Henry VI, Part 2

By William Shakespeare

Editor Maximianno Cobra
with Susan Ruddick - Sarah Blackstone - Charles Darlington

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Characters in the Play

KING HENRY VI
QUEEN MARGARET

Humphrey, Duke of GLOUCESTER, the king's uncle, and Lord Protector
DUCHESS of Gloucester, Dame Eleanor Cobham
CARDINAL Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, the king's great-uncle

Duke of SOMERSET
Duke of SUFFOLK, William de la Pole, earlier Marquess of Suffolk
BUCKINGHAM
Lord CLIFFORD
YOUNG CLIFFORD, his son

Duke of YORK, Richard Plantagenet
Earl of SALISBURY
Earl of WARWICK, Salisbury's son
Sons of the Duke of York:
- EDWARD, Earl of March
- RICHARD

Jack CADE, leader of the Kentish rebellion
Followers of Jack Cade:
- BEVIS
- John HOLLAND
- DICK the butcher
- SMITH the weaver
- MICHAEL
- GEORGE

King Henry's supporters against Cade:
- Lord SCALES
- Lord SAYE
- Sir Humphrey STAFFORD
- His BROTHER, William Stafford

Sir John HUME, a priest
John SOUTHWELL, a priest
Margery JOURDAIN, a witch
Roger BOLINGBROKE, a conjurer
SPIRIT

Custodians of the Duchess of Gloucester:
  Sir John STANLEY
  SHERIFF

Thomas HORNER, the Duke of York's armorer
Peter THUMP, Horner the armorer's man or prentice
Two or Three PETITIONERS
Three NEIGHBORS of Horner's
Three PRENTICES, friends of Thump

A MAN of Saint Albans
Sander SIMPCOX, supposed recipient of a miracle
His WIFE
MAYOR of Saint Albans
A BEADLE of Saint Albans

LIEUTENANT, captain of a ship
Ship's MASTER
Master's MATE
Walter WHITMORE, a ship's officer
Two GENTLEMEN, prisoners

MESSENGERS
SERVANTS
A HERALD
POST, or messenger
Two or Three MURDERERS of Gloucester
VAUX
CLERK of Chartham
Two or Three CITIZENS
Alexander IDEN, a gentleman of Kent

Servants, Guards, Falconers, Attendants, Townsmen of Saint Albans, Bearers, Drummers, Commoners, Rebels, a Sawyer, Soldiers, Officers, Matthew Gough, and Others

ACT 1

Scene 1

Flourish of trumpets, then hautboys.
Enter King Henry, Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, Salisbury, Warwick, and Cardinal Beaufort, on the one side; Queen Margaret, Suffolk, York, Somerset, and Buckingham, on the other.

SUFFOLK
As by your high imperial Majesty
I had in charge at my depart for France,
As procurator to your Excellence,
To marry Princess Margaret for your Grace,
So, in the famous ancient city Tours,
In presence of the Kings of France and Sicil,
The Dukes of Orleance, Calaber, Britaigne, and Alanson,
Seven earls, twelve barons, and twenty reverend bishops,
I have performed my task and was espoused;
He kneels.
And humbly now upon my bended knee,
In sight of England and her lordly peers,
Deliver up my title in the Queen
To your most gracious hands, that are the substance
Of that great shadow I did represent:
The happiest gift that ever marquess gave,
The fairest queen that ever king received.
KING HENRY
Suffolk, arise.—Welcome, Queen Margaret.
Suffolk rises.
I can express no kinder sign of love
Than this kind kiss. *He kisses her.*
O Lord, that lends me life,
Lend me a heart replete with thankfulness!
For Thou hast given me in this beauteous face
A world of earthly blessings to my soul,
If sympathy of love unite our thoughts.
QUEEN MARGARET
Great king of England and my gracious lord,
The mutual conference that my mind hath had
By day, by night, waking and in my dreams,
In courtly company or at my beads,
With you, mine alderliefest sovereign,
Makes me the bolder to salute my king
With ruder terms, such as my wit affords
And overjoy of heart doth minister.
KING HENRY
Her sight did ravish, but her grace in speech,
Her words yclad with wisdom’s majesty,
Makes me from wond’ring fall to weeping joys,
Such is the fullness of my heart’s content.

Lords, with one cheerful voice welcome my love.
ALL *kneel.*
Long live Queen Margaret, England's happiness!
QUEEN MARGARET We thank you all.
Flourish. All rise.
SUFFOLK*, to Gloucester*
My Lord Protector, so it please your Grace,
Here are the articles of contracted peace
Between our sovereign and the French king Charles,
For eighteen months concluded by consent.
He hands Gloucester a paper.
GLOUCESTER (*reads*) *Imprimis, it is agreed between the French king Charles and William de la Pole, Marquess of Suffolk, ambassador for Henry, King of England, that the said Henry shall espouse the Lady Margaret, daughter unto Reignier, King of Naples, Sicilia, and Jerusalem, and crown her Queen of England ere the thirtieth of May next ensuing. Item, that the duchy of Anjou and the county of Maine shall be released and delivered to the King her father—* *He drops the paper.*
KING HENRY
Uncle, how now?
GLOUCESTER Pardon me, gracious lord.
Some sudden qualm hath struck me at the heart
And dimmed mine eyes, that I can read no further.
KING HENRY
Uncle of Winchester, I pray read on.
CARDINAL *picks up the paper and reads Item, it is further agreed between them that the duchies of Anjou and Maine shall be released and delivered to the King her father, and she sent over of the King of England's own proper cost and charges, without having any dowry.*
KING HENRY
They please us well.—Lord Marquess, kneel down.
Suffolk kneels.
We here create thee the first Duke of Suffolk
And girt thee with the sword. *Suffolk rises.* Cousin of York,
We here discharge your Grace from being regent
I' th' parts of France till term of eighteen months
Be full expired.—Thanks, Uncle Winchester,
Gloucester, York, Buckingham, Somerset,
Salisbury, and Warwick;
We thank you all for this great favor done
In entertainment to my princely queen.
Come, let us in, and with all speed provide
To see her coronation be performed.
King, Queen, and Suffolk exit. The rest remain.
GLOUCESTER
Brave peers of England, pillars of the state,
To you Duke Humphrey must unload his grief,
Your grief, the common grief of all the land.
What, did my brother Henry spend his youth,

His valor, coin, and people in the wars?
Did he so often lodge in open field,
In winter's cold and summer's parching heat,
To conquer France, his true inheritance?
And did my brother Bedford toil his wits
To keep by policy what Henry got?
Have you yourselves, Somerset, Buckingham,
Brave York, Salisbury, and victorious Warwick,
Received deep scars in France and Normandy?
Or hath mine uncle Beaufort and myself,
With all the learnèd council of the realm,
Studied so long, sat in the Council House,
Early and late, debating to and fro
How France and Frenchmen might be kept in awe,
And had his Highness in his infancy
Crowned in Paris in despite of foes?
And shall these labors and these honors die?
Shall Henry's conquest, Bedford's vigilance,
Your deeds of war, and all our counsel die?
O peers of England, shameful is this league,
Fatal this marriage, cancelling your fame,
Blotting your names from books of memory,
Razing the characters of your renown,
Defacing monuments of conquered France,
Undoing all, as all had never been!

CARDINAL

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

GLOUCESTER

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

SALISBURY

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

WARWICK

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

YORK

For Suffolk's duke, may he be suffocate
That dims the honor of this warlike isle!
France should have torn and rent my very heart
Before I would have yielded to this league.
I never read but England's kings have had

Large sums of gold and dowries with their wives;
And our King Henry gives away his own
To match with her that brings no vantages.

GLOUCESTER

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

CARDINAL

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

GLOUCESTER

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

Gloucester exits.

CARDINAL

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

BUCKINGHAM

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

CARDINAL

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

SOMERSET

Cousin of Buckingham, though Humphrey's pride
And greatness of his place be grief to us,
Yet let us watch the haughty cardinal.

His insolence is more intolerable
Than all the princes' in the land besides.
If Gloucester be displaced, he'll be Protector.
BUCKINGHAM
Or thou or I, Somerset, will be Protector,
Despite Duke Humphrey or the Cardinal.
Buckingham and Somerset exit.
SALISBURY
Pride went before; Ambition follows him.
While these do labor for their own preferment,
Behooves it us to labor for the realm.
I never saw but Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester,
Did bear him like a noble gentleman.
Oft have I seen the haughty cardinal,
More like a soldier than a man o' th' Church,
As stout and proud as he were lord of all,
Swear like a ruffian and demean himself
Unlike the ruler of a commonweal.—
Warwick, my son, the comfort of my age,
Thy deeds, thy plainness, and thy housekeeping
Hath won the greatest favor of the Commons,
Excepting none but good Duke Humphrey.—
And, brother York, thy acts in Ireland,
In bringing them to civil discipline,
Thy late exploits done in the heart of France,
When thou wert regent for our sovereign,
Have made thee feared and honored of the people.
Join we together for the public good
In what we can to bridle and suppress
The pride of Suffolk and the Cardinal,
With Somerset's and Buckingham's ambition;
And, as we may, cherish Duke Humphrey's deeds
While they do tend the profit of the land.
WARWICK
So God help Warwick, as he loves the land
And common profit of his country!
YORK
And so says York—*aside* for he hath greatest cause.
SALISBURY
Then let's make haste away and look unto the main.
WARWICK
Unto the main? O father, Maine is lost!
That Maine which by main force Warwick did win
And would have kept so long as breath did last!
Main chance, father, you meant; but I meant Maine,
Which I will win from France or else be slain.
Warwick and Salisbury exit.
York remains.
YORK
Anjou and Maine are given to the French;
Paris is lost; the state of Normandy
Stands on a tickle point now they are gone.
Suffolk concluded on the articles,
The peers agreed, and Henry was well pleased
To change two dukedoms for a duke's fair daughter.

I cannot blame them all. What is 't to them?
'Tis thine they give away, and not their own.
Pirates may make cheap pennyworths of their pillage,
And purchase friends, and give to courtesans,
Still reveling like lords till all be gone;
Whileas the silly owner of the goods
Weeps over them, and wrings his hapless hands,
And shakes his head, and trembling stands aloof,
While all is shared and all is borne away,
Ready to starve, and dare not touch his own.
So York must sit and fret and bite his tongue
While his own lands are bargained for and sold.
Methinks the realms of England, France, and Ireland
Bear that proportion to my flesh and blood
As did the fatal brand Althaea burnt
Unto the Prince's heart of Calydon.
Anjou and Maine both given unto the French!
Cold news for me, for I had hope of France,
Even as I have of fertile England's soil.
A day will come when York shall claim his own;
And therefore I will take the Nevilles' parts
And make a show of love to proud Duke Humphrey,
And, when I spy advantage, claim the crown,
For that's the golden mark I seek to hit.
Nor shall proud Lancaster usurp my right,
Nor hold the scepter in his childish fist,
Nor wear the diadem upon his head,
Whose churchlike humors fits not for a crown.
Then, York, be still awhile till time do serve.
Watch thou and wake, when others be asleep,
To pry into the secrets of the state
Till Henry, surfeiting in joys of love
With his new bride and England's dear-bought queen,
And Humphrey with the peers be fall'n at jars.
Then will I raise aloft the milk-white rose,
With whose sweet smell the air shall be perfumed,
And in my standard bear the arms of York,
To grapple with the house of Lancaster;
And force perforce I'll make him yield the crown,
Whose bookish rule hath pulled fair England down.

York exits.

Scene 2

Enter Duke Humphrey of Gloucester and his wife the Duchess Eleanor.

DUCHESS

Why droops my lord like over-ripened corn
Hanging the head at Ceres' plenteous load?
Why doth the great Duke Humphrey knit his brows,
As frowning at the favors of the world?
Why are thine eyes fixed to the sullen earth,
Gazing on that which seems to dim thy sight?

What seest thou there? King Henry's diadem,
Enchased with all the honors of the world?
If so, gaze on and grovel on thy face
Until thy head be circled with the same.
Put forth thy hand; reach at the glorious gold.
What, is 't too short? I'll lengthen it with mine;
And, having both together heaved it up,
We'll both together lift our heads to heaven
And never more abase our sight so low
As to vouchsafe one glance unto the ground.

GLOUCESTER

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

DUCHESS

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

GLOUCESTER

Methought this staff, mine office badge in court,
Was broke in twain—by whom I have forgot,
But, as I think, it was by th' Cardinal—
And on the pieces of the broken wand
Were placed the heads of Edmund, Duke of Somerset,
And William de la Pole, first Duke of Suffolk.
This was my dream. What it doth bode God knows.

DUCHESS

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

GLOUCESTER

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

DUCHESS

What, what, my lord? Are you so choleric
With Eleanor for telling but her dream?
Next time I'll keep my dreams unto myself
And not be checked.

GLOUCESTER
Nay, be not angry. I am pleased again.

Enter Messenger.

MESSENGER
My Lord Protector, 'tis his Highness' pleasure
You do prepare to ride unto Saint Albans,
Whereas the King and Queen do mean to hawk.
GLOUCESTER
I go.—Come, Nell, thou wilt ride with us?
DUCHESS
Yes, my good lord. I'll follow presently.
Gloucester exits, with Messenger.
Follow I must; I cannot go before
While Gloucester bears this base and humble mind.
Were I a man, a duke, and next of blood,
I would remove these tedious stumbling blocks
And smooth my way upon their headless necks;
And, being a woman, I will not be slack
To play my part in Fortune's pageant.—
Where are you there? Sir John! Nay, fear not, man.
We are alone; here's none but thee and I.

Enter Sir John Hume.

HUME
Jesus preserve your royal Majesty!
DUCHESS
What sayst thou? "Majesty"? I am but "Grace."
HUME
But by the grace of God and Hume's advice,
Your Grace's title shall be multiplied.
DUCHESS
What sayst thou, man? Hast thou as yet conferred
With Margery Jourdain, the cunning witch,
With Roger Bolingbroke, the conjurer?
And will they undertake to do me good?
HUME
This they have promisèd: to show your Highness
A spirit raised from depth of underground
That shall make answer to such questions
As by your Grace shall be propounded him.
DUCHESS
It is enough. I'll think upon the questions.
When from Saint Albans we do make return,
We'll see these things effected to the full.
Here, Hume, take this reward.
She gives him money.
Make merry, man,
With thy confederates in this weighty cause.
Duchess exits.
HUME
Hume must make merry with the Duchess' gold.
Marry, and shall! But, how now, Sir John Hume?
Seal up your lips, and give no words but "mum";

The business asketh silent secrecy.
Dame Eleanor gives gold to bring the witch;
Gold cannot come amiss, were she a devil.
Yet have I gold flies from another coast—
I dare not say, from the rich cardinal
And from the great and new-made Duke of Suffolk,
Yet I do find it so. For, to be plain,
They, knowing Dame Eleanor's aspiring humor,
Have hirèd me to undermine the Duchess
And buzz these conjurations in her brain.
They say a crafty knave does need no broker,
Yet am I Suffolk and the Cardinal's broker.
Hume, if you take not heed, you shall go near
To call them both a pair of crafty knaves.
Well, so it stands; and thus I fear at last
Hume's knavery will be the Duchess' wrack,
And her attainture will be Humphrey's fall.
Sort how it will, I shall have gold for all.
He exits.

Scene 3

Enter three or four Petitioners, Peter, the Armorer's man, being one.

FIRST PETITIONER My masters, let's stand close. My Lord Protector will come this way by and by, and then we may deliver our supplications in the quill.
SECOND PETITIONER Marry, the Lord protect him, for he's a good man! Jesu bless him!

Enter Suffolk, wearing the red rose, and Queen Margaret.

FIRST PETITIONER Here he comes, methinks, and the Queen with him. I'll be the first, sure.
He steps forward.
SECOND PETITIONER Come back, fool! This is the Duke of Suffolk, and not my Lord Protector.
SUFFOLK How now, fellow? Wouldst anything with me?
FIRST PETITIONER I pray, my lord, pardon me. I took you for my Lord Protector.
QUEEN MARGARET *takes a petition and reads. To my Lord Protector.* Are your supplications to his Lordship? Let me see them.—What is thine?
FIRST PETITIONER Mine is, an 't please your Grace, against John Goodman, my Lord Cardinal's man, for keeping my house, and lands, and wife and all, from me.
SUFFOLK Thy wife too? That's some wrong indeed.— What's yours? *Taking a petition.* What's here? (*Reads.*) *Against the Duke of Suffolk for enclosing the commons of Melford.* How now, sir knave?
SECOND PETITIONER Alas, sir, I am but a poor petitioner of our whole township.
PETER*, showing his petition* Against my master,

Thomas Horner, for saying that the Duke of York was rightful heir to the crown.

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

PETER That my master was? No, forsooth. My master said that he was and that the King was an usurper.

SUFFOLK, *calling* Who is there?

Enter Servant.

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

Peter exits with Servant.

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

Tear the supplication.

Away, base cullions.—Suffolk, let them go.

ALL Come, let's be gone. *They exit.*

QUEEN MARGARET
My lord of Suffolk, say, is this the guise,
Is this the fashions in the court of England?
Is this the government of Britain's isle
And this the royalty of Albion's king?
What, shall King Henry be a pupil still
Under the surly Gloucester's governance?
Am I a queen in title and in style,
And must be made a subject to a duke?
I tell thee, Pole, when in the city Tours
Thou rann'st atilt in honor of my love
And stol'st away the ladies' hearts of France,
I thought King Henry had resembled thee
In courage, courtship, and proportion.
But all his mind is bent to holiness,
To number Ave Marys on his beads;
His champions are the prophets and apostles,
His weapons holy saws of sacred writ,
His study is his tiltyard, and his loves
Are brazen images of canonized saints.
I would the College of the Cardinals
Would choose him pope and carry him to Rome
And set the triple crown upon his head!
That were a state fit for his holiness.

SUFFOLK
Madam, be patient. As I was cause
Your Highness came to England, so will I
In England work your Grace's full content.

QUEEN MARGARET
Besides the haughty Protector, have we Beaufort
The imperious churchman, Somerset, Buckingham,
And grumbling York; and not the least of these
But can do more in England than the King.

SUFFOLK
And he of these that can do most of all
Cannot do more in England than the Nevilles;
Salisbury and Warwick are no simple peers.
QUEEN MARGARET
Not all these lords do vex me half so much
As that proud dame, the Lord Protector's wife.
She sweeps it through the court with troops of ladies,
More like an empress than Duke Humphrey's wife.
Strangers in court do take her for the Queen.
She bears a duke's revenues on her back,
And in her heart she scorns our poverty.
Shall I not live to be avenged on her?
Contemptuous baseborn callet as she is,
She vaunted 'mongst her minions t' other day
The very train of her worst wearing gown
Was better worth than all my father's lands
Till Suffolk gave two dukedoms for his daughter.
SUFFOLK
Madam, myself have limed a bush for her
And placed a choir of such enticing birds
That she will light to listen to the lays
And never mount to trouble you again.
So let her rest. And, madam, list to me,
For I am bold to counsel you in this:
Although we fancy not the Cardinal,
Yet must we join with him and with the lords
Till we have brought Duke Humphrey in disgrace.
As for the Duke of York, this late complaint
Will make but little for his benefit.
So, one by one, we'll weed them all at last,
And you yourself shall steer the happy helm.

Sound a sennet. Enter King Henry, Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, Cardinal, Somerset, wearing the red rose, Buckingham, Salisbury; York and Warwick, both wearing the white rose; and the Duchess of Gloucester.

KING HENRY
For my part, noble lords, I care not which;
Or Somerset or York, all's one to me.
YORK
If York have ill demeaned himself in France,
Then let him be denied the regentship.
SOMERSET
If Somerset be unworthy of the place,
Let York be regent; I will yield to him.
WARWICK
Whether your Grace be worthy, yea or no,
Dispute not that. York is the worthier.
CARDINAL
Ambitious Warwick, let thy betters speak.
WARWICK
The Cardinal's not my better in the field.

BUCKINGHAM
All in this presence are thy betters, Warwick.
WARWICK
Warwick may live to be the best of all.
SALISBURY
Peace, son.—And show some reason, Buckingham,
Why Somerset should be preferred in this.
QUEEN MARGARET
Because the King, forsooth, will have it so.
GLOUCESTER
Madam, the King is old enough himself
To give his censure. These are no women's matters.
QUEEN MARGARET
If he be old enough, what needs your Grace
To be Protector of his Excellence?
GLOUCESTER
Madam, I am Protector of the realm,
And at his pleasure will resign my place.
SUFFOLK
Resign it, then, and leave thine insolence.
Since thou wert king—as who is king but thou?—
The commonwealth hath daily run to wrack,
The Dauphin hath prevailed beyond the seas,
And all the peers and nobles of the realm
Have been as bondmen to thy sovereignty.
CARDINAL*, to Gloucester*
The Commons hast thou racked; the clergy's bags
Are lank and lean with thy extortions.
SOMERSET*, to Gloucester*
Thy sumptuous buildings and thy wife's attire
Have cost a mass of public treasury.
BUCKINGHAM*, to Gloucester*
Thy cruelty in execution
Upon offenders hath exceeded law
And left thee to the mercy of the law.
QUEEN MARGARET*, to Gloucester*
Thy sale of offices and towns in France,
If they were known, as the suspect is great,
Would make thee quickly hop without thy head.
Gloucester exits.
Queen Margaret drops her fan.
To Duchess. Give me my fan. What, minion, can
you not? *She gives the Duchess a box on the ear.*
I cry you mercy, madam. Was it you?
DUCHESS
Was 't I? Yea, I it was, proud Frenchwoman.
Could I come near your beauty with my nails,
I'd set my ten commandments in your face.
KING HENRY
Sweet aunt, be quiet. 'Twas against her will.
DUCHESS
Against her will, good king? Look to 't in time.
She'll hamper thee and dandle thee like a baby.
Though in this place most master wear no breeches,
She shall not strike Dame Eleanor unrevenged.
Eleanor, the Duchess, exits.

BUCKINGHAM*, aside to Cardinal*
Lord Cardinal, I will follow Eleanor
And listen after Humphrey how he proceeds.
She's tickled now; her fume needs no spurs;
She'll gallop far enough to her destruction.
Buckingham exits.

Enter Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester.

GLOUCESTER
Now, lords, my choler being overblown
With walking once about the quadrangle,
I come to talk of commonwealth affairs.
As for your spiteful false objections,
Prove them, and I lie open to the law;
But God in mercy so deal with my soul
As I in duty love my king and country!
But, to the matter that we have in hand:
I say, my sovereign, York is meetest man
To be your regent in the realm of France.
SUFFOLK
Before we make election, give me leave
To show some reason, of no little force,
That York is most unmeet of any man.
YORK
I'll tell thee, Suffolk, why I am unmeet:
First, for I cannot flatter thee in pride;
Next, if I be appointed for the place,
My lord of Somerset will keep me here
Without discharge, money, or furniture
Till France be won into the Dauphin's hands.
Last time I danced attendance on his will
Till Paris was besieged, famished, and lost.
WARWICK
That can I witness, and a fouler fact
Did never traitor in the land commit.
SUFFOLK Peace, headstrong Warwick!
WARWICK
Image of pride, why should I hold my peace?

Enter Horner, the Armorer, and his Man Peter, under guard.

SUFFOLK
Because here is a man accused of treason.
Pray God the Duke of York excuse himself!
YORK
Doth anyone accuse York for a traitor?
KING HENRY
What mean'st thou, Suffolk? Tell me, what are these?
SUFFOLK
Please it your Majesty, this is the man
That doth accuse his master of high treason.
His words were these: that Richard, Duke of York,
Was rightful heir unto the English crown,

And that your Majesty was an usurper.
KING HENRY Say, man, were these thy words?
HORNER An 't shall please your Majesty, I never said nor thought any such matter. God is my witness, I am falsely accused by the villain.
PETER By these ten bones, my lords, he did speak them to me in the garret one night as we were scouring my lord of York's armor.
YORK, *to Horner*
Base dunghill villain and mechanical,
I'll have thy head for this thy traitor's speech!—
I do beseech your royal Majesty,
Let him have all the rigor of the law.
HORNER Alas, my lord, hang me if ever I spake the words. My accuser is my prentice; and when I did correct him for his fault the other day, he did vow upon his knees he would be even with me. I have good witness of this. Therefore I beseech your Majesty, do not cast away an honest man for a villain's accusation!
KING HENRY
Uncle, what shall we say to this in law?
GLOUCESTER
This doom, my lord, if I may judge:
Let Somerset be regent o'er the French,
Because in York this breeds suspicion;
And let these have a day appointed them
For single combat in convenient place,
For he hath witness of his servant's malice.
This is the law, and this Duke Humphrey's doom.
SOMERSET
I humbly thank your royal Majesty.
HORNER
And I accept the combat willingly.
PETER Alas, my lord, I cannot fight; for God's sake pity my case! The spite of man prevaileth against me. O Lord, have mercy upon me! I shall never be able to fight a blow. O Lord, my heart!
GLOUCESTER
Sirrah, or you must fight or else be hanged.
KING HENRY Away with them to prison; and the day of combat shall be the last of the next month.—
Come, Somerset, we'll see thee sent away.

Flourish. They exit.

Scene 4

Enter the Witch Margery Jourdain, the two Priests Hume and Southwell, and Bolingbroke, a conjurer.

HUME Come, my masters. The Duchess, I tell you, expects performance of your promises.
BOLINGBROKE Master Hume, we are therefore provided. Will her Ladyship behold and hear our exorcisms?
HUME Ay, what else? Fear you not her courage.
BOLINGBROKE I have heard her reported to be a

woman of an invincible spirit. But it shall be convenient,
Master Hume, that you be by her aloft
while we be busy below; and so, I pray you, go, in
God's name, and leave us. *Hume exits.*
Mother Jourdain, be you prostrate and grovel on
the earth. *She lies face downward.* John Southwell,
read you; and let us to our work.

Enter Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester,
with Hume, aloft.

DUCHESS Well said, my masters, and welcome all. To
this gear, the sooner the better.
BOLINGBROKE
Patience, good lady. Wizards know their times.
Deep night, dark night, the silent of the night,
The time of night when Troy was set on fire,
The time when screech owls cry and bandogs howl,
And spirits walk, and ghosts break up their graves—
That time best fits the work we have in hand.
Madam, sit you, and fear not. Whom we raise
We will make fast within a hallowed verge.

Here they do the ceremonies belonging, and
make the circle. Bolingbroke or Southwell reads
"Conjuro te, etc." It thunders and lightens terribly;
then the Spirit riseth.

SPIRIT *Adsum.*
JOURDAIN Asmath,
By the eternal God, whose name and power
Thou tremblest at, answer that I shall ask,
For till thou speak, thou shalt not pass from hence.
SPIRIT
Ask what thou wilt. That I had said and done!
BOLINGBROKE*, reading from a paper, while Southwell writes*
First of the King: What shall of him become?
SPIRIT
The duke yet lives that Henry shall depose,
But him outlive and die a violent death.
BOLINGBROKE*, reads*
What fates await the Duke of Suffolk?
SPIRIT
By water shall he die and take his end.
BOLINGBROKE *reads*
What shall befall the Duke of Somerset?
SPIRIT Let him shun castles.
Safer shall he be upon the sandy plains
Than where castles mounted stand.
Have done, for more I hardly can endure.
BOLINGBROKE
Descend to darkness and the burning lake!
False fiend, avoid!
Thunder and lightning. Spirit exits, descending.

Enter the Duke of York and the Duke of Buckingham with their Guard and Sir Humphrey Stafford, and break in.

YORK
Lay hands upon these traitors and their trash.
The Guard arrest Margery Jourdain and her accomplices and seize their papers.
To Jourdain. Beldam, I think we watched you at an inch.
To the Duchess, aloft. What, madam, are you there? The King and commonweal
Are deeply indebted for this piece of pains.
My Lord Protector will, I doubt it not,
See you well guerdoned for these good deserts.
DUCHESS
Not half so bad as thine to England's king,
Injurious duke, that threatest where's no cause.
BUCKINGHAM
True, madam, none at all. What call you this?
He holds up the papers seized.
Away with them! Let them be clapped up close
And kept asunder.—You, madam, shall with us.—
Stafford, take her to thee. *Stafford exits.*
We'll see your trinkets here all forthcoming.
All away! *Jourdain, Southwell, and Bolingbroke exit under guard, below; Duchess and Hume exit, under guard, aloft.*
YORK
Lord Buckingham, methinks you watched her well.
A pretty plot, well chosen to build upon!
Now, pray, my lord, let's see the devil's writ.
Buckingham hands him the papers.
What have we here?
(*Reads.*) *The duke yet lives that Henry shall depose,*
But him outlive and die a violent death.
Why, this is just *Aio te, Aeacida,*
Romanos vincere posse. Well, to the rest:
(*Reads.*) *Tell me what fate awaits the Duke of Suffolk?*
By water shall he die and take his end.
What shall betide the Duke of Somerset?
Let him shun castles;
Safer shall he be upon the sandy plains
Than where castles mounted stand.
Come, come, my lord, these oracles
Are hardly attained and hardly understood.
The King is now in progress towards Saint Albans;
With him the husband of this lovely lady.
Thither goes these news as fast as horse can carry them—
A sorry breakfast for my Lord Protector.
BUCKINGHAM
Your Grace shall give me leave, my lord of York,
To be the post, in hope of his reward.
YORK At your pleasure, my good lord.

Buckingham exits.

Who's within there, ho!

Enter a Servingman.

Invite my lords of Salisbury and Warwick
To sup with me tomorrow night. Away!

They exit.

ACT 2

Scene 1

Enter King Henry, Queen Margaret, Gloucester the Lord Protector, Cardinal, and Suffolk, and Attendants, with Falconers hallowing.

QUEEN MARGARET
Believe me, lords, for flying at the brook
I saw not better sport these seven years' day.
Yet, by your leave, the wind was very high,
And, ten to one, old Joan had not gone out.
KING HENRY*, to Gloucester*
But what a point, my lord, your falcon made,
And what a pitch she flew above the rest!
To see how God in all his creatures works!
Yea, man and birds are fain of climbing high.
SUFFOLK
No marvel, an it like your Majesty,
My Lord Protector's hawks do tower so well;
They know their master loves to be aloft
And bears his thoughts above his falcon's pitch.
GLOUCESTER
My lord, 'tis but a base ignoble mind
That mounts no higher than a bird can soar.
CARDINAL
I thought as much. He would be above the clouds.
GLOUCESTER
Ay, my Lord Cardinal, how think you by that?
Were it not good your Grace could fly to heaven?
KING HENRY
The treasury of everlasting joy.
CARDINAL*, to Gloucester*
Thy heaven is on Earth; thine eyes and thoughts
Beat on a crown, the treasure of thy heart.
Pernicious Protector, dangerous peer,
That smooth'st it so with king and commonweal!
GLOUCESTER
What, cardinal, is your priesthood grown
peremptory?
Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?
Churchmen so hot? Good uncle, hide such malice.
With such holiness, can you do it?
SUFFOLK
No malice, sir, no more than well becomes
So good a quarrel and so bad a peer.
GLOUCESTER
As who, my lord?
SUFFOLK Why, as you, my lord,
An 't like your lordly Lord Protectorship.
GLOUCESTER
Why, Suffolk, England knows thine insolence.

QUEEN MARGARET
And thy ambition, Gloucester.
KING HENRY I prithee peace,
Good queen, and whet not on these furious peers,
For blessèd are the peacemakers on Earth.
CARDINAL
Let me be blessèd for the peace I make
Against this proud Protector with my sword!
GLOUCESTER*, aside to Cardinal*
Faith, holy uncle, would 't were come to that!
CARDINAL*, aside to Gloucester* Marry, when thou dar'st!
GLOUCESTER*, aside to Cardinal*
Make up no factious numbers for the matter.
In thine own person answer thy abuse.
CARDINAL*, aside to Gloucester*
Ay, where thou dar'st not peep. An if thou dar'st,
This evening, on the east side of the grove.
KING HENRY
How now, my lords?
CARDINAL Believe me, cousin Gloucester,
Had not your man put up the fowl so suddenly,
We had had more sport. (*Aside to Gloucester.*)
Come with thy two-hand sword.
GLOUCESTER
True, uncle. (*Aside to Cardinal.*) Are you advised?
The east side of the grove.
CARDINAL*, aside to Gloucester*
I am with you.
KING HENRY Why, how now, uncle Gloucester?
GLOUCESTER
Talking of hawking; nothing else, my lord.
(*Aside to Cardinal.*) Now, by God's mother, priest,
I'll shave your crown for this,
Or all my fence shall fail.
CARDINAL*, aside to Gloucester Medice, teipsum;*
Protector, see to 't well; protect yourself.
KING HENRY
The winds grow high; so do your stomachs, lords.
How irksome is this music to my heart!
When such strings jar, what hope of harmony?
I pray, my lords, let me compound this strife.

Enter a man from St. Albans crying "A miracle!"

GLOUCESTER What means this noise?—
Fellow, what miracle dost thou proclaim?
MAN A miracle, a miracle!
SUFFOLK
Come to the King, and tell him what miracle.
MAN
Forsooth, a blind man at Saint Alban's shrine
Within this half hour hath received his sight,
A man that ne'er saw in his life before.
KING HENRY
Now, God be praised, that to believing souls

Gives light in darkness, comfort in despair.

Enter the Mayor of Saint Albans, and his brethren, bearing the man Simpcox between two in a chair, followed by Simpcox's Wife and Others.

CARDINAL
Here comes the townsmen on procession
To present your Highness with the man.
KING HENRY
Great is his comfort in this earthly vale,
Although by his sight his sin be multiplied.
GLOUCESTER
Stand by, my masters.—Bring him near the King.
His Highness' pleasure is to talk with him.
The two bearers bring the chair forward.
KING HENRY
Good fellow, tell us here the circumstance,
That we for thee may glorify the Lord.
What, hast thou been long blind and now restored?
SIMPCOX Born blind, an 't please your Grace.
WIFE Ay, indeed, was he.
SUFFOLK What woman is this?
WIFE His wife, an 't like your Worship.
GLOUCESTER Hadst thou been his mother, thou couldst have better told.
KING HENRY Where wert thou born?
SIMPCOX
At Berwick in the North, an 't like your Grace.
KING HENRY
Poor soul, God's goodness hath been great to thee.
Let never day nor night unhallowed pass,
But still remember what the Lord hath done.
QUEEN MARGARET
Tell me, good fellow, cam'st thou here by chance,
Or of devotion to this holy shrine?
SIMPCOX
God knows, of pure devotion, being called
A hundred times and oftener in my sleep
By good Saint Alban, who said "Simon, come,
Come, offer at my shrine, and I will help thee."
WIFE
Most true, forsooth, and many time and oft
Myself have heard a voice to call him so.
CARDINAL What, art thou lame?
SIMPCOX Ay, God Almighty help me!
SUFFOLK How cam'st thou so?
SIMPCOX A fall off of a tree.
WIFE A plum tree, master.
GLOUCESTER How long hast thou been blind?
SIMPCOX O, born so, master.
GLOUCESTER What, and wouldst climb a tree?
SIMPCOX But that in all my life, when I was a youth.
WIFE Too true, and bought his climbing very dear.
GLOUCESTER Mass, thou lov'dst plums well, that wouldst venture so.

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

GLOUCESTER
A subtle knave, but yet it shall not serve.—
Let me see thine eyes. Wink now. Now open them.
In my opinion, yet thou seest not well.

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

GLOUCESTER
Sayst thou me so? What color is this cloak of?

SIMPCOX Red, master, red as blood.

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

SIMPCOX Black, forsooth, coal-black as jet.

KING HENRY
Why, then, thou know'st what color jet is of.

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

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

WIFE
Never, before this day, in all his life.

GLOUCESTER Tell me, sirrah, what's my name?

SIMPCOX Alas, master, I know not.

GLOUCESTER*, pointing* What's his name?

SIMPCOX I know not.

GLOUCESTER*, pointing to someone else* Nor his?

SIMPCOX No, indeed, master.

GLOUCESTER What's thine own name?

SIMPCOX Sander Simpcox, an if it please you, master.

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

SIMPCOX O master, that you could!

GLOUCESTER My masters of Saint Albans, have you not beadles in your town and things called whips?

MAYOR Yes, my lord, if it please your Grace.

GLOUCESTER Then send for one presently.

MAYOR Sirrah, go fetch the beadle hither straight.

A man exits.

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

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

Enter a Beadle with whips.

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

BEADLE I will, my lord.—Come on, sirrah, off with your doublet quickly.

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

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

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

QUEEN MARGARET
It made me laugh to see the villain run.

GLOUCESTER*, to the Beadle*
Follow the knave, and take this drab away.

WIFE Alas, sir, we did it for pure need.

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

The Beadle, Mayor, Wife, and the others from Saint Albans exit.

CARDINAL
Duke Humphrey has done a miracle today.

SUFFOLK
True, made the lame to leap and fly away.

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

Enter Buckingham.

KING HENRY
What tidings with our cousin Buckingham?

BUCKINGHAM
Such as my heart doth tremble to unfold:
A sort of naughty persons, lewdly bent,
Under the countenance and confederacy
Of Lady Eleanor, the Protector's wife,
The ringleader and head of all this rout,
Have practiced dangerously against your state,
Dealing with witches and with conjurers,
Whom we have apprehended in the fact,
Raising up wicked spirits from under ground,
Demanding of King Henry's life and death
And other of your Highness' Privy Council,
As more at large your Grace shall understand.

CARDINAL
And so, my Lord Protector, by this means
Your lady is forthcoming yet at London.
Aside to Gloucester. This news, I think, hath turned your weapon's edge;
'Tis like, my lord, you will not keep your hour.

GLOUCESTER
Ambitious churchman, leave to afflict my heart.
Sorrow and grief have vanquished all my powers,

And, vanquished as I am, I yield to thee,
Or to the meanest groom.

KING HENRY

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

GLOUCESTER

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

KING HENRY

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

Flourish. They exit.

Scene 2

Enter York, Salisbury, and Warwick.

YORK

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

SALISBURY

My lord, I long to hear it at full.

WARWICK

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

YORK Then thus:

Edward the Third, my lords, had seven sons:
The first, Edward the Black Prince, Prince of Wales;
The second, William of Hatfield; and the third,
Lionel, Duke of Clarence; next to whom
Was John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster;
The fifth was Edmund Langley, Duke of York;
The sixth was Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester;
William of Windsor was the seventh and last.
Edward the Black Prince died before his father
And left behind him Richard, his only son,
Who, after Edward the Third's death, reigned as

king
Till Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster,
The eldest son and heir of John of Gaunt,
Crowned by the name of Henry the Fourth,
Seized on the realm, deposed the rightful king,
Sent his poor queen to France, from whence she came,
And him to Pomfret; where, as all you know,
Harmless Richard was murdered traitorously.
WARWICK Father, the Duke hath told the truth.
Thus got the house of Lancaster the crown.
YORK
Which now they hold by force and not by right;
For Richard, the first son's heir, being dead,
The issue of the next son should have reigned.
SALISBURY
But William of Hatfield died without an heir.
YORK
The third son, Duke of Clarence, from whose line
I claim the crown, had issue, Philippa, a daughter,
Who married Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.
Edmund had issue, Roger, Earl of March;
Roger had issue: Edmund, Anne, and Eleanor.
SALISBURY
This Edmund, in the reign of Bolingbroke,
As I have read, laid claim unto the crown
And, but for Owen Glendower, had been king,
Who kept him in captivity till he died.
But to the rest.
YORK His eldest sister, Anne,
My mother, being heir unto the crown,
Married Richard, Earl of Cambridge, who was son
To Edmund Langley, Edward the Third's fifth son.
By her I claim the kingdom. She was heir
To Roger, Earl of March, who was the son
Of Edmund Mortimer, who married Philippa,
Sole daughter unto Lionel, Duke of Clarence.
So, if the issue of the elder son
Succeed before the younger, I am king.
WARWICK
What plain proceedings is more plain than this?
Henry doth claim the crown from John of Gaunt,
The fourth son; York claims it from the third.
Till Lionel's issue fails, his should not reign.
It fails not yet, but flourishes in thee
And in thy sons, fair slips of such a stock.
Then, father Salisbury, kneel we together,
And in this private plot be we the first
That shall salute our rightful sovereign
With honor of his birthright to the crown.
SALISBURY, WARWICK*, kneeling*
Long live our sovereign Richard, England's king!
YORK
We thank you, lords. *They rise.* But I am not your king
Till I be crowned, and that my sword be stained

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

SALISBURY

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

WARWICK

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

YORK

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

They exit.

Scene 3

Sound trumpets. Enter King Henry and State (*Queen Margaret, Gloucester, York, Salisbury, Suffolk, and Others*) *with Guard, to banish the Duchess of Gloucester, who is accompanied by Margery Jourdain, Southwell, Hume, and Bolingbroke, all guarded.*

KING HENRY

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

DUCHESS

Welcome is banishment. Welcome were my death.

GLOUCESTER

Eleanor, the law, thou seest, hath judged thee.
I cannot justify whom the law condemns.

Duchess and the other prisoners exit under guard.

Mine eyes are full of tears, my heart of grief.
Ah, Humphrey, this dishonor in thine age
Will bring thy head with sorrow to the ground.—
I beseech your Majesty give me leave to go;

Sorrow would solace, and mine age would ease.

KING HENRY

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

GLOUCESTER

My staff?—Here, noble Henry, is my staff.

He puts down his staff before Henry.

As willingly do I the same resign
As e'er thy father Henry made it mine;
And even as willingly at thy feet I leave it
As others would ambitiously receive it.
Farewell, good king. When I am dead and gone,
May honorable peace attend thy throne.

Gloucester exits.

Henry picks up the staff.

QUEEN MARGARET

Why, now is Henry king and Margaret queen,
And Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, scarce himself,
That bears so shrewd a maim. Two pulls at once:
His lady banished and a limb lopped off.
This staff of honor raught, there let it stand
Where it best fits to be, in Henry's hand.

SUFFOLK

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

YORK

Lords, let him go.—Please it your Majesty,
This is the day appointed for the combat,
And ready are the appellant and defendant—
The armorer and his man—to enter the lists,
So please your Highness to behold the fight.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

KING HENRY

I' God's name, see the lists and all things fit.
Here let them end it, and God defend the right!

YORK

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

Enter at one door the Armorer Horner and his Neighbors, drinking to him so much that he is drunk; and he enters with a Drum before him and his staff with a sandbag fastened to it; and at the other door his man

Peter, with a Drum and sandbag, and Prentices drinking to him.

FIRST NEIGHBOR Here, neighbor Horner, I drink to you in a cup of sack; and fear not, neighbor, you shall do well enough.

SECOND NEIGHBOR And here, neighbor, here's a cup of charneco.

THIRD NEIGHBOR And here's a pot of good double beer, neighbor. Drink, and fear not your man.

HORNER Let it come, i' faith, and I'll pledge you all. And a fig for Peter! *They drink.*

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

SECOND PRENTICE Be merry, Peter, and fear not thy master. Fight for credit of the prentices.

PETER I thank you all. Drink, and pray for me, I pray you, for I think I have taken my last draft in this world. Here, Robin, an if I die, I give thee my apron.—And, Will, thou shalt have my hammer.—And here, Tom, take all the money that I have. *He distributes his possessions.* O Lord, bless me, I pray God, for I am never able to deal with my master. He hath learnt so much fence already.

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

PETER Peter, forsooth.

SALISBURY Peter? What more?

PETER Thump.

SALISBURY Thump? Then see thou thump thy master well.

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

YORK Dispatch. This knave's tongue begins to double. Sound, trumpets. Alarum to the combatants!

Trumpet sounds.

They fight, and Peter strikes him down.

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

He dies.

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

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

KING HENRY

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

Sound a flourish. They exit, bearing Horner's body.

Scene 4

Enter Duke Humphrey of Gloucester and his Men, in mourning cloaks.

GLOUCESTER
Thus sometimes hath the brightest day a cloud,
And after summer evermore succeeds
Barren winter, with his wrathful nipping cold;
So cares and joys abound, as seasons fleet.
Sirs, what's o'clock?
SERVANT Ten, my lord.
GLOUCESTER
Ten is the hour that was appointed me
To watch the coming of my punished duchess.
Uneath may she endure the flinty streets,
To tread them with her tender-feeling feet.
Sweet Nell, ill can thy noble mind abrook
The abject people gazing on thy face
With envious looks laughing at thy shame,
That erst did follow thy proud chariot wheels
When thou didst ride in triumph through the streets.
But, soft! I think she comes, and I'll prepare
My tearstained eyes to see her miseries.

Enter the Duchess of Gloucester, barefoot, and in a white sheet, with papers pinned to her back and a taper burning in her hand, with Sir John Stanley, the Sheriff, and Officers.

SERVANT
So please your Grace, we'll take her from the Sheriff.
GLOUCESTER
No, stir not for your lives. Let her pass by.
DUCHESS
Come you, my lord, to see my open shame?
Now thou dost penance too. Look how they gaze!
See how the giddy multitude do point,
And nod their heads, and throw their eyes on thee.
Ah, Gloucester, hide thee from their hateful looks,
And, in thy closet pent up, rue my shame,
And ban thine enemies, both mine and thine.
GLOUCESTER
Be patient, gentle Nell. Forget this grief.
DUCHESS
Ah, Gloucester, teach me to forget myself!
For whilst I think I am thy married wife
And thou a prince, Protector of this land,
Methinks I should not thus be led along,
Mailed up in shame, with papers on my back,
And followed with a rabble that rejoice
To see my tears and hear my deep-fet groans.
The ruthless flint doth cut my tender feet,
And when I start, the envious people laugh
And bid me be advisèd how I tread.

Ah, Humphrey, can I bear this shameful yoke?
Trowest thou that e'er I'll look upon the world
Or count them happy that enjoys the sun?
No, dark shall be my light, and night my day.
To think upon my pomp shall be my hell.
Sometimes I'll say I am Duke Humphrey's wife
And he a prince and ruler of the land;
Yet so he ruled and such a prince he was
As he stood by whilst I, his forlorn duchess,
Was made a wonder and a pointing-stock
To every idle rascal follower.
But be thou mild, and blush not at my shame,
Nor stir at nothing till the ax of death
Hang over thee, as, sure, it shortly will.
For Suffolk, he that can do all in all
With her that hateth thee and hates us all,
And York and impious Beaufort, that false priest,
Have all limed bushes to betray thy wings;
And fly thou how thou canst, they'll tangle thee.
But fear not thou until thy foot be snared,
Nor never seek prevention of thy foes.

GLOUCESTER

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

Enter a Herald.

HERALD

I summon your Grace to his Majesty's Parliament
Holden at Bury the first of this next month.

GLOUCESTER

And my consent ne'er asked herein before?
This is close dealing. Well, I will be there.

Herald exits.

My Nell, I take my leave.—And, master sheriff,
Let not her penance exceed the King's commission.

SHERIFF

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

GLOUCESTER

Must you, Sir John, protect my lady here?

STANLEY

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

GLOUCESTER

Entreat her not the worse in that I pray

You use her well. The world may laugh again,
And I may live to do you kindness, if
You do it her. And so, Sir John, farewell.

DUCHESS

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

GLOUCESTER

Witness my tears. I cannot stay to speak.

Gloucester exits with his Men.

DUCHESS

Art thou gone too? All comfort go with thee,
For none abides with me. My joy is death—
Death, at whose name I oft have been afeard,
Because I wished this world's eternity.—
Stanley, I prithee, go, and take me hence.
I care not whither, for I beg no favor;
Only convey me where thou art commanded.

STANLEY

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

DUCHESS

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

STANLEY

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

DUCHESS

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

SHERIFF

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

DUCHESS

Ay, ay, farewell. Thy office is discharged.

The Sheriff and Officers exit.

Come, Stanley, shall we go?

STANLEY

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

DUCHESS

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

They exit.

ACT 3

Scene 1

Sound a sennet. Enter King Henry, Queen Margaret, Cardinal, Suffolk, York, Buckingham, Salisbury, and Warwick, and Others to the Parliament.

KING HENRY

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

SUFFOLK

Well hath your Highness seen into this duke,
And, had I first been put to speak my mind,

I think I should have told your Grace's tale.
The Duchess by his subornation,
Upon my life, began her devilish practices;
Or if he were not privy to those faults,
Yet, by reputing of his high descent—
As next the King he was successive heir,
And such high vaunts of his nobility—
Did instigate the bedlam brainsick duchess
By wicked means to frame our sovereign's fall.
Smooth runs the water where the brook is deep,
And in his simple show he harbors treason.
The fox barks not when he would steal the lamb.
No, no, my sovereign, Gloucester is a man
Unsounded yet and full of deep deceit.

CARDINAL

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

YORK

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

BUCKINGHAM

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

KING HENRY

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

Enter Somerset.

SOMERSET

All health unto my gracious sovereign!

KING HENRY

Welcome, Lord Somerset. What news from France?

SOMERSET

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

KING HENRY

Cold news, Lord Somerset; but God's will be done.

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

Enter Gloucester.

GLOUCESTER
All happiness unto my lord the King!
Pardon, my liege, that I have stayed so long.
SUFFOLK
Nay, Gloucester, know that thou art come too soon,
Unless thou wert more loyal than thou art.
I do arrest thee of high treason here.
GLOUCESTER
Well, Suffolk, thou shalt not see me blush
Nor change my countenance for this arrest.
A heart unspotted is not easily daunted.
The purest spring is not so free from mud
As I am clear from treason to my sovereign.
Who can accuse me? Wherein am I guilty?
YORK
'Tis thought, my lord, that you took bribes of France
And, being Protector, stayed the soldiers' pay,
By means whereof his Highness hath lost France.
GLOUCESTER
Is it but thought so? What are they that think it?
I never robbed the soldiers of their pay
Nor ever had one penny bribe from France.
So help me God as I have watched the night—
Ay, night by night—in studying good for England!
That doit that e'er I wrested from the King,
Or any groat I hoarded to my use,
Be brought against me at my trial day!
No, many a pound of mine own proper store,
Because I would not tax the needy Commons,
Have I dispursèd to the garrisons
And never asked for restitution.
CARDINAL
It serves you well, my lord, to say so much.
GLOUCESTER
I say no more than truth, so help me God.
YORK
In your protectorship, you did devise
Strange tortures for offenders, never heard of,
That England was defamed by tyranny.
GLOUCESTER
Why, 'tis well known that whiles I was Protector,
Pity was all the fault that was in me;
For I should melt at an offender's tears,
And lowly words were ransom for their fault.
Unless it were a bloody murderer
Or foul felonious thief that fleeced poor passengers,

I never gave them condign punishment.
Murder indeed, that bloody sin, I tortured
Above the felon or what trespass else.

SUFFOLK

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

KING HENRY

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

GLOUCESTER

Ah, gracious lord, these days are dangerous.
Virtue is choked with foul ambition,
And charity chased hence by rancor's hand;
Foul subornation is predominant,
And equity exiled your Highness' land.
I know their complot is to have my life;
And if my death might make this island happy
And prove the period of their tyranny,
I would expend it with all willingness.
But mine is made the prologue to their play;
For thousands more, that yet suspect no peril,
Will not conclude their plotted tragedy.
Beaufort's red sparkling eyes blab his heart's malice,
And Suffolk's cloudy brow his stormy hate;
Sharp Buckingham unburdens with his tongue
The envious load that lies upon his heart;
And dogged York, that reaches at the moon,
Whose overweening arm I have plucked back,
By false accuse doth level at my life.—
And you, my sovereign lady, with the rest,
Causeless have laid disgraces on my head
And with your best endeavor have stirred up
My liefest liege to be mine enemy.
Ay, all of you have laid your heads together—
Myself had notice of your conventicles—
And all to make away my guiltless life.
I shall not want false witness to condemn me
Nor store of treasons to augment my guilt.
The ancient proverb will be well effected:
"A staff is quickly found to beat a dog."

CARDINAL

My liege, his railing is intolerable.
If those that care to keep your royal person
From treason's secret knife and traitor's rage
Be thus upbraided, chid, and rated at,
And the offender granted scope of speech,
'Twill make them cool in zeal unto your Grace.

SUFFOLK

Hath he not twit our sovereign lady here
With ignominious words, though clerkly couched,
As if she had subornèd some to swear

False allegations to o'erthrow his state?
QUEEN MARGARET
But I can give the loser leave to chide.
GLOUCESTER
Far truer spoke than meant. I lose, indeed;
Beshrew the winners, for they played me false!
And well such losers may have leave to speak.
BUCKINGHAM
He'll wrest the sense and hold us here all day.
Lord Cardinal, he is your prisoner.
CARDINAL*, to his Men*
Sirs, take away the Duke, and guard him sure.
GLOUCESTER
Ah, thus King Henry throws away his crutch
Before his legs be firm to bear his body.—
Thus is the shepherd beaten from thy side,
And wolves are gnarling who shall gnaw thee first.
Ah, that my fear were false; ah, that it were!
For, good King Henry, thy decay I fear.
Gloucester exits, guarded by Cardinal's Men.
KING HENRY
My lords, what to your wisdoms seemeth best
Do, or undo, as if ourself were here.
QUEEN MARGARET
What, will your Highness leave the Parliament?
KING HENRY
Ay, Margaret. My heart is drowned with grief,
Whose flood begins to flow within mine eyes,
My body round engirt with misery;
For what's more miserable than discontent?
Ah, uncle Humphrey, in thy face I see
The map of honor, truth, and loyalty;
And yet, good Humphrey, is the hour to come
That e'er I proved thee false or feared thy faith.
What louring star now envies thy estate
That these great lords and Margaret our queen
Do seek subversion of thy harmless life?
Thou never didst them wrong nor no man wrong.
And as the butcher takes away the calf
And binds the wretch and beats it when it strains,
Bearing it to the bloody slaughterhouse,
Even so remorseless have they borne him hence;
And as the dam runs lowing up and down,
Looking the way her harmless young one went,
And can do naught but wail her darling's loss,
Even so myself bewails good Gloucester's case
With sad unhelpful tears, and with dimmed eyes
Look after him and cannot do him good,
So mighty are his vowèd enemies.
His fortunes I will weep and, 'twixt each groan,
Say "Who's a traitor, Gloucester he is none."
He exits, with Buckingham, Salisbury, Warwick, and Others. Somerset steps aside.
QUEEN MARGARET*, to Cardinal, Suffolk, and York*
Free lords, cold snow melts with the sun's hot beams.

Henry my lord is cold in great affairs,
Too full of foolish pity; and Gloucester's show
Beguiles him, as the mournful crocodile
With sorrow snares relenting passengers,
Or as the snake, rolled in a flow'ring bank,
With shining checkered slough, doth sting a child
That for the beauty thinks it excellent.
Believe me, lords, were none more wise than I—
And yet herein I judge mine own wit good—
This Gloucester should be quickly rid the world,
To rid us from the fear we have of him.

CARDINAL

That he should die is worthy policy,
But yet we want a color for his death.
'Tis meet he be condemned by course of law.

SUFFOLK

But, in my mind, that were no policy.
The King will labor still to save his life,
The Commons haply rise to save his life,
And yet we have but trivial argument,
More than mistrust, that shows him worthy death.

YORK

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

SUFFOLK

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

YORK

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

QUEEN MARGARET

So the poor chicken should be sure of death.

SUFFOLK

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

QUEEN MARGARET

Thrice noble Suffolk, 'tis resolutely spoke.

SUFFOLK

Not resolute, except so much were done,
For things are often spoke and seldom meant;
But that my heart accordeth with my tongue,
Seeing the deed is meritorious,

And to preserve my sovereign from his foe,
Say but the word and I will be his priest.

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

SUFFOLK
Here is my hand. The deed is worthy doing.

QUEEN MARGARET And so say I.

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

Enter a Post.

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

He exits.

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

YORK
That Somerset be sent as regent thither.
'Tis meet that lucky ruler be employed—
Witness the fortune he hath had in France.

SOMERSET*, advancing*
If York, with all his far-fet policy,
Had been the regent there instead of me,
He never would have stayed in France so long.

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

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

YORK
What, worse than naught? Nay, then, a shame take all!

SOMERSET
And, in the number, thee that wishest shame!

CARDINAL
My lord of York, try what your fortune is.

Th’ uncivil kerns of Ireland are in arms
And temper clay with blood of Englishmen.
To Ireland will you lead a band of men,
Collected choicely, from each county some,
And try your hap against the Irishmen?

YORK

I will, my lord, so please his Majesty.

SUFFOLK

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

YORK

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

SUFFOLK

A charge, Lord York, that I will see performed.
But now return we to the false Duke Humphrey.

CARDINAL

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

YORK

My lord of Suffolk, within fourteen days
At Bristow I expect my soldiers,
For there I’ll ship them all for Ireland.

SUFFOLK

I’ll see it truly done, my lord of York.

All but York exit.

YORK

Now, York, or never, steel thy fearful thoughts
And change misdoubt to resolution.
Be that thou hop’st to be, or what thou art
Resign to death; it is not worth th’ enjoying.
Let pale-faced fear keep with the mean-born man
And find no harbor in a royal heart.
Faster than springtime showers comes thought on thought,
And not a thought but thinks on dignity.
My brain, more busy than the laboring spider,
Weaves tedious snares to trap mine enemies.
Well, nobles, well, ’tis politicly done
To send me packing with an host of men.
I fear me you but warm the starvèd snake,
Who, cherished in your breasts, will sting your hearts.
’Twas men I lacked, and you will give them me;
I take it kindly. Yet be well assured
You put sharp weapons in a madman’s hands.
Whiles I in Ireland nourish a mighty band,
I will stir up in England some black storm
Shall blow ten thousand souls to heaven or hell;
And this fell tempest shall not cease to rage
Until the golden circuit on my head,
Like to the glorious sun’s transparent beams,
Do calm the fury of this mad-bred flaw.

And for a minister of my intent,
I have seduced a headstrong Kentishman,
John Cade of Ashford,
To make commotion, as full well he can,
Under the title of John Mortimer.
In Ireland have I seen this stubborn Cade
Oppose himself against a troop of kerns,
And fought so long till that his thighs with darts
Were almost like a sharp-quilled porpentine;
And in the end being rescued, I have seen
Him caper upright like a wild Morisco,
Shaking the bloody darts as he his bells.
Full often, like a shag-haired crafty kern,
Hath he conversèd with the enemy,
And undiscovered come to me again
And given me notice of their villainies.
This devil here shall be my substitute;
For that John Mortimer, which now is dead,
In face, in gait, in speech he doth resemble.
By this, I shall perceive the Commons' mind,
How they affect the house and claim of York.
Say he be taken, racked, and torturèd,
I know no pain they can inflict upon him
Will make him say I moved him to those arms.
Say that he thrive, as 'tis great like he will,
Why then from Ireland come I with my strength
And reap the harvest which that rascal sowed.
For, Humphrey being dead, as he shall be,
And Henry put apart, the next for me.

He exits.

Scene 2

Enter two or three running over the stage, from the murder of Duke Humphrey.

FIRST MURDERER
Run to my lord of Suffolk. Let him know
We have dispatched the Duke as he commanded.
SECOND MURDERER
O, that it were to do! What have we done?
Didst ever hear a man so penitent?

Enter Suffolk.

FIRST MURDERER Here comes my lord.
SUFFOLK Now, sirs, have you dispatched this thing?
FIRST MURDERER Ay, my good lord, he's dead.
SUFFOLK
Why, that's well said. Go, get you to my house;
I will reward you for this venturous deed.
The King and all the peers are here at hand.
Have you laid fair the bed? Is all things well,
According as I gave directions?
FIRST MURDERER 'Tis, my good lord.
SUFFOLK Away, be gone. *The Murderers exit.*

Sound trumpets. Enter King Henry, Queen Margaret, Cardinal, Somerset, with Attendants.

KING HENRY
Go, call our uncle to our presence straight.
Say we intend to try his Grace today
If he be guilty, as 'tis publishèd.
SUFFOLK
I'll call him presently, my noble lord. *He exits.*
KING HENRY
Lords, take your places; and, I pray you all,
Proceed no straiter 'gainst our uncle Gloucester
Than from true evidence of good esteem
He be approved in practice culpable.
QUEEN MARGARET
God forbid any malice should prevail
That faultless may condemn a nobleman!
Pray God he may acquit him of suspicion!
KING HENRY
I thank thee, Meg. These words content me much.

Enter Suffolk.

How now? Why look'st thou pale? Why tremblest thou?
Where is our uncle? What's the matter, Suffolk?
SUFFOLK
Dead in his bed, my lord. Gloucester is dead.
QUEEN MARGARET Marry, God forfend!
CARDINAL
God's secret judgment. I did dream tonight
The Duke was dumb and could not speak a word.
King Henry swoons.
QUEEN MARGARET
How fares my lord? Help, lords, the King is dead!
SOMERSET
Rear up his body. Wring him by the nose.
QUEEN MARGARET
Run, go, help, help! O Henry, ope thine eyes!
King Henry stirs.
SUFFOLK
He doth revive again. Madam, be patient.
KING HENRY
O heavenly God!
QUEEN MARGARET How fares my gracious lord?
SUFFOLK
Comfort, my sovereign! Gracious Henry, comfort!
KING HENRY
What, doth my lord of Suffolk comfort me?
Came he right now to sing a raven's note,
Whose dismal tune bereft my vital powers,
And thinks he that the chirping of a wren,
By crying comfort from a hollow breast,
Can chase away the first-conceivèd sound?
Hide not thy poison with such sugared words.
Lay not thy hands on me. Forbear, I say!

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

KING HENRY

Ah, woe is me for Gloucester, wretched man!

QUEEN MARGARET

Be woe for me, more wretched than he is.
What, dost thou turn away and hide thy face?
I am no loathsome leper. Look on me.
What, art thou, like the adder, waxen deaf?
Be poisonous too, and kill thy forlorn queen.
Is all thy comfort shut in Gloucester's tomb?
Why, then, Dame Margaret was ne'er thy joy.
Erect his statue and worship it,
And make my image but an alehouse sign.
Was I for this nigh-wracked upon the sea
And twice by awkward wind from England's bank
Drove back again unto my native clime?
What boded this, but well forewarning wind
Did seem to say "Seek not a scorpion's nest,
Nor set no footing on this unkind shore"?
What did I then but cursed the gentle gusts
And he that loosed them forth their brazen caves
And bid them blow towards England's blessèd shore
Or turn our stern upon a dreadful rock?
Yet Aeolus would not be a murderer,
But left that hateful office unto thee.
The pretty-vaulting sea refused to drown me,
Knowing that thou wouldst have me drowned on shore
With tears as salt as sea, through thy unkindness.
The splitting rocks cow'red in the sinking sands
And would not dash me with their ragged sides

Because thy flinty heart, more hard than they,
Might in thy palace perish Margaret.
As far as I could ken thy chalky cliffs,
When from thy shore the tempest beat us back,
I stood upon the hatches in the storm,
And when the dusky sky began to rob
My earnest-gaping sight of thy land's view,
I took a costly jewel from my neck—
A heart it was, bound in with diamonds—
And threw it towards thy land. The sea received it,
And so I wished thy body might my heart.
And even with this I lost fair England's view,
And bid mine eyes be packing with my heart,
And called them blind and dusky spectacles
For losing ken of Albion's wishèd coast.
How often have I tempted Suffolk's tongue,
The agent of thy foul inconstancy,
To sit and watch me, as Ascanius did
When he to madding Dido would unfold
His father's acts commenced in burning Troy!
Am I not witched like her, or thou not false like him?
Ay me, I can no more. Die, Margaret,
For Henry weeps that thou dost live so long.

Noise within. Enter Warwick and Salisbury, and many Commons.

WARWICK
It is reported, mighty sovereign,
That good Duke Humphrey traitorously is murdered
By Suffolk and the Cardinal Beaufort's means.
The Commons, like an angry hive of bees
That want their leader, scatter up and down
And care not who they sting in his revenge.
Myself have calmed their spleenful mutiny,
Until they hear the order of his death.
KING HENRY
That he is dead, good Warwick, 'tis too true;
But how he died God knows, not Henry.
Enter his chamber, view his breathless corpse,
And comment then upon his sudden death.
WARWICK
That shall I do, my liege.—Stay, Salisbury,
With the rude multitude till I return.
Warwick exits through one door; Salisbury and Commons exit through another.
KING HENRY
O Thou that judgest all things, stay my thoughts,
My thoughts that labor to persuade my soul
Some violent hands were laid on Humphrey's life.
If my suspect be false, forgive me, God,
For judgment only doth belong to Thee.
Fain would I go to chafe his paly lips
With twenty thousand kisses, and to drain
Upon his face an ocean of salt tears,

To tell my love unto his dumb deaf trunk
And with my fingers feel his hand unfeeling;
But all in vain are these mean obsequies.
And to survey his dead and earthy image,
What were it but to make my sorrow greater?

Bed put forth, bearing Gloucester's body.
Enter Warwick.

WARWICK
Come hither, gracious sovereign. View this body.
KING HENRY
That is to see how deep my grave is made,
For with his soul fled all my worldly solace;
For seeing him, I see my life in death.
WARWICK
As surely as my soul intends to live
With that dread King that took our state upon Him
To free us from His Father's wrathful curse,
I do believe that violent hands were laid
Upon the life of this thrice-famèd duke.
SUFFOLK
A dreadful oath, sworn with a solemn tongue!
What instance gives Lord Warwick for his vow?
WARWICK
See how the blood is settled in his face.
Oft have I seen a timely-parted ghost,
Of ashy semblance, meager, pale, and bloodless,
Being all descended to the laboring heart,
Who, in the conflict that it holds with death,
Attracts the same for aidance 'gainst the enemy,
Which with the heart there cools and ne'er returneth
To blush and beautify the cheek again.
But see, his face is black and full of blood;
His eyeballs further out than when he lived,
Staring full ghastly, like a strangled man;
His hair upreared, his nostrils stretched with struggling;
His hands abroad displayed, as one that grasped
And tugged for life and was by strength subdued.
Look, on the sheets his hair, you see, is sticking;
His well-proportioned beard made rough and rugged,
Like to the summer's corn by tempest lodged.
It cannot be but he was murdered here.
The least of all these signs were probable.
The bed is removed.
SUFFOLK
Why, Warwick, who should do the Duke to death?
Myself and Beaufort had him in protection,
And we, I hope, sir, are no murderers.
WARWICK
But both of you were vowed Duke Humphrey's foes,
To Cardinal. And you, forsooth, had the good duke to keep.

’Tis like you would not feast him like a friend,
And ’tis well seen he found an enemy.
QUEEN MARGARET
Then you, belike, suspect these noblemen
As guilty of Duke Humphrey’s timeless death.
WARWICK
Who finds the heifer dead and bleeding fresh,
And sees fast by a butcher with an ax,
But will suspect ’twas he that made the slaughter?
Who finds the partridge in the puttock’s nest
But may imagine how the bird was dead,
Although the kite soar with unbloodied beak?
Even so suspicious is this tragedy.
QUEEN MARGARET
Are you the butcher, Suffolk? Where’s your knife?
Is Beaufort termed a kite? Where are his talons?
SUFFOLK
I wear no knife to slaughter sleeping men,
But here’s a vengeful sword, rusted with ease,
That shall be scoured in his rancorous heart
That slanders me with murder’s crimson badge.—
Say, if thou dar’st, proud lord of Warwickshire,
That I am faulty in Duke Humphrey’s death.
WARWICK
What dares not Warwick, if false Suffolk dare him?
QUEEN MARGARET
He dares not calm his contumelious spirit
Nor cease to be an arrogant controller,
Though Suffolk dare him twenty thousand times.
WARWICK
Madam, be still—with reverence may I say—
For every word you speak in his behalf
Is slander to your royal dignity.
SUFFOLK
Blunt-witted lord, ignoble in demeanor!
If ever lady wronged her lord so much,
Thy mother took into her blameful bed
Some stern untutored churl, and noble stock
Was graft with crab-tree slip, whose fruit thou art
And never of the Nevilles’ noble race.
WARWICK
But that the guilt of murder bucklers thee
And I should rob the deathsman of his fee,
Quitting thee thereby of ten thousand shames,
And that my sovereign’s presence makes me mild,
I would, false murd’rous coward, on thy knee
Make thee beg pardon for thy passèd speech
And say it was thy mother that thou meant’st,
That thou thyself wast born in bastardy;
And after all this fearful homage done,
Give thee thy hire and send thy soul to hell,
Pernicious bloodsucker of sleeping men!
SUFFOLK
Thou shalt be waking while I shed thy blood,
If from this presence thou dar’st go with me.

WARWICK
Away even now, or I will drag thee hence!
Unworthy though thou art, I'll cope with thee
And do some service to Duke Humphrey's ghost.
Warwick and Suffolk exit.
KING HENRY
What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted?
Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just,
And he but naked, though locked up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

A noise within.
QUEEN MARGARET What noise is this?

Enter Suffolk and Warwick, with their weapons drawn.

KING HENRY
Why, how now, lords? Your wrathful weapons drawn
Here in our presence? Dare you be so bold?
Why, what tumultuous clamor have we here?
SUFFOLK
The trait'rous Warwick, with the men of Bury,
Set all upon me, mighty sovereign.

Enter Salisbury.

SALISBURY*, to the offstage Commons*
Sirs, stand apart. The King shall know your mind.—
Dread lord, the Commons send you word by me,
Unless Lord Suffolk straight be done to death
Or banishèd fair England's territories,
They will by violence tear him from your palace
And torture him with grievous ling'ring death.
They say, by him the good duke Humphrey died;
They say, in him they fear your Highness' death;
And mere instinct of love and loyalty,
Free from a stubborn opposite intent,
As being thought to contradict your liking,
Makes them thus forward in his banishment.
They say, in care of your most royal person,
That if your Highness should intend to sleep,
And charge that no man should disturb your rest,
In pain of your dislike or pain of death,
Yet, notwithstanding such a strait edict,
Were there a serpent seen with forkèd tongue
That slyly glided towards your Majesty,
It were but necessary you were waked,
Lest, being suffered in that harmful slumber,
The mortal worm might make the sleep eternal.
And therefore do they cry, though you forbid,
That they will guard you, whe'er you will or no,
From such fell serpents as false Suffolk is,
With whose envenomèd and fatal sting
Your loving uncle, twenty times his worth,
They say, is shamefully bereft of life.

COMMONS*, within*
An answer from the King, my lord of Salisbury!
SUFFOLK
'Tis like the Commons, rude unpolished hinds,
Could send such message to their sovereign!
To Salisbury. But you, my lord, were glad to be employed,
To show how quaint an orator you are.
But all the honor Salisbury hath won
Is that he was the lord ambassador
Sent from a sort of tinkers to the King.
COMMONS*, within*
An answer from the King, or we will all break in.
KING HENRY
Go, Salisbury, and tell them all from me,
I thank them for their tender loving care;
And, had I not been cited so by them,
Yet did I purpose as they do entreat.
For, sure, my thoughts do hourly prophesy
Mischance unto my state by Suffolk's means.
And therefore, by His Majesty I swear,
Whose far unworthy deputy I am,
He shall not breathe infection in this air
But three days longer, on the pain of death.
Salisbury exits.
QUEEN MARGARET
O Henry, let me plead for gentle Suffolk!
KING HENRY
Ungentle queen to call him gentle Suffolk!
No more, I say. If thou dost plead for him,
Thou wilt but add increase unto my wrath.
Had I but said, I would have kept my word;
But when I swear, it is irrevocable.
To Suffolk. If, after three days' space, thou here be'st found
On any ground that I am ruler of,
The world shall not be ransom for thy life.—
Come, Warwick, come, good Warwick, go with me.
I have great matters to impart to thee.
All but the Queen and Suffolk exit.
QUEEN MARGARET*, calling after King Henry and Warwick*
Mischance and sorrow go along with you!
Heart's discontent and sour affliction
Be playfellows to keep you company!
There's two of you; the devil make a third,
And threefold vengeance tend upon your steps!
SUFFOLK
Cease, gentle queen, these execrations,
And let thy Suffolk take his heavy leave.
QUEEN MARGARET
Fie, coward woman and soft-hearted wretch!
Hast thou not spirit to curse thine enemies?
SUFFOLK
A plague upon them! Wherefore should I curse them?

Could curses kill, as doth the mandrake's groan,
I would invent as bitter searching terms,
As curst, as harsh, and horrible to hear,
Delivered strongly through my fixèd teeth,
With full as many signs of deadly hate,
As lean-faced Envy in her loathsome cave.
My tongue should stumble in mine earnest words;
Mine eyes should sparkle like the beaten flint;
Mine hair be fixed on end, as one distract;
Ay, every joint should seem to curse and ban;
And even now my burdened heart would break
Should I not curse them. Poison be their drink!
Gall, worse than gall, the daintiest that they taste;
Their sweetest shade, a grove of cypress trees;
Their chiefest prospect, murd'ring basilisks;
Their softest touch, as smart as lizards' stings!
Their music, frightful as the serpent's hiss,
And boding screech owls make the consort full!
All the foul terrors in dark-seated hell—

QUEEN MARGARET

Enough, sweet Suffolk, thou torment'st thyself,
And these dread curses, like the sun 'gainst glass,
Or like an over-chargèd gun, recoil
And turn the force of them upon thyself.

SUFFOLK

You bade me ban, and will you bid me leave?
Now, by the ground that I am banished from,
Well could I curse away a winter's night,
Though standing naked on a mountain top
Where biting cold would never let grass grow,
And think it but a minute spent in sport.

QUEEN MARGARET

O, let me entreat thee cease! Give me thy hand,
That I may dew it with my mournful tears;
Nor let the rain of heaven wet this place
To wash away my woeful monuments.

She kisses his hand.

O, could this kiss be printed in thy hand,
That thou mightst think upon these by the seal,
Through whom a thousand sighs are breathed for thee!
So, get thee gone, that I may know my grief;
'Tis but surmised whiles thou art standing by,
As one that surfeits thinking on a want.
I will repeal thee, or, be well assured,
Adventure to be banishèd myself;
And banishèd I am, if but from thee.
Go, speak not to me. Even now be gone!
O, go not yet! Even thus two friends condemned
Embrace and kiss and take ten thousand leaves,
Loather a hundred times to part than die.

They embrace.

Yet now farewell, and farewell life with thee.

SUFFOLK

Thus is poor Suffolk ten times banishèd,
Once by the King, and three times thrice by thee.

’Tis not the land I care for, wert thou thence.
A wilderness is populous enough,
So Suffolk had thy heavenly company;
For where thou art, there is the world itself,
With every several pleasure in the world;
And where thou art not, desolation.
I can no more. Live thou to joy thy life;
Myself no joy in naught but that thou liv’st.

Enter Vaux.

QUEEN MARGARET
Whither goes Vaux so fast? What news, I prithee?
VAUX To signify unto his Majesty,
That Cardinal Beaufort is at point of death;
For suddenly a grievous sickness took him
That makes him gasp and stare and catch the air,
Blaspheming God and cursing men on Earth.
Sometimes he talks as if Duke Humphrey’s ghost
Were by his side; sometimes he calls the King
And whispers to his pillow, as to him,
The secrets of his overchargèd soul.
And I am sent to tell his Majesty
That even now he cries aloud for him.
QUEEN MARGARET
Go, tell this heavy message to the King. *Vaux exits.*
Ay me! What is this world? What news are these!
But wherefore grieve I at an hour’s poor loss,
Omitting Suffolk’s exile, my soul’s treasure?
Why only, Suffolk, mourn I not for thee,
And with the southern clouds contend in tears—
Theirs for the earth’s increase, mine for my sorrows’?
Now get thee hence. The King, thou know’st, is coming;
If thou be found by me, thou art but dead.
SUFFOLK
If I depart from thee, I cannot live;
And in thy sight to die, what were it else
But like a pleasant slumber in thy lap?
Here could I breathe my soul into the air,
As mild and gentle as the cradle babe
Dying with mother’s dug between its lips;
Where, from thy sight, I should be raging mad
And cry out for thee to close up mine eyes,
To have thee with thy lips to stop my mouth.
So shouldst thou either turn my flying soul,
Or I should breathe it so into thy body,
And then it lived in sweet Elysium.
To die by thee were but to die in jest;
From thee to die were torture more than death.
O, let me stay, befall what may befall!
QUEEN MARGARET
Away! Though parting be a fretful corrosive,
It is applièd to a deathful wound.
To France, sweet Suffolk. Let me hear from thee,

For wheresoe'er thou art in this world's globe,
I'll have an Iris that shall find thee out.
SUFFOLK I go.
QUEEN MARGARET And take my heart with thee.
SUFFOLK
A jewel locked into the woefull'st cask
That ever did contain a thing of worth!
Even as a splitted bark, so sunder we.
This way fall I to death.
QUEEN MARGARET This way for me.
They exit through different doors.

Scene 3

Enter King Henry, Salisbury and Warwick, to the Cardinal in bed, raving and staring.

KING HENRY
How fares my lord? Speak, Beaufort, to thy sovereign.
CARDINAL
If thou be'st Death, I'll give thee England's treasure,
Enough to purchase such another island,
So thou wilt let me live and feel no pain.
KING HENRY
Ah, what a sign it is of evil life,
Where Death's approach is seen so terrible!
WARWICK
Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks to thee.
CARDINAL
Bring me unto my trial when you will.
Died he not in his bed? Where should he die?
Can I make men live, whe'er they will or no?
O, torture me no more! I will confess.
Alive again? Then show me where he is.
I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him.
He hath no eyes! The dust hath blinded them.
Comb down his hair. Look, look. It stands upright,
Like lime-twigs set to catch my wingèd soul.
Give me some drink, and bid the apothecary
Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.
KING HENRY
O, Thou eternal mover of the heavens,
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!
O, beat away the busy meddling fiend
That lays strong siege unto this wretch's soul,
And from his bosom purge this black despair!
WARWICK
See how the pangs of death do make him grin!
SALISBURY
Disturb him not. Let him pass peaceably.
KING HENRY
Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure be!—
Lord Card'nal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
Hold up thy hand; make signal of thy hope.
The Cardinal dies.
He dies and makes no sign. O, God forgive him!

WARWICK
So bad a death argues a monstrous life.
KING HENRY
Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.
Close up his eyes, and draw the curtain close,
And let us all to meditation.

After the curtains are closed around the bed, they exit. The bed is removed.

ACT 4

Scene 1

Alarum. Offstage fight at sea. Ordnance goes off. Enter Lieutenant, Suffolk, captive and in disguise, and Others, including a Master, a Master's Mate, Walter Whitmore, and Prisoners.

LIEUTENANT
The gaudy, blabbing, and remorseful day
Is crept into the bosom of the sea,
And now loud-howling wolves arouse the jades
That drag the tragic melancholy night,
Who, with their drowsy, slow, and flagging wings
Clip dead men's graves, and from their misty jaws
Breathe foul contagious darkness in the air.
Therefore bring forth the soldiers of our prize;
For, whilst our pinnace anchors in the Downs,
Here shall they make their ransom on the sand,
Or with their blood stain this discolored shore.—
Master, this prisoner freely give I thee.—
And, thou that art his mate, make boot of this.—
The other, Walter Whitmore, is thy share.

Three gentlemen prisoners, including Suffolk, are handed over.

FIRST GENTLEMAN
What is my ransom, master? Let me know.

MASTER
A thousand crowns, or else lay down your head.

MATE*, to the Second Gentleman*
And so much shall you give, or off goes yours.

LIEUTENANT
What, think you much to pay two thousand crowns,
And bear the name and port of gentlemen?—
Cut both the villains' throats—for die you shall;
The lives of those which we have lost in fight
Be counterpoised with such a petty sum!

FIRST GENTLEMAN
I'll give it, sir, and therefore spare my life.

SECOND GENTLEMAN
And so will I, and write home for it straight.

WHITMORE*, to Suffolk*
I lost mine eye in laying the prize aboard,
And therefore to revenge it shalt thou die;
And so should these, if I might have my will.

LIEUTENANT
Be not so rash. Take ransom; let him live.

SUFFOLK
Look on my George; I am a gentleman.
Rate me at what thou wilt, thou shalt be paid.

WHITMORE
And so am I. My name is Walter Whitmore.

Suffolk starts.

How now, why starts thou? What, doth death affright?

SUFFOLK

Thy name affrights me, in whose sound is death.
A cunning man did calculate my birth
And told me that by water I should die.
Yet let not this make thee be bloody-minded;
Thy name is Gualtier, being rightly sounded.

WHITMORE

Gualtier or Walter, which it is, I care not.
Never yet did base dishonor blur our name
But with our sword we wiped away the blot.
Therefore, when merchantlike I sell revenge,
Broke be my sword, my arms torn and defaced,
And I proclaimed a coward through the world!

SUFFOLK

Stay, Whitmore, for thy prisoner is a prince,
The Duke of Suffolk, William de la Pole.

WHITMORE

The Duke of Suffolk muffled up in rags?

SUFFOLK

Ay, but these rags are no part of the Duke.
Jove sometimes went disguised, and why not I?

LIEUTENANT

But Jove was never slain, as thou shalt be.

SUFFOLK

Obscure and lousy swain, King Henry's blood,
The honorable blood of Lancaster,
Must not be shed by such a jaded groom.
Hast thou not kissed thy hand and held my stirrup?
Bareheaded plodded by my footcloth mule,
And thought thee happy when I shook my head?
How often hast thou waited at my cup,
Fed from my trencher, kneeled down at the board,
When I have feasted with Queen Margaret?
Remember it, and let it make thee crestfall'n,
Ay, and allay this thy abortive pride.
How in our voiding lobby hast thou stood
And duly waited for my coming forth?
This hand of mine hath writ in thy behalf,
And therefore shall it charm thy riotous tongue.

WHITMORE

Speak, captain, shall I stab the forlorn swain?

LIEUTENANT

First let my words stab him as he hath me.

SUFFOLK

Base slave, thy words are blunt, and so art thou.

LIEUTENANT

Convey him hence, and on our longboat's side,
Strike off his head.

SUFFOLK Thou dar'st not for thy own.

LIEUTENANT

Yes, Pole.

SUFFOLK Pole!

LIEUTENANT Pole! Sir Pole! Lord!
Ay, kennel, puddle, sink, whose filth and dirt

Troubles the silver spring where England drinks!
Now will I dam up this thy yawning mouth
For swallowing the treasure of the realm.
Thy lips that kissed the Queen shall sweep the ground,
And thou that smiledst at good Duke Humphrey's death
Against the senseless winds shall grin in vain,
Who in contempt shall hiss at thee again.
And wedded be thou to the hags of hell
For daring to affy a mighty lord
Unto the daughter of a worthless king,
Having neither subject, wealth, nor diadem.
By devilish policy art thou grown great,
And, like ambitious Sylla, overgorged
With gobbets of thy mother's bleeding heart.
By thee Anjou and Maine were sold to France.
The false revolting Normans thorough thee
Disdain to call us lord, and Picardy
Hath slain their governors, surprised our forts,
And sent the ragged soldiers wounded home.
The princely Warwick, and the Nevilles all,
Whose dreadful swords were never drawn in vain,
As hating thee, are rising up in arms.
And now the house of York, thrust from the crown
By shameful murder of a guiltless king
And lofty, proud, encroaching tyranny,
Burns with revenging fire, whose hopeful colors
Advance our half-faced sun, striving to shine,
Under the which is writ *"Invitis nubibus."*
The commons here in Kent are up in arms,
And, to conclude, reproach and beggary
Is crept into the palace of our king,
And all by thee.—Away! Convey him hence.

SUFFOLK

O, that I were a god, to shoot forth thunder
Upon these paltry, servile, abject drudges!
Small things make base men proud. This villain here,
Being captain of a pinnace, threatens more
Than Bargulus, the strong Illyrian pirate.
Drones suck not eagles' blood, but rob beehives.
It is impossible that I should die
By such a lowly vassal as thyself.
Thy words move rage and not remorse in me.
I go of message from the Queen to France.
I charge thee waft me safely cross the Channel.

LIEUTENANT Walter.

WHITMORE

Come, Suffolk, I must waft thee to thy death.

SUFFOLK

Paene gelidus timor occupat artus.
It is thee I fear.

WHITMORE

Thou shalt have cause to fear before I leave thee.
What, are you daunted now? Now will you stoop?

FIRST GENTLEMAN
My gracious lord, entreat him; speak him fair.
SUFFOLK
Suffolk's imperial tongue is stern and rough,
Used to command, untaught to plead for favor.
Far be it we should honor such as these
With humble suit. No, rather let my head
Stoop to the block than these knees bow to any
Save to the God of heaven and to my king;
And sooner dance upon a bloody pole
Than stand uncovered to the vulgar groom.
True nobility is exempt from fear.—
More can I bear than you dare execute.
LIEUTENANT
Hale him away, and let him talk no more.
SUFFOLK
Come, soldiers, show what cruelty you can,
That this my death may never be forgot!
Great men oft die by vile bezonians:
A Roman sworder and banditto slave
Murdered sweet Tully; Brutus' bastard hand
Stabbed Julius Caesar; savage islanders
Pompey the Great, and Suffolk dies by pirates.
Walter Whitmore exits with Suffolk and Others.
LIEUTENANT
And as for these whose ransom we have set,
It is our pleasure one of them depart.
To Second Gentleman. Therefore come you with us, and let him go. *Lieutenant and the rest exit.*
The First Gentleman remains.

Enter Walter Whitmore with the body and severed head of Suffolk.

WHITMORE
There let his head and lifeless body lie,
Until the Queen his mistress bury it.
Walter Whitmore exits.
FIRST GENTLEMAN
O, barbarous and bloody spectacle!
His body will I bear unto the King.
If he revenge it not, yet will his friends.
So will the Queen, that living held him dear.
He exits with the head and body.

Scene 2

Enter Bevis and John Holland with staves.

BEVIS Come, and get thee a sword, though made of a lath. They have been up these two days.
HOLLAND They have the more need to sleep now, then.
BEVIS I tell thee, Jack Cade the clothier means to dress the commonwealth, and turn it, and set a new nap upon it.
HOLLAND So he had need, for 'tis threadbare. Well, I

say, it was never merry world in England since gentlemen came up.

BEVIS O miserable age! Virtue is not regarded in handicraftsmen.

HOLLAND The nobility think scorn to go in leather aprons.

BEVIS Nay, more, the King's Council are no good workmen.

HOLLAND True, and yet it is said "Labor in thy vocation," which is as much to say as "Let the magistrates be laboring men." And therefore should we be magistrates.

BEVIS Thou hast hit it, for there's no better sign of a brave mind than a hard hand.

HOLLAND I see them, I see them! There's Best's son, the tanner of Wingham—

BEVIS He shall have the skins of our enemies to make dog's leather of.

HOLLAND And Dick the butcher—

BEVIS Then is sin struck down like an ox, and iniquity's throat cut like a calf.

HOLLAND And Smith the weaver.

BEVIS Argo, their thread of life is spun.

HOLLAND Come, come, let's fall in with them.

Drum. Enter Cade, Dick the butcher, Smith the weaver, and a Sawyer, with infinite numbers, all with staves.

CADE We, John Cade, so termed of our supposed father—

DICK, *aside* Or rather of stealing a cade of herrings.

CADE For our enemies shall fall before us, inspired with the spirit of putting down kings and princes—command silence.

DICK Silence!

CADE My father was a Mortimer—

DICK, *aside* He was an honest man and a good bricklayer.

CADE My mother a Plantagenet—

DICK, *aside* I knew her well; she was a midwife.

CADE My wife descended of the Lacys.

DICK, *aside* She was indeed a peddler's daughter, and sold many laces.

SMITH, *aside* But now of late, not able to travel with her furred pack, she washes bucks here at home.

CADE Therefore am I of an honorable house.

DICK, *aside* Ay, by my faith, the field is honorable; and there was he born, under a hedge, for his father had never a house but the cage.

CADE Valiant I am—

SMITH, *aside* He must needs, for beggary is valiant.

CADE I am able to endure much—

DICK, *aside* No question of that; for I have seen him whipped three market-days together.

CADE I fear neither sword nor fire.

SMITH, *aside* He need not fear the sword, for his coat is of proof.

DICK, *aside* But methinks he should stand in fear of fire, being burnt i' th' hand for stealing of sheep.

CADE Be brave, then, for your captain is brave and vows reformation. There shall be in England seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny. The three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to drink small beer. All the realm shall be in common, and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass. And when I am king, as king I will be—

ALL God save your Majesty!

CADE I thank you, good people.—There shall be no money; all shall eat and drink on my score; and I will apparel them all in one livery, that they may agree like brothers and worship me their lord.

DICK The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.

CADE Nay, that I mean to do. Is not this a lamentable thing, that of the skin of an innocent lamb should be made parchment? That parchment, being scribbled o'er, should undo a man? Some say the bee stings, but I say, 'tis the beeswax; for I did but seal once to a thing, and I was never mine own man since. How now? Who's there?

Enter a Clerk of Chartham, under guard.

SMITH The clerk of Chartham. He can write and read and cast account.

CADE O, monstrous!

SMITH We took him setting of boys' copies.

CADE Here's a villain!

SMITH H'as a book in his pocket with red letters in 't.

CADE Nay, then, he is a conjurer.

DICK Nay, he can make obligations and write court hand.

CADE I am sorry for 't. The man is a proper man, of mine honor. Unless I find him guilty, he shall not die.—Come hither, sirrah; I must examine thee. What is thy name?

CLERK Emmanuel.

DICK They use to write it on the top of letters.—'Twill go hard with you.

CADE Let me alone.—Dost thou use to write thy name? Or hast thou a mark to thyself, like an honest, plain-dealing man?

CLERK Sir, I thank God, I have been so well brought up that I can write my name.

ALL He hath confessed. Away with him! He's a villain and a traitor.

CADE Away with him, I say! Hang him with his pen and inkhorn about his neck.

One exits with the Clerk.

Enter Michael.

MICHAEL Where's our general?
CADE Here I am, thou particular fellow.
MICHAEL Fly, fly, fly! Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother are hard by, with the King's forces.
CADE Stand, villain, stand, or I'll fell thee down. He shall be encountered with a man as good as himself. He is but a knight, is he?
MICHAEL No.
CADE To equal him I will make myself a knight presently. *He kneels.* Rise up Sir John Mortimer. *He rises.* Now have at him!

Enter Sir Humphrey Stafford and his Brother, with a Herald, Drum, and Soldiers.

STAFFORD
Rebellious hinds, the filth and scum of Kent,
Marked for the gallows, lay your weapons down!
Home to your cottages; forsake this groom.
The King is merciful, if you revolt.
BROTHER
But angry, wrathful, and inclined to blood,
If you go forward. Therefore yield, or die.
CADE
As for these silken-coated slaves, I pass not.
It is to you, good people, that I speak,
Over whom, in time to come, I hope to reign,
For I am rightful heir unto the crown.
STAFFORD
Villain, thy father was a plasterer,
And thou thyself a shearman, art thou not?
CADE
And Adam was a gardener.
BROTHER And what of that?
CADE
Marry, this: Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March,
Married the Duke of Clarence' daughter, did he not?
STAFFORD Ay, sir.
CADE
By her he had two children at one birth.
BROTHER That's false.
CADE
Ay, there's the question. But I say 'tis true.
The elder of them, being put to nurse,
Was by a beggar-woman stol'n away,
And, ignorant of his birth and parentage,
Became a bricklayer when he came to age.
His son am I. Deny it if you can.
DICK
Nay, 'tis too true. Therefore he shall be king.
SMITH Sir, he made a chimney in my father's house, and the bricks are alive at this day to testify it. Therefore deny it not.
STAFFORD
And will you credit this base drudge's words,
That speaks he knows not what?

ALL
Ay, marry, will we. Therefore get you gone.
BROTHER
Jack Cade, the Duke of York hath taught you this.
CADE He lies, *aside* for I invented it myself.—Go to, sirrah. Tell the King from me that, for his father's sake, Henry the Fifth, in whose time boys went to span-counter for French crowns, I am content he shall reign, but I'll be Protector over him.
DICK And, furthermore, we'll have the Lord Saye's head for selling the dukedom of Maine.
CADE And good reason: for thereby is England mained and fain to go with a staff, but that my puissance holds it up. Fellow kings, I tell you that that Lord Saye hath gelded the commonwealth and made it an eunuch; and, more than that, he can speak French, and therefore he is a traitor.
STAFFORD
O, gross and miserable ignorance!
CADE Nay, answer if you can. The Frenchmen are our enemies. Go to, then, I ask but this: can he that speaks with the tongue of an enemy be a good counselor, or no?
ALL No, no, and therefore we'll have his head!
BROTHER*, to Stafford*
Well, seeing gentle words will not prevail,
Assail them with the army of the King.
STAFFORD
Herald, away, and throughout every town
Proclaim them traitors that are up with Cade,
That those which fly before the battle ends
May, even in their wives' and children's sight
Be hanged up for example at their doors.—
And you that be the King's friends, follow me.
The Staffords, Soldiers, and Herald exit.
CADE
And you that love the Commons, follow me.
Now show yourselves men. 'Tis for liberty!
We will not leave one lord, one gentleman;
Spare none but such as go in clouted shoon,
For they are thrifty, honest men and such
As would, but that they dare not, take our parts.
DICK They are all in order and march toward us.
CADE But then are we in order when we are most out of order. Come, march forward.
They exit.

Scene 3

Alarums to the fight, wherein both the Staffords are slain. Enter Cade and the rest.

CADE Where's Dick, the butcher of Ashford?
DICK Here, sir.
CADE They fell before thee like sheep and oxen, and thou behaved'st thyself as if thou hadst been in thine own slaughterhouse. Therefore, thus will I

reward thee: the Lent shall be as long again as it is,
and thou shalt have a license to kill for a hundred
lacking one.

DICK I desire no more.

CADE And to speak truth, thou deserv'st no less. This
monument of the victory will I bear. *He puts on
Sir Humphrey Stafford's armor and helmet, or sallet.*
And the bodies shall be dragged at my horse
heels till I do come to London, where we will have
the Mayor's sword borne before us.

DICK If we mean to thrive and do good, break open
the jails and let out the prisoners.

CADE Fear not that, I warrant thee. Come, let's march
towards London.

They exit with the bodies of the Staffords.

Scene 4

*Enter King Henry, with a supplication, and
Queen Margaret with Suffolk's head, the Duke
of Buckingham, and the Lord Saye.*

QUEEN MARGARET*, aside*

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

BUCKINGHAM*, to King Henry*

What answer makes your Grace to the rebels'
supplication?

KING HENRY

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

QUEEN MARGARET*, aside*

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

KING HENRY

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

SAYE

Ay, but I hope your Highness shall have his.

KING HENRY How now, madam?

Still lamenting and mourning for Suffolk's death?
I fear me, love, if that I had been dead,
Thou wouldst not have mourned so much for me.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

Enter a Messenger.

KING HENRY
How now, what news? Why com'st thou in such haste?
MESSENGER
The rebels are in Southwark. Fly, my lord!
Jack Cade proclaims himself Lord Mortimer,
Descended from the Duke of Clarence' house,
And calls your Grace usurper, openly,
And vows to crown himself in Westminster.
His army is a ragged multitude
Of hinds and peasants, rude and merciless.
Sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother's death
Hath given them heart and courage to proceed.
All scholars, lawyers, courtiers, gentlemen
They call false caterpillars and intend their death.
KING HENRY
O, graceless men, they know not what they do!
BUCKINGHAM
My gracious lord, retire to Killingworth
Until a power be raised to put them down.
QUEEN MARGARET
Ah, were the Duke of Suffolk now alive,
These Kentish rebels would be soon appeased!
KING HENRY Lord Saye, the traitors hateth thee;
Therefore away with us to Killingworth.
SAYE
So might your Grace's person be in danger.
The sight of me is odious in their eyes;
And therefore in this city will I stay
And live alone as secret as I may.

Enter another Messenger.

SECOND MESSENGER
Jack Cade hath gotten London Bridge.
The citizens fly and forsake their houses.
The rascal people, thirsting after prey,
Join with the traitor, and they jointly swear
To spoil the city and your royal court.
BUCKINGHAM
Then linger not, my lord. Away! Take horse!
KING HENRY
Come, Margaret. God, our hope, will succor us.
QUEEN MARGARET
My hope is gone, now Suffolk is deceased.
KING HENRY*, to Saye*
Farewell, my lord. Trust not the Kentish rebels.
BUCKINGHAM
Trust nobody, for fear you be betrayed.
SAYE
The trust I have is in mine innocence,
And therefore am I bold and resolute.

They exit.

Scene 5

Enter Lord Scales upon the Tower, walking. Then enters two or three Citizens below.

SCALES How now? Is Jack Cade slain?

FIRST CITIZEN No, my lord, nor likely to be slain; for they have won the Bridge, killing all those that withstand them. The Lord Mayor craves aid of your Honor from the Tower to defend the city from the rebels.

SCALES

Such aid as I can spare you shall command;
But I am troubled here with them myself:
The rebels have essayed to win the Tower.
But get you to Smithfield and gather head,
And thither I will send you Matthew Gough.
Fight for your king, your country, and your lives.
And so farewell, for I must hence again.

They exit.

Scene 6

Enter Jack Cade and the rest, and strikes his staff on London Stone.

CADE Now is Mortimer lord of this city. And here, sitting upon London Stone, I charge and command that, of the city's cost, the Pissing Conduit run nothing but claret wine this first year of our reign. And now henceforward it shall be treason for any that calls me other than Lord Mortimer.

Enter a Soldier running.

SOLDIER Jack Cade, Jack Cade!

CADE Knock him down there. *They kill him.*

DICK If this fellow be wise, he'll never call you Jack Cade more. I think he hath a very fair warning. *Takes a paper from the dead Soldier and reads the message.* My lord, there's an army gathered together in Smithfield.

CADE Come, then, let's go fight with them. But first, go and set London Bridge on fire, and, if you can, burn down the Tower too. Come, let's away.

All exit.

Scene 7

Alarums. Matthew Gough is slain, and all the rest. Then enter Jack Cade with his company.

CADE So, sirs. Now go some and pull down the Savoy; others to th' Inns of Court. Down with them all!

DICK I have a suit unto your Lordship.

CADE Be it a lordship, thou shalt have it for that word.

DICK Only that the laws of England may come out of your mouth.

HOLLAND*, aside* Mass, 'twill be sore law, then, for he was thrust in the mouth with a spear, and 'tis not whole yet.

SMITH*, aside* Nay, John, it will be stinking law, for his breath stinks with eating toasted cheese.

CADE I have thought upon it; it shall be so. Away! Burn all the records of the realm. My mouth shall be the Parliament of England.

HOLLAND*, aside* Then we are like to have biting statutes—unless his teeth be pulled out.

CADE And henceforward all things shall be in common.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER My lord, a prize, a prize! Here's the Lord Saye, which sold the towns in France, he that made us pay one-and-twenty fifteens, and one shilling to the pound, the last subsidy.

Enter George with the Lord Saye.

CADE Well, he shall be beheaded for it ten times.—Ah, thou say, thou serge, nay, thou buckram lord, now art thou within point-blank of our jurisdiction regal. What canst thou answer to my Majesty for giving up of Normandy unto Monsieur Basimecu, the Dauphin of France? Be it known unto thee by these presence, even the presence of Lord Mortimer, that I am the besom that must sweep the court clean of such filth as thou art. Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school; and whereas, before, our forefathers had no other books but the score and the tally, thou hast caused printing to be used, and, contrary to the King his crown and dignity, thou hast built a paper mill. It will be proved to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun and a verb and such abominable words as no Christian ear can endure to hear. Thou hast appointed justices of peace to call poor men before them about matters they were not able to answer. Moreover, thou hast put them in prison; and, because they could not read, thou hast hanged them, when indeed only for that cause they have been most worthy to live. Thou dost ride on a footcloth, dost thou not?

SAYE What of that?

CADE Marry, thou oughtst not to let thy horse wear a cloak when honester men than thou go in their hose and doublets.

DICK And work in their shirt too—as myself, for example, that am a butcher.

SAYE You men of Kent—

DICK What say you of Kent?

SAYE Nothing but this: 'tis *bona terra, mala gens*.

CADE Away with him, away with him! He speaks Latin.

SAYE
Hear me but speak, and bear me where you will.
Kent, in the commentaries Caesar writ,
Is termed the civil'st place of all this isle.
Sweet is the country, because full of riches;
The people liberal, valiant, active, wealthy;
Which makes me hope you are not void of pity.
I sold not Maine; I lost not Normandy;
Yet to recover them would lose my life.
Justice with favor have I always done;
Prayers and tears have moved me; gifts could never.
When have I aught exacted at your hands
Kent to maintain, the King, the realm, and you?
Large gifts have I bestowed on learnèd clerks,
Because my book preferred me to the King.
And seeing ignorance is the curse of God,
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven,
Unless you be possessed with devilish spirits,
You cannot but forbear to murder me.
This tongue hath parleyed unto foreign kings
For your behoof—

CADE Tut, when struck'st thou one blow in the field?

SAYE
Great men have reaching hands. Oft have I struck
Those that I never saw, and struck them dead.

GEORGE O monstrous coward! What, to come behind folks?

SAYE
These cheeks are pale for watching for your good.

CADE Give him a box o' th' ear, and that will make 'em red again.

SAYE
Long sitting to determine poor men's causes
Hath made me full of sickness and diseases.

CADE You shall have a hempen caudle, then, and the help of hatchet.

DICK Why dost thou quiver, man?

SAYE The palsy, and not fear, provokes me.

CADE Nay, he nods at us, as who should say "I'll be even with you." I'll see if his head will stand steadier on a pole, or no. Take him away, and behead him.

SAYE
Tell me, wherein have I offended most?
Have I affected wealth or honor? Speak.
Are my chests filled up with extorted gold?
Is my apparel sumptuous to behold?
Whom have I injured, that you seek my death?
These hands are free from guiltless blood-shedding,
This breast from harboring foul deceitful thoughts.
O, let me live!

CADE I feel remorse in myself with his words, but I'll bridle it. He shall die, an it be but for pleading so well for his life. Away with him! He has a familiar

under his tongue; he speaks not i' God's name. Go,
take him away, I say, and strike off his head
presently; and then break into his son-in-law's
house, Sir James Cromer, and strike off his head;
and bring them both upon two poles hither.

ALL It shall be done.

SAYE
Ah, countrymen, if when you make your prayers,
God should be so obdurate as yourselves,
How would it fare with your departed souls?
And therefore yet relent, and save my life.

CADE Away with him, and do as I command you.

Some exit with Lord Saye.

The proudest peer in the realm shall not wear a
head on his shoulders unless he pay me tribute.
There shall not a maid be married but she shall
pay to me her maidenhead ere they have it. Men
shall hold of me *in capite*; and we charge and command
that their wives be as free as heart can wish
or tongue can tell.

DICK My lord, when shall we go to Cheapside and take
up commodities upon our bills?

CADE Marry, presently.

ALL O, brave!

Enter one with the heads of Lord Saye and Sir James Cromer on poles.

CADE But is not this braver? Let them kiss one another,
for they loved well when they were alive. *The
heads are brought together.* Now part them again,
lest they consult about the giving up of some more
towns in France. Soldiers, defer the spoil of the
city until night, for, with these borne before us
instead of maces, will we ride through the streets
and at every corner have them kiss. Away!

He exits with his company.

Scene 8

Alarum, and retreat. Enter again Cade and all his rabblement.

CADE Up Fish Street! Down Saint Magnus' Corner!
Kill and knock down! Throw them into Thames!

Sound a parley.

What noise is this I hear? Dare any be so bold to
sound retreat or parley when I command them
kill?

Enter Buckingham and old Clifford with Attendants.

BUCKINGHAM
Ay, here they be that dare and will disturb thee.
Know, Cade, we come ambassadors from the King
Unto the Commons, whom thou hast misled,
And here pronounce free pardon to them all

That will forsake thee and go home in peace.

CLIFFORD
What say you, countrymen? Will you relent
And yield to mercy whil'st 'tis offered you,
Or let a rabble lead you to your deaths?
Who loves the King and will embrace his pardon,
Fling up his cap and say "God save his Majesty!"
Who hateth him and honors not his father,
Henry the Fifth, that made all France to quake,
Shake he his weapon at us and pass by.

ALL God save the King! God save the King!

They fling their caps in the air.

CADE What, Buckingham and Clifford, are you so brave?—And, you base peasants, do you believe him? Will you needs be hanged with your pardons about your necks? Hath my sword therefore broke through London gates, that you should leave me at the White Hart in Southwark? I thought you would never have given out these arms till you had recovered your ancient freedom. But you are all recreants and dastards, and delight to live in slavery to the nobility. Let them break your backs with burdens, take your houses over your heads, ravish your wives and daughters before your faces. For me, I will make shift for one, and so God's curse light upon you all!

ALL We'll follow Cade! We'll follow Cade!

CLIFFORD Is Cade the son of Henry the Fifth,
That thus you do exclaim you'll go with him?
Will he conduct you through the heart of France
And make the meanest of you earls and dukes?
Alas, he hath no home, no place to fly to,
Nor knows he how to live but by the spoil,
Unless by robbing of your friends and us.
Were 't not a shame that, whilst you live at jar,
The fearful French, whom you late vanquishèd,
Should make a start o'er seas and vanquish you?
Methinks already in this civil broil
I see them lording it in London streets,
Crying *"Villiago!"* unto all they meet.
Better ten thousand baseborn Cades miscarry
Than you should stoop unto a Frenchman's mercy.
To France, to France, and get what you have lost!
Spare England, for it is your native coast.
Henry hath money; you are strong and manly.
God on our side, doubt not of victory.

ALL
À Clifford! À Clifford! We'll follow the King and Clifford!

CADE*, aside* Was ever feather so lightly blown to and fro as this multitude? The name of Henry the Fifth hales them to an hundred mischiefs and makes them leave me desolate. I see them lay their heads together to surprise me. My sword make way for me, for here is no staying!—In despite of the devils and hell, have through the very middest of you!

And heavens and honor be witness that no want of resolution in me, but only my followers' base and ignominious treasons, makes me betake me to my heels. *He exits, running.*

BUCKINGHAM
What, is he fled? Go, some, and follow him;
And he that brings his head unto the King
Shall have a thousand crowns for his reward.
Some of them exit.
Follow me, soldiers. We'll devise a means
To reconcile you all unto the King.
All exit.

Scene 9

Sound trumpets. Enter King Henry, Queen Margaret, and Somerset on the terrace, aloft.

KING HENRY
Was ever king that joyed an earthly throne
And could command no more content than I?
No sooner was I crept out of my cradle
But I was made a king at nine months old.
Was never subject longed to be a king
As I do long and wish to be a subject!

Enter Buckingham and old Clifford.

BUCKINGHAM
Health and glad tidings to your Majesty!
KING HENRY
Why, Buckingham, is the traitor Cade surprised,
Or is he but retired to make him strong?

Enter below multitudes with halters about their necks.

CLIFFORD
He is fled, my lord, and all his powers do yield
And, humbly thus, with halters on their necks,
Expect your Highness' doom of life or death.
KING HENRY
Then, heaven, set ope thy everlasting gates
To entertain my vows of thanks and praise!
Soldiers, this day have you redeemed your lives
And showed how well you love your prince and country.
Continue still in this so good a mind,
And Henry, though he be infortunate,
Assure yourselves, will never be unkind.
And so with thanks and pardon to you all,
I do dismiss you to your several countries.
ALL God save the King! God save the King!
The multitudes exit.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER
Please it your Grace to be advertisèd
The Duke of York is newly come from Ireland
And, with a puissant and a mighty power
Of gallowglasses and stout kerns,
Is marching hitherward in proud array,
And still proclaimeth, as he comes along,
His arms are only to remove from thee
The Duke of Somerset, whom he terms a traitor.
KING HENRY
Thus stands my state, 'twixt Cade and York distressed,
Like to a ship that, having scaped a tempest,
Is straightway calmed and boarded with a pirate.
But now is Cade driven back, his men dispersed,
And now is York in arms to second him.
I pray thee, Buckingham, go and meet him,
And ask him what's the reason of these arms.
Tell him I'll send Duke Edmund to the Tower.—
And, Somerset, we will commit thee thither
Until his army be dismissed from him.
SOMERSET My lord,
I'll yield myself to prison willingly,
Or unto death, to do my country good.
KING HENRY*, to Buckingham*
In any case, be not too rough in terms,
For he is fierce and cannot brook hard language.
BUCKINGHAM
I will, my lord, and doubt not so to deal
As all things shall redound unto your good.
KING HENRY
Come, wife, let's in, and learn to govern better,
For yet may England curse my wretched reign.
Flourish. They exit.

Scene 10

Enter Cade.

CADE Fie on ambitions! Fie on myself, that have a sword and yet am ready to famish! These five days have I hid me in these woods and durst not peep out, for all the country is laid for me. But now am I so hungry that, if I might have a lease of my life for a thousand years, I could stay no longer. Wherefore, o'er a brick wall have I climbed into this garden, to see if I can eat grass, or pick a sallet another while, which is not amiss to cool a man's stomach this hot weather. And I think this word sallet was born to do me good; for many a time, but for a sallet, my brainpan had been cleft with a brown bill; and many a time, when I have been dry and bravely marching, it hath served me instead of a quart pot to drink in; and now the word sallet must serve me to feed on.

Enter Iden and his Men.

IDEN
Lord, who would live turmoilèd in the court
And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?
This small inheritance my father left me
Contenteth me, and worth a monarchy.
I seek not to wax great by others' waning,
Or gather wealth, I care not with what envy.
Sufficeth that I have maintains my state
And sends the poor well pleasèd from my gate.
CADE, *aside* Here's the lord of the soil come to seize me for a stray, for entering his fee-simple without leave.—Ah, villain, thou wilt betray me and get a thousand crowns of the King by carrying my head to him; but I'll make thee eat iron like an ostrich and swallow my sword like a great pin, ere thou and I part. *He draws his sword.*
IDEN
Why, rude companion, whatsoe'er thou be,
I know thee not. Why, then, should I betray thee?
Is 't not enough to break into my garden
And, like a thief, to come to rob my grounds,
Climbing my walls in spite of me the owner,
But thou wilt brave me with these saucy terms?
CADE Brave thee? Ay, by the best blood that ever was broached, and beard thee too. Look on me well: I have eat no meat these five days, yet come thou and thy five men, and if I do not leave you all as dead as a doornail, I pray God I may never eat grass more.
IDEN
Nay, it shall ne'er be said, while England stands,
That Alexander Iden, an esquire of Kent,
Took odds to combat a poor famished man.
Oppose thy steadfast gazing eyes to mine;
See if thou canst outface me with thy looks.
Set limb to limb, and thou art far the lesser;
Thy hand is but a finger to my fist,
Thy leg a stick comparèd with this truncheon.
My foot shall fight with all the strength thou hast;
And if mine arm be heavèd in the air,
Thy grave is digged already in the earth.
As for words, whose greatness answers words,
Let this my sword report what speech forbears.
He draws his sword.
CADE By my valor, the most complete champion that ever I heard! Steel, if thou turn the edge or cut not out the burly-boned clown in chines of beef ere thou sleep in thy sheath, I beseech God on my knees thou mayst be turned to hobnails.
(Here they fight, and Cade falls.)
O, I am slain! Famine, and no other, hath slain me. Let ten thousand devils come against me, and give me but the ten meals I have lost, and I'd defy them all. Wither, garden, and be henceforth a burying place to all that do dwell in this house, because the

unconquered soul of Cade is fled.

IDEN
Is ’t Cade that I have slain, that monstrous traitor?
Sword, I will hallow thee for this thy deed,
And hang thee o’er my tomb when I am dead.
Ne’er shall this blood be wipèd from thy point,
But thou shalt wear it as a herald’s coat
To emblaze the honor that thy master got.

CADE Iden, farewell, and be proud of thy victory. Tell
Kent from me she hath lost her best man, and
exhort all the world to be cowards; for I, that never
feared any, am vanquished by famine, not by valor.
Dies.

IDEN
How much thou wrong’st me, heaven be my judge!
Die, damnèd wretch, the curse of her that bare thee!
And as I thrust thy body in with my sword,
So wish I, I might thrust thy soul to hell.
Hence will I drag thee headlong by the heels
Unto a dunghill, which shall be thy grave,
And there cut off thy most ungracious head,
Which I will bear in triumph to the King,
Leaving thy trunk for crows to feed upon.
He exits with his Men, dragging Cade’s body.

ACT 5

Scene 1

Enter York, wearing the white rose, and his army of Irish, with Attendants, Drum and Colors.

YORK
From Ireland thus comes York to claim his right
And pluck the crown from feeble Henry's head.
Ring, bells, aloud! Burn, bonfires, clear and bright
To entertain great England's lawful king!
Ah, *sancta maiestas*, who would not buy thee dear?
Let them obey that knows not how to rule.
This hand was made to handle naught but gold.
I cannot give due action to my words
Except a sword or scepter balance it.
A scepter shall it have, have I a soul,
On which I'll toss the fleur-de-luce of France.

Enter Buckingham, wearing the red rose.

Aside. Whom have we here? Buckingham, to disturb me?
The King hath sent him, sure. I must dissemble.
BUCKINGHAM
York, if thou meanest well, I greet thee well.
YORK
Humphrey of Buckingham, I accept thy greeting.
Art thou a messenger, or come of pleasure?
BUCKINGHAM
A messenger from Henry, our dread liege,
To know the reason of these arms in peace;
Or why thou, being a subject as I am,
Against thy oath and true allegiance sworn,
Should raise so great a power without his leave,
Or dare to bring thy force so near the court.
YORK*, aside*
Scarce can I speak, my choler is so great.
O, I could hew up rocks and fight with flint,
I am so angry at these abject terms!
And now, like Ajax Telamonius,
On sheep or oxen could I spend my fury.
I am far better born than is the King,
More like a king, more kingly in my thoughts.
But I must make fair weather yet awhile,
Till Henry be more weak and I more strong.—
Buckingham, I prithee, pardon me,
That I have given no answer all this while.
My mind was troubled with deep melancholy.
The cause why I have brought this army hither
Is to remove proud Somerset from the King,
Seditious to his Grace and to the state.

BUCKINGHAM
That is too much presumption on thy part.
But if thy arms be to no other end,
The King hath yielded unto thy demand:
The Duke of Somerset is in the Tower.
YORK
Upon thine honor, is he prisoner?
BUCKINGHAM
Upon mine honor, he is prisoner.
YORK
Then, Buckingham, I do dismiss my powers.—
Soldiers, I thank you all. Disperse yourselves.
Meet me tomorrow in Saint George's field;
You shall have pay and everything you wish.
Soldiers exit.
And let my sovereign, virtuous Henry,
Command my eldest son, nay, all my sons,
As pledges of my fealty and love;
I'll send them all as willing as I live.
Lands, goods, horse, armor, anything I have
Is his to use, so Somerset may die.
BUCKINGHAM
York, I commend this kind submission.
We twain will go into his Highness' tent.
They walk arm in arm.

Enter King Henry and Attendants.

KING HENRY
Buckingham, doth York intend no harm to us
That thus he marcheth with thee arm in arm?
YORK
In all submission and humility
York doth present himself unto your Highness.
KING HENRY
Then what intends these forces thou dost bring?
YORK
To heave the traitor Somerset from hence
And fight against that monstrous rebel Cade,
Who since I heard to be discomfited.

Enter Iden, with Cade's head.

IDEN
If one so rude and of so mean condition
May pass into the presence of a king,
Lo, I present your Grace a traitor's head,
The head of Cade, whom I in combat slew.
KING HENRY
The head of Cade? Great God, how just art Thou!
O, let me view his visage, being dead,
That living wrought me such exceeding trouble.
Tell me, my friend, art thou the man that slew him?
IDEN I was, an 't like your Majesty.
KING HENRY
How art thou called? And what is thy degree?

IDEN
Alexander Iden, that's my name,
A poor esquire of Kent that loves his king.
BUCKINGHAM
So please it you, my lord, 'twere not amiss
He were created knight for his good service.
KING HENRY
Iden, kneel down. *He kneels.* Rise up a knight. *He rises.*
We give thee for reward a thousand marks,
And will that thou henceforth attend on us.
IDEN
May Iden live to merit such a bounty,
And never live but true unto his liege!

Enter Queen Margaret and Somerset, wearing the red rose.

KING HENRY*, aside to Buckingham*
See, Buckingham, Somerset comes with th' Queen.
Go bid her hide him quickly from the Duke.
Buckingham whispers to the Queen.
QUEEN MARGARET
For thousand Yorks he shall not hide his head,
But boldly stand and front him to his face.
YORK*, aside*
How now? Is Somerset at liberty?
Then, York, unloose thy long-imprisoned thoughts,
And let thy tongue be equal with thy heart.
Shall I endure the sight of Somerset?—
False king, why hast thou broken faith with me,
Knowing how hardly I can brook abuse?
"King" did I call thee? No, thou art not king,
Not fit to govern and rule multitudes,
Which dar'st not—no, nor canst not—rule a traitor.
That head of thine doth not become a crown;
Thy hand is made to grasp a palmer's staff,
And not to grace an awful princely scepter.
That gold must round engirt these brows of mine,
Whose smile and frown, like to Achilles' spear,
Is able with the change to kill and cure.
Here is a hand to hold a scepter up
And with the same to act controlling laws.
Give place. By heaven, thou shalt rule no more
O'er him whom heaven created for thy ruler.
SOMERSET
O monstrous traitor! I arrest thee, York,
Of capital treason 'gainst the King and crown.
Obey, audacious traitor. Kneel for grace.
YORK
Wouldst have me kneel? First let me ask of these
If they can brook I bow a knee to man.
To an Attendant. Sirrah, call in my sons to be my bail.*Attendant exits.*
I know, ere they will have me go to ward,
They'll pawn their swords for my enfranchisement.

QUEEN MARGARET*, to Buckingham*
Call hither Clifford; bid him come amain,
To say if that the bastard boys of York
Shall be the surety for their traitor father.

Buckingham exits.

YORK*, to Queen Margaret*
O, blood-bespotted Neapolitan,
Outcast of Naples, England's bloody scourge!
The sons of York, thy betters in their birth,
Shall be their father's bail, and bane to those
That for my surety will refuse the boys.

Enter York's sons Edward and Richard, wearing the white rose.

See where they come; I'll warrant they'll make it good.

Enter old Clifford and his Son, wearing the red rose.

QUEEN MARGARET
And here comes Clifford to deny their bail.
CLIFFORD*, kneeling before King Henry*
Health and all happiness to my lord the King.

He rises.

YORK
I thank thee, Clifford. Say, what news with thee?
Nay, do not fright us with an angry look.
We are thy sovereign, Clifford; kneel again.
For thy mistaking so, we pardon thee.
CLIFFORD
This is my king, York; I do not mistake,
But thou mistakes me much to think I do.—
To Bedlam with him! Is the man grown mad?
KING HENRY
Ay, Clifford, a bedlam and ambitious humor
Makes him oppose himself against his king.
CLIFFORD
He is a traitor. Let him to the Tower,
And chop away that factious pate of his.
QUEEN MARGARET
He is arrested, but will not obey.
His sons, he says, shall give their words for him.
YORK Will you not, sons?
EDWARD
Ay, noble father, if our words will serve.
RICHARD
And if words will not, then our weapons shall.
CLIFFORD
Why, what a brood of traitors have we here!
YORK
Look in a glass, and call thy image so.
I am thy king and thou a false-heart traitor.
Call hither to the stake my two brave bears,
That, with the very shaking of their chains,
They may astonish these fell-lurking curs.

To an Attendant. Bid Salisbury and Warwick come to me. *Attendant exits.*

Enter the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury, wearing the white rose.

CLIFFORD
Are these thy bears? We'll bait thy bears to death
And manacle the bearherd in their chains,
If thou dar'st bring them to the baiting place.
RICHARD
Oft have I seen a hot o'erweening cur
Run back and bite because he was withheld,
Who, being suffered with the bear's fell paw,
Hath clapped his tail between his legs and cried;
And such a piece of service will you do
If you oppose yourselves to match Lord Warwick.
CLIFFORD
Hence, heap of wrath, foul indigested lump,
As crooked in thy manners as thy shape!
YORK
Nay, we shall heat you thoroughly anon.
CLIFFORD
Take heed, lest by your heat you burn yourselves.
KING HENRY
Why, Warwick, hath thy knee forgot to bow?—
Old Salisbury, shame to thy silver hair,
Thou mad misleader of thy brainsick son!
What, wilt thou on thy deathbed play the ruffian
And seek for sorrow with thy spectacles?
O, where is faith? O, where is loyalty?
If it be banished from the frosty head,
Where shall it find a harbor in the earth?
Wilt thou go dig a grave to find out war,
And shame thine honorable age with blood?
Why art thou old and want'st experience?
Or wherefore dost abuse it, if thou hast it?
For shame! In duty bend thy knee to me
That bows unto the grave with mickle age.
SALISBURY
My lord, I have considered with myself
The title of this most renownèd duke,
And in my conscience do repute his Grace
The rightful heir to England's royal seat.
KING HENRY
Hast thou not sworn allegiance unto me?
SALISBURY I have.
KING HENRY
Canst thou dispense with heaven for such an oath?
SALISBURY
It is great sin to swear unto a sin,
But greater sin to keep a sinful oath.
Who can be bound by any solemn vow
To do a murd'rous deed, to rob a man,
To force a spotless virgin's chastity,
To reave the orphan of his patrimony,

To wring the widow from her customed right,
And have no other reason for this wrong
But that he was bound by a solemn oath?

QUEEN MARGARET
A subtle traitor needs no sophister.

KING HENRY*, to an Attendant*
Call Buckingham, and bid him arm himself.

Attendant exits.

YORK*, to King Henry*
Call Buckingham and all the friends thou hast,
I am resolved for death or dignity.

CLIFFORD
The first, I warrant thee, if dreams prove true.

WARWICK
You were best to go to bed and dream again,
To keep thee from the tempest of the field.

CLIFFORD
I am resolved to bear a greater storm
Than any thou canst conjure up today;
And that I'll write upon thy burgonet,
Might I but know thee by thy house's badge.

WARWICK
Now, by my father's badge, old Neville's crest,
The rampant bear chained to the ragged staff,
This day I'll wear aloft my burgonet—
As on a mountaintop the cedar shows
That keeps his leaves in spite of any storm—
Even to affright thee with the view thereof.

CLIFFORD
And from thy burgonet I'll rend thy bear
And tread it under foot with all contempt,
Despite the bearherd that protects the bear.

YOUNG CLIFFORD
And so to arms, victorious father,
To quell the rebels and their complices.

RICHARD
Fie! Charity, for shame! Speak not in spite,
For you shall sup with Jesu Christ tonight.

YOUNG CLIFFORD
Foul stigmatic, that's more than thou canst tell!

RICHARD
If not in heaven, you'll surely sup in hell.

They exit separately.

Scene 2

The sign of the Castle Inn is displayed. Alarms.
Enter Warwick, wearing the white rose.

WARWICK
Clifford of Cumberland, 'tis Warwick calls!
An if thou dost not hide thee from the bear,
Now, when the angry trumpet sounds alarum
And dead men's cries do fill the empty air,
Clifford, I say, come forth and fight with me;
Proud northern lord, Clifford of Cumberland,
Warwick is hoarse with calling thee to arms.

Enter York, wearing the white rose.

How now, my noble lord? What, all afoot?

YORK

The deadly-handed Clifford slew my steed,
But match to match I have encountered him
And made a prey for carrion kites and crows
Even of the bonny beast he loved so well.

Enter old Clifford, wearing the red rose.

WARWICK

Of one or both of us the time is come.

YORK

Hold, Warwick! Seek thee out some other chase,
For I myself must hunt this deer to death.

WARWICK

Then, nobly, York! 'Tis for a crown thou fight'st.—
As I intend, Clifford, to thrive today,
It grieves my soul to leave thee unassailed.

Warwick exits.

CLIFFORD

What seest thou in me, York? Why dost thou pause?

YORK

With thy brave bearing should I be in love,
But that thou art so fast mine enemy.

CLIFFORD

Nor should thy prowess want praise and esteem,
But that 'tis shown ignobly and in treason.

YORK

So let it help me now against thy sword
As I in justice and true right express it!

CLIFFORD

My soul and body on the action both!

YORK

A dreadful lay! Address thee instantly.

They fight and Clifford falls.

CLIFFORD

La fin courrone les oeuvres. *He dies.*

YORK

Thus war hath given thee peace, for thou art still.
Peace with his soul, heaven, if it be thy will!

He exits.

Enter young Clifford, wearing the red rose.

YOUNG CLIFFORD

Shame and confusion! All is on the rout.
Fear frames disorder, and disorder wounds
Where it should guard. O war, thou son of hell,
Whom angry heavens do make their minister,
Throw in the frozen bosoms of our part
Hot coals of vengeance! Let no soldier fly.
He that is truly dedicate to war
Hath no self-love; nor he that loves himself

Hath not essentially, but by circumstance,
The name of valor. *He sees his father, lying dead.* O, let the vile world end
And the premised flames of the last day
Knit Earth and heaven together!
Now let the general trumpet blow his blast,
Particularities and petty sounds
To cease! Wast thou ordained, dear father,
To lose thy youth in peace, and to achieve
The silver livery of advisèd age,
And, in thy reverence and thy chair-days, thus
To die in ruffian battle? Even at this sight
My heart is turned to stone, and while 'tis mine,
It shall be stony. York not our old men spares;
No more will I their babes. Tears virginal
Shall be to me even as the dew to fire;
And beauty, that the tyrant oft reclaims,
Shall to my flaming wrath be oil and flax.
Henceforth I will not have to do with pity.
Meet I an infant of the house of York,
Into as many gobbets will I cut it
As wild Medea young Absyrtis did.
In cruelty will I seek out my fame.
He takes his father's body onto his back.
Come, thou new ruin of old Clifford's house;
As did Aeneas old Anchises bear,
So bear I thee upon my manly shoulders.
But then Aeneas bare a living load,
Nothing so heavy as these woes of mine. *He exits.*

Enter Richard, wearing the white rose, and Somerset, wearing the red rose, to fight.

Richard kills Somerset under the sign of Castle Inn.

RICHARD So lie thou there.
For underneath an alehouse' paltry sign,
The Castle in Saint Albans, Somerset
Hath made the wizard famous in his death.
Sword, hold thy temper! Heart, be wrathful still!
Priests pray for enemies, but princes kill. *He exits.*

Fight. Excursions. Enter King Henry, Queen Margaret, both wearing the red rose, and Others.

QUEEN MARGARET
Away, my lord! You are slow. For shame, away!
KING HENRY
Can we outrun the heavens? Good Margaret, stay!
QUEEN MARGARET
What are you made of? You'll nor fight nor fly.
Now is it manhood, wisdom, and defense
To give the enemy way, and to secure us
By what we can, which can no more but fly.
Alarum afar off.
If you be ta'en, we then should see the bottom

Of all our fortunes; but if we haply scape,
As well we may—if not through your neglect—
We shall to London get, where you are loved
And where this breach now in our fortunes made
May readily be stopped.

Enter Young Clifford, wearing the red rose.

YOUNG CLIFFORD
But that my heart's on future mischief set,
I would speak blasphemy ere bid you fly;
But fly you must. Uncurable discomfit
Reigns in the hearts of all our present parts.
Away, for your relief! And we will live
To see their day and them our fortune give.
Away, my lord, away!

They exit.

Scene 3

Alarum. Retreat. Enter York, Edward, Richard, Warwick, and Soldiers, all wearing the white rose, with Drum and Colors.

YORK
Of Salisbury, who can report of him,
That winter lion, who in rage forgets
Agèd contusions and all brush of time,
And, like a gallant in the brow of youth,
Repairs him with occasion? This happy day
Is not itself, nor have we won one foot,
If Salisbury be lost.
RICHARD My noble father,
Three times today I holp him to his horse,
Three times bestrid him. Thrice I led him off,
Persuaded him from any further act;
But still, where danger was, still there I met him,
And, like rich hangings in a homely house,
So was his will in his old feeble body.
But, noble as he is, look where he comes.

Enter Salisbury, wearing the white rose.

Now, by my sword, well hast thou fought today!
SALISBURY
By th' Mass, so did we all. I thank you, Richard.
God knows how long it is I have to live,
And it hath pleased Him that three times today
You have defended me from imminent death.
Well, lords, we have not got that which we have;
'Tis not enough our foes are this time fled,
Being opposites of such repairing nature.
YORK
I know our safety is to follow them;
For, as I hear, the King is fled to London
To call a present court of Parliament.
Let us pursue him ere the writs go forth.—

What says Lord Warwick? Shall we after them?

WARWICK

After them? Nay, before them, if we can.
Now, by my hand, lords, 'twas a glorious day.
Saint Albans battle won by famous York
Shall be eternized in all age to come.—
Sound drum and trumpets, and to London all;
And more such days as these to us befall!

Flourish. They exit.