Henry VI, Part 1

By William Shakespeare

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Characters in the Play

The English

KING HENRY VI
Lord TALBOT, afterwards Earl of Shrewsbury
JOHN TALBOT, his son
Duke of GLOUCESTER, the king's uncle, and Lord Protector
Duke of BEDFORD, the king's uncle, and Regent of France
Duke of EXETER, the king's great-uncle
Cardinal, Bishop of WINCHESTER, the king's great-uncle
Duke of SOMERSET
Richard PLANTAGENET, later Duke of YORK, and Regent of France
Earl of WARWICK
Earl of SALISBURY
Earl of SUFFOLK, William de la Pole
Edmund MORTIMER, Earl of March
Sir William GLANSDALE
Sir Thomas GARGRAVE
Sir John FASTOLF
Sir William LUCY
WOODVILLE, Lieutenant of the Tower of London
VERNON, of the White Rose or York faction
BASSET, of the Red Rose or Lancaster faction
A LAWYER
JAILORS to Mortimer
A LEGATE
MAYOR of London

Heralds, Attendants, three Messengers, Servingmen in blue coats and in tawny coats, two Warders, Officers, Soldiers, Captains, Watch, Trumpeters, Drummer, Servant, two Ambassadors

The French

CHARLES, Dauphin of France
Joan la PUCELLE, also Joan of Arc
REIGNIER, Duke of Anjou and Maine, King of Naples
MARGARET, his daughter
Duke of ALANSON

Bastard of ORLEANCE
Duke of BURGUNDY
GENERAL of the French forces at Bordeaux
COUNTESS of Auvergne
Her PORTER
MASTER GUNNER of Orleance
BOY, his son
SERGEANT of a Band
A SHEPHERD, Pucelle's father

Drummer, Soldiers, two Sentinels, Messenger, Soldiers,
Governor of Paris, Herald, Scout, Fiends accompanying Pucelle

ACT 1

Scene 1

Dead March. Enter the funeral of King Henry the Fifth, attended on by the Duke of Bedford, Regent of France; the Duke of Gloucester, Protector; the Duke of Exeter; the Earl of Warwick; the Bishop of Winchester; and the Duke of Somerset, with Heralds and Attendants.

BEDFORD

Hung be the heavens with black, yield day to night!
Comets, importing change of times and states,
Brandish your crystal tresses in the sky,
And with them scourge the bad revolting stars
That have consented unto Henry's death:
King Henry the Fifth, too famous to live long.
England ne'er lost a king of so much worth.

GLOUCESTER

England ne'er had a king until his time.
Virtue he had, deserving to command;
His brandished sword did blind men with his beams;
His arms spread wider than a dragon's wings;
His sparkling eyes, replete with wrathful fire,
More dazzled and drove back his enemies
Than midday sun fierce bent against their faces.
What should I say? His deeds exceed all speech.
He ne'er lift up his hand but conquerèd.

EXETER

We mourn in black; why mourn we not in blood?
Henry is dead and never shall revive.
Upon a wooden coffin we attend,
And Death's dishonorable victory
We with our stately presence glorify,
Like captives bound to a triumphant car.
What? Shall we curse the planets of mishap
That plotted thus our glory's overthrow?
Or shall we think the subtle-witted French
Conjurers and sorcerers, that, afraid of him,
By magic verses have contrived his end?

WINCHESTER

He was a king blest of the King of kings;
Unto the French the dreadful Judgment Day
So dreadful will not be as was his sight.
The battles of the Lord of Hosts he fought;
The Church's prayers made him so prosperous.

GLOUCESTER

The Church? Where is it? Had not churchmen prayed,
His thread of life had not so soon decayed.
None do you like but an effeminate prince
Whom like a schoolboy you may overawe.

WINCHESTER

Gloucester, whate'er we like, thou art Protector
And lookest to command the Prince and realm.

Thy wife is proud; she holdeth thee in awe
More than God or religious churchmen may.
GLOUCESTER
Name not religion, for thou lov'st the flesh,
And ne'er throughout the year to church thou go'st,
Except it be to pray against thy foes.
BEDFORD
Cease, cease these jars, and rest your minds in peace!
Let's to the altar.—Heralds, wait on us.—
Instead of gold, we'll offer up our arms,
Since arms avail not, now that Henry's dead.
Posterity, await for wretched years
When at their mothers' moistened eyes babes shall suck,
Our isle be made a nourish of salt tears,
And none but women left to wail the dead.
Henry the Fifth, thy ghost I invocate:
Prosper this realm, keep it from civil broils,
Combat with adverse planets in the heavens.
A far more glorious star thy soul will make
Than Julius Caesar or bright—

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER
My honorable lords, health to you all.
Sad tidings bring I to you out of France,
Of loss, of slaughter, and discomfiture:
Guyen, Champaigne, Rheims, Roan, Orleance,
Paris, Gisors, Poitiers, are all quite lost.
BEDFORD
What say'st thou, man, before dead Henry's corse?
Speak softly, or the loss of those great towns
Will make him burst his lead and rise from death.
GLOUCESTER
Is Paris lost? Is Roan yielded up?
If Henry were recalled to life again,
These news would cause him once more yield the ghost.
EXETER
How were they lost? What treachery was used?
MESSENGER
No treachery, but want of men and money.
Amongst the soldiers, this is mutterèd:
That here you maintain several factions
And, whilst a field should be dispatched and fought,
You are disputing of your generals.
One would have ling'ring wars with little cost;
Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings;
A third thinks, without expense at all,
By guileful fair words peace may be obtained.
Awake, awake, English nobility!
Let not sloth dim your honors new begot.
Cropped are the flower-de-luces in your arms;
Of England's coat, one half is cut away. *He exits.*

EXETER
Were our tears wanting to this funeral,
These tidings would call forth her flowing tides.
BEDFORD
Me they concern; regent I am of France.
Give me my steelèd coat, I'll fight for France.
Away with these disgraceful wailing robes.
Wounds will I lend the French instead of eyes
To weep their intermissive miseries.

Enter to them another Messenger, with papers.

SECOND MESSENGER
Lords, view these letters, full of bad mischance.
France is revolted from the English quite,
Except some petty towns of no import.
The Dauphin Charles is crownèd king in Rheims;
The Bastard of Orleance with him is joined;
Reignier, Duke of Anjou, doth take his part;
The Duke of Alanson flieth to his side. *He exits.*
EXETER
The Dauphin crownèd king? All fly to him?
O, whither shall we fly from this reproach?
GLOUCESTER
We will not fly but to our enemies' throats.—
Bedford, if thou be slack, I'll fight it out.
BEDFORD
Gloucester, why doubt'st thou of my forwardness?
An army have I mustered in my thoughts,
Wherewith already France is overrun.

Enter another Messenger.

THIRD MESSENGER
My gracious lords, to add to your laments,
Wherewith you now bedew King Henry's hearse,
I must inform you of a dismal fight
Betwixt the stout Lord Talbot and the French.
WINCHESTER
What? Wherein Talbot overcame, is 't so?
THIRD MESSENGER
O no, wherein Lord Talbot was o'erthrown.
The circumstance I'll tell you more at large.
The tenth of August last, this dreadful lord,
Retiring from the siege of Orleance,
Having full scarce six thousand in his troop,
By three and twenty thousand of the French
Was round encompassèd and set upon.
No leisure had he to enrank his men.
He wanted pikes to set before his archers,
Instead whereof, sharp stakes plucked out of hedges
They pitchèd in the ground confusedly
To keep the horsemen off from breaking in.
More than three hours the fight continuèd,
Where valiant Talbot, above human thought,
Enacted wonders with his sword and lance.

Hundreds he sent to hell, and none durst stand him;
Here, there, and everywhere, enraged, he slew.
The French exclaimed the devil was in arms;
All the whole army stood agazed on him.
His soldiers, spying his undaunted spirit,
"À Talbot! À Talbot!" cried out amain
And rushed into the bowels of the battle.
Here had the conquest fully been sealed up
If Sir John Fastolf had not played the coward.
He, being in the vaward, placed behind
With purpose to relieve and follow them,
Cowardly fled, not having struck one stroke.
Hence grew the general wrack and massacre.
Enclosèd were they with their enemies.
A base Walloon, to win the Dauphin's grace,
Thrust Talbot with a spear into the back,
Whom all France, with their chief assembled strength,
Durst not presume to look once in the face.

BEDFORD

Is Talbot slain then? I will slay myself
For living idly here, in pomp and ease,
Whilst such a worthy leader, wanting aid,
Unto his dastard foemen is betrayed.

THIRD MESSENGER

O, no, he lives, but is took prisoner,
And Lord Scales with him, and Lord Hungerford;
Most of the rest slaughtered or took likewise.

BEDFORD

His ransom there is none but I shall pay.
I'll hale the Dauphin headlong from his throne;
His crown shall be the ransom of my friend.
Four of their lords I'll change for one of ours.
Farewell, my masters; to my task will I.
Bonfires in France forthwith I am to make,
To keep our great Saint George's feast withal.
Ten thousand soldiers with me I will take,
Whose bloody deeds shall make all Europe quake.

THIRD MESSENGER

So you had need; 'fore Orleance besieged,
The English army is grown weak and faint;
The Earl of Salisbury craveth supply
And hardly keeps his men from mutiny,
Since they so few watch such a multitude.

He exits.

EXETER

Remember, lords, your oaths to Henry sworn:
Either to quell the Dauphin utterly
Or bring him in obedience to your yoke.

BEDFORD

I do remember it, and here take my leave
To go about my preparation. *Bedford exits.*

GLOUCESTER

I'll to the Tower with all the haste I can
To view th' artillery and munition,
And then I will proclaim young Henry king.

Gloucester exits.

EXETER
To Eltham will I, where the young king is,
Being ordained his special governor;
And for his safety there I'll best devise. *He exits.*

WINCHESTER*, aside*
Each hath his place and function to attend.
I am left out; for me nothing remains.
But long I will not be Jack-out-of-office.
The King from Eltham I intend to steal,
And sit at chiefest stern of public weal.

He exits at one door; at another door, Warwick, Somerset, Attendants and Heralds exit with the coffin.

Scene 2

Sound a flourish. Enter Charles the Dauphin, Alanson, and Reignier, marching with Drum and Soldiers.

CHARLES
Mars his true moving, even as in the heavens
So in the Earth, to this day is not known.
Late did he shine upon the English side;
Now we are victors; upon us he smiles.
What towns of any moment but we have?
At pleasure here we lie, near Orleance.
Otherwhiles, the famished English, like pale ghosts,
Faintly besiege us one hour in a month.

ALANSON
They want their porridge and their fat bull beeves.
Either they must be dieted like mules
And have their provender tied to their mouths,
Or piteous they will look, like drownèd mice.

REIGNIER
Let's raise the siege. Why live we idly here?
Talbot is taken, whom we wont to fear.
Remaineth none but mad-brained Salisbury,
And he may well in fretting spend his gall;
Nor men nor money hath he to make war.

CHARLES
Sound, sound alarum! We will rush on them.
Now for the honor of the forlorn French!
Him I forgive my death that killeth me
When he sees me go back one foot, or fly.

They exit. Here alarum. They are beaten back by the English, with great loss.

Enter Charles, Alanson, and Reignier.

CHARLES
Whoever saw the like? What men have I!
Dogs, cowards, dastards! I would ne'er have fled
But that they left me 'midst my enemies.

REIGNIER
Salisbury is a desperate homicide.

He fighteth as one weary of his life.
The other lords, like lions wanting food,
Do rush upon us as their hungry prey.

ALANSON

Froissart, a countryman of ours, records
England all Olivers and Rolands bred
During the time Edward the Third did reign.
More truly now may this be verified,
For none but Samsons and Goliases
It sendeth forth to skirmish. One to ten!
Lean rawboned rascals! Who would e'er suppose
They had such courage and audacity?

CHARLES

Let's leave this town, for they are hare-brained slaves,
And hunger will enforce them to be more eager.
Of old I know them; rather with their teeth
The walls they'll tear down than forsake the siege.

REIGNIER

I think by some odd gimmers or device
Their arms are set, like clocks, still to strike on;
Else ne'er could they hold out so as they do.
By my consent, we'll even let them alone.

ALANSON Be it so.

Enter the Bastard of Orleance.

BASTARD

Where's the Prince Dauphin? I have news for him.

CHARLES

Bastard of Orleance, thrice welcome to us.

BASTARD

Methinks your looks are sad, your cheer appalled.
Hath the late overthrow wrought this offence?
Be not dismayed, for succor is at hand.
A holy maid hither with me I bring,
Which, by a vision sent to her from heaven,
Ordainèd is to raise this tedious siege
And drive the English forth the bounds of France.
The spirit of deep prophecy she hath,
Exceeding the nine Sibyls of old Rome.
What's past and what's to come she can descry.
Speak, shall I call her in? Believe my words,
For they are certain and unfallible.

CHARLES

Go call her in. *Bastard exits.*
But first, to try her skill,
Reignier, stand thou as Dauphin in my place;
Question her proudly; let thy looks be stern.
By this means shall we sound what skill she hath.

Enter Bastard, with Joan la Pucelle.

REIGNIER*, as Charles*

Fair maid, is 't thou wilt do these wondrous feats?

PUCELLE

Reignier, is 't thou that thinkest to beguile me?

Where is the Dauphin?—Come, come from behind.
I know thee well, though never seen before.
Be not amazed; there's nothing hid from me.
In private will I talk with thee apart.—
Stand back, you lords, and give us leave a while.

REIGNIER

She takes upon her bravely at first dash.

Alanson, Reignier, and Bastard exit.

PUCELLE

Dauphin, I am by birth a shepherd's daughter,
My wit untrained in any kind of art.
Heaven and Our Lady gracious hath it pleased
To shine on my contemptible estate.
Lo, whilst I waited on my tender lambs,
And to sun's parching heat displayed my cheeks,
God's Mother deignèd to appear to me,
And in a vision full of majesty
Willed me to leave my base vocation
And free my country from calamity.
Her aid she promised and assured success.
In complete glory she revealed herself;
And whereas I was black and swart before,
With those clear rays which she infused on me
That beauty am I blest with, which you may see.
Ask me what question thou canst possible,
And I will answer unpremeditated.
My courage try by combat, if thou dar'st,
And thou shalt find that I exceed my sex.
Resolve on this: thou shalt be fortunate
If thou receive me for thy warlike mate.

CHARLES

Thou hast astonished me with thy high terms.
Only this proof I'll of thy valor make:
In single combat thou shalt buckle with me,
And if thou vanquishest, thy words are true;
Otherwise I renounce all confidence.

PUCELLE

I am prepared. Here is my keen-edged sword,
Decked with fine flower-de-luces on each side—
Aside. The which at Touraine, in Saint Katherine's churchyard,
Out of a great deal of old iron I chose forth.

CHARLES

Then come, a' God's name! I fear no woman.

PUCELLE

And while I live, I'll ne'er fly from a man.

Here they fight, and
Joan la Pucelle overcomes.

CHARLES

Stay, stay thy hands! Thou art an Amazon,
And fightest with the sword of Deborah.

PUCELLE

Christ's mother helps me; else I were too weak.

CHARLES

Whoe'er helps thee, 'tis thou that must help me.
Impatiently I burn with thy desire.

My heart and hands thou hast at once subdued.
Excellent Pucelle, if thy name be so,
Let me thy servant and not sovereign be.
'Tis the French Dauphin sueth to thee thus.

PUCELLE

I must not yield to any rights of love,
For my profession's sacred from above.
When I have chasèd all thy foes from hence,
Then will I think upon a recompense.

CHARLES

Meantime look gracious on thy prostrate thrall.

Enter Reignier and Alanson.

REIGNIER*, aside to Alanson*

My lord, methinks, is very long in talk.

ALANSON*, aside to Reignier*

Doubtless he shrives this woman to her smock,
Else ne'er could he so long protract his speech.

REIGNIER*, aside to Alanson*

Shall we disturb him, since he keeps no mean?

ALANSON*, aside to Reignier*

He may mean more than we poor men do know.
These women are shrewd tempters with their tongues.

REIGNIER*, to Charles*

My lord, where are you? What devise you on?
Shall we give o'er Orleance, or no?

PUCELLE

Why, no, I say. Distrustful recreants,
Fight till the last gasp. I'll be your guard.

CHARLES

What she says I'll confirm: we'll fight it out.

PUCELLE

Assigned am I to be the English scourge.
This night the siege assuredly I'll raise.
Expect Saint Martin's summer, halcyons' days,
Since I have enterèd into these wars.
Glory is like a circle in the water,
Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
Till by broad spreading it disperse to naught.
With Henry's death, the English circle ends;
Dispersèd are the glories it included.
Now am I like that proud insulting ship
Which Caesar and his fortune bare at once.

CHARLES

Was Mahomet inspirèd with a dove?
Thou with an eagle art inspirèd then.
Helen, the mother of great Constantine,
Nor yet Saint Philip's daughters were like thee.
Bright star of Venus, fall'n down on the Earth,
How may I reverently worship thee enough?

ALANSON

Leave off delays, and let us raise the siege.

REIGNIER

Woman, do what thou canst to save our honors.

Drive them from Orleance and be immortalized.
CHARLES
Presently we'll try. Come, let's away about it.
No prophet will I trust if she prove false.
They exit.

Scene 3

Enter Gloucester with his Servingmen in blue coats.

GLOUCESTER
I am come to survey the Tower this day.
Since Henry's death I fear there is conveyance.
Where be these warders that they wait not here?—
Open the gates! 'Tis Gloucester that calls.
Servingmen knock at the gate.
FIRST WARDER*, within*
Who's there that knocks so imperiously?
FIRST SERVINGMAN
It is the noble Duke of Gloucester.
SECOND WARDER*, within*
Whoe'er he be, you may not be let in.
FIRST SERVINGMAN
Villains, answer you so the Lord Protector?
FIRST WARDER*, within*
The Lord protect him, so we answer him.
We do no otherwise than we are willed.
GLOUCESTER
Who willed you? Or whose will stands but mine?
There's none Protector of the realm but I.—
Break up the gates! I'll be your warrantize.
Shall I be flouted thus by dunghill grooms?
Gloucester's men rush at the Tower gates, and Woodville, the lieutenant, speaks within.
WOODVILLE
What noise is this? What traitors have we here?
GLOUCESTER
Lieutenant, is it you whose voice I hear?
Open the gates. Here's Gloucester that would enter.
WOODVILLE
Have patience, noble duke, I may not open.
The Cardinal of Winchester forbids.
From him I have express commandment
That thou nor none of thine shall be let in.
GLOUCESTER
Fainthearted Woodville, prizest him 'fore me?
Arrogant Winchester, that haughty prelate
Whom Henry, our late sovereign, ne'er could brook?
Thou art no friend to God or to the King.
Open the gates, or I'll shut thee out shortly.
SERVINGMEN
Open the gates unto the Lord Protector,
Or we'll burst them open if that you come not quickly.

Enter, to the Protector at the Tower gates, Winchester in cardinal's robes and his men in tawny coats.

WINCHESTER
How now, ambitious Humphrey, what means this?
GLOUCESTER
Peeled priest, dost thou command me to be shut out?
WINCHESTER
I do, thou most usurping proditor—
And not Protector—of the King or realm.
GLOUCESTER
Stand back, thou manifest conspirator,
Thou that contrived'st to murder our dead lord,
Thou that giv'st whores indulgences to sin!
I'll canvass thee in thy broad cardinal's hat
If thou proceed in this thy insolence.
WINCHESTER
Nay, stand thou back. I will not budge a foot.
This be Damascus; be thou cursèd Cain
To slay thy brother Abel, if thou wilt.
GLOUCESTER
I will not slay thee, but I'll drive thee back.
Thy scarlet robes, as a child's bearing-cloth,
I'll use to carry thee out of this place.
WINCHESTER
Do what thou dar'st, I beard thee to thy face.
GLOUCESTER
What, am I dared and bearded to my face?—
Draw, men, for all this privilegèd place.
Blue coats to tawny coats! *All draw their swords.*
Priest, beware your beard.
I mean to tug it and to cuff you soundly.
Under my feet I'll stamp thy cardinal's hat;
In spite of pope or dignities of Church,
Here by the cheeks I'll drag thee up and down.
WINCHESTER
Gloucester, thou wilt answer this before the Pope.
GLOUCESTER
Winchester goose, I cry "a rope, a rope!"—
Now beat them hence; why do you let them stay?—
Thee I'll chase hence, thou wolf in sheep's array.—
Out, tawny coats, out, scarlet hypocrite!

Here Gloucester's men beat out the Cardinal's men,
and enter in the hurly-burly the Mayor of London
and his Officers.

MAYOR
Fie, lords, that you, being supreme magistrates,
Thus contumeliously should break the peace!
GLOUCESTER
Peace, Mayor? Thou know'st little of my wrongs.
Here's Beaufort, that regards nor God nor king,
Hath here distrained the Tower to his use.
WINCHESTER
Here's Gloucester, a foe to citizens,
One that still motions war and never peace,
O'ercharging your free purses with large fines;
That seeks to overthrow religion

Because he is Protector of the realm,
And would have armor here out of the Tower
To crown himself king and suppress the Prince.

GLOUCESTER
I will not answer thee with words, but blows.

Here they skirmish again.

MAYOR
Naught rests for me in this tumultuous strife
But to make open proclamation.
Come, officer, as loud as e'er thou canst, cry.

He hands an Officer a paper.

OFFICER *reads* *All manner of men, assembled here in arms this day against God's peace and the King's, we charge and command you, in his Highness' name, to repair to your several dwelling places, and not to wear, handle, or use any sword, weapon, or dagger henceforward, upon pain of death.*

GLOUCESTER
Cardinal, I'll be no breaker of the law,
But we shall meet and break our minds at large.

WINCHESTER
Gloucester, we'll meet to thy cost, be sure.
Thy heartblood I will have for this day's work.

MAYOR
I'll call for clubs if you will not away.
(*Aside.*) This cardinal's more haughty than the devil!

GLOUCESTER
Mayor, farewell. Thou dost but what thou mayst.

WINCHESTER
Abominable Gloucester, guard thy head,
For I intend to have it ere long.

Gloucester and Winchester exit at separate doors, with their Servingmen.

MAYOR*, to Officers*
See the coast cleared, and then we will depart.
(*Aside.*) Good God, these nobles should such stomachs bear!
I myself fight not once in forty year.

They exit.

Scene 4

Enter the Master Gunner of Orleance and his Boy.

MASTER GUNNER
Sirrah, thou know'st how Orleance is besieged
And how the English have the suburbs won.

BOY
Father, I know, and oft have shot at them;
Howe'er, unfortunate, I missed my aim.

MASTER GUNNER
But now thou shalt not. Be thou ruled by me.
Chief master-gunner am I of this town;
Something I must do to procure me grace.
The Prince's espials have informèd me
How the English, in the suburbs close entrenched,
Went through a secret grate of iron bars

In yonder tower, to overpeer the city,
And thence discover how with most advantage
They may vex us with shot or with assault.
To intercept this inconvenience,
A piece of ordnance 'gainst it I have placed,
And even these three days have I watched
If I could see them. Now do thou watch,
For I can stay no longer.
If thou spy'st any, run and bring me word;
And thou shalt find me at the Governor's. *He exits.*

BOY
Father, I warrant you, take you no care;
I'll never trouble you if I may spy them. *He exits.*

Enter Salisbury and Talbot on the turrets,
with Sir William Glansdale, Sir Thomas Gargrave,
Attendants and Others.

SALISBURY
Talbot, my life, my joy, again returned!
How wert thou handled, being prisoner?
Or by what means gott'st thou to be released?
Discourse, I prithee, on this turret's top.

TALBOT
The Duke of Bedford had a prisoner
Called the brave Lord Ponton de Santrailles;
For him was I exchanged and ransomèd.
But with a baser man-of-arms by far
Once in contempt they would have bartered me,
Which I disdaining, scorned, and cravèd death
Rather than I would be so vile-esteemed.
In fine, redeemed I was as I desired.
But O, the treacherous Fastolf wounds my heart,
Whom with my bare fists I would execute
If I now had him brought into my power.

SALISBURY
Yet tell'st thou not how thou wert entertained.

TALBOT
With scoffs and scorns and contumelious taunts.
In open marketplace produced they me
To be a public spectacle to all.
"Here," said they, "is the terror of the French,
The scarecrow that affrights our children so."
Then broke I from the officers that led me,
And with my nails digged stones out of the ground
To hurl at the beholders of my shame.
My grisly countenance made others fly;
None durst come near for fear of sudden death.
In iron walls they deemed me not secure:
So great fear of my name 'mongst them were spread
That they supposed I could rend bars of steel
And spurn in pieces posts of adamant.
Wherefore a guard of chosen shot I had
That walked about me every minute-while;
And if I did but stir out of my bed,
Ready they were to shoot me to the heart.

Enter the Boy with a linstock.
He crosses the main stage and exits.

SALISBURY
I grieve to hear what torments you endured,
But we will be revenged sufficiently.
Now it is supper time in Orleance.
Here, through this grate, I count each one
And view the Frenchmen how they fortify.
Let us look in; the sight will much delight thee.
Sir Thomas Gargrave and Sir William Glansdale,
Let me have your express opinions
Where is best place to make our batt'ry next?
GARGRAVE
I think at the north gate, for there stands lords.
GLANSDALE
And I, here, at the bulwark of the bridge.
TALBOT
For aught I see, this city must be famished
Or with light skirmishes enfeeblèd.
Here they shoot, and Salisbury and Gargrave fall down.
SALISBURY
O Lord, have mercy on us, wretched sinners!
GARGRAVE
O Lord, have mercy on me, woeful man!
TALBOT
What chance is this that suddenly hath crossed us?—
Speak, Salisbury—at least if thou canst, speak!
How far'st thou, mirror of all martial men?
One of thy eyes and thy cheek's side struck off!—
Accursèd tower, accursèd fatal hand
That hath contrived this woeful tragedy!
In thirteen battles Salisbury o'ercame;
Henry the Fifth he first trained to the wars.
Whilst any trump did sound or drum struck up,
His sword did ne'er leave striking in the field.—
Yet liv'st thou, Salisbury? Though thy speech doth fail,
One eye thou hast to look to heaven for grace.
The sun with one eye vieweth all the world.
Heaven, be thou gracious to none alive
If Salisbury wants mercy at thy hands!—
Sir Thomas Gargrave, hast thou any life?
Speak unto Talbot. Nay, look up to him.—
Bear hence his body; I will help to bury it.
Attendants exit with body of Gargrave.
Salisbury, cheer thy spirit with this comfort,
Thou shalt not die whiles—
He beckons with his hand and smiles on me
As who should say "When I am dead and gone,
Remember to avenge me on the French."
Plantagenet, I will; and, like thee, Nero,
Play on the lute, beholding the towns burn.
Wretched shall France be only in my name.

Here an alarum, and it thunders and lightens.

What stir is this? What tumult's in the heavens?
Whence cometh this alarum and the noise?

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER

My lord, my lord, the French have gathered head.
The Dauphin, with one Joan la Pucelle joined,
A holy prophetess new risen up,
Is come with a great power to raise the siege.

Here Salisbury lifteth himself up and groans.

TALBOT

Hear, hear, how dying Salisbury doth groan;
It irks his heart he cannot be revenged.
Frenchmen, I'll be a Salisbury to you.
Pucelle or puzel, dauphin or dogfish,
Your hearts I'll stamp out with my horse's heels
And make a quagmire of your mingled brains.
Convey we Salisbury into his tent,
And then try what these dastard Frenchmen dare.

Alarum. They exit.

Scene 5

Here an alarum again, and Talbot pursueth the Dauphin and driveth him; then enter Joan la Pucelle, driving Englishmen before her. They cross the stage and exit. Then enter Talbot.

TALBOT

Where is my strength, my valor, and my force?
Our English troops retire; I cannot stay them.
A woman clad in armor chaseth them.

Enter Pucelle, with Soldiers.

Here, here she comes!—I'll have a bout with thee.
Devil or devil's dam, I'll conjure thee.
Blood will I draw on thee—thou art a witch—
And straightway give thy soul to him thou serv'st.

PUCELLE

Come, come; 'tis only I that must disgrace thee.

Here they fight.

TALBOT

Heavens, can you suffer hell so to prevail?
My breast I'll burst with straining of my courage,
And from my shoulders crack my arms asunder,
But I will chastise this high-minded strumpet.

They fight again.

PUCELLE

Talbot, farewell. Thy hour is not yet come.
I must go victual Orleance forthwith.

A short alarum. Then she prepares to enter the town with Soldiers.

O'ertake me if thou canst. I scorn thy strength.
Go, go, cheer up thy hunger-starvèd men.

Help Salisbury to make his testament.
This day is ours, as many more shall be.

She exits with Soldiers.

TALBOT

My thoughts are whirlèd like a potter's wheel.
I know not where I am nor what I do.
A witch by fear—not force, like Hannibal—
Drives back our troops, and conquers as she lists.
So bees with smoke and doves with noisome stench
Are from their hives and houses driven away.
They called us, for our fierceness, English dogs;
Now like to whelps we crying run away.

A short alarum. Enter English soldiers, chased by French soldiers.

Hark, countrymen, either renew the fight,
Or tear the lions out of England's coat.
Renounce your soil; give sheep in lions' stead.
Sheep run not half so treacherous from the wolf,
Or horse or oxen from the leopard,
As you fly from your oft-subduèd slaves.

Alarum. Here another skirmish.

It will not be! Retire into your trenches.
You all consented unto Salisbury's death,
For none would strike a stroke in his revenge.
Pucelle is entered into Orleance
In spite of us or aught that we could do.

Soldiers exit.

O, would I were to die with Salisbury!
The shame hereof will make me hide my head.

Talbot exits. Alarum. Retreat.

Scene 6

Flourish. Enter on the walls Pucelle, Charles the Dauphin, Reignier, Alanson, and Soldiers.

PUCELLE

Advance our waving colors on the walls.
Rescued is Orleance from the English.
Thus Joan la Pucelle hath performed her word.

She exits.

CHARLES

Divinest creature, Astraea's daughter,
How shall I honor thee for this success?
Thy promises are like Adonis' garden
That one day bloomed and fruitful were the next.
France, triumph in thy glorious prophetess.
Recovered is the town of Orleance.
More blessèd hap did ne'er befall our state.

REIGNIER

Why ring not bells aloud throughout the town?
Dauphin, command the citizens make bonfires
And feast and banquet in the open streets
To celebrate the joy that God hath given us.

ALANSON
All France will be replete with mirth and joy
When they shall hear how we have played the men.
CHARLES
'Tis Joan, not we, by whom the day is won;
For which I will divide my crown with her,
And all the priests and friars in my realm
Shall in procession sing her endless praise.
A statelier pyramis to her I'll rear
Than Rhodophe's of Memphis ever was.
In memory of her, when she is dead,
Her ashes, in an urn more precious
Than the rich-jeweled coffer of Darius,
Transported shall be at high festivals
Before the kings and queens of France.
No longer on Saint Dennis will we cry,
But Joan la Pucelle shall be France's saint.
Come in, and let us banquet royally
After this golden day of victory.

Flourish. They exit.

ACT 2

Scene 1

Enter on the walls a French Sergeant of a Band, with two Sentinels.

SERGEANT
Sirs, take your places and be vigilant.
If any noise or soldier you perceive
Near to the walls, by some apparent sign
Let us have knowledge at the court of guard.
SENTINEL
Sergeant, you shall. *Sergeant exits.*
Thus are poor servitors,
When others sleep upon their quiet beds,
Constrained to watch in darkness, rain, and cold.

Enter Talbot, Bedford, and Burgundy, below, with scaling ladders.

TALBOT
Lord Regent, and redoubted Burgundy,
By whose approach the regions of Artois,
Walloon, and Picardy are friends to us,
This happy night the Frenchmen are secure,
Having all day caroused and banqueted.
Embrace we then this opportunity,
As fitting best to quittance their deceit
Contrived by art and baleful sorcery.
BEDFORD
Coward of France, how much he wrongs his fame,
Despairing of his own arm's fortitude,
To join with witches and the help of hell!
BURGUNDY
Traitors have never other company.
But what's that Pucelle whom they term so pure?
TALBOT
A maid, they say.
BEDFORD A maid? And be so martial?
BURGUNDY
Pray God she prove not masculine ere long,
If underneath the standard of the French
She carry armor as she hath begun.
TALBOT
Well, let them practice and converse with spirits.
God is our fortress, in whose conquering name
Let us resolve to scale their flinty bulwarks.
BEDFORD
Ascend, brave Talbot. We will follow thee.
TALBOT
Not all together. Better far, I guess,
That we do make our entrance several ways,
That if it chance the one of us do fail,

The other yet may rise against their force.

BEDFORD

Agreed. I'll to yond corner.

BURGUNDY And I to this.

TALBOT

And here will Talbot mount, or make his grave.
Now, Salisbury, for thee and for the right
Of English Henry, shall this night appear
How much in duty I am bound to both.

Scaling the walls, they cry
"Saint George! À Talbot!"

SENTINEL

Arm, arm! The enemy doth make assault.

The English, pursuing the Sentinels, exit aloft.
The French leap o'er the walls in their shirts.

Enter several ways, Bastard, Alanson, Reignier,
half ready, and half unready.

ALANSON

How now, my lords? What, all unready so?

BASTARD

Unready? Ay, and glad we scaped so well.

REIGNIER

'Twas time, I trow, to wake and leave our beds,
Hearing alarums at our chamber doors.

ALANSON

Of all exploits since first I followed arms
Ne'er heard I of a warlike enterprise
More venturous or desperate than this.

BASTARD

I think this Talbot be a fiend of hell.

REIGNIER

If not of hell, the heavens sure favor him.

ALANSON

Here cometh Charles. I marvel how he sped.

Enter Charles and Joan la Pucelle.

BASTARD

Tut, holy Joan was his defensive guard.

CHARLES

Is this thy cunning, thou deceitful dame?
Didst thou at first, to flatter us withal,
Make us partakers of a little gain
That now our loss might be ten times so much?

PUCELLE

Wherefore is Charles impatient with his friend?
At all times will you have my power alike?
Sleeping or waking, must I still prevail,
Or will you blame and lay the fault on me?—
Improvident soldiers, had your watch been good,
This sudden mischief never could have fall'n.

CHARLES

Duke of Alanson, this was your default,
That, being captain of the watch tonight,

Did look no better to that weighty charge.

ALANSON
Had all your quarters been as safely kept
As that whereof I had the government,
We had not been thus shamefully surprised.

BASTARD
Mine was secure.

REIGNIER And so was mine, my lord.

CHARLES
And for myself, most part of all this night
Within her quarter and mine own precinct
I was employed in passing to and fro
About relieving of the sentinels.
Then how or which way should they first break in?

PUCELLE
Question, my lords, no further of the case,
How or which way; 'tis sure they found some place
But weakly guarded, where the breach was made.
And now there rests no other shift but this:
To gather our soldiers, scattered and dispersed,
And lay new platforms to endamage them.

Alarum. Enter an English Soldier, crying, "À Talbot, À Talbot!" The French fly, leaving their clothes behind.

SOLDIER
I'll be so bold to take what they have left.
The cry of "Talbot" serves me for a sword,
For I have loaden me with many spoils,
Using no other weapon but his name.
He exits.

Scene 2

Enter Talbot, Bedford, Burgundy, a Captain and Others.

BEDFORD
The day begins to break and night is fled,
Whose pitchy mantle over-veiled the Earth.
Here sound retreat and cease our hot pursuit.
Retreat sounded.

TALBOT
Bring forth the body of old Salisbury,
And here advance it in the marketplace,
The middle center of this cursèd town.

Soldiers enter bearing the body of Salisbury, Drums beating a dead march.

Now have I paid my vow unto his soul:
For every drop of blood was drawn from him
There hath at least five Frenchmen died tonight.
And, that hereafter ages may behold
What ruin happened in revenge of him,
Within their chiefest temple I'll erect
A tomb wherein his corpse shall be interred,

Upon the which, that everyone may read,
Shall be engraved the sack of Orleance,
The treacherous manner of his mournful death,
And what a terror he had been to France.

Funeral exits.

But, lords, in all our bloody massacre,
I muse we met not with the Dauphin's grace,
His new-come champion, virtuous Joan of Arc,
Nor any of his false confederates.

BEDFORD

'Tis thought, Lord Talbot, when the fight began,
Roused on the sudden from their drowsy beds,
They did amongst the troops of armèd men
Leap o'er the walls for refuge in the field.

BURGUNDY

Myself, as far as I could well discern
For smoke and dusky vapors of the night,
Am sure I scared the Dauphin and his trull,
When arm-in-arm they both came swiftly running,
Like to a pair of loving turtledoves
That could not live asunder day or night.
After that things are set in order here,
We'll follow them with all the power we have.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER

All hail, my lords. Which of this princely train
Call you the warlike Talbot, for his acts
So much applauded through the realm of France?

TALBOT

Here is the Talbot. Who would speak with him?

MESSENGER

The virtuous lady, Countess of Auvergne,
With modesty admiring thy renown,
By me entreats, great lord, thou wouldst vouchsafe
To visit her poor castle where she lies,
That she may boast she hath beheld the man
Whose glory fills the world with loud report.

BURGUNDY

Is it even so? Nay, then, I see our wars
Will turn unto a peaceful comic sport,
When ladies crave to be encountered with.
You may not, my lord, despise her gentle suit.

TALBOT

Ne'er trust me, then; for when a world of men
Could not prevail with all their oratory,
Yet hath a woman's kindness overruled.—
And therefore tell her I return great thanks,
And in submission will attend on her.—
Will not your Honors bear me company?

BEDFORD

No, truly, 'tis more than manners will;
And I have heard it said unbidden guests
Are often welcomest when they are gone.

TALBOT
Well then, alone, since there's no remedy,
I mean to prove this lady's courtesy.—
Come hither, captain. *Whispers.*
You perceive my mind?
CAPTAIN
I do, my lord, and mean accordingly.
They exit.

Scene 3

Enter Countess of Auvergne, with Porter.

COUNTESS
Porter, remember what I gave in charge,
And when you have done so, bring the keys to me.
PORTER Madam, I will. *He exits.*
COUNTESS
The plot is laid. If all things fall out right,
I shall as famous be by this exploit
As Scythian Tamyris by Cyrus' death.
Great is the rumor of this dreadful knight,
And his achievements of no less account.
Fain would mine eyes be witness with mine ears
To give their censure of these rare reports.

Enter Messenger and Talbot.

MESSENGER
Madam, according as your Ladyship desired,
By message craved, so is Lord Talbot come.
COUNTESS
And he is welcome. What, is this the man?
MESSENGER
Madam, it is.
COUNTESS Is this the scourge of France?
Is this the Talbot, so much feared abroad
That with his name the mothers still their babes?
I see report is fabulous and false.
I thought I should have seen some Hercules,
A second Hector, for his grim aspect
And large proportion of his strong-knit limbs.
Alas, this is a child, a silly dwarf!
It cannot be this weak and writhled shrimp
Should strike such terror to his enemies.
TALBOT
Madam, I have been bold to trouble you.
But since your Ladyship is not at leisure,
I'll sort some other time to visit you.
He begins to exit.
COUNTESS*, to Messenger*
What means he now? Go ask him whither he goes.
MESSENGER
Stay, my Lord Talbot, for my lady craves
To know the cause of your abrupt departure.
TALBOT
Marry, for that she's in a wrong belief,

I go to certify her Talbot's here.

Enter Porter with keys.

COUNTESS*, to Talbot*
If thou be he, then art thou prisoner.
TALBOT
Prisoner? To whom?
COUNTESS To me, bloodthirsty lord.
And for that cause I trained thee to my house.
Long time thy shadow hath been thrall to me,
For in my gallery thy picture hangs.
But now the substance shall endure the like,
And I will chain these legs and arms of thine,
That hast by tyranny these many years
Wasted our country, slain our citizens,
And sent our sons and husbands captivate.
TALBOT Ha, ha, ha!
COUNTESS
Laughest thou, wretch? Thy mirth shall turn to moan.
TALBOT
I laugh to see your Ladyship so fond
To think that you have aught but Talbot's shadow
Whereon to practice your severity.
COUNTESS Why, art not thou the man?
TALBOT I am, indeed.
COUNTESS Then have I substance too.
TALBOT
No, no, I am but shadow of myself.
You are deceived; my substance is not here,
For what you see is but the smallest part
And least proportion of humanity.
I tell you, madam, were the whole frame here,
It is of such a spacious lofty pitch
Your roof were not sufficient to contain 't.
COUNTESS
This is a riddling merchant for the nonce:
He will be here and yet he is not here.
How can these contrarieties agree?
TALBOT
That will I show you presently.

Winds his horn. Drums strike up; a peal of ordnance.

Enter Soldiers.

How say you, madam? Are you now persuaded
That Talbot is but shadow of himself?
These are his substance, sinews, arms, and strength,
With which he yoketh your rebellious necks,
Razeth your cities, and subverts your towns,
And in a moment makes them desolate.
COUNTESS
Victorious Talbot, pardon my abuse.
I find thou art no less than fame hath bruited,
And more than may be gathered by thy shape.

Let my presumption not provoke thy wrath,
For I am sorry that with reverence
I did not entertain thee as thou art.

TALBOT

Be not dismayed, fair lady, nor misconster
The mind of Talbot as you did mistake
The outward composition of his body.
What you have done hath not offended me,
Nor other satisfaction do I crave
But only, with your patience, that we may
Taste of your wine and see what cates you have,
For soldiers' stomachs always serve them well.

COUNTESS

With all my heart, and think me honorèd
To feast so great a warrior in my house.

They exit.

Scene 4

Enter Richard Plantagenet, Warwick, Somerset, William de la Pole the Earl of Suffolk, Vernon, a Lawyer, and Others.

PLANTAGENET

Great lords and gentlemen, what means this silence?
Dare no man answer in a case of truth?

SUFFOLK

Within the Temple Hall we were too loud;
The garden here is more convenient.

PLANTAGENET

Then say at once if I maintained the truth,
Or else was wrangling Somerset in th' error?

SUFFOLK

Faith, I have been a truant in the law
And never yet could frame my will to it,
And therefore frame the law unto my will.

SOMERSET

Judge you, my Lord of Warwick, then, between us.

WARWICK

Between two hawks, which flies the higher pitch,
Between two dogs, which hath the deeper mouth,
Between two blades, which bears the better temper,
Between two horses, which doth bear him best,
Between two girls, which hath the merriest eye,
I have perhaps some shallow spirit of judgment;
But in these nice sharp quillets of the law,
Good faith, I am no wiser than a daw.

PLANTAGENET

Tut, tut, here is a mannerly forbearance!
The truth appears so naked on my side
That any purblind eye may find it out.

SOMERSET

And on my side it is so well appareled,
So clear, so shining, and so evident,
That it will glimmer through a blind man's eye.

PLANTAGENET

Since you are tongue-tied and so loath to speak,

In dumb significants proclaim your thoughts:
Let him that is a trueborn gentleman
And stands upon the honor of his birth,
If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From off this brier pluck a white rose with me.
SOMERSET
Let him that is no coward nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.
WARWICK
I love no colors; and, without all color
Of base insinuating flattery,
I pluck this white rose with Plantagenet.
SUFFOLK
I pluck this red rose with young Somerset,
And say withal I think he held the right.
VERNON
Stay, lords and gentlemen, and pluck no more
Till you conclude that he upon whose side
The fewest roses are croppèd from the tree
Shall yield the other in the right opinion.
SOMERSET
Good Master Vernon, it is well objected:
If I have fewest, I subscribe in silence.
PLANTAGENET And I.
VERNON
Then for the truth and plainness of the case,
I pluck this pale and maiden blossom here,
Giving my verdict on the white rose side.
SOMERSET
Prick not your finger as you pluck it off,
Lest, bleeding, you do paint the white rose red,
And fall on my side so against your will.
VERNON
If I, my lord, for my opinion bleed,
Opinion shall be surgeon to my hurt
And keep me on the side where still I am.
SOMERSET Well, well, come on, who else?
LAWYER
Unless my study and my books be false,
The argument you held was wrong in law,
In sign whereof I pluck a white rose too.
PLANTAGENET
Now, Somerset, where is your argument?
SOMERSET
Here in my scabbard, meditating that
Shall dye your white rose in a bloody red.
PLANTAGENET
Meantime your cheeks do counterfeit our roses,
For pale they look with fear, as witnessing
The truth on our side.
SOMERSET No, Plantagenet.
'Tis not for fear, but anger that thy cheeks
Blush for pure shame to counterfeit our roses,
And yet thy tongue will not confess thy error.

PLANTAGENET
Hath not thy rose a canker, Somerset?
SOMERSET
Hath not thy rose a thorn, Plantagenet?
PLANTAGENET
Ay, sharp and piercing, to maintain his truth,
Whiles thy consuming canker eats his falsehood.
SOMERSET
Well, I'll find friends to wear my bleeding roses
That shall maintain what I have said is true,
Where false Plantagenet dare not be seen.
PLANTAGENET
Now, by this maiden blossom in my hand,
I scorn thee and thy fashion, peevish boy.
SUFFOLK
Turn not thy scorns this way, Plantagenet.
PLANTAGENET
Proud Pole, I will, and scorn both him and thee.
SUFFOLK
I'll turn my part thereof into thy throat.
SOMERSET
Away, away, good William de la Pole!
We grace the yeoman by conversing with him.
WARWICK
Now, by God's will, thou wrong'st him, Somerset.
His grandfather was Lionel, Duke of Clarence,
Third son to the third Edward, King of England.
Spring crestless yeomen from so deep a root?
PLANTAGENET
He bears him on the place's privilege,
Or durst not for his craven heart say thus.
SOMERSET
By Him that made me, I'll maintain my words
On any plot of ground in Christendom.
Was not thy father Richard, Earl of Cambridge,
For treason executed in our late king's days?
And, by his treason, stand'st not thou attainted,
Corrupted, and exempt from ancient gentry?
His trespass yet lives guilty in thy blood,
And, till thou be restored, thou art a yeoman.
PLANTAGENET
My father was attachèd, not attainted,
Condemned to die for treason, but no traitor;
And that I'll prove on better men than Somerset,
Were growing time once ripened to my will.
For your partaker Pole and you yourself,
I'll note you in my book of memory
To scourge you for this apprehension.
Look to it well, and say you are well warned.
SOMERSET
Ah, thou shalt find us ready for thee still,
And know us by these colors for thy foes,
For these my friends in spite of thee shall wear.
PLANTAGENET
And, by my soul, this pale and angry rose,
As cognizance of my blood-drinking hate,

Will I forever, and my faction, wear
Until it wither with me to my grave
Or flourish to the height of my degree.
SUFFOLK
Go forward, and be choked with thy ambition!
And so farewell, until I meet thee next. *He exits.*
SOMERSET
Have with thee, Pole.—Farewell, ambitious Richard.
He exits.
PLANTAGENET
How I am braved, and must perforce endure it!
WARWICK
This blot that they object against your house
Shall be whipped out in the next parliament,
Called for the truce of Winchester and Gloucester;
And if thou be not then created York,
I will not live to be accounted Warwick.
Meantime, in signal of my love to thee,
Against proud Somerset and William Pole
Will I upon thy party wear this rose.
And here I prophesy: this brawl today,
Grown to this faction in the Temple garden,
Shall send, between the red rose and the white,
A thousand souls to death and deadly night.
PLANTAGENET
Good Master Vernon, I am bound to you,
That you on my behalf would pluck a flower.
VERNON
In your behalf still will I wear the same.
LAWYER
And so will I.
PLANTAGENET Thanks, gentle sir.
Come, let us four to dinner. I dare say
This quarrel will drink blood another day.
They exit.

Scene 5

Enter Edmund Mortimer, brought in a chair, and Jailers.

MORTIMER
Kind keepers of my weak decaying age,
Let dying Mortimer here rest himself.
Even like a man new-halèd from the rack,
So fare my limbs with long imprisonment;
And these gray locks, the pursuivants of death,
Nestor-like agèd in an age of care,
Argue the end of Edmund Mortimer;
These eyes, like lamps whose wasting oil is spent,
Wax dim, as drawing to their exigent;
Weak shoulders, overborne with burdening grief,
And pithless arms, like to a withered vine
That droops his sapless branches to the ground;
Yet are these feet, whose strengthless stay is numb,
Unable to support this lump of clay,
Swift-wingèd with desire to get a grave,

As witting I no other comfort have.
But tell me, keeper, will my nephew come?

KEEPER

Richard Plantagenet, my lord, will come.
We sent unto the Temple, unto his chamber,
And answer was returned that he will come.

MORTIMER

Enough. My soul shall then be satisfied.
Poor gentleman, his wrong doth equal mine.
Since Henry Monmouth first began to reign,
Before whose glory I was great in arms,
This loathsome sequestration have I had;
And even since then hath Richard been obscured,
Deprived of honor and inheritance.
But now the arbitrator of despairs,
Just Death, kind umpire of men's miseries,
With sweet enlargement doth dismiss me hence.
I would his troubles likewise were expired,
That so he might recover what was lost.

Enter Richard Plantagenet.

KEEPER

My lord, your loving nephew now is come.

MORTIMER

Richard Plantagenet, my friend, is he come?

PLANTAGENET

Ay, noble uncle, thus ignobly used,
Your nephew, late despisèd Richard, comes.

MORTIMER*, to Jailer*

Direct mine arms I may embrace his neck
And in his bosom spend my latter gasp.
O, tell me when my lips do touch his cheeks,
That I may kindly give one fainting kiss.

He embraces Richard.

And now declare, sweet stem from York's great stock,
Why didst thou say of late thou wert despised?

PLANTAGENET

First, lean thine agèd back against mine arm,
And in that ease I'll tell thee my disease.
This day, in argument upon a case,
Some words there grew 'twixt Somerset and me,
Among which terms he used his lavish tongue
And did upbraid me with my father's death;
Which obloquy set bars before my tongue,
Else with the like I had requited him.
Therefore, good uncle, for my father's sake,
In honor of a true Plantagenet,
And for alliance' sake, declare the cause
My father, Earl of Cambridge, lost his head.

MORTIMER

That cause, fair nephew, that imprisoned me
And hath detained me all my flow'ring youth
Within a loathsome dungeon, there to pine,
Was cursèd instrument of his decease.

PLANTAGENET
Discover more at large what cause that was,
For I am ignorant and cannot guess.
MORTIMER
I will, if that my fading breath permit
And death approach not ere my tale be done.
Henry the Fourth, grandfather to this king,
Deposed his nephew Richard, Edward's son,
The first begotten and the lawful heir
Of Edward king, the third of that descent;
During whose reign the Percies of the north,
Finding his usurpation most unjust,
Endeavored my advancement to the throne.
The reason moved these warlike lords to this
Was, for that—young Richard thus removed,
Leaving no heir begotten of his body—
I was the next by birth and parentage;
For by my mother I derivèd am
From Lionel, Duke of Clarence, third son
To King Edward the Third; whereas he
From John of Gaunt doth bring his pedigree,
Being but fourth of that heroic line.
But mark: as in this haughty great attempt
They laborèd to plant the rightful heir,
I lost my liberty and they their lives.
Long after this, when Henry the Fifth,
Succeeding his father Bolingbroke, did reign,
Thy father, Earl of Cambridge then, derived
From famous Edmund Langley, Duke of York,
Marrying my sister that thy mother was,
Again, in pity of my hard distress,
Levied an army, weening to redeem
And have installed me in the diadem.
But, as the rest, so fell that noble earl
And was beheaded. Thus the Mortimers,
In whom the title rested, were suppressed.
PLANTAGENET
Of which, my lord, your Honor is the last.
MORTIMER
True, and thou seest that I no issue have
And that my fainting words do warrant death.
Thou art my heir; the rest I wish thee gather.
But yet be wary in thy studious care.
PLANTAGENET
Thy grave admonishments prevail with me.
But yet methinks my father's execution
Was nothing less than bloody tyranny.
MORTIMER
With silence, nephew, be thou politic;
Strong-fixèd is the house of Lancaster,
And, like a mountain, not to be removed.
But now thy uncle is removing hence,
As princes do their courts when they are cloyed
With long continuance in a settled place.
PLANTAGENET
O uncle, would some part of my young years

Might but redeem the passage of your age.

MORTIMER

Thou dost then wrong me, as that slaughterer doth
Which giveth many wounds when one will kill.
Mourn not, except thou sorrow for my good;
Only give order for my funeral.
And so farewell, and fair be all thy hopes,
And prosperous be thy life in peace and war.

Dies.

PLANTAGENET

And peace, no war, befall thy parting soul.
In prison hast thou spent a pilgrimage,
And like a hermit overpassed thy days.—
Well, I will lock his counsel in my breast,
And what I do imagine, let that rest.—
Keepers, convey him hence, and I myself
Will see his burial better than his life.

Jailers exit carrying Mortimer's body.

Here dies the dusky torch of Mortimer,
Choked with ambition of the meaner sort.
And for those wrongs, those bitter injuries,
Which Somerset hath offered to my house,
I doubt not but with honor to redress.
And therefore haste I to the Parliament,
Either to be restorèd to my blood,
Or make mine ill th' advantage of my good.

He exits.

ACT 3

Scene 1

Flourish. Enter King Henry, Exeter, Gloucester, and Winchester; Richard Plantagenet and Warwick, with white roses; Somerset and Suffolk, with red roses; and Others. Gloucester offers to put up a bill. Winchester snatches it, tears it.

WINCHESTER

Com'st thou with deep premeditated lines,
With written pamphlets studiously devised?
Humphrey of Gloucester, if thou canst accuse
Or aught intend'st to lay unto my charge,
Do it without invention, suddenly,
As I with sudden and extemporal speech
Purpose to answer what thou canst object.

GLOUCESTER

Presumptuous priest, this place commands my patience,
Or thou shouldst find thou hast dishonored me.
Think not, although in writing I preferred
The manner of thy vile outrageous crimes,
That therefore I have forged or am not able
Verbatim to rehearse the method of my pen.
No, prelate, such is thy audacious wickedness,
Thy lewd, pestiferous, and dissentious pranks,
As very infants prattle of thy pride.
Thou art a most pernicious usurer,
Froward by nature, enemy to peace,
Lascivious, wanton, more than well beseems
A man of thy profession and degree.
And for thy treachery, what's more manifest,
In that thou laid'st a trap to take my life
As well at London Bridge as at the Tower?
Besides, I fear me, if thy thoughts were sifted,
The King, thy sovereign, is not quite exempt
From envious malice of thy swelling heart.

WINCHESTER

Gloucester, I do defy thee.—Lords, vouchsafe
To give me hearing what I shall reply.
If I were covetous, ambitious, or perverse,
As he will have me, how am I so poor?
Or how haps it I seek not to advance
Or raise myself, but keep my wonted calling?
And for dissension, who preferreth peace
More than I do, except I be provoked?
No, my good lords, it is not that offends;
It is not that that hath incensed the Duke.
It is because no one should sway but he,
No one but he should be about the King;
And that engenders thunder in his breast
And makes him roar these accusations forth.

But he shall know I am as good—
GLOUCESTER As good!
Thou bastard of my grandfather!
WINCHESTER
Ay, lordly sir; for what are you, I pray,
But one imperious in another's throne?
GLOUCESTER
Am I not Protector, saucy priest?
WINCHESTER
And am not I a prelate of the Church?
GLOUCESTER
Yes, as an outlaw in a castle keeps,
And useth it to patronage his theft.
WINCHESTER
Unreverent Gloucester!
GLOUCESTER Thou art reverend
Touching thy spiritual function, not thy life.
WINCHESTER
Rome shall remedy this.
GLOUCESTER Roam thither then.
WARWICK*, to Winchester*
My lord, it were your duty to forbear.
SOMERSET
Ay, so the Bishop be not overborne.
Methinks my lord should be religious,
And know the office that belongs to such.
WARWICK
Methinks his Lordship should be humbler.
It fitteth not a prelate so to plead.
SOMERSET
Yes, when his holy state is touched so near.
WARWICK
State holy, or unhallowed, what of that?
Is not his Grace Protector to the King?
PLANTAGENET*, aside*
Plantagenet, I see, must hold his tongue,
Lest it be said "Speak, sirrah, when you should;
Must your bold verdict enter talk with lords?"
Else would I have a fling at Winchester.
KING HENRY
Uncles of Gloucester and of Winchester,
The special watchmen of our English weal,
I would prevail, if prayers might prevail,
To join your hearts in love and amity.
O, what a scandal is it to our crown
That two such noble peers as you should jar!
Believe me, lords, my tender years can tell
Civil dissension is a viperous worm
That gnaws the bowels of the commonwealth.

A noise within: "Down with the tawny coats!"

What tumult 's this?
WARWICK An uproar, I dare warrant,
Begun through malice of the Bishop's men.

A noise again: "Stones! Stones!"

Enter Mayor.

MAYOR
O, my good lords, and virtuous Henry,
Pity the city of London, pity us!
The Bishop and the Duke of Gloucester's men,
Forbidden late to carry any weapon,
Have filled their pockets full of pebble stones
And, banding themselves in contrary parts,
Do pelt so fast at one another's pate
That many have their giddy brains knocked out;
Our windows are broke down in every street,
And we, for fear, compelled to shut our shops.

Enter Servingmen in skirmish with bloody pates.

KING HENRY
We charge you, on allegiance to ourself,
To hold your slaught'ring hands and keep the peace.—
Pray, Uncle Gloucester, mitigate this strife.
FIRST SERVINGMAN Nay, if we be forbidden stones, we'll fall to it with our teeth.
SECOND SERVINGMAN
Do what you dare, we are as resolute. *Skirmish again.*
GLOUCESTER
You of my household, leave this peevish broil,
And set this unaccustomed fight aside.
THIRD SERVINGMAN
My lord, we know your Grace to be a man
Just and upright, and, for your royal birth,
Inferior to none but to his Majesty;
And ere that we will suffer such a prince,
So kind a father of the commonweal,
To be disgracèd by an inkhorn mate,
We and our wives and children all will fight
And have our bodies slaughtered by thy foes.
FIRST SERVINGMAN
Ay, and the very parings of our nails
Shall pitch a field when we are dead.
Begin again.
GLOUCESTER Stay, stay, I say!
And if you love me, as you say you do,
Let me persuade you to forbear awhile.
KING HENRY
O, how this discord doth afflict my soul!
Can you, my Lord of Winchester, behold
My sighs and tears, and will not once relent?
Who should be pitiful if you be not?
Or who should study to prefer a peace
If holy churchmen take delight in broils?
WARWICK
Yield, my Lord Protector—yield, Winchester—
Except you mean with obstinate repulse
To slay your sovereign and destroy the realm.
You see what mischief, and what murder too,

Hath been enacted through your enmity.
Then be at peace, except you thirst for blood.
WINCHESTER
He shall submit, or I will never yield.
GLOUCESTER
Compassion on the King commands me stoop,
Or I would see his heart out ere the priest
Should ever get that privilege of me.
WARWICK
Behold, my Lord of Winchester, the Duke
Hath banished moody discontented fury,
As by his smoothèd brows it doth appear.
Why look you still so stern and tragical?
GLOUCESTER
Here, Winchester, I offer thee my hand.
Winchester refuses Gloucester's hand.
KING HENRY
Fie, Uncle Beaufort! I have heard you preach
That malice was a great and grievous sin;
And will not you maintain the thing you teach,
But prove a chief offender in the same?
WARWICK
Sweet king! The Bishop hath a kindly gird.—
For shame, my Lord of Winchester, relent;
What, shall a child instruct you what to do?
WINCHESTER
Well, Duke of Gloucester, I will yield to thee;
Love for thy love and hand for hand I give.
They take each other's hand.
GLOUCESTER*, aside*
Ay, but I fear me with a hollow heart.—
See here, my friends and loving countrymen,
This token serveth for a flag of truce
Betwixt ourselves and all our followers,
So help me God, as I dissemble not.
WINCHESTER*, aside*
So help me God, as I intend it not.
KING HENRY
O, loving uncle—kind Duke of Gloucester—
How joyful am I made by this contract.
To the Servingmen. Away, my masters, trouble us no more,
But join in friendship as your lords have done.
FIRST SERVINGMAN Content. I'll to the surgeon's.
SECOND SERVINGMAN And so will I.
THIRD SERVINGMAN And I will see what physic the tavern affords.
They exit with Mayor and Others.
WARWICK*, presenting a scroll*
Accept this scroll, most gracious sovereign,
Which in the right of Richard Plantagenet
We do exhibit to your Majesty.
GLOUCESTER
Well urged, my Lord of Warwick.—For, sweet prince,
An if your Grace mark every circumstance,
You have great reason to do Richard right,

Especially for those occasions
At Eltham Place I told your Majesty.
KING HENRY
And those occasions, uncle, were of force.—
Therefore, my loving lords, our pleasure is
That Richard be restorèd to his blood.
WARWICK
Let Richard be restorèd to his blood;
So shall his father's wrongs be recompensed.
WINCHESTER
As will the rest, so willeth Winchester.
KING HENRY
If Richard will be true, not that alone
But all the whole inheritance I give
That doth belong unto the house of York,
From whence you spring by lineal descent.
PLANTAGENET
Thy humble servant vows obedience
And humble service till the point of death.
KING HENRY
Stoop then, and set your knee against my foot;
Plantagenet kneels.
And in reguerdon of that duty done
I girt thee with the valiant sword of York.
Rise, Richard, like a true Plantagenet,
And rise created princely Duke of York.
YORK*, formerly PLANTAGENET, standing*
And so thrive Richard as thy foes may fall!
And as my duty springs, so perish they
That grudge one thought against your Majesty.
ALL
Welcome, high prince, the mighty Duke of York.
SOMERSET*, aside*
Perish, base prince, ignoble Duke of York.
GLOUCESTER
Now will it best avail your Majesty
To cross the seas and to be crowned in France.
The presence of a king engenders love
Amongst his subjects and his loyal friends,
As it disanimates his enemies.
KING HENRY
When Gloucester says the word, King Henry goes,
For friendly counsel cuts off many foes.
GLOUCESTER
Your ships already are in readiness.
Sennet. Flourish. All but Exeter exit.
EXETER
Ay, we may march in England or in France,
Not seeing what is likely to ensue.
This late dissension grown betwixt the peers
Burns under feignèd ashes of forged love
And will at last break out into a flame.
As festered members rot but by degree
Till bones and flesh and sinews fall away,
So will this base and envious discord breed.
And now I fear that fatal prophecy

Which in the time of Henry named the Fifth
Was in the mouth of every sucking babe:
That Henry born at Monmouth should win all,
And Henry born at Windsor should lose all,
Which is so plain that Exeter doth wish
His days may finish ere that hapless time.
He exits.

Scene 2

Enter Pucelle disguised, with four Soldiers with sacks upon their backs.

PUCELLE
These are the city gates, the gates of Roan,
Through which our policy must make a breach.
Take heed. Be wary how you place your words;
Talk like the vulgar sort of market men
That come to gather money for their corn.
If we have entrance, as I hope we shall,
And that we find the slothful watch but weak,
I'll by a sign give notice to our friends,
That Charles the Dauphin may encounter them.
SOLDIER
Our sacks shall be a mean to sack the city,
And we be lords and rulers over Roan;
Therefore we'll knock.
Knock.
WATCH*, within*
Qui là?
PUCELLE *Paysans la pauvre gens de France:*
Poor market folks that come to sell their corn.
WATCH
Enter, go in. The market bell is rung.
PUCELLE*, aside*
Now, Roan, I'll shake thy bulwarks to the ground.
They exit.

Enter Charles, Bastard, Alanson, Reignier, and Soldiers.

CHARLES
Saint Dennis bless this happy stratagem
And once again we'll sleep secure in Roan.
BASTARD
Here entered Pucelle and her practisants.
Now she is there, how will she specify
"Here is the best and safest passage in"?
REIGNIER
By thrusting out a torch from yonder tower,
Which, once discerned, shows that her meaning is:
No way to that, for weakness, which she entered.

Enter Pucelle on the top, thrusting out a torch burning.

PUCELLE
Behold, this is the happy wedding torch

That joineth Roan unto her countrymen,
But burning fatal to the Talbonites.

BASTARD
See, noble Charles, the beacon of our friend;
The burning torch, in yonder turret stands.

CHARLES
Now shine it like a comet of revenge,
A prophet to the fall of all our foes!

REIGNIER
Defer no time; delays have dangerous ends.
Enter and cry "The Dauphin!" presently,
And then do execution on the watch.

Alarum. They exit.

An Alarum. Enter Talbot in an excursion.

TALBOT
France, thou shalt rue this treason with thy tears,
If Talbot but survive thy treachery.
Pucelle, that witch, that damnèd sorceress,
Hath wrought this hellish mischief unawares,
That hardly we escaped the pride of France.

He exits.

An alarum. Excursions. Bedford brought in sick in a chair, carried by two Attendants. Enter Talbot and Burgundy without; within, Pucelle with a sack of grain, Charles, Bastard, Alanson, and Reignier on the walls.

PUCELLE*, to those below*
Good morrow, gallants. Want you corn for bread?

She scatters grain on those below.

I think the Duke of Burgundy will fast
Before he'll buy again at such a rate.
'Twas full of darnel. Do you like the taste?

BURGUNDY
Scoff on, vile fiend and shameless courtesan!
I trust ere long to choke thee with thine own,
And make thee curse the harvest of that corn.

CHARLES
Your Grace may starve, perhaps, before that time.

BEDFORD
O, let no words, but deeds, revenge this treason.

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

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

PUCELLE
Are you so hot, sir? Yet, Pucelle, hold thy peace,

If Talbot do but thunder, rain will follow.
Those below whisper together in council.
God speed the Parliament! Who shall be the Speaker?
TALBOT
Dare you come forth and meet us in the field?
PUCELLE
Belike your Lordship takes us then for fools,
To try if that our own be ours or no.
TALBOT
I speak not to that railing Hecate,
But unto thee, Alanson, and the rest.
Will you, like soldiers, come and fight it out?
ALANSON Seigneur, no.
TALBOT
Seigneur, hang! Base muleteers of France,
Like peasant footboys do they keep the walls
And dare not take up arms like gentlemen.
PUCELLE
Away, captains. Let's get us from the walls,
For Talbot means no goodness by his looks.—
Goodbye, my lord. We came but to tell you
That we are here. *They exit from the walls.*
TALBOT
And there will we be too, ere it be long,
Or else reproach be Talbot's greatest fame.—
Vow, Burgundy, by honor of thy house,
Pricked on by public wrongs sustained in France,
Either to get the town again or die.
And I, as sure as English Henry lives,
And as his father here was conqueror,
As sure as in this late-betrayèd town
Great Coeur-de-lion's heart was burièd,
So sure I swear to get the town or die.
BURGUNDY
My vows are equal partners with thy vows.
TALBOT
But, ere we go, regard this dying prince,
The valiant Duke of Bedford.—Come, my lord,
We will bestow you in some better place,
Fitter for sickness and for crazy age.
BEDFORD
Lord Talbot, do not so dishonor me.
Here will I sit, before the walls of Roan,
And will be partner of your weal or woe.
BURGUNDY
Courageous Bedford, let us now persuade you—
BEDFORD
Not to be gone from hence, for once I read
That stout Pendragon, in his litter sick,
Came to the field and vanquishèd his foes.
Methinks I should revive the soldiers' hearts
Because I ever found them as myself.
TALBOT
Undaunted spirit in a dying breast,
Then be it so. Heavens keep old Bedford safe!—
And now no more ado, brave Burgundy,

But gather we our forces out of hand
And set upon our boasting enemy.

He exits with Burgundy.
Bedford and Attendants remain.

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

CAPTAIN
Whither away, Sir John Fastolf, in such haste?
FASTOLF
Whither away? To save myself by flight.
We are like to have the overthrow again.
CAPTAIN
What, will you fly and leave Lord Talbot?
FASTOLF Ay,
All the Talbots in the world, to save my life.

He exits.

CAPTAIN
Cowardly knight, ill fortune follow thee.

He exits.

Retreat. Excursions. Pucelle, Alanson, and Charles enter, pursued by English Soldiers, and fly.

BEDFORD
Now, quiet soul, depart when heaven please,
For I have seen our enemies' overthrow.
What is the trust or strength of foolish man?
They that of late were daring with their scoffs
Are glad and fain by flight to save themselves.

Bedford dies, and is carried in by two in his chair.

An alarum. Enter Talbot, Burgundy, and the rest.

TALBOT
Lost and recovered in a day again!
This is a double honor, Burgundy.
Yet heavens have glory for this victory.
BURGUNDY
Warlike and martial Talbot, Burgundy
Enshrines thee in his heart, and there erects
Thy noble deeds as valor's monuments.
TALBOT
Thanks, gentle duke. But where is Pucelle now?
I think her old familiar is asleep.
Now where's the Bastard's braves and Charles his gleeks?
What, all amort? Roan hangs her head for grief
That such a valiant company are fled.
Now will we take some order in the town,
Placing therein some expert officers,
And then depart to Paris to the King,
For there young Henry with his nobles lie.

BURGUNDY
What wills Lord Talbot pleaseth Burgundy.
TALBOT
But yet, before we go, let's not forget
The noble Duke of Bedford late-deceased,
But see his exequies fulfilled in Roan.
A braver soldier never couchèd lance,
A gentler heart did never sway in court.
But kings and mightiest potentates must die,
For that's the end of human misery.

They exit.

Scene 3

Enter Charles, Bastard, Alanson, Pucelle, and Soldiers.

PUCELLE
Dismay not, princes, at this accident,
Nor grieve that Roan is so recoverèd.
Care is no cure, but rather corrosive
For things that are not to be remedied.
Let frantic Talbot triumph for a while,
And like a peacock sweep along his tail;
We'll pull his plumes and take away his train,
If dauphin and the rest will be but ruled.
CHARLES
We have been guided by thee hitherto,
And of thy cunning had no diffidence.
One sudden foil shall never breed distrust.
BASTARD*, to Pucelle*
Search out thy wit for secret policies,
And we will make thee famous through the world.
ALANSON*, to Pucelle*
We'll set thy statue in some holy place
And have thee reverenced like a blessèd saint.
Employ thee then, sweet virgin, for our good.
PUCELLE
Then thus it must be; this doth Joan devise:
By fair persuasions mixed with sugared words
We will entice the Duke of Burgundy
To leave the Talbot and to follow us.
CHARLES
Ay, marry, sweeting, if we could do that,
France were no place for Henry's warriors,
Nor should that nation boast it so with us,
But be extirpèd from our provinces.
ALANSON
Forever should they be expulsed from France,
And not have title of an earldom here.
PUCELLE
Your honors shall perceive how I will work
To bring this matter to the wishèd end.

Drum sounds afar off.

Hark! By the sound of drum you may perceive
Their powers are marching unto Paris-ward.

Here sound an English march.

There goes the Talbot with his colors spread,

And all the troops of English after him.

French march.

Now in the rearward comes the Duke and his.
Fortune in favor makes him lag behind.
Summon a parley; we will talk with him.

Trumpets sound a parley.

CHARLES
A parley with the Duke of Burgundy!

Enter Burgundy.

BURGUNDY
Who craves a parley with the Burgundy?
PUCELLE
The princely Charles of France, thy countryman.
BURGUNDY
What say'st thou, Charles?—for I am marching hence.
CHARLES*, aside to Pucelle*
Speak, Pucelle, and enchant him with thy words.
PUCELLE
Brave Burgundy, undoubted hope of France,
Stay; let thy humble handmaid speak to thee.
BURGUNDY
Speak on, but be not over-tedious.
PUCELLE
Look on thy country, look on fertile France,
And see the cities and the towns defaced
By wasting ruin of the cruel foe.
As looks the mother on her lowly babe
When death doth close his tender-dying eyes,
See, see the pining malady of France:
Behold the wounds, the most unnatural wounds,
Which thou thyself hast given her woeful breast.
O, turn thy edgèd sword another way;
Strike those that hurt, and hurt not those that help.
One drop of blood drawn from thy country's bosom
Should grieve thee more than streams of foreign gore.
Return thee therefore with a flood of tears,
And wash away thy country's stainèd spots.
BURGUNDY*, aside*
Either she hath bewitched me with her words,
Or nature makes me suddenly relent.
PUCELLE
Besides, all French and France exclaims on thee,
Doubting thy birth and lawful progeny.
Who join'st thou with but with a lordly nation
That will not trust thee but for profit's sake?
When Talbot hath set footing once in France
And fashioned thee that instrument of ill,
Who then but English Henry will be lord,
And thou be thrust out like a fugitive?
Call we to mind, and mark but this for proof:
Was not the Duke of Orleance thy foe?
And was he not in England prisoner?
But when they heard he was thine enemy,
They set him free, without his ransom paid,

In spite of Burgundy and all his friends.
See then, thou fight'st against thy countrymen,
And join'st with them will be thy slaughtermen.
Come, come, return; return, thou wandering lord.
Charles and the rest will take thee in their arms.

BURGUNDY*, aside*

I am vanquishèd. These haughty words of hers
Have battered me like roaring cannon-shot,
And made me almost yield upon my knees.—
Forgive me, country, and sweet countrymen;
And, lords, accept this hearty kind embrace.

He embraces Charles, Bastard, and Alanson.

My forces and my power of men are yours.
So, farewell, Talbot. I'll no longer trust thee.

PUCELLE*, aside*

Done like a Frenchman: turn and turn again.

CHARLES

Welcome, brave duke. Thy friendship makes us fresh.

BASTARD

And doth beget new courage in our breasts.

ALANSON

Pucelle hath bravely played her part in this
And doth deserve a coronet of gold.

CHARLES

Now let us on, my lords, and join our powers,
And seek how we may prejudice the foe.

They exit.

Scene 4

Flourish. Enter the King, Gloucester, Winchester, Exeter; York, Warwick, and Vernon, with white roses; Somerset, Suffolk, and Basset, with red roses. To them, with his Soldiers, Talbot.

TALBOT

My gracious prince and honorable peers,
Hearing of your arrival in this realm,
I have awhile given truce unto my wars
To do my duty to my sovereign;
In sign whereof, this arm, that hath reclaimed
To your obedience fifty fortresses,
Twelve cities, and seven walled towns of strength,
Besides five hundred prisoners of esteem,
Lets fall his sword before your Highness' feet,
And with submissive loyalty of heart
Ascribes the glory of his conquest got
First to my God, and next unto your Grace.

He kneels.

KING HENRY

Is this the Lord Talbot, Uncle Gloucester,
That hath so long been resident in France?

GLOUCESTER

Yes, if it please your Majesty, my liege.

KING HENRY

Welcome, brave captain and victorious lord.
When I was young—as yet I am not old—

I do remember how my father said
A stouter champion never handled sword.
Long since we were resolvèd of your truth,
Your faithful service, and your toil in war;
Yet never have you tasted our reward
Or been reguerdoned with so much as thanks,
Because till now we never saw your face.
Therefore stand up; and for these good deserts
We here create you Earl of Shrewsbury;
And in our coronation take your place. *Talbot rises.*

Sennet. Flourish. All except Vernon and Basset exit.

VERNON
Now, sir, to you that were so hot at sea,
Disgracing of these colors that I wear
In honor of my noble Lord of York,
Dar'st thou maintain the former words thou spak'st?

BASSET
Yes, sir, as well as you dare patronage
The envious barking of your saucy tongue
Against my lord the Duke of Somerset.

VERNON
Sirrah, thy lord I honor as he is.

BASSET
Why, what is he? As good a man as York.

VERNON
Hark you, not so; in witness, take you that.

Strikes him.

BASSET
Villain, thou knowest the law of arms is such
That whoso draws a sword 'tis present death,
Or else this blow should broach thy dearest blood.
But I'll unto his Majesty, and crave
I may have liberty to venge this wrong,
When thou shalt see I'll meet thee to thy cost.

He exits.

VERNON
Well, miscreant, I'll be there as soon as you,
And after meet you sooner than you would.

He exits.

ACT 4

Scene 1

Flourish. Enter King, Gloucester, Winchester, Talbot, Exeter; York and Warwick, with white roses; Suffolk and Somerset, with red roses; Governor of Paris, and Others.

GLOUCESTER
Lord Bishop, set the crown upon his head.
WINCHESTER*, crowning King Henry*
God save King Henry, of that name the Sixth!
GLOUCESTER
Now, Governor of Paris, take your oath.
Governor kneels.
That you elect no other king but him;
Esteem none friends but such as are his friends,
And none your foes but such as shall pretend
Malicious practices against his state:
This shall you do, so help you righteous God.
Governor rises.

Enter Fastolf.

FASTOLF
My gracious sovereign, as I rode from Callice
To haste unto your coronation,
A letter was delivered to my hands,
Writ to your Grace from th' Duke of Burgundy.
He hands the King a paper.
TALBOT
Shame to the Duke of Burgundy and thee!
I vowed, base knight, when I did meet thee next,
To tear the Garter from thy craven's leg,
(*tearing it off*)
Which I have done, because unworthily
Thou wast installèd in that high degree.—
Pardon me, princely Henry and the rest.
This dastard, at the battle of Patay,
When but in all I was six thousand strong
And that the French were almost ten to one,
Before we met or that a stroke was given,
Like to a trusty squire did run away;
In which assault we lost twelve hundred men.
Myself and divers gentlemen besides
Were there surprised and taken prisoners.
Then judge, great lords, if I have done amiss,
Or whether that such cowards ought to wear
This ornament of knighthood—yea or no?
GLOUCESTER
To say the truth, this fact was infamous
And ill beseeming any common man,
Much more a knight, a captain, and a leader.

TALBOT
When first this Order was ordained, my lords,
Knights of the Garter were of noble birth,
Valiant and virtuous, full of haughty courage,
Such as were grown to credit by the wars;
Not fearing death nor shrinking for distress,
But always resolute in most extremes.
He then that is not furnished in this sort
Doth but usurp the sacred name of knight,
Profaning this most honorable Order,
And should, if I were worthy to be judge,
Be quite degraded, like a hedge-born swain
That doth presume to boast of gentle blood.
KING HENRY*, to Fastolf*
Stain to thy countrymen, thou hear'st thy doom.
Be packing therefore, thou that wast a knight.
Henceforth we banish thee on pain of death.
Fastolf exits.
And now, my lord protector, view the letter
Sent from our uncle, Duke of Burgundy.
He hands the paper to Gloucester.
GLOUCESTER
What means his Grace that he hath changed his style?
No more but, plain and bluntly, *"To the King"*!
Hath he forgot he is his sovereign?
Or doth this churlish superscription
Pretend some alteration in good will?
What's here? (*Reads.*)
I have upon especial cause,
Moved with compassion of my country's wrack,
Together with the pitiful complaints
Of such as your oppression feeds upon,
Forsaken your pernicious faction
And joined with Charles, the rightful king of France.
O monstrous treachery! Can this be so?
That in alliance, amity, and oaths
There should be found such false dissembling guile?
KING HENRY
What? Doth my Uncle Burgundy revolt?
GLOUCESTER
He doth, my lord, and is become your foe.
KING HENRY
Is that the worst this letter doth contain?
GLOUCESTER
It is the worst, and all, my lord, he writes.
KING HENRY
Why, then, Lord Talbot there shall talk with him
And give him chastisement for this abuse.—
How say you, my lord, are you not content?
TALBOT
Content, my liege? Yes. But that I am prevented,
I should have begged I might have been employed.
KING HENRY
Then gather strength and march unto him straight;
Let him perceive how ill we brook his treason
And what offense it is to flout his friends.

TALBOT
I go, my lord, in heart desiring still
You may behold confusion of your foes. *He exits.*

Enter Vernon, with a white rose, and Basset, with a red rose.

VERNON
Grant me the combat, gracious sovereign.
BASSET
And me, my lord, grant me the combat too.
YORK*, indicating Vernon*
This is my servant; hear him, noble prince.
SOMERSET*, indicating Basset*
And this is mine, sweet Henry; favor him.
KING HENRY
Be patient, lords, and give them leave to speak.—
Say, gentlemen, what makes you thus exclaim,
And wherefore crave you combat, or with whom?
VERNON
With him, my lord, for he hath done me wrong.
BASSET
And I with him, for he hath done me wrong.
KING HENRY
What is that wrong whereof you both complain?
First let me know, and then I'll answer you.
BASSET
Crossing the sea from England into France,
This fellow here with envious carping tongue
Upbraided me about the rose I wear,
Saying the sanguine color of the leaves
Did represent my master's blushing cheeks
When stubbornly he did repugn the truth
About a certain question in the law
Argued betwixt the Duke of York and him,
With other vile and ignominious terms.
In confutation of which rude reproach,
And in defense of my lord's worthiness,
I crave the benefit of law of arms.
VERNON
And that is my petition, noble lord;
For though he seem with forgèd quaint conceit
To set a gloss upon his bold intent,
Yet know, my lord, I was provoked by him,
And he first took exceptions at this badge,
Pronouncing that the paleness of this flower
Bewrayed the faintness of my master's heart.
YORK
Will not this malice, Somerset, be left?
SOMERSET
Your private grudge, my Lord of York, will out,
Though ne'er so cunningly you smother it.
KING HENRY
Good Lord, what madness rules in brainsick men
When for so slight and frivolous a cause
Such factious emulations shall arise!

Good cousins both, of York and Somerset,
Quiet yourselves, I pray, and be at peace.

YORK

Let this dissension first be tried by fight,
And then your Highness shall command a peace.

SOMERSET

The quarrel toucheth none but us alone;
Betwixt ourselves let us decide it then.

YORK*, throwing down a gage*

There is my pledge; accept it, Somerset.

VERNON*, to Somerset*

Nay, let it rest where it began at first.

BASSET*, to Somerset*

Confirm it so, mine honorable lord.

GLOUCESTER

Confirm it so? Confounded be your strife,
And perish you with your audacious prate!
Presumptuous vassals, are you not ashamed
With this immodest clamorous outrage
To trouble and disturb the King and us?—
And you, my lords, methinks you do not well
To bear with their perverse objections,
Much less to take occasion from their mouths
To raise a mutiny betwixt yourselves.
Let me persuade you take a better course.

EXETER

It grieves his Highness. Good my lords, be friends.

KING HENRY

Come hither, you that would be combatants:
Henceforth I charge you, as you love our favor,
Quite to forget this quarrel and the cause.—
And you, my lords, remember where we are:
In France, amongst a fickle wavering nation.
If they perceive dissension in our looks,
And that within ourselves we disagree,
How will their grudging stomachs be provoked
To willful disobedience and rebel!
Besides, what infamy will there arise
When foreign princes shall be certified
That for a toy, a thing of no regard,
King Henry’s peers and chief nobility
Destroyed themselves and lost the realm of France!
O, think upon the conquest of my father,
My tender years, and let us not forgo
That for a trifle that was bought with blood.
Let me be umpire in this doubtful strife.
I see no reason if I wear this rose
That anyone should therefore be suspicious
I more incline to Somerset than York.

He puts on a red rose.

Both are my kinsmen, and I love them both.
As well they may upbraid me with my crown
Because, forsooth, the King of Scots is crowned.
But your discretions better can persuade
Than I am able to instruct or teach;
And therefore, as we hither came in peace,

So let us still continue peace and love.
Cousin of York, we institute your Grace
To be our regent in these parts of France;—
And good my Lord of Somerset, unite
Your troops of horsemen with his bands of foot;
And like true subjects, sons of your progenitors,
Go cheerfully together and digest
Your angry choler on your enemies.
Ourself, my lord protector, and the rest,
After some respite, will return to Callice;
From thence to England, where I hope ere long
To be presented, by your victories,
With Charles, Alanson, and that traitorous rout.

Flourish. All but York, Warwick, Exeter, Vernon exit.

WARWICK

My Lord of York, I promise you the King
Prettily, methought, did play the orator.

YORK

And so he did, but yet I like it not
In that he wears the badge of Somerset.

WARWICK

Tush, that was but his fancy; blame him not.
I dare presume, sweet prince, he thought no harm.

YORK

And if iwis he did—but let it rest.
Other affairs must now be managèd.

York, Warwick and Vernon exit.
Exeter remains.

EXETER

Well didst thou, Richard, to suppress thy voice,
For had the passions of thy heart burst out,
I fear we should have seen deciphered there
More rancorous spite, more furious raging broils,
Than yet can be imagined or supposed.
But howsoe'er, no simple man that sees
This jarring discord of nobility,
This shouldering of each other in the court,
This factious bandying of their favorites,
But sees it doth presage some ill event.
'Tis much when scepters are in children's hands,
But more when envy breeds unkind division:
There comes the ruin; there begins confusion.

He exits.

Scene 2

Enter Talbot with Soldiers and Trump and Drum before Bordeaux.

TALBOT

Go to the gates of Bordeaux, trumpeter.
Summon their general unto the wall.

Trumpet sounds. Enter General and Others aloft.

English John Talbot, captains, calls you forth,

Servant-in-arms to Harry, King of England,
And thus he would: open your city gates,
Be humble to us, call my sovereign yours,
And do him homage as obedient subjects,
And I'll withdraw me and my bloody power.
But if you frown upon this proffered peace,
You tempt the fury of my three attendants,
Lean Famine, quartering Steel, and climbing Fire,
Who, in a moment, even with the earth
Shall lay your stately and air-braving towers,
If you forsake the offer of their love.

GENERAL

Thou ominous and fearful owl of death,
Our nation's terror and their bloody scourge,
The period of thy tyranny approacheth.
On us thou canst not enter but by death;
For I protest we are well fortified
And strong enough to issue out and fight.
If thou retire, the Dauphin, well appointed,
Stands with the snares of war to tangle thee.
On either hand thee, there are squadrons pitched
To wall thee from the liberty of flight;
And no way canst thou turn thee for redress
But Death doth front thee with apparent spoil,
And pale Destruction meets thee in the face.
Ten thousand French have ta'en the Sacrament
To rive their dangerous artillery
Upon no Christian soul but English Talbot.
Lo, there thou stand'st, a breathing valiant man
Of an invincible unconquered spirit.
This is the latest glory of thy praise
That I, thy enemy, due thee withal;
For ere the glass that now begins to run
Finish the process of his sandy hour,
These eyes, that see thee now well-colorèd,
Shall see thee withered, bloody, pale, and dead.

Drum afar off.

Hark, hark, the Dauphin's drum, a warning bell,
Sings heavy music to thy timorous soul,
And mine shall ring thy dire departure out.

He exits, aloft, with Others.

TALBOT

He fables not; I hear the enemy.
Out, some light horsemen, and peruse their wings.

Some Soldiers exit.

O, negligent and heedless discipline,
How are we parked and bounded in a pale,
A little herd of England's timorous deer
Mazed with a yelping kennel of French curs.
If we be English deer, be then in blood,
Not rascal-like to fall down with a pinch,
But rather, moody-mad and desperate stags,
Turn on the bloody hounds with heads of steel
And make the cowards stand aloof at bay.
Sell every man his life as dear as mine
And they shall find dear deer of us, my friends.

God and Saint George, Talbot and England's right,
Prosper our colors in this dangerous fight!

He exits with Soldiers, Drum and Trumpet.

Scene 3

Enter a Messenger that meets York. Enter York with Trumpet and many Soldiers.

YORK

Are not the speedy scouts returned again
That dogged the mighty army of the Dauphin?

MESSENGER

They are returned, my lord, and give it out
That he is marched to Bordeaux with his power
To fight with Talbot. As he marched along,
By your espials were discoverèd
Two mightier troops than that the Dauphin led,
Which joined with him and made their march for Bordeaux. *He exits.*

YORK

A plague upon that villain Somerset
That thus delays my promisèd supply
Of horsemen that were levied for this siege!
Renownèd Talbot doth expect my aid,
And I am louted by a traitor villain
And cannot help the noble chevalier.
God comfort him in this necessity.
If he miscarry, farewell wars in France.

Enter Sir William Lucy.

LUCY

Thou princely leader of our English strength,
Never so needful on the earth of France,
Spur to the rescue of the noble Talbot,
Who now is girdled with a waist of iron
And hemmed about with grim destruction.
To Bordeaux, warlike duke! To Bordeaux, York!
Else farewell Talbot, France, and England's honor.

YORK

O God, that Somerset, who in proud heart
Doth stop my cornets, were in Talbot's place!
So should we save a valiant gentleman
By forfeiting a traitor and a coward.
Mad ire and wrathful fury makes me weep
That thus we die while remiss traitors sleep.

LUCY

O, send some succor to the distressed lord!

YORK

He dies, we lose; I break my warlike word;
We mourn, France smiles; we lose, they daily get,
All long of this vile traitor Somerset.

LUCY

Then God take mercy on brave Talbot's soul,
And on his son, young John, who two hours since
I met in travel toward his warlike father.

This seven years did not Talbot see his son,
And now they meet where both their lives are done.

YORK

Alas, what joy shall noble Talbot have
To bid his young son welcome to his grave?
Away! Vexation almost stops my breath,
That sundered friends greet in the hour of death.
Lucy, farewell. No more my fortune can
But curse the cause I cannot aid the man.
Maine, Blois, Poictiers, and Tours are won away,
Long all of Somerset and his delay.

York and his Soldiers exit.

LUCY

Thus while the vulture of sedition
Feeds in the bosom of such great commanders,
Sleeping neglection doth betray to loss
The conquest of our scarce-cold conqueror,
That ever-living man of memory,
Henry the Fifth. Whiles they each other cross,
Lives, honors, lands, and all hurry to loss.

He exits.

Scene 4

Enter Somerset with his army and a Captain from Talbot's army.

SOMERSET

It is too late; I cannot send them now.
This expedition was by York and Talbot
Too rashly plotted. All our general force
Might with a sally of the very town
Be buckled with. The overdaring Talbot
Hath sullied all his gloss of former honor
By this unheedful, desperate, wild adventure.
York set him on to fight and die in shame
That, Talbot dead, great York might bear the name.

Enter Sir William Lucy.

CAPTAIN

Here is Sir William Lucy, who with me
Set from our o'er-matched forces forth for aid.

SOMERSET

How now, Sir William, whither were you sent?

LUCY

Whither, my lord? From bought and sold Lord Talbot,
Who, ringed about with bold adversity,
Cries out for noble York and Somerset
To beat assailing Death from his weak regions;
And whiles the honorable captain there
Drops bloody sweat from his war-wearied limbs
And, in advantage ling'ring, looks for rescue,
You, his false hopes, the trust of England's honor,
Keep off aloof with worthless emulation.
Let not your private discord keep away
The levied succors that should lend him aid,

While he, renownèd noble gentleman,
Yield up his life unto a world of odds.
Orleance the Bastard, Charles, Burgundy,
Alanson, Reignier compass him about,
And Talbot perisheth by your default.

SOMERSET

York set him on; York should have sent him aid.

LUCY

And York as fast upon your Grace exclaims,
Swearing that you withhold his levied host
Collected for this expedition.

SOMERSET

York lies. He might have sent and had the horse.
I owe him little duty and less love,
And take foul scorn to fawn on him by sending.

LUCY

The fraud of England, not the force of France,
Hath now entrapped the noble-minded Talbot.
Never to England shall he bear his life,
But dies betrayed to fortune by your strife.

SOMERSET

Come, go. I will dispatch the horsemen straight.
Within six hours they will be at his aid.

LUCY

Too late comes rescue; he is ta'en or slain,
For fly he could not if he would have fled;
And fly would Talbot never, though he might.

SOMERSET

If he be dead, brave Talbot, then adieu.

LUCY

His fame lives in the world, his shame in you.

They exit.

Scene 5

Enter Talbot and John Talbot, his son.

TALBOT

O young John Talbot, I did send for thee
To tutor thee in stratagems of war,
That Talbot's name might be in thee revived
When sapless age and weak unable limbs
Should bring thy father to his drooping chair.
But—O, malignant and ill-boding stars!—
Now thou art come unto a feast of Death,
A terrible and unavoided danger.
Therefore, dear boy, mount on my swiftest horse,
And I'll direct thee how thou shalt escape
By sudden flight. Come, dally not, be gone.

JOHN TALBOT

Is my name Talbot? And am I your son?
And shall I fly? O, if you love my mother,
Dishonor not her honorable name
To make a bastard and a slave of me!
The world will say "He is not Talbot's blood,
That basely fled when noble Talbot stood."

TALBOT

Fly, to revenge my death if I be slain.
JOHN TALBOT
He that flies so will ne'er return again.
TALBOT
If we both stay, we both are sure to die.
JOHN TALBOT
Then let me stay and, father, do you fly.
Your loss is great; so your regard should be.
My worth unknown, no loss is known in me.
Upon my death, the French can little boast;
In yours they will; in you all hopes are lost.
Flight cannot stain the honor you have won,
But mine it will, that no exploit have done.
You fled for vantage, everyone will swear;
But if I bow, they'll say it was for fear.
There is no hope that ever I will stay
If the first hour I shrink and run away.
He kneels.
Here on my knee I beg mortality,
Rather than life preserved with infamy.
TALBOT
Shall all thy mother's hopes lie in one tomb?
JOHN TALBOT
Ay, rather than I'll shame my mother's womb.
TALBOT
Upon my blessing I command thee go.
JOHN TALBOT
To fight I will, but not to fly the foe.
TALBOT
Part of thy father may be saved in thee.
JOHN TALBOT
No part of him but will be shame in me.
TALBOT
Thou never hadst renown, nor canst not lose it.
JOHN TALBOT
Yes, your renownèd name; shall flight abuse it?
TALBOT
Thy father's charge shall clear thee from that stain.
JOHN TALBOT
You cannot witness for me, being slain.
If death be so apparent, then both fly.
TALBOT
And leave my followers here to fight and die?
My age was never tainted with such shame.
JOHN TALBOT
And shall my youth be guilty of such blame?
He rises.
No more can I be severed from your side
Than can yourself yourself in twain divide.
Stay, go, do what you will; the like do I,
For live I will not, if my father die.
TALBOT
Then here I take my leave of thee, fair son,
Born to eclipse thy life this afternoon.
Come, side by side, together live and die,
And soul with soul from France to heaven fly.
They exit.

Scene 6

Alarum. Excursions, wherein Talbot's son John is hemmed about, and Talbot rescues him.

TALBOT

Saint George, and victory! Fight, soldiers, fight!
The Regent hath with Talbot broke his word
And left us to the rage of France his sword.
Where is John Talbot?—Pause, and take thy breath;
I gave thee life and rescued thee from death.

JOHN TALBOT

O, twice my father, twice am I thy son!
The life thou gav'st me first was lost and done
Till with thy warlike sword, despite of fate,
To my determined time thou gav'st new date.

TALBOT

When from the Dauphin's crest thy sword struck fire,
It warmed thy father's heart with proud desire
Of bold-faced victory. Then leaden age,
Quickened with youthful spleen and warlike rage,
Beat down Alanson, Orleance, Burgundy,
And from the pride of Gallia rescued thee.
The ireful Bastard Orleance, that drew blood
From thee, my boy, and had the maidenhood
Of thy first fight, I soon encounterèd,
And, interchanging blows, I quickly shed
Some of his bastard blood, and in disgrace
Bespoke him thus: "Contaminated, base,
And misbegotten blood I spill of thine,
Mean and right poor, for that pure blood of mine
Which thou didst force from Talbot, my brave boy."
Here, purposing the Bastard to destroy,
Came in strong rescue. Speak, thy father's care:
Art thou not weary, John? How dost thou fare?
Wilt thou yet leave the battle, boy, and fly,
Now thou art sealed the son of chivalry?
Fly, to revenge my death when I am dead;
The help of one stands me in little stead.
O, too much folly is it, well I wot,
To hazard all our lives in one small boat.
If I today die not with Frenchmen's rage,
Tomorrow I shall die with mickle age.
By me they nothing gain, and, if I stay,
'Tis but the short'ning of my life one day.
In thee thy mother dies, our household's name,
My death's revenge, thy youth, and England's fame.
All these and more we hazard by thy stay;
All these are saved if thou wilt fly away.

JOHN TALBOT

The sword of Orleance hath not made me smart;
These words of yours draw lifeblood from my heart.
On that advantage, bought with such a shame,
To save a paltry life and slay bright fame,
Before young Talbot from old Talbot fly,
The coward horse that bears me fall and die!

And like me to the peasant boys of France,
To be shame's scorn and subject of mischance!
Surely, by all the glory you have won,
An if I fly, I am not Talbot's son.
Then talk no more of flight, it is no boot;
If son to Talbot, die at Talbot's foot.

TALBOT

Then follow thou thy desp'rate sire of Crete,
Thou Icarus; thy life to me is sweet.
If thou wilt fight, fight by thy father's side,
And commendable proved, let's die in pride.

They exit.

Scene 7

Alarum. Excursions. Enter old Talbot led by a Servant.

TALBOT

Where is my other life? Mine own is gone.
O, where's young Talbot? Where is valiant John?
Triumphant Death, smeared with captivity,
Young Talbot's valor makes me smile at thee.
When he perceived me shrink and on my knee,
His bloody sword he brandished over me,
And like a hungry lion did commence
Rough deeds of rage and stern impatience;
But when my angry guardant stood alone,
Tend'ring my ruin and assailed of none,
Dizzy-eyed fury and great rage of heart
Suddenly made him from my side to start
Into the clust'ring battle of the French;
And in that sea of blood, my boy did drench
His over-mounting spirit; and there died
My Icarus, my blossom, in his pride.

Enter Soldiers with John Talbot, borne.

SERVINGMAN

O, my dear lord, lo where your son is borne!

TALBOT

Thou antic Death, which laugh'st us here to scorn,
Anon from thy insulting tyranny,
Coupled in bonds of perpetuity,
Two Talbots, wingèd through the lither sky,
In thy despite shall scape mortality.—
O, thou whose wounds become hard-favored Death,
Speak to thy father ere thou yield thy breath!
Brave Death by speaking, whither he will or no.
Imagine him a Frenchman and thy foe.—
Poor boy, he smiles, methinks, as who should say
"Had Death been French, then Death had died today."—
Come, come, and lay him in his father's arms;
My spirit can no longer bear these harms.
Soldiers, adieu! I have what I would have,
Now my old arms are young John Talbot's grave.

Dies.
Alarums. Soldiers exit.

Enter Charles, Alanson, Burgundy, Bastard, and Pucelle, with Forces.

CHARLES
Had York and Somerset brought rescue in,
We should have found a bloody day of this.
BASTARD
How the young whelp of Talbot's, raging wood,
Did flesh his puny sword in Frenchmen's blood!
PUCELLE
Once I encountered him, and thus I said:
"Thou maiden youth, be vanquished by a maid."
But with a proud majestical high scorn
He answered thus: "Young Talbot was not born
To be the pillage of a giglot wench."
So, rushing in the bowels of the French,
He left me proudly, as unworthy fight.
BURGUNDY
Doubtless he would have made a noble knight.
See where he lies inhearsèd in the arms
Of the most bloody nurser of his harms.
BASTARD
Hew them to pieces, hack their bones asunder,
Whose life was England's glory, Gallia's wonder.
CHARLES
O, no, forbear! For that which we have fled
During the life, let us not wrong it dead.

Enter Lucy with Attendants and a French Herald.

LUCY
Herald, conduct me to the Dauphin's tent,
To know who hath obtained the glory of the day.
CHARLES
On what submissive message art thou sent?
LUCY
Submission, dauphin? 'Tis a mere French word.
We English warriors wot not what it means.
I come to know what prisoners thou hast ta'en,
And to survey the bodies of the dead.
CHARLES
For prisoners askst thou? Hell our prison is.
But tell me whom thou seek'st.
LUCY
But where's the great Alcides of the field,
Valiant Lord Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury,
Created for his rare success in arms
Great Earl of Washford, Waterford, and Valence,
Lord Talbot of Goodrich and Urchinfield,
Lord Strange of Blackmere, Lord Verdon of Alton,
Lord Cromwell of Wingfield, Lord Furnival of Sheffield,
The thrice victorious Lord of Falconbridge,

Knight of the noble Order of Saint George,
Worthy Saint Michael, and the Golden Fleece,
Great Marshal to Henry the Sixth
Of all his wars within the realm of France?

PUCELLE

Here's a silly stately style indeed.
The Turk, that two-and-fifty kingdoms hath,
Writes not so tedious a style as this.
Him that thou magnifi'st with all these titles
Stinking and flyblown lies here at our feet.

LUCY

Is Talbot slain, the Frenchmen's only scourge,
Your kingdom's terror and black Nemesis?
O, were mine eyeballs into bullets turned
That I in rage might shoot them at your faces!
O, that I could but call these dead to life,
It were enough to fright the realm of France.
Were but his picture left amongst you here,
It would amaze the proudest of you all.
Give me their bodies, that I may bear them hence
And give them burial as beseems their worth.

PUCELLE

I think this upstart is old Talbot's ghost,
He speaks with such a proud commanding spirit.
For God's sake, let him have him. To keep them here,
They would but stink and putrefy the air.

CHARLES

Go, take their bodies hence.

LUCY I'll bear them hence.
But from their ashes shall be reared
A phoenix that shall make all France afeard.

CHARLES

So we be rid of them, do with him what thou wilt.

Lucy, Servant, and Attendants exit, bearing the bodies.

And now to Paris in this conquering vein.
All will be ours, now bloody Talbot's slain.

They exit.

ACT 5

Scene 1

Sennet. Enter King, Gloucester, and Exeter, with Attendants.

KING HENRY*, to Gloucester*
Have you perused the letters from the Pope,
The Emperor, and the Earl of Armagnac?
GLOUCESTER
I have, my lord, and their intent is this:
They humbly sue unto your Excellence
To have a godly peace concluded of
Between the realms of England and of France.
KING HENRY
How doth your Grace affect their motion?
GLOUCESTER
Well, my good lord, and as the only means
To stop effusion of our Christian blood
And stablish quietness on every side.
KING HENRY
Ay, marry, uncle, for I always thought
It was both impious and unnatural
That such immanity and bloody strife
Should reign among professors of one faith.
GLOUCESTER
Besides, my lord, the sooner to effect
And surer bind this knot of amity,
The Earl of Armagnac, near knit to Charles,
A man of great authority in France,
Proffers his only daughter to your Grace
In marriage, with a large and sumptuous dowry.
KING HENRY
Marriage, uncle? Alas, my years are young;
And fitter is my study and my books
Than wanton dalliance with a paramour.
Yet call th' Ambassadors and, as you please,
So let them have their answers every one.
An Attendant exits.
I shall be well content with any choice
Tends to God's glory and my country's weal.

Enter Winchester, dressed in cardinal's robes, and the Ambassador of Armagnac, a Papal Legate, and another Ambassador.

EXETER*, aside*
What, is my Lord of Winchester installed
And called unto a cardinal's degree?
Then I perceive that will be verified
Henry the Fifth did sometime prophesy:
"If once he come to be a cardinal,
He'll make his cap coequal with the crown."

KING HENRY
My Lords Ambassadors, your several suits
Have been considered and debated on;
Your purpose is both good and reasonable,
And therefore are we certainly resolved
To draw conditions of a friendly peace,
Which by my Lord of Winchester we mean
Shall be transported presently to France.
GLOUCESTER*, to the Ambassador of Armagnac*
And for the proffer of my lord your master,
I have informed his Highness so at large
As, liking of the lady's virtuous gifts,
Her beauty, and the value of her dower,
He doth intend she shall be England's queen.
KING HENRY*, handing a jewel to the Ambassador*
In argument and proof of which contract,
Bear her this jewel, pledge of my affection.—
And so, my Lord Protector, see them guarded
And safely brought to Dover, where, inshipped,
Commit them to the fortune of the sea.
All except Winchester and Legate exit.
WINCHESTER
Stay, my Lord Legate; you shall first receive
The sum of money which I promisèd
Should be delivered to his Holiness
For clothing me in these grave ornaments.
LEGATE
I will attend upon your Lordship's leisure. *He exits.*
WINCHESTER
Now Winchester will not submit, I trow,
Or be inferior to the proudest peer.
Humphrey of Gloucester, thou shalt well perceive
That neither in birth or for authority
The Bishop will be overborne by thee.
I'll either make thee stoop and bend thy knee,
Or sack this country with a mutiny.
He exits.

Scene 2

Enter Charles, Burgundy, Alanson, Bastard, Reignier, and Joan la Pucelle, with Soldiers.

CHARLES
These news, my lords, may cheer our drooping spirits:
'Tis said the stout Parisians do revolt
And turn again unto the warlike French.
ALANSON
Then march to Paris, royal Charles of France,
And keep not back your powers in dalliance.
PUCELLE
Peace be amongst them if they turn to us;
Else ruin combat with their palaces!

Enter Scout.

SCOUT
Success unto our valiant general,
And happiness to his accomplices.
CHARLES
What tidings send our scouts? I prithee speak.
SCOUT
The English army that divided was
Into two parties is now conjoined in one,
And means to give you battle presently.
CHARLES
Somewhat too sudden, sirs, the warning is,
But we will presently provide for them.
BURGUNDY
I trust the ghost of Talbot is not there.
Now he is gone, my lord, you need not fear.
PUCELLE
Of all base passions, fear is most accursed.
Command the conquest, Charles, it shall be thine;
Let Henry fret and all the world repine.
CHARLES
Then on, my lords, and France be fortunate!

They exit.

Scene 3

Alarum. Excursions. Enter Joan la Pucelle.

PUCELLE
The Regent conquers and the Frenchmen fly.
Now help, you charming spells and periapts,
And you choice spirits that admonish me,
And give me signs of future accidents. *Thunder.*
You speedy helpers, that are substitutes
Under the lordly monarch of the north,
Appear, and aid me in this enterprise.

Enter Fiends.

This speed and quick appearance argues proof
Of your accustomed diligence to me.
Now, you familiar spirits that are culled
Out of the powerful regions under earth,
Help me this once, that France may get the field.

They walk, and speak not.

O, hold me not with silence overlong!
Where I was wont to feed you with my blood,
I'll lop a member off and give it you
In earnest of a further benefit,
So you do condescend to help me now.

They hang their heads.

No hope to have redress? My body shall
Pay recompense if you will grant my suit.

They shake their heads.

Cannot my body nor blood-sacrifice
Entreat you to your wonted furtherance?
Then take my soul—my body, soul, and all—
Before that England give the French the foil.

They depart.

See, they forsake me. Now the time is come
That France must vail her lofty-plumèd crest
And let her head fall into England's lap.
My ancient incantations are too weak,
And hell too strong for me to buckle with.
Now, France, thy glory droopeth to the dust.

She exits.

Excursions. Burgundy and York fight hand to hand. Burgundy and the French fly as York and English soldiers capture Joan la Pucelle.

YORK
Damsel of France, I think I have you fast.
Unchain your spirits now with spelling charms,
And try if they can gain your liberty.
A goodly prize, fit for the devil's grace!
See how the ugly witch doth bend her brows
As if with Circe she would change my shape.
PUCELLE
Changed to a worser shape thou canst not be.
YORK
O, Charles the Dauphin is a proper man;
No shape but his can please your dainty eye.
PUCELLE
A plaguing mischief light on Charles and thee,
And may you both be suddenly surprised
By bloody hands in sleeping on your beds!
YORK
Fell banning hag! Enchantress, hold thy tongue.
PUCELLE
I prithee give me leave to curse awhile.
YORK
Curse, miscreant, when thou com'st to the stake.

They exit.

Alarum. Enter Suffolk with Margaret in his hand.

SUFFOLK
Be what thou wilt, thou art my prisoner.

Gazes on her.

O fairest beauty, do not fear nor fly,
For I will touch thee but with reverent hands.
I kiss these fingers for eternal peace
And lay them gently on thy tender side.
Who art thou? Say, that I may honor thee.
MARGARET
Margaret my name, and daughter to a king,
The King of Naples, whosoe'er thou art.
SUFFOLK
An earl I am, and Suffolk am I called.
Be not offended, nature's miracle;
Thou art allotted to be ta'en by me.
So doth the swan her downy cygnets save,
Keeping them prisoner underneath her wings.

Yet if this servile usage once offend,
Go and be free again as Suffolk's friend.
She is going.
O, stay! (*Aside.*) I have no power to let her pass.
My hand would free her, but my heart says no.
As plays the sun upon the glassy streams,
Twinkling another counterfeited beam,
So seems this gorgeous beauty to mine eyes.
Fain would I woo her, yet I dare not speak.
I'll call for pen and ink and write my mind.
Fie, de la Pole, disable not thyself!
Hast not a tongue? Is she not here?
Wilt thou be daunted at a woman's sight?
Ay. Beauty's princely majesty is such
Confounds the tongue and makes the senses rough.

MARGARET
Say, Earl of Suffolk, if thy name be so,
What ransom must I pay before I pass?
For I perceive I am thy prisoner.

SUFFOLK*, aside*
How canst thou tell she will deny thy suit
Before thou make a trial of her love?

MARGARET
Why speak'st thou not? What ransom must I pay?

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

MARGARET
Wilt thou accept of ransom, yea or no?

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

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

SUFFOLK*, aside*
There all is marred; there lies a cooling card.

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

SUFFOLK*, aside*
And yet a dispensation may be had.

MARGARET
And yet I would that you would answer me.

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

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

SUFFOLK*, aside*
Yet so my fancy may be satisfied,
And peace establishèd between these realms.
But there remains a scruple in that, too;
For though her father be the King of Naples,
Duke of Anjou and Maine, yet is he poor,
And our nobility will scorn the match.

MARGARET
Hear you, captain? Are you not at leisure?

SUFFOLK, *aside*
It shall be so, disdain they ne'er so much.
Henry is youthful, and will quickly yield.—
Madam, I have a secret to reveal.
MARGARET, *aside*
What though I be enthralled, he seems a knight,
And will not any way dishonor me.
SUFFOLK
Lady, vouchsafe to listen what I say.
MARGARET, *aside*
Perhaps I shall be rescued by the French,
And then I need not crave his courtesy.
SUFFOLK
Sweet madam, give me hearing in a cause.
MARGARET, *aside*
Tush, women have been captivate ere now.
SUFFOLK
Lady, wherefore talk you so?
MARGARET
I cry you mercy, 'tis but *quid* for *quo*.
SUFFOLK
Say, gentle princess, would you not suppose
Your bondage happy, to be made a queen?
MARGARET
To be a queen in bondage is more vile
Than is a slave in base servility,
For princes should be free.
SUFFOLK And so shall you,
If happy England's royal king be free.
MARGARET
Why, what concerns his freedom unto me?
SUFFOLK
I'll undertake to make thee Henry's queen,
To put a golden scepter in thy hand
And set a precious crown upon thy head,
If thou wilt condescend to be my—
MARGARET What?
SUFFOLK His love.
MARGARET
I am unworthy to be Henry's wife.
SUFFOLK
No, gentle madam, I unworthy am
To woo so fair a dame to be his wife,
And have no portion in the choice myself.
How say you, madam? Are you so content?
MARGARET
An if my father please, I am content.
SUFFOLK
Then call our captains and our colors forth!
A Soldier exits.
And, madam, at your father's castle walls
We'll crave a parley to confer with him.

Enter Captains and Trumpets. Sound a parley.
Enter Reignier on the walls.

See, Reignier, see thy daughter prisoner!

REIGNIER

To whom?

SUFFOLK To me.

REIGNIER Suffolk, what remedy?
I am a soldier and unapt to weep
Or to exclaim on Fortune's fickleness.

SUFFOLK

Yes, there is remedy enough, my lord:
Consent, and, for thy Honor give consent,
Thy daughter shall be wedded to my king,
Whom I with pain have wooed and won thereto;
And this her easy-held imprisonment
Hath gained thy daughter princely liberty.

REIGNIER

Speaks Suffolk as he thinks?

SUFFOLK Fair Margaret knows
That Suffolk doth not flatter, face, or feign.

REIGNIER

Upon thy princely warrant, I descend
To give thee answer of thy just demand.

He exits from the walls.

SUFFOLK

And here I will expect thy coming.

Trumpets sound. Enter Reignier, below.

REIGNIER

Welcome, brave earl, into our territories.
Command in Anjou what your Honor pleases.

SUFFOLK

Thanks, Reignier, happy for so sweet a child,
Fit to be made companion with a king.
What answer makes your Grace unto my suit?

REIGNIER

Since thou dost deign to woo her little worth
To be the princely bride of such a lord,
Upon condition I may quietly
Enjoy mine own, the country Maine and Anjou,
Free from oppression or the stroke of war,
My daughter shall be Henry's, if he please.

SUFFOLK

That is her ransom; I deliver her,
And those two counties I will undertake
Your Grace shall well and quietly enjoy.

REIGNIER

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

SUFFOLK

Reignier of France, I give thee kingly thanks
Because this is in traffic of a king.
Aside. And yet methinks I could be well content
To be mine own attorney in this case.—
I'll over then to England with this news,
And make this marriage to be solemnized.

So farewell, Reignier; set this diamond safe
In golden palaces, as it becomes.
REIGNIER*, embracing Suffolk*
I do embrace thee, as I would embrace
The Christian prince King Henry, were he here.
MARGARET*, to Suffolk*
Farewell, my lord; good wishes, praise, and prayers
Shall Suffolk ever have of Margaret.
She is going, as Reignier exits.
SUFFOLK
Farewell, sweet madam. But, hark you, Margaret,
No princely commendations to my king?
MARGARET
Such commendations as becomes a maid,
A virgin, and his servant, say to him.
SUFFOLK
Words sweetly placed and modestly directed.
But, madam, I must trouble you again:
No loving token to his Majesty?
MARGARET
Yes, my good lord: a pure unspotted heart,
Never yet taint with love, I send the King.
SUFFOLK And this withal. *Kiss her.*
MARGARET
That for thyself. I will not so presume
To send such peevish tokens to a king. *She exits.*
SUFFOLK
O, wert thou for myself! But, Suffolk, stay.
Thou mayst not wander in that labyrinth.
There Minotaurs and ugly treasons lurk.
Solicit Henry with her wondrous praise;
Bethink thee on her virtues that surmount
And natural graces that extinguish art;
Repeat their semblance often on the seas,
That, when thou com'st to kneel at Henry's feet,
Thou mayst bereave him of his wits with wonder.
He exits.

Scene 4

Enter York, Warwick, Shepherd, and Pucelle, guarded.

YORK
Bring forth that sorceress condemned to burn.
SHEPHERD
Ah, Joan, this kills thy father's heart outright.
Have I sought every country far and near,
And, now it is my chance to find thee out,
Must I behold thy timeless cruel death?
Ah, Joan, sweet daughter Joan, I'll die with thee.
PUCELLE
Decrepit miser, base ignoble wretch!
I am descended of a gentler blood.
Thou art no father nor no friend of mine.
SHEPHERD
Out, out!—My lords, an please you, 'tis not so!

I did beget her, all the parish knows;
Her mother liveth yet, can testify
She was the first fruit of my bach'lorship.

WARWICK

Graceless, wilt thou deny thy parentage?

YORK

This argues what her kind of life hath been,
Wicked and vile; and so her death concludes.

SHEPHERD

Fie, Joan, that thou wilt be so obstacle!
God knows thou art a collop of my flesh,
And for thy sake have I shed many a tear.
Deny me not, I prithee, gentle Joan.

PUCELLE

Peasant, avaunt!—You have suborned this man
Of purpose to obscure my noble birth.

SHEPHERD

'Tis true, I gave a noble to the priest
The morn that I was wedded to her mother.—
Kneel down and take my blessing, good my girl.
Wilt thou not stoop? Now cursèd be the time
Of thy nativity! I would the milk
Thy mother gave thee when thou suck'dst her breast
Had been a little ratsbane for thy sake!
Or else, when thou didst keep my lambs afield,
I wish some ravenous wolf had eaten thee!
Dost thou deny thy father, cursèd drab?
O burn her, burn her! Hanging is too good. *He exits.*

YORK

Take her away, for she hath lived too long
To fill the world with vicious qualities.

PUCELLE

First, let me tell you whom you have condemned:
Not one begotten of a shepherd swain,
But issued from the progeny of kings,
Virtuous and holy, chosen from above
By inspiration of celestial grace
To work exceeding miracles on earth.
I never had to do with wicked spirits.
But you, that are polluted with your lusts,
Stained with the guiltless blood of innocents,
Corrupt and tainted with a thousand vices,
Because you want the grace that others have,
You judge it straight a thing impossible
To compass wonders but by help of devils.
No, misconceivèd! Joan of Arc hath been
A virgin from her tender infancy,
Chaste and immaculate in very thought,
Whose maiden blood, thus rigorously effused,
Will cry for vengeance at the gates of heaven.

YORK

Ay, ay.—Away with her to execution.

WARWICK

And hark you, sirs: because she is a maid,
Spare for no faggots; let there be enow.

Place barrels of pitch upon the fatal stake
That so her torture may be shortenèd.
PUCELLE
Will nothing turn your unrelenting hearts?
Then, Joan, discover thine infirmity,
That warranteth by law to be thy privilege:
I am with child, you bloody homicides.
Murder not then the fruit within my womb,
Although you hale me to a violent death.
YORK
Now heaven forfend, the holy maid with child?
WARWICK*, to Pucelle*
The greatest miracle that e'er you wrought!
Is all your strict preciseness come to this?
YORK
She and the Dauphin have been juggling.
I did imagine what would be her refuge.
WARWICK
Well, go to, we'll have no bastards live,
Especially since Charles must father it.
PUCELLE
You are deceived; my child is none of his.
It was Alanson that enjoyed my love.
YORK
Alanson, that notorious Machiavel?
It dies an if it had a thousand lives!
PUCELLE
O, give me leave! I have deluded you.
'Twas neither Charles nor yet the Duke I named,
But Reignier, King of Naples, that prevailed.
WARWICK
A married man? That's most intolerable.
YORK
Why, here's a girl! I think she knows not well—
There were so many—whom she may accuse.
WARWICK
It's sign she hath been liberal and free.
YORK
And yet, forsooth, she is a virgin pure!—
Strumpet, thy words condemn thy brat and thee.
Use no entreaty, for it is in vain.
PUCELLE
Then lead me hence, with whom I leave my curse:
May never glorious sun reflex his beams
Upon the country where you make abode,
But darkness and the gloomy shade of death
Environ you, till mischief and despair
Drive you to break your necks or hang yourselves.
She exits, led by Guards.
YORK
Break thou in pieces, and consume to ashes,
Thou foul accursèd minister of hell!

Enter Winchester, as Cardinal.

WINCHESTER
Lord Regent, I do greet your Excellence
With letters of commission from the King.
For know, my lords, the states of Christendom,
Moved with remorse of these outrageous broils,
Have earnestly implored a general peace
Betwixt our nation and the aspiring French;
And here at hand the Dauphin and his train
Approacheth to confer about some matter.
YORK
Is all our travail turned to this effect?
After the slaughter of so many peers,
So many captains, gentlemen, and soldiers
That in this quarrel have been overthrown
And sold their bodies for their country's benefit,
Shall we at last conclude effeminate peace?
Have we not lost most part of all the towns—
By treason, falsehood, and by treachery—
Our great progenitors had conquerèd?
O, Warwick, Warwick, I foresee with grief
The utter loss of all the realm of France!
WARWICK
Be patient, York; if we conclude a peace
It shall be with such strict and severe covenants
As little shall the Frenchmen gain thereby.

Enter Charles, Alanson, Bastard,
Reignier, with Attendants.

CHARLES
Since, lords of England, it is thus agreed
That peaceful truce shall be proclaimed in France,
We come to be informèd by yourselves
What the conditions of that league must be.
YORK
Speak, Winchester, for boiling choler chokes
The hollow passage of my poisoned voice
By sight of these our baleful enemies.
WINCHESTER
Charles and the rest, it is enacted thus:
That, in regard King Henry gives consent,
Of mere compassion and of lenity,
To ease your country of distressful war
And suffer you to breathe in fruitful peace,
You shall become true liegemen to his crown.
And, Charles, upon condition thou wilt swear
To pay him tribute and submit thyself,
Thou shalt be placed as viceroy under him,
And still enjoy thy regal dignity.
ALANSON
Must he be then as shadow of himself—
Adorn his temples with a coronet,
And yet, in substance and authority,
Retain but privilege of a private man?
This proffer is absurd and reasonless.

CHARLES
'Tis known already that I am possessed
With more than half the Gallian territories,
And therein reverenced for their lawful king.
Shall I, for lucre of the rest unvanquished,
Detract so much from that prerogative
As to be called but viceroy of the whole?
No, lord ambassador, I'll rather keep
That which I have than, coveting for more,
Be cast from possibility of all.
YORK
Insulting Charles, hast thou by secret means
Used intercession to obtain a league
And, now the matter grows to compromise,
Stand'st thou aloof upon comparison?
Either accept the title thou usurp'st,
Of benefit proceeding from our king
And not of any challenge of desert,
Or we will plague thee with incessant wars.
REIGNIER*, aside to Charles*
My lord, you do not well in obstinacy
To cavil in the course of this contract.
If once it be neglected, ten to one
We shall not find like opportunity.
ALANSON*, aside to Charles*
To say the truth, it is your policy
To save your subjects from such massacre
And ruthless slaughters as are daily seen
By our proceeding in hostility;
And therefore take this compact of a truce
Although you break it when your pleasure serves.
WARWICK
How say'st thou, Charles? Shall our condition stand?
CHARLES
It shall—only reserved you claim no interest
In any of our towns of garrison.
YORK
Then swear allegiance to his Majesty,
As thou art knight, never to disobey
Nor be rebellious to the crown of England,
Thou nor thy nobles, to the crown of England.
Charles, Alanson, Bastard, and Reignier swear allegiance to Henry.
So, now dismiss your army when you please;
Hang up your ensigns, let your drums be still,
For here we entertain a solemn peace.
They exit.

Scene 5

Enter Suffolk in conference with the King, Gloucester, and Exeter, with Attendants.

KING HENRY
Your wondrous rare description, noble earl,
Of beauteous Margaret hath astonished me.
Her virtues gracèd with external gifts

Do breed love's settled passions in my heart,
And like as rigor of tempestuous gusts
Provokes the mightiest hulk against the tide,
So am I driven by breath of her renown
Either to suffer shipwrack, or arrive
Where I may have fruition of her love.

SUFFOLK

Tush, my good lord, this superficial tale
Is but a preface of her worthy praise.
The chief perfections of that lovely dame,
Had I sufficient skill to utter them,
Would make a volume of enticing lines
Able to ravish any dull conceit;
And, which is more, she is not so divine,
So full replete with choice of all delights,
But with as humble lowliness of mind
She is content to be at your command—
Command, I mean, of virtuous chaste intents—
To love and honor Henry as her lord.

KING HENRY

And otherwise will Henry ne'er presume.—
Therefore, my Lord Protector, give consent
That Margaret may be England's royal queen.

GLOUCESTER

So should I give consent to flatter sin.
You know, my lord, your Highness is betrothed
Unto another lady of esteem.
How shall we then dispense with that contract
And not deface your honor with reproach?

SUFFOLK

As doth a ruler with unlawful oaths;
Or one that, at a triumph having vowed
To try his strength, forsaketh yet the lists
By reason of his adversary's odds.
A poor earl's daughter is unequal odds,
And therefore may be broke without offense.

GLOUCESTER

Why, what, I pray, is Margaret more than that?
Her father is no better than an earl,
Although in glorious titles he excel.

SUFFOLK

Yes, my lord, her father is a king,
The King of Naples and Jerusalem,
And of such great authority in France
As his alliance will confirm our peace,
And keep the Frenchmen in allegiance.

GLOUCESTER

And so the Earl of Armagnac may do,
Because he is near kinsman unto Charles.

EXETER

Besides, his wealth doth warrant a liberal dower,
Where Reignier sooner will receive than give.

SUFFOLK

A dower, my lords? Disgrace not so your king
That he should be so abject, base, and poor,
To choose for wealth and not for perfect love.

Henry is able to enrich his queen,
And not to seek a queen to make him rich;
So worthless peasants bargain for their wives,
As market men for oxen, sheep, or horse.
Marriage is a matter of more worth
Than to be dealt in by attorneyship.
Not whom we will, but whom his Grace affects,
Must be companion of his nuptial bed.
And therefore, lords, since he affects her most,
Most of all these reasons bindeth us
In our opinions she should be preferred.
For what is wedlock forcèd but a hell,
An age of discord and continual strife?
Whereas the contrary bringeth bliss
And is a pattern of celestial peace.
Whom should we match with Henry, being a king,
But Margaret, that is daughter to a king?
Her peerless feature, joinèd with her birth,
Approves her fit for none but for a king.
Her valiant courage and undaunted spirit,
More than in women commonly is seen,
Will answer our hope in issue of a king.
For Henry, son unto a conqueror,
Is likely to beget more conquerors,
If with a lady of so high resolve
As is fair Margaret he be linked in love.
Then yield, my lords, and here conclude with me
That Margaret shall be queen, and none but she.

KING HENRY

Whether it be through force of your report,
My noble Lord of Suffolk, or for that
My tender youth was never yet attaint
With any passion of inflaming love,
I cannot tell; but this I am assured:
I feel such sharp dissension in my breast,
Such fierce alarums both of hope and fear,
As I am sick with working of my thoughts.
Take therefore shipping; post, my lord, to France;
Agree to any covenants, and procure
That Lady Margaret do vouchsafe to come
To cross the seas to England and be crowned
King Henry's faithful and anointed queen.
For your expenses and sufficient charge,
Among the people gather up a tenth.
Be gone, I say, for till you do return,
I rest perplexèd with a thousand cares.—
And you, good uncle, banish all offense.
If you do censure me by what you were,
Not what you are, I know it will excuse
This sudden execution of my will.
And so conduct me where, from company,
I may revolve and ruminate my grief.

He exits with Attendants.

GLOUCESTER

Ay, grief, I fear me, both at first and last.

Gloucester exits with Exeter.

SUFFOLK
Thus Suffolk hath prevailed, and thus he goes
As did the youthful Paris once to Greece,
With hope to find the like event in love,
But prosper better than the Trojan did.
Margaret shall now be queen, and rule the King,
But I will rule both her, the King, and realm.

He exits.