VI

Then what intends these forces thou dost bring?

YORK

To heave the traitor Somerset from hence,
And fight against that monstrous rebel Cade,
Who since I heard to be discomfited.

65

Enter IDEN, with CADE'S head

IDEN

If one so rude and of so mean condition
May pass into the presence of a king,
Lo, I present your grace a traitor's head,
The head of Cade, whom I in combat slew.

KING HENRY VI

70 The head of Cade! Great God, how just art Thou!
O, let me view his visage, being dead,
That living wrought me such exceeding trouble.
Tell me, my friend, art thou the man that slew him?

IDEN

I was, an't like your majesty.

KING HENRY VI

75 How art thou call'd? And what is thy degree?

IDEN

Alexander Iden, that's my name;
A poor esquire of Kent, that loves his king.

BUCKINGHAM

So please it you, my lord, 'twere not amiss
He were created knight for his good service.

KING HENRY VI

80 Iden, kneel down.

He kneels

KING HENRY VI

Rise up a knight.
We give thee for reward a thousand marks,
And will that thou henceforth attend on us.

85

IDEN

May Iden live to merit such a bounty.
And never live but true unto his liege!

Rises

Enter QUEEN MARGARET and SOMERSET

KING HENRY VI

90 See, Buckingham, Somerset comes with the queen:
Go, bid her hide him quickly from the duke.

QUEEN MARGARET

For thousand Yorks he shall not hide his head,
But boldly stand and front him to his face.

YORK

York has come to your highness with submission and
humility.

KING HENRY VI

Then why did you bring this army with you?

YORK

To take the traitor Somerset from here and fight that
monstrous rebel Cade, who I have heard is now defeated.

IDEN enters with CADE'S head.

IDEN

If someone so ignorant and of such low rank may come into
the presence of a king, here is a traitor's head. This is the
head of Cade, who I killed in a one-on-one fight.

KING HENRY VI

The head of Cade! Great God, how just you are! Oh, let me
see how he looks like now that he's dead, but caused me so
much trouble when he was alive. Tell me, my friend, are you
the man that killed him?

IDEN


I was, if it please your majesty.

KING HENRY VI

What's your name and what is your rank?

IDEN

Alexander Iden, that's my name. I am a poor esquire of
Kent, that loves his king.

 "Esquire" was someone who was waiting to be made a knight.

BUCKINGHAM

If my king is happy with it, it wouldn't be out of place to
make him a knight for this good service.

KING HENRY VI

Iden, kneel down.

IDEN kneels.

KING HENRY VI

Stand up a knight. We give you a thousand crowns as a
reward and desire that you will attend on us from now on.

IDEN

May Iden live to be deserving of such a generosity and
never live unless he is loyal to his king!

IDEN stands up.

Enter QUEEN MARGARET and SOMERSET.

KING HENRY VI

Buckingham, look--Somerset is coming with the queen. Go
and tell her to hide him quickly from York.

QUEEN MARGARET

He shall not hide his head even if there were thousand
Yorks here, but he will bravely stand and confront him face
to face.

YORK

How now! Is Somerset at liberty?
 Then, York, unloose thy long-imprison'd thoughts,
 95 And let thy tongue be equal with thy heart.
 Shall I endure the sight of Somerset?
 False king! Why hast thou broken faith with me,
 Knowing how hardly I can brook abuse?
 King did I call thee? No, thou art not king,
 100 Not fit to govern and rule multitudes,
 Which darest not, no, nor canst not rule a traitor.
 That head of thine doth not become a crown;
 Thy hand is made to grasp a palmer's staff,
 And not to grace an awful princely sceptre.
 105 That gold must round engirt these brows of mine,
 Whose smile and frown, like to Achilles' spear,
 Is able with the change to kill and cure.
 Here is a hand to hold a sceptre up
 And with the same to act controlling laws.
 110 Give place: by heaven, thou shalt rule no more
 O'er him whom heaven created for thy ruler.

SOMERSET

O monstrous traitor! I arrest thee, York,
 Of capital treason 'gainst the king and crown;
 Obey, audacious traitor; kneel for grace.

YORK

115 Wouldst have me kneel? First let me ask of these,
 If they can brook I bow a knee to man.
 Sirrah, call in my sons to be my bail;

Exit Attendant

YORK

I know, ere they will have me go to ward,
 They'll pawn their swords for my enfranchisement.

120

QUEEN MARGARET

Call hither Clifford! Bid him come amain,
 To say if that the bastard boys of York
 Shall be the surety for their traitor father.

Exit BUCKINGHAM

YORK

O blood-besotted Neapolitan,
 125 Outcast of Naples, England's bloody scourge!
 The sons of York, thy betters in their birth,
 Shall be their father's bail; and bane to those
 That for my surety will refuse the boys!

Enter EDWARD and RICHARD

YORK

130 See where they come: I'll warrant they'll
 make it good.

Enter CLIFFORD and YOUNG CLIFFORD

QUEEN MARGARET

And here comes Clifford to deny their bail.

CLIFFORD

135 Health and all happiness to my lord the king!

Kneels

YORK

I thank thee, Clifford: say, what news with thee?
 Nay, do not fright us with an angry look;
 We are thy sovereign, Clifford, kneel again;
 For thy mistaking so, we pardon thee.

YORK

What's this? Is Somerset free? Then, York will release the thoughts he has kept for so long and let his tongue speak what his heart feels. Shall I endure to look at Somerset? You are a false king! Why have you deceived me, knowing with what difficulty can I tolerate deception? Did I call you king? No, you are not a king, nor are you capable of ruling the crowds. A traitor doesn't dare and cannot rule. Your head does is not fit for a crown, your hand is made to grasp a pilgrim's staff and not to hold an awe-inspiring princely scepter. That gold must encircle my head. My smile and frown, like Achilles' spear ⁴ is able to change from killing to healing in a moment. Here is a hand that is made for holding a scepter and also bring about effective laws. By heaven, you shall not rule any more over him whom heaven created to be your ruler.

⁴ The rust from Achilles' spear (in the mythological Trojan War) was able to cure a wound that the spear had inflicted.

SOMERSET

Oh, monstrous traitor! I arrest you, York, of capital treason against the king and the crown. Obey, audacious traitor. Kneel in front of your king.

YORK

Do you want me to kneel!? First, let me ask these attendants, if they can permit me to bow to any man. Sir, call my sons to come in and bail me out.

Exit Attendant.

YORK

I know that before they will let me go to custody, they will bring out their swords to free me.

QUEEN MARGARET

Call Clifford! Tell him to come quickly to say whether the bastard boys of York shall be the assurance for their traitor father.

Exit BUCKINGHAM.

YORK

Oh, bloodthirsty Neapolitan ⁵, outcast of Naples, England's bloody punishment! The sons of York are your superiors in birth. They shall bail out their father. I wish destruction to those who will refuse my boys as my assurance!

⁵ Margaret was the daughter of Reigner, the King of Naples, and so she is a "Neapolitan".

Enter EDWARD and RICHARD.

YORK

See where they come! I swear that they will make everything all right.

Enter CLIFFORD and YOUNG CLIFFORD.

QUEEN MARGARET

And here comes Clifford to stop them from bailing you out.

CLIFFORD

I wish health and happiness to my lord the king!

CLIFFORD kneels to KING HENRY VI.

YORK

Thank you, Clifford! What's the news with you? No, don't look at so angrily. We are the king, Clifford, so kneel again. We excuse you for not doing so.

CLIFFORD

140 This is my king, York, I do not mistake;
But thou mistakest me much to think I do:
To Bedlam with him! Is the man grown mad?

KING HENRY VI

Ay, Clifford; a bedlam and ambitious humour
Makes him oppose himself against his king.

CLIFFORD

145 He is a traitor; let him to the Tower,
And chop away that factious pate of his.

QUEEN MARGARET

He is arrested, but will not obey;
His sons, he says, shall give their words for him.

YORK

Will you not, sons?

EDWARD

150 Ay, noble father, if our words will serve.

RICHARD

And if words will not, then our weapons shall.

CLIFFORD

Why, what a brood of traitors have we here!

YORK

Look in a glass, and call thy image so:
I am thy king, and thou a false-heart traitor.
155 Call hither to the stake my two brave bears,
That with the very shaking of their chains
They may astonish these fell-lurking curs:
Bid Salisbury and Warwick come to me.

Enter the WARWICK and SALISBURY

CLIFFORD

Are these thy bears? We'll bait thy bears to death.
160 And manacle the bear-ward in their chains,
If thou darest bring them to the baiting place.

RICHARD

Oft have I seen a hot o'erweening cur
Run back and bite, because he was withheld;
Who, being suffer'd with the bear's fell paw,
165 Hath clapp'd his tail between his legs and cried:
And such a piece of service will you do,
If you oppose yourselves to match Lord Warwick.

CLIFFORD

Hence, heap of wrath, foul indigested lump,
As crooked in thy manners as thy shape!

YORK

170 Nay, we shall heat you thoroughly anon.

CLIFFORD

Take heed, lest by your heat you burn yourselves.

KING HENRY VI

Why, Warwick, hath thy knee forgot to bow?
Old Salisbury, shame to thy silver hair,
Thou mad misleader of thy brain-sick son!
175 What, wilt thou on thy death-bed play the ruffian,
And seek for sorrow with thy spectacles?
O, where is faith? O, where is loyalty?
If it be banish'd from the frosty head,

CLIFFORD

This is my king, York. I am not making a mistake. But you mistake me for thinking that I do. To the madhouse with him! Has he become mad?

KING HENRY VI

Yes, Cliffors, a mad and ambitious mood makes him oppose himself against his king.

CLIFFORD

He is a traitor, take him to the Tower and chop off his rebellious head.

QUEEN MARGARET

He is arrested but won't listen to us. He says that his sons will speak for him.

YORK

Won't you speak for me, sons?

EDWARD

We will, noble father. If our words will be enough.


RICHARD


And if words won't be, then our weapons will.

CLIFFORD

Ah, what a group of traitors do we have here!

YORK

Look in a mirror and call yourself a traitor. I am your king and you are a disloyal traitor. Call my two brave bears to the stake , to terrify these fierce dogs with the shaking of their chains. Tell Salisbury and Warwick to come here.

 Bear-baiting was an extremely popular form of entertainment in Shakespeare's London, with a bear-baiting ring down the street from the Globe. Bears would be tied to the stake and attacked by dogs.

WARWICK and SALISBURY enter.


CLIFFORD


Are these your bears? We'll fight your bears until we kill them. And we'll put the bear-baiter in their chains, if you dare to bring them to the bear pit.

RICHARD

I have often seen an angry overexcited dog turn around and bite the dog handler, because he was stopped from fighting. The dog, hurt by the bear's savage paw, has put his tail between his legs and cried. And you'll be just like that, if you stand against Lord Warwick.

CLIFFORD

Get out of here, you pile of anger, you foul indigested lump, as deformed  in your manners as you are in your body.

 Richard is known for a hunched back and various other physical deformities.

YORK

No, we'll make you hot from fighting very soon.

CLIFFORD

Be careful, unless you burn yourselves with that heat.

KING HENRY VI

Why don't you kneel in front of me, Warwick? Old Salisbury, shame to your silver hair, you mad corrupter of your brain-sick son! Will you play a hooligan on your death-bed and look for sorrow with your glasses? Oh, where is faith? Oh, where is loyalty? If its banished from your old head, where shall it find a home anywhere in this world? Will you go and dig a grave to find war, and shame your honorable age with

Where shall it find a harbour in the earth?
 180 Wilt thou go dig a grave to find out war,
 And shame thine honourable age with blood?
 Why art thou old, and want'st experience?
 Or wherefore dost abuse it, if thou hast it?
 For shame! In duty bend thy knee to me
 185 That bows unto the grave with mickle age.

SALISBURY

My lord, I have consider'd with myself
 The title of this most renowned duke;
 And in my conscience do repute his grace
 The rightful heir to England's royal seat.

KING HENRY VI

190 Hast thou not sworn allegiance unto me?

SALISBURY

I have.

KING HENRY VI

Canst thou dispense with heaven for such an oath?

SALISBURY

It is great sin to swear unto a sin,
 But greater sin to keep a sinful oath.
 195 Who can be bound by any solemn vow
 To do a murderous deed, to rob a man,
 To force a spotless virgin's chastity,
 To reave the orphan of his patrimony,
 To wring the widow from her custom'd right,
 200 And have no other reason for this wrong
 But that he was bound by a solemn oath?

QUEEN MARGARET

A subtle traitor needs no sophister.

KING HENRY VI

Call Buckingham, and bid him arm himself.

YORK

205 Call Buckingham, and all the friends thou hast,
 I am resolved for death or dignity.

CLIFFORD

The first I warrant thee, if dreams prove true.

WARWICK

You were best to go to bed and dream again,
 To keep thee from the tempest of the field.

CLIFFORD

I am resolved to bear a greater storm
 210 Than any thou canst conjure up to-day;
 And that I'll write upon thy burgonet,
 Might I but know thee by thy household badge.

WARWICK

Now, by my father's badge, old Nevil's crest,
 The rampant bear chain'd to the ragged staff,
 215 This day I'll wear aloft my burgonet,
 As on a mountain top the cedar shows
 That keeps his leaves in spite of any storm,
 Even to affright thee with the view thereof.

CLIFFORD

And from thy burgonet I'll rend thy bear
 220 And tread it under foot with all contempt,
 Despite the bear-ward that protects the bear.

bloodshed? Are you old and still lack experience? Or why do
 you misuse your wisdom, if you have it? Shame on you!
 Kneel dutifully in front of me, like old age kneels to the
 grave.

SALISBURY

My lord, I have considered the title of this renowned duke
 myself, and in my conscience I consider him the rightful heir
 to the English throne.

KING HENRY VI

Haven't you sworn your loyalty to me?

SALISBURY

I have.

KING HENRY VI

Can you disregard it and swear against heaven?

SALISBURY

It is sinful to swear to a sin. But it is even a greater sin to
 keep a sinful promise. Who can be bound to any serious
 promise to commit a murder, to rob a man, to rape a virgin,
 to steal an orphan's inheritance, to steal the rights of
 inheritance from a widow, and have no other reason for
 these crimes than that he made a promise to do so?

QUEEN MARGARET

A cunning traitor doesn't need false logic.

KING HENRY VI

Call Buckingham, and tell him to arm for battle.

YORK

Call Buckingham and all the friends you have. I am
 determined to die or take the throne.

CLIFFORD

I will give you the first, if my dreams come true.

WARWICK

It would be better if you went back to bed and dreamed
 again, to keep yourself safe from the storm of the
 battlefield.

CLIFFORD

I am determined to suffer a greater storm than any of you
 can stir up today. And I'll write on your helmet, if I can
 recognize you by your family crest.

WARWICK

Now, by my father's badge, old Nevil's crest--the roaring
 bear chained to the rough staff--I'll wear my helmet on my
 horse, like a cedar shows itself on a mountain top and
 keeps its leaves though any storm, just to frighten you with
 the view.

CLIFFORD

And I'll tear your bear from your helmet, and tread it under
 your feet with contempt, despite the bear-keeper that
 protects the bear.

YOUNG CLIFFORD

And so to arms, victorious father,
To quell the rebels and their accomplices.

RICHARD

225 Fie! Charity, for shame! Speak not in spite,
For you shall sup with Jesu Christ to-night.

YOUNG CLIFFORD

Foul stigmatic, that's more than thou canst tell.

RICHARD

If not in heaven, you'll surely sup in hell.

Exeunt severally

YOUNG CLIFFORD

And so let's fight, victorious father! To kill the rebels and their accomplices.

RICHARD

Oh, please! That's shameful! Don't speak, because you'll have dinner with Jesus Christ tonight.

YOUNG CLIFFORD

Foul criminal, that's more than you can say for yourself.

RICHARD

If I won't have dinner in heaven, I'll surely have dinner in hell!

All exit separately.

Act 5, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Alarums to the battle. Enter WARWICK

WARWICK

Clifford of Cumberland, 'tis Warwick calls:
And if thou dost not hide thee from the bear,
Now, when the angry trumpet sounds alarum
And dead men's cries do fill the empty air,
5 Clifford, I say, come forth and fight with me:
Proud northern lord, Clifford of Cumberland,
Warwick is hoarse with calling thee to arms.

Enter YORK

WARWICK

How now, my noble lord? What, all afoot?

YORK

10 The deadly-handed Clifford slew my steed,
But match to match I have encounter'd him
And made a prey for carrion kites and crows
Even of the bonny beast he loved so well.

Enter CLIFFORD

WARWICK

Of one or both of us the time is come.

YORK

15 Hold, Warwick, seek thee out some other chase,
For I myself must hunt this deer to death.

WARWICK

Then, nobly, York; 'tis for a crown thou fight'st.
As I intend, Clifford, to thrive to-day,
It grieves my soul to leave thee unassail'd.

Exit

CLIFFORD

20 What seest thou in me, York? Why dost thou pause?

YORK

With thy brave bearing should I be in love,
But that thou art so fast mine enemy.

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet calls to battle. WARWICK enters.

WARWICK

Clifford of Cumberland, Warwick calls you! And if you don't hide from the bear, now, when the angry trumpet calls to battle and the cries of dying men fill the empty air, then come forward and fight with me, Clifford! You proud northern lord, Clifford of Cumberland, I'm losing my voice by calling you to fight!

YORK enters.

WARWICK

How is it going, my noble lord? Are they all fighting?

YORK

The murderous Clifford killed my horse, but I have followed him and finally met him. And now I've killed his horse, that he loved so much.

CLIFFORD enters.

WARWICK

The time has come for one or both of us now.

YORK

Stop, Warwick, and find some other prey for yourself. This deer is mine to kill.

WARWICK

Then I hope you fight nobly, York. You fight for a crown, after all. Since I am planning to win today, Clifford, it makes me sad to leave without attacking you.

WARWICK exits.

CLIFFORD

What do you see in me, York? Why did you stop?

YORK

I would admire your bravery, if you weren't my worst enemy.

CLIFFORD

Nor should thy prowess want praise and esteem,
But that 'tis shown ignobly and in treason.

YORK

25 So let it help me now against thy sword
As I in justice and true right express it.

CLIFFORD

My soul and body on the action both!

YORK

A dreadful lay! Address thee instantly.

They fight, and CLIFFORD falls

CLIFFORD

30 La fin couronne les oeuvres.

Dies

YORK

Thus war hath given thee peace, for thou art still.
Peace with his soul, heaven, if it be thy will!

Exit

Enter YOUNG CLIFFORD

YOUNG CLIFFORD

35 Shame and confusion! All is on the rout;
Fear frames disorder, and disorder wounds
Where it should guard. O war, thou son of hell,
Whom angry heavens do make their minister
Throw in the frozen bosoms of our part
40 Hot coals of vengeance! Let no soldier fly.
He that is truly dedicate to war
Hath no self-love, nor he that loves himself
Hath not essentially but by circumstance
The name of valour.

Seeing his dead father

YOUNG CLIFFORD

45 O, let the vile world end,
And the promised flames of the last day
Knit earth and heaven together!
Now let the general trumpet blow his blast,
Particularities and petty sounds
50 To cease! Wast thou ordain'd, dear father,
To lose thy youth in peace, and to achieve
The silver livery of advised age,
And, in thy reverence and thy chair-days, thus
To die in ruffian battle? Even at this sight
55 My heart is turn'd to stone: and while 'tis mine,
It shall be stony. York not our old men spares;
No more will I their babes: tears virginal
Shall be to me even as the dew to fire,
And beauty that the tyrant oft reclaims
60 Shall to my flaming wrath be oil and flax.
Henceforth I will not have to do with pity:
Meet I an infant of the house of York,
Into as many gobbets will I cut it
As wild Medea young Absyrtus did:
65 In cruelty will I seek out my fame.
Come, thou new ruin of old Clifford's house:
As did Aeneas old Anchises bear,
So bear I thee upon my manly shoulders;
But then Aeneas bare a living load,
70 Nothing so heavy as these woes of mine.

Exit, bearing off his father

CLIFFORD

Your cunning should be worthy of respect and praise,
except you use your cleverness for treasonous ends.

YORK

Well, I hope my cunning helps me against your sword, since
I use it for justice and what's right.

CLIFFORD

I bet my body and soul on the outcome of this fight!

YORK

A bad bet! Prepare yourself now!

YORK and CLIFFORD fight. CLIFFORD falls.

CLIFFORD

The end crowns the works.

CLIFFORD dies.

YORK

And so war has given you peace, because now you're still.
Peace be with his soul, heaven, if that's your will!

YORK exits.

YOUNG CLIFFORD enters.


YOUNG CLIFFORD


Shame and confusion! Everything is out of control. Fear
creates disorder, and disorder hurts the thing it should be
protecting. Oh, war, you are a son of hell. The angry
heavens throw you into cold hearts to ignite a fire of
revenge! No soldier should retreat. Whoever is truly
devoted to war doesn't think about protecting himself, and
whoever tries to protect himself won't ever be brave except
by accident.


YOUNG CLIFFORD sees his dead father.


YOUNG CLIFFORD

Oh, I hope the horrible world ends, and the preordained
flames of the judgement day unite earth and heaven
together! I wish that the trumpet sounding the end of days
to all men would sound now, to stop these small and petty
sounds! Was it your destiny, dear father, to lose your youth
in peace, and to grow old just so you can die in this rough
battle? This sight alone has turned my heart into stone, and
as long as it's mine, it will be stony. York doesn't spare our
old men, so I won't spare their babies. These innocent tears
will be for me like the dew to a fire 1, and beauty that
often subdues cruelty will be oil and wax 2 to my flaming
anger. From now on, I won't have pity. If I meet an infant
from the house of York, I'll cut it into as many chunks of raw
flesh as wild Medea did to young Absyrtus 3. I'll try to
become famous for cruelty. Come, you new ruin of the
house of old Clifford. Like Aeneas carried old Anchises 4,
I'll carry you on my manly shoulders. But then again,
Aeneas carried a living body, so he didn't suffer as much as I
do.

 Dew was imagined to make fire
burn more strongly.

 "Oil and wax" are both very
flammable.

 Medea slaughtered her brother
Absyrtus in Greek mythology and
dismembered his body.

 Aeneas, the hero of Homer's
Aeneid, was the son of Anchises, who
he carried out of the burning city of
Troy at the end of the mythological
Trojan War.

YOUNG CLIFFORD exits, carrying his father.

Enter RICHARD and SOMERSET to fight. SOMERSET is killed

RICHARD

So, lie thou there;
For underneath an alehouse' paltry sign,
The Castle in Saint Alban's, Somerset
Hath made the wizard famous in his death.
75 Sword, hold thy temper; heart, be wrathful still:
Priests pray for enemies, but princes kill.

Exit

Fight: excursions. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, and others

QUEEN MARGARET

Away, my lord! You are slow; for shame, away!

KING HENRY VI

Can we outrun the heavens? Good Margaret, stay.

QUEEN MARGARET

What are you made of? You'll nor fight nor fly:
80 Now is it manhood, wisdom and defence,
To give the enemy way, and to secure us
By what we can, which can no more but fly.

Alarum afar off

QUEEN MARGARET

If you be ta'en, we then should see the bottom
Of all our fortunes: but if we haply scape,
85 As well we may, if not through your neglect,
We shall to London get, where you are loved
And where this breach now in our fortunes made
May readily be stopp'd.

Re-enter YOUNG CLIFFORD


YOUNG CLIFFORD


But that my heart's on future mischief set,
90 I would speak blasphemy ere bid you fly:
But fly you must; incurable discomfit
Reigns in the hearts of all our present parts.
Away, for your relief! And we will live
To see their day and them our fortune give:
95 Away, my lord, away!

Exeunt

RICHARD and SOMERSET enter, fighting. SOMERSET is killed.

RICHARD

So, you lie there. Because he died under a sign of a worthless pub called the Castle in Saint Alban's, Somerset has proven the wizard's  prophecy. Sword, stop your violence; heart, continue to be angry. Priests pray for enemies, but princes kill.

 See Roger Bullingbroke's prophecy in Act One, Scene 4.

RICHARD exits.

Fighting across the stage. KING HENRY VI enters with QUEEN MARGARET and others.

QUEEN MARGARET

We must get away, my lord! Oh, you are slow; let's go!

KING HENRY VI

Can we run faster than the heavens? Good Margaret, wait.

QUEEN MARGARET

What are you made of? You won't fight or run! Now it's brave, wise, and smart to let the enemy win and to save ourselves however we can. And we can do nothing else but run!

A sound of battle from far away.

QUEEN MARGARET

If you are captured, we would hit the rock bottom of our luck. But if we manage to escape--as we may still do, if you don't slow us down--we can get to London, where you are loved and where this hole in our luck can be easily repaired.

YOUNG CLIFFORD re-enters.

YOUNG CLIFFORD

If I weren't afraid of hell, I would speak blasphemy before I told you to run. But you must go. Our surviving forces are undeniably defeated. Run away for your safety! We'll survive to see our victorious day and give them piece of our luck. Run, my lord, run!

All exit.

Act 5, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Alarum. Retreat. Enter YORK, RICHARD, WARWICK, and Soldiers, with drum and colours

YORK

Of Salisbury, who can report of him,
That winter lion, who in rage forgets
Aged contusions and all brush of time,
And, like a gallant in the brow of youth,
5 Repairs him with occasion? This happy day
Is not itself, nor have we won one foot,
If Salisbury be lost.

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet announces a retreat. YORK, RICHARD, WARWICK, and soldiers enter with drum and flagbearers.

YORK

Who can give us any news of Salisbury? He fought like an old lion who in his anger forgets about his old age, as if he were young again. It's not a properly happy day, nor have we really won, if we have lost Salisbury.

RICHARD

My noble father,
 Three times to-day I help him to his horse,
 10 Three times bestrid him; thrice I led him off,
 Persuaded him from any further act:
 But still, where danger was, still there I met him;
 And like rich hangings in a homely house,
 So was his will in his old feeble body.
 15 But, noble as he is, look where he comes.

Enter SALISBURY

SALISBURY

Now, by my sword, well hast thou fought to-day;
 By the mass, so did we all. I thank you, Richard:
 God knows how long it is I have to live;
 And it hath pleased him that three times to-day
 20 You have defended me from imminent death.
 Well, lords, we have not got that which we have:
 'Tis not enough our foes are this time fled,
 Being opposites of such repairing nature.

YORK

I know our safety is to follow them;
 25 For, as I hear, the king is fled to London,
 To call a present court of parliament.
 Let us pursue him ere the writs go forth.
 What says Lord Warwick? Shall we after them?

WARWICK

After them! Nay, before them, if we can.
 30 Now, by my faith, lords, 'twas a glorious day:
 Saint Alban's battle won by famous York
 Shall be eternized in all age to come.
 Sound drums and trumpets, and to London all:
 And more such days as these to us befall!

Exeunt

RICHARD

My noble father, I helped him to get up on his horse three
 times today, and I defended him three times from enemy
 soldiers. I led him off the battlefield three times, too, and
 tried to persuade him from fighting anymore. But either
 way, wherever there was danger, I was always with him. His
 fighting spirit in his old weak body was like a rich tapestry
 in a humble house. But speaking of the noble man, here he
 comes.

SALISBURY enters.

SALISBURY

Now, by my sword, you have fought well today. And so did
 we all! Thank you, Richard. God knows how long I have to
 live, and he saved me from sudden death three times today.
 Well, lords, we haven't won yet. It's not enough that our
 enemies have run away this time, since they are enemies
 who can recover swiftly.

YORK

I know the best way to keep ourselves safe is to follow
 them. I hear that the king has run away to London to call an
 immediate court of parliament. Let's follow him before he
 can send the summons. What do you think, Lord Warwick?
 Should we go after them?

WARWICK

After them? No, before them if we can! Now, this truly was a
 glorious day, lords. Saint Alban's battle was won by famous
 York, and it will be famous for all ages to come. Sound the
 drums and trumpets, and let's all go to London. And let's
 hope we see many more days like this!

All exit.

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