

**Henry VI:
The Wars of the Roses**

A History

by
William Shakespeare

Adapted by
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LAB! Theatre

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	GENDER
Henry VI	King of England	M
Margaret of Anjou	his Queen	F
Prince Edward	their son	M
Duke of Gloucester	uncle to the King	M
Duke of Exeter	advisor to the King	M
Earl of Warwick	the 'kingmaker'	M
Earl of Salisbury	his father	M
Bishop of Winchester	great-uncle to the King	M
Richard Plantagenet	Duke of York	M
Edward IV	his son	M
Clarence	his second son	M
Richard III	his third son, a hunchback	M
Rutland	his youngest son	M
Lady Grey	a widow, later Queen Elizabeth	F
Duke of Suffolk	Margaret's paramour	M
Duke of Somerset	York's rival	M
Duke of Buckingham	a courtier	M
Lord Clifford	a Lancastrian courtier	M
Lord Talbot	a warrior	M
John Talbot	his son	M
Sir William Lucy	a knight	M
Joan la Pucelle	a prophethess	F
Charles	the French Dauphin	M
Reignier	King of Naples, Margaret's father	M
Duke of Alencon	a French nobleman	M
Lewis XI	King of France	M
Lady Bona	his sister	F
Vernon	a Yorkist	M
Basset	a Lancastrian	M
Lawyer	a Yorkist	M
Tutor	Rutland's teacher	M
Lieutenant	a guard at the Tower	M
Scout	a French soldier	M
Two murderers	employed by Suffolk	M
Two keepers	who capture Henry VI	M
Soldiers, messengers, commons and others		

ACT I, SCENE 1 - THE TEMPLE GARDEN

*Enter the Earls of SOMERSET, SUFFOLK and
WARWICK, RICHARD PLANTAGENET, VERNON
and another lawyer.*

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

SUFFOLK

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Then say at once if I maintain'd the truth;
Or else was wrangling Somerset in the error?
The truth appears so naked on my side
That any purblind eye may find it out.

SOMERSET

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Let him that is a true-born gentleman
And stands upon the honour of his birth,
If he suppose that I have pleaded truth,
From off this brier pluck a white rose with me.

SOMERSET

Let him that is no coward nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.

WARWICK

I love no colours, and without all colour
Of base insinuating flattery
I pluck this white rose with Plantagenet.

SUFFOLK

I pluck this red rose with young Somerset
And say withal I think he held the right.

VERNON

Stay, lord and gentlemen, and pluck no more,
Till you conclude that he upon whose side
The fewest roses are cropp'd from the tree
Shall yield the other in the right opinion.

SOMERSET

Good Master Vernon, it is well objected:
If I have fewewst, I subscribe in silence.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

And I.

VERNON

Then for the trust and plainness of the case,
I pluck this pale and maiden blossom here.

SOMERSET

Well, well, come on: who else?

LAWYER

(to SOMERSET)

Unless my study and my books be false,
The argument you held was wrong in you:
In sign whereof I pluck a white rose too.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Now, Somerset, where is your argument?

SOMERSET

Here in my scabbard, meditating that
Shall dye your white rose in a bloody red.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Hath not thy rose a canker, Somerset?

SOMERSET

Hath not thy rose a thorn, Plantagenet?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Ay, sharp and piercing, to maintain his truth;
Whiles thy consuming canker eats his falsehood.

SOMERSET

By him that made me, I'll maintain my words
On any plot of ground in Christendom.
Was not thy father, Richard Earl of Cambridge,
For treason executed in our late king's days?
His trespass yet lives guilty in thy blood.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

My father was attached, not attainted,
Condemn'd to die for treason, but no traitor;
And that I'll prove on better men than Somerset.
For your partaker Pole and you yourself,
I'll note you in my book of memory,
To scourge you for this apprehension:
Look to it well and say you are well warn'd.

SOMERSET

Ah, thou shalt find us ready for thee still;
And know us by these colours for thy foes,
For these my friends in spite of thee shall wear.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

And, by my soul, this pale and angry rose,
As cognizance of my blood-drinking hate,
Will I for ever and my faction wear,
Until it wither with me to my grave
Or flourish to the height of my degree.

SUFFOLK

Go forward and be choked with thy ambition!
And so farewell until I meet thee next.

Exit.

SOMERSET

Have with thee, Pole. Farewell, ambitious Richard.

Exit.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

How I am braved and must perforce endure it!

WARWICK

This blot that they object against your house
 Shall be wiped out in the next parliament
 And if thou be not then created York,
 I will not live to be accounted Warwick.
 Meantime, in signal of my love to thee,
 Will I upon thy party wear this rose;
 And here I prophesy: this brawl to-day
 Shall send between the red rose and the white
 A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Thanks, gentle sir.
 Come, let us four to dinner: I dare say
 This quarrel will drink blood another day.

Exeunt.

ACT I, SCENE 2 - ORLEANS

*Here an alarum, and TALBOT pursueth the DAUPHIN,
 and driveth him. Then enter JOAN LA PUCELLE,
 driving Englishmen before her, and exit after them and re-
 enter TALBOT.*

TALBOT

Where is my strength, my valour, and my force?
 Our English troops retire, I cannot stay them:
 A woman clad in armour chaseth them.

Re-enter JOAN LA PUCELLE.

Here, here she comes. I'll have a bout with thee;

Blood will I draw on thee, thou art a witch,
And straightaway give thy soul to him thou servest!

JOAN

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

Here they fight.

TALBOT

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

JOAN

Talbot, farewell; thy hour is not yet come:
I must go to victual Orleans forthwith.
This day is ours, as many more shall be.

Exit.

TALBOT

My thoughts are whirled like a potter's wheel;
I know not where I am nor what I do.
A witch, by fear, not force, like Hannibal,
Drives back our troops and conquers as she lists.
They called us for our fierceness English dogs;
Now, like to whelps, we crying run away.

A short alarum.

Hark, countrymen! either renew the fight
Or tear the lions out of England's coat.

Alarum. Here another skirmish.

It will not be: retire into your trenches!
Pucelle is enter'd into Orleans,
In spite of us or aught that we could do;
The shame hereof will make me hide my head.

Exit TALBOT. Alarum; retreat; flourish. Enter, on the walls, JOAN LA PUCELLE, CHARLES, REIGNIER, ALENCON, and soldiers.

JOAN

Advance our waving colours on the walls;
Rescued is Orleans from the English.
Thus Joan la Pucelle hath perform'd her word.

CHARLES

How shall I honour thee for this success?
France, triumph in thy glorious prophetess!
Recover'd is the town of Orleans:
More blessed hap did ne'er befall our state.

ALENCON

All France will be replete with mirth and joy
When they shall hear how we have play'd the men.

CHARLES

'Tis Joan, not we, by whom the day is won;
For which I will divide my crown with her,
And all the priests and friars in my realm
Shall in procession sing her endless praise.
No longer on Saint Denis will we cry,
But Joan la Pucelle shall be France's saint.
Come in, and let us banquet royally
After this golden day of victory.

Flourish. Exeunt.

ACT I, SCENE 3 - PARIS, THE PALACE

Flourish. Enter KING HENRY VI, GLOUCESTER, WARWICK, SOMERSET, and RICHARD PLANTAGENET.

WARWICK

Accept this scroll, most gracious sovereign,
Which in the right of Richard Plantagenet
We do exhibit to your majesty.

GLOUCESTER

Well urged, my Lord of Warwick; or sweet prince,
And if your grace mark every circumstance,
You have great reason to do Richard right.

WARWICK

Let Richard be restored to his blood;
So shall his father's wrongs be recompensed.

HENRY VI

If Richard will be true, not that alone
But all the whole inheritance I give
That doth belong unto the house of York,
From whence you spring by lineal descent.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Thy humble servant vows obedience
And humble service till the point of death.

HENRY VI

Stoop then and set your knee against my foot;
And, in requerdon of that duty done,
I gird thee with the valiant sword of York.
Rise Richard, like a true Plantagenet,
And rise created princely Duke of York.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

And so thrive Richard as thy foes may fall.

ALL

Welcome, high prince, the mighty Duke of York!

SOMERSET

(Aside)

Perish, base prince, ignoble Duke of York!

Enter SOLDIER.

SOLDIER

My gracious sovereign, as I rode from Calais,
 To haste unto your coronation,
 A letter was deliver'd to my hands,
 Writ to your grace from the Duke of Burgundy.

GLOUCESTER

(Reading)

What means his grace, that he hath changed his style?
 No more but plain and bluntly, 'To the king!'
 Hath he forgot he is his sovereign?
 What's here? 'I have, upon especial cause,
 Moved with compassion of my country's wreck,
 Forsaken your pernicious faction
 And join'd with Charles, the rightful King of France.'

HENRY VI

What! doth my uncle Burgundy revolt?

GLOUCESTER

He doth, my lord, and is become your foe.

HENRY VI

Then gather strength and march unto him straight:
 Let him perceive how ill we brook his treason
 And what offence it is to flout his friends.

Exit SOLDIER. Enter VERNON and BASSET.

VERNON

Grant me the combat, gracious sovereign!

BASSET

And me, my lord, grant me the combat too.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

This is my servant: hear him, noble prince.

SOMERSET

And this is mine: sweet Henry, favour him.

HENRY VI

Be patient, lords; and give them leave to speak.
 Say, gentlemen, what makes you thus exclaim?
 And wherefore crave you combat? or with whom?

VERNON

With him, my lord; for he hath done me wrong.

BASSET

And I with him' for he hath done me wrong.
 This fellow here, with envious carping tongue,
 Upbraided me about the rose I wear;
 Saying, the sanguine colour of the leaves
 Did represent my master's blushing cheeks,
 When stubbornly he did repugn the truth
 About a certain question of the law
 Argued betwixt the Duke of York and him;
 And in defence of my lord's worthiness,
 I crave the benefit of law of arms.

VERNON

Yet know, my lord, I was provoked by him;
 And he first took exceptions at this badge,
 Pronouncing that the paleness of this flower
 Bewray'd the faintness of my master's heart.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Will not this malice, Somerset, be left?

SOMERSET

Your private grudge, my Lord of York, will out,
 Though ne'er so cunningly you smother it.

HENRY VI

Good Lord, what madness rules in brainsick men,
 When for so slight and frivolous a cause
 Such factious emulations shall arise!
 Good cousins both, of York and Somerset,
 Quiet yourselves, I pray, and be at peace.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

SOMERSET

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

GLOUCESTER

Presumptuous vassals, are you not ashamed
With this immodest clamorous outrage
To trouble and disturb the king and us?
Let me persuade you take a better course.

WARWICK

It grieves his highness: good my lords, be friends.

HENRY VI

Come hither, you that would be combatants:
Henceforth I charge you, as you love our favour,
Quite to forget this quarrel and the cause.
And you, my lords, remember where we are,
In France, amongst a fickle wavering nation.
If they perceive dissension in our looks
And that within ourselves we disagree,
How will their grudging stomachs be provoked
To wilful disobedience, and rebel!
Let me be umpire in this doubtful strife.
I see no reason, if I wear this rose,

(Putting on a red rose)

That any one should therefore be suspicious
I more incline to Somerset than York:
Both are my kinsmen, and I love them both.
Cousin of York, we institute your grace
To be our regent in these parts of France:
And, good my Lord of Somerset, unite
Your troops of horsemen with his bands of foot;
And like true subjects, sons of your progenitors,
Go cheerfully together and digest

Your angry choler on your enemies.
 Ourself, my lord protector and the rest
 After some respite will return to Calais;
 From thence to England; where I hope ere long
 To be presented, by your victories,
 With Charles, Alencon and that traitorous rout.

*Flourish. Exeunt all but YORK, WARWICK and
 VERNON.*

WARWICK

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

WARWICK

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

An if I wist he did - but let it rest.
 Other affairs must now be managed.

Exeunt all but WARWICK.

WARWICK

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

Exit.

ACT I, SCENE 4 - PLAINS IN GASCONY

Enter RICHARD PLANTAGENET with trumpet and many soldiers at right, SOMERSET with his army at left.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

Enter SIR WILLIAM LUCY. at center.

LUCY

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

O God, that Somerset, who in proud heart
Doth stop my cornets, were in Talbot's place!
Mad ire and wrathful fury makes me weep,
That thus we die, while remiss traitors sleep.

SOMERSET

It is too late; I cannot send them now:
This expedition was by York and Talbot
Too rashly plotted: all our general force
Might with a sally of the very town
Be buckled with. The over-daring Talbot

Hath sullied all his gloss of former honour
 By this unheedful, desperate, wild adventure:
 York set him on to fight and die in shame,
 That, Talbot dead, great York might bear the name.

LUCY *turns to* SOMERSET.

How now, Sir William! whither were you sent?

LUCY

Whither, my lord? from bought and sold Lord Talbot;
 Who, ring'd about with bold adversity,
 Cries out for noble York and Somerset,
 And while the honourable captain there
 Drops bloody sweat from his war-wearied limbs,
 You, his false hopes, the trust of England's honour,
 Keep off aloof with worthless emulation.
 Let not your private discord keep away
 The levied succors that should lend him aid.

SOMERSET

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

LUCY

And York as fast upon your grace exclaims.

SOMERSET

York lies; he might have sent and had the horse.

LUCY *turns back to* RICHARD PLANTAGENET.

LUCY

O, send some succor to the distress'd lord!

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

LUCY

Then Go take mercy on brave Talbot's soul;
 And on his son young John, who two hours since

I met in travel toward his warlike father!
 This seven years did not Talbot see his son;
 And now they meet where both their lives are done.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Alas, what joy shall noble Talbot have
 To bid his young son welcome to his grave?
 Away! vexation almost stops my breath.
 Maine, Blois, Poitiers and Tours are won away,
 'Long all of Somerset and his delay.

LUCY

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

SOMERSET

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

LUCY

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

SOMERSET

If he be dead, brave Talbot, then adieu!

LUCY

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

Exeunt.

ACT I, SCENE 5 - A FIELD OF BATTLE

Alarum. Excursions, enter TALBOT led by a SERVANT.

TALBOT

Where is my other life? mine own is gone;
 O, where's young Talbot? where is valiant John?

Triumphant death, smear'd with captivity,
Young Talbot's valour makes me smile at thee.

SERVANT

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

Enter soldiers with the body of JOHN TALBOT.

TALBOT

O, thou, whose wounds became hard-favour'd death,
Speak to thy father ere thou yield thy breath!
Come, come and lay him in his father's arms:
My spirit can no longer bear these harms.
Soldiers, adieu! I have what I would have,
Now my old arms are young John Talbot's grave.

Dies.

*Enter CHARLES, ALENCON, REIGNIER, JOAN LA
PUCELLE and forces.*

CHARLES

Had York and Somerset brought rescue in,
We should have found a bloody day of this.

ALENCON

How the young whelp of Talbot's raging-wood,
Did flesh his puny sword in Frenchmen's blood!
Doubtless he would have made a noble knight;
See, where he lies inhearsed in the arms
Of the most bloody nurses of his harms!

*Enter SIR WILLIAM LUCY, attended, herald of the
French preceding.*

LUCY

I come to know what prisoners thou hast ta'en
And to survey the bodies of the dead.

CHARLES

For prisoners ask'st thou? hell our prison is.
But tell me whom thou seek'st.

LUCY

(Seeing TALBOT's body)

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

JOAN

For God's sake let him have 'em; to keep them here,
They would but stink, and putrefy the air.

CHARLES

Go, take their bodies hence.

LUCY

I'll bear them hence; but from their ashes shall be rear'd
A phoenix that shall make all France afeared.

CHARLES

So we be rid of them, do with 'em what thou wilt.
And now to Paris, in this conquering vein:
All will be ours, now bloody Talbot's slain.

Enter a SCOUT.

SCOUT

Success unto our valiant general,
And happiness to his accomplices!

CHARLES

What tidings send our scouts? I prithee, speak.

SCOUT

The English army, that divided was
Into two parties, now is conjoined in one,
And means to give you battle presently.

JOAN

Command the conquest, Charles, it shall be thine,
Let Henry fret and all the world repine.

Exeunt.

ACT II, SCENE 1 - BEFORE ANGIERS

Alarum. Enter SUFFOLK with MARGARET in his hand.

SUFFOLK

Be what thou wilt, thou art my prisoner.

(Gazes on her)

O fairest beauty, do not fear nor fly!
Who art thou? say, that I may honour thee.

MARGARET

Margaret my name, and daughter to a king,
The King of Naples, whosoe'er thou art.

SUFFOLK

An earl I am, and Suffolk I am call'd.

MARGARET

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

SUFFOLK

(Aside)

How canst thou tell she will deny thy suit,

Before thou make a trial of her love?
 She's beautiful and therefore to be woo'd'
 She is a woman, therefore to be won.

MARGARET

Wilt thou accept of ransom, yea or no?

SUFFOLK

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

MARGARET

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

SUFFOLK

And yet a dispensation may be had.
 I'll win this Lady Margaret. For whom?
 Why, for my king: tush, that's a wooden thing.
 Yet so my fancy may be satisfied,
 And peace established between these realms.
 But there remains a scruple in that too;
 For though her father be the King of Naples,
 Duke of Anjou and Maine, yet is he poor,
 And our nobility will scorn the match.

MARGARET

Hear ye, captain, are you not at leisure?

SUFFOLK

It shall be so, disdain they ne'er so much.
 Henry is youthful and will quickly yield.
 --Madam, I have a secret to reveal.
 Say, gentle princess, would you not suppose
 Your bondage happy, to be made a queen?

MARGARET

To be a queen in bondage is more vile
 Than is a slave in base servility;
 For princes should be free.

SUFFOLK

And so shall you,
If happy England's royal king be free.

MARGARET

Why, what concerns his freedom unto me?

SUFFOLK

I'll undertake to make thee Henry's queen,
To put a golden sceptre in thy hand
And set a precious crown upon thy head,
If thou wilt consent to be my -

MARGARET

What?

SUFFOLK

His love.
How say you, madam, are ye so content?

MARGARET

An if my father please, I am content.

SUFFOLK

Then call our captains and our colours forth.
And madam, at your father's castle walls
We'll crave a parley, to confer with him.

A parley sounded. Enter REIGNIER on the walls.

See, Reignier, see thy daughter prisoner!

REIGNIER

To whom?

SUFFOLK

To me.

REIGNIER

Suffolk, what remedy?

SUFFOLK

Consent, and for thy honour give consent,
Thy daughter shall be wedded to my king.
What answer makes your grace unto my suit?

REIGNIER

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

SUFFOLK

Reignier of France, I give thee kingly thanks,
Because this is in traffic of a king.

REIGNIER

I do embrace thee, as I would embrace
The Christian prince, King Henry, were he here.

MARGARET

Farewell, my lord: good wishes, praise and prayers
Shall Suffolk ever have of Margaret.

Going.

SUFFOLK

Farewell, sweet madam: but hark you, Margaret;
No princely commendations to my king?

MARGARET

Such commendations as becomes a maid,
A virgin and his servant, say to him.

SUFFOLK

Words sweetly placed and modestly directed.
But madam, I must trouble you again;
No loving token to his majesty?

MARGARET

Yes, my good lord, a pure unspotted heart,
Never yet tainted with love, I send the king.

SUFFOLK

And this withal.

Kisses her.

MARGARET

That for thyself: I will not so presume
To send such peevish tokens to a king.

Exeunt REIGNIER and MARGARET.

SUFFOLK

O, wert thou for myself! But, Suffolk, stay;
Thou mayst not wander in that labyrinth;
There Minotaurs and ugly treasons lurk.
Solicit Henry with her wondrous praise:
Bethink thee on her virtues that surmount,
And natural graces that extinguish art;
Repeat their semblance often on the seas,
That, when thou comest to kneel at Henry's feet,
Thou mayst bereave him of his wits with wonder.
Margaret shall now be queen, and rule the king;
But I will rule both her, the king and realm.

Exit.

ACT II, SCENE 2 - A FIELD OF BATTLE

Alarum. Excursions. Enter JOAN LA PUCELLE.

JOAN

The regent conquers, and the Frenchmen fly.
Now help, ye charming spells and periapts;
Appear and aid me in this enterprise.

Thunder. Enter FIENDS.

This speedy and quick appearance argues proof

Of your accustom'd diligence to me.
 Help me this once, that France may get the field.

They walk, and speak not.

O, hold me not in silence over-long!
 Where I was wont to feed you with my blood,
 I'll lop a member off and give it you
 So you do condescend to help me now.

They hang their heads.

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

They shake their heads.

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

They depart.

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

*Enter RICHARD PLANTAGENET, WARWICK and
 company. They fight, and JOAN LA PUCELLE is taken.*

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Damsel of France, I think I have you fast:
 A goodly prize, fit for the devil's grace!
 See, how the ugly wench doth bend her brows,
 As if with Circe she would change my shape.

JOAN

Changed to a worser shape thou canst not be.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Fell banning hag, enchantress, hold thy tongue!

JOAN

I prithee, give me leave to curse awhile.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Curse, miscreant, when thou comest to the stake.

JOAN

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Ay, ay: away with her to execution!

JOAN

Will nothing turn your unrelenting hearts?
 Then, Joan, discover thy infirmity.
 I am with child, ye bloody homicides:
 Murder not then the fruit within my womb,
 Although ye hale me to a violent death.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Now heaven forfend! the holy maid with child!

WARWICK

The greatest miracle that e'er ye wrought!

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

She and the Dauphin have been juggling;
I did imagine that would be her refuge.

WARWICK

Well, go to; we'll have no bastards live;
Especially since Charles must father it.

JOAN

You are deceived; my child is none of his:
It was Alencon that enjoy'd my love.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Alencon! that notorious Machiavel!
It dies, an if it had a thousand lives!

JOAN

O, give me leave, I have deluded you:
'Twas neither Charles nor yet the duke I named,
But Reignier, king of Naples, that prevail'd.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Why, here's a girl! I think she knows not well,
There were so many whom she may accuse.
And yet, forsooth, she is a virgin pure.
Strumpet, thy words condemn thy brat and thee:
Use no entreaty, for it is in vain.

JOAN

Then lead me hence; with whom I leave my curse:
May never glorious sun reflex his beams
Upon the country where you make abode;
But darkness and the gloomy shade of death
Environ you, till mischief and despair
Drive you to break your necks or hang yourselves.

Exit, guarded.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Break thou in pieces and consume to ashes,
Thou foul accursed minister of hell!

Enter EXETER, attended.

EXETER

Lord regent, I do greet your excellence
With letters of commission from the king.
For know, my lords, the states of Christendom
Moved with remorse for these outrageous broils,
Have earnestly implored a general peace
Betwixt our nation and the aspiring French.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Is all our travail turn'd to this effect?
Shall we at last conclude effeminate peace?
Have we not lost most part of all the towns,
By treason, falsehood and by treachery,
Our great progenitors had conquered?
O Warwick, Warwick! I foresee with grief
The utter loss of all the realm of France.

Enter CHARLES, a prisoner.

CHARLES

Since, lords of England, it is thus agreed
That peaceful truce shall be proclaim'd in France,
We come to be informed by yourselves
What the conditions of that league must be.

EXETER

Charles, and the rest, it is enacted thus:
That, in regard King Henry gives consent,
Of mere compassion and of lenity,
To ease your country of distressful war,
And suffer you to breathe in fruitful peace,
You shall become true liegemen to his crown:
And Charles, upon condition thou wilt swear
To pay him tribute, submit thyself,
Thou shalt be placed as viceroy under him,
And still enjoy thy regal dignity.

WARWICK

How say'st thou, Charles? shall our condition stand?

CHARLES

It shall.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Then swear allegiance to his majesty,
As thou art knight, never to disobey
Nor be rebellious to the crown of England.
So, now dismiss your army when ye please:
Hang up your ensign, let your drums be still,
For here we entertain a solemn peace.

Exeunt.

ACT II, SCENE 3 - LONDON, THE PALACE

*Flourish of trumpets. Enter KING HENRY VI,
GLOUCESTER, WARWICK, WINCHESTER and
BUCKINGHAM on the one side; QUEEN
MARGARET, SUFFOLK, YORK, and SOMERSET on
the other.*

SUFFOLK

As by your high imperial majesty
I had in charge at my depart for France,
To marry Princess Margaret for your grace,
I have perform'd my task and was espoused:
And humbly now upon my bended knee,
Deliver up my title in the queen
The happiest gift that ever marquess gave,
The fairest queen that ever king received.

HENRY VI

Suffolk, arise. Welcome, Queen Margaret.
Lords, with one cheerful voice welcome my love.

ALL

(Kneeling)

Long live Queen Margaret, England's happiness!

MARGARET

We thank you all.

SUFFOLK

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

GLOUCESTER

(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--'

Lets the paper fall.

HENRY VI

Uncle, how now!

GLOUCESTER

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

HENRY VI

Uncle of Winchester, I pray, read on.

WINCHESTER

(Reads)

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

HENRY VI

They please us well. Lord marquess, kneel down:
We here create thee the first duke of Suffolk.
We thank you all for the great favour done
In entertainment to my princely queen.
Come, let us in, and with all speed provide
To see her coronation be perform'd.

Exeunt KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET *and*
SUFFOLK.

GLOUCESTER

Brave peers of England, pillars of the state,
To you Duke Humphrey must unload his grief,
Your grief, the common grief of all the land.
What! did my brother Henry spend his youth,
His valour, coin and people, in the wars?
Did he so often lodge in open field,
In winter's cold and summer's parching heat,
To conquer France, his true inheritance?
Have you yourselves, Somerset, Buckingham,
Brave York, Salisbury, and victorious Warwick,
Received deep scars in France and Normandy?
O peers of England, shameful is this league!
Fatal this marriage, cancelling your fame,
Defacing monuments of conquer'd France,
Undoing all, as all had never been!

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

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

She should have stayed in France and starved in France,
 Before--

WINCHESTER

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

GLOUCESTER

Lordings, farewell; and say, when I am gone,
 I prophesied France will be lost ere long.

Exit.

WINCHESTER

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.
 Look to it, lords! let not his smoothing words
 Bewitch your hearts; be wise and circumspect.
 What though the common people favour him,
 Calling him, 'Humphrey, the good Duke of Gloucester,'
 I fear me, lords, for all his flattering gloss,
 He will be found a dangerous protector.

SOMERSET

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

WINCHESTER

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

Exeunt all but RICHARD PLANTAGENET.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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?
 Pirates may make cheap penny worths of their pillage,
 And purchase friends and give to courtezans,
 Still revelling like lords till all be gone;
 While as the silly owner of the goods
 Weeps over them and wrings his hapless hands
 While all is shared and all is borne away.
 So York must sit and fret and bite his tongue,
 While his own lands are bargain'd for and sold.
 A day will come when York shall claim his own;
 And when I spy advantage, claim the crown,
 For that's the golden mark I seek to hit:
 Nor shall proud Lancaster usurp my right,
 Nor hold the sceptre in his childish fist,
 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 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 pull'd fair England down.

Exit.

ACT II, SCENE 4 - THE PALACE

Enter SUFFOLK and QUEEN MARGARET

MARGARET

My Lord of Suffolk, say, is this the guise,
 Is this the fashion in the court of England?
 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 ran'st a tilt in honour of my love
 And stolest 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.
 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.

MARGARET

Beside the haughty protector, have we Winchester,
 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 Nevils:
 Salisbury and Warwick are no simple peers.
 But let them 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.

Exeunt.

ACT II, SCENE 5 - LONDON, YORK'S GARDEN

Enter RICHARD PLANTAGENET, SALISBURY *and*
 WARWICK.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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 Nevils are thy subjects to command.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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 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 reign'd as king;
 Till Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Lancaster,
 The eldest son and heir of John of Gaunt,
 Crown'd by the name of Henry the Fourth,
 Seized on the realm, deposed the rightful king,
 Sent his poor queen to France, from whence she came,
 And him to Pomfret; where, as you all know,
 Harmless Richard was murder'd traitorously.

WARWICK

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

SALISBURY

But william of Hatfield died without an heir.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

SALISBURY

This Edmund, in the reign of Bolingbroke,
 As I have read, laid claim unto the crown.
 But to the rest.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

BOTH

Long live our sovereign Richard, England's king!

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

We thank you, lords. But I am not your king
 Till I be crown'd and that my sword be stain'd
 With heart-blood of the house of Lancaster;
 And that's not suddenly to be perform'd,
 But with advice and silent secrecy.
 Do you as I do in these dangerous days:
 Wink at the Duke of Suffolk's insolence,
 At Gloucester'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 assured me that the Earl of Warwick
Shall one day make the Duke of York a king.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

Exeunt.

ACT II, SCENE 5 - THE ABBEY AT BURY ST. EDMUND'S

*Sound a sennet. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN
MARGARET, WINCHESTER, SUFFOLK,
SOMERSET, BUCKINGHAM, RICHARD
PLANTAGENET, SALISBURY and WARWICK to the
Parliament.*

HENRY VI

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

MARGARET

Can you not see? or will ye not observe
The strangeness of his alter'd countenance?
With what majesty he bears himself,
How insolent of late he is become,
How proud, how peremptory, and unlike himself?
Small curs are not regarded when they grin;
But great men tremble when the lion roars;
And Humphrey is no little man in England.
By flattery he hath won the commons' hearts,
And when he please to make commotion,
'Tis to be fear'd they all will follow him.
Now 'tis the spring, and weeds are shallow-rooted;
Suffer them now, and they'll o'ergrow the garden
And choke the herbs for want of husbandry.
My Lord 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.

WINCHESTER

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

And did he not, in his protectorship,
Levy great sums of money through the realm
For soldiers' pay in France, and never sent it?

HENRY VI

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.

MARGARET

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

Enter GLOUCESTER.

GLOUCESTER

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

SUFFOLK

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

GLOUCESTER

Well, Suffolk, thou shalt not see me blush
 Nor change my countenance for this arrest:
 A heart unspotted is not easily daunted.
 Who can accuse me? wherein am I guilty?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

'Tis thought, my lord, that you took bribes of France,
 And, being protector, stayed the soldiers' pay.

GLOUCESTER

Is it but thought so? what are they that think it?
 I never robb'd the soldiers of their pay,
 Nor ever had one penny bribe from France.
 No; many a pound of mine own proper store,
 Because I would not tax the needy commons,
 Have I disbursed to the garrisons,
 And never ask'd for restitution.

WINCHESTER

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

GLOUCESTER

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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.

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.

HENRY VI

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

GLOUCESTER

Ah, gracious lord, these days are dangerous:
Virtue is choked with foul ambition
And charity chased hence by rancour's hand.
I know their complot is to have my life,
And if my death might make this island happy,
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.
Ay, all you have laid your heads together,
And all to make away my guiltless life.

SOMERSET

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

WINCHESTER

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.

Exit, guarded.

HENRY VI

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

MARGARET

What, will your highness leave the parliament?

HENRY VI

Ay, Margaret; my heart is drown'd with greif.
 Ah, uncle Humphrey! in thy face I see
 The map of honour, truth and loyalty.
 What loursing star now envies thy estate,
 That these great lords and Margaret our queen
 Do seek subversion of thy harmless life?
 His fortunes I will weep; and 'twixt each groan
 Say 'Who's a traitor? Gloucester he is none.'

Exeunt all but QUEEN MARGARET, WINCHESTER,
 SUFFOLK *and* RICHARD PLANTAGENET.
 SOMERSET *remains apart.*

MARGARET

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.
 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 of the fear we have of him.

WINCHESTER

That he should die is worthy policy.

SUFFOLK

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.

WINCHESTER

Here is my hand, the deed is worthy doing.

MARGARET

And so say I.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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.

WINCHESTER

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

SOMERSET

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

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

No, nor lose it all, as thou hast done:
Show me one scar character'd on thy skin:
Men's flesh preserved so whole do seldom win.

MARGARET

No more, good York, sweet Somerset, be still.

WINCHESTER

My Lord of York, try what your fortune is.
The uncivil kerns of Ireland are in arms

And temper clay with blood of Englishmen:
To Ireland will you lead a band of men,
And try your hap against the Irishmen?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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

SUFFOLK

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

WINCHESTER

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.

Exeunt all but RICHARD PLANTAGENET.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Now, York, or never, steel thy fearful thoughts,
And change misdoubt to resolution:
My brain more busy than the labouring spider
Weaves tedious snares to trap mine enemies.
Well, nobles, well, 'tis politicly done,
To send me packing with a host of men.
'Twas men I lack'd and you will give them me:
I take it kindly; and yet be well assured
You put sharp weapons in a madman's hands.
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;
For Humphrey being dead, as he shall be,
And Henry put apart, the next for me.

Exit.

ACT III, SCENE 1 - BURY ST. EDMUND'S, A ROOM OF STATE

Enter certain MURDERERS, hastily.

FIRST MURDERER

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

SECOND MURDERER

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

Enter SUFFOLK.

FIRST MURDERER

Here comes my lord.

SUFFOLK

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

FIRST MURDERER

Ay, my good lord, he's dead.

SUFFOLK

Why, that's well said. Go, get you to my house;
I will reward you for this venturous deed.

Exeunt MURDERERS.

*Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET,
WINCHESTER and SOMERSET, with attendants.*

HENRY VI

Go, call our uncle to our presence straight;
Say we intend to try his grace to-day.

SUFFOLK

I'll call him presently, my noble lord.

Exit.

MARGARET

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

HENRY VI

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

Re-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.

MARGARET

Marry, God forfend!

WINCHESTER

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

SUFFOLK

Comfort, my sovereign! gracious Henry, comfort!

HENRY VI

What, doth my Lord of Suffolk comfort me?
Hide not thy poison with such sugar'd words;
Lay not thy hands on me; forbear, I say;
Their touch affrights me as a serpent's sting.

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, dost thou turn away and hide thy face?
 I am no loathsome leper; look on me.
 Is all thy comfort shut in Gloucester's tomb?
 Why, then, dame Margaret was ne'er thy joy.
 Erect his statue then and worship it,
 And make my image but an alehouse sign.

Noise within. Enter WARWICK, SALISBURY and many commons.

WARWICK

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

HENRY VI

That he is dead, good Warwick, 'tis too true;
 But how he died God knows, not Henry.
 O Thou that judgest all things, stay my thoughts,
 My thoughts, that labour to persuade my soul
 Some violent hands were laid on Humphrey's life!

Enter SALISBURY.

SALISBURY

Dread lord, the commons send you word by me,
 Unless Lord Suffolk straight be done to death,
 Or banished fair England's territories,
 They will by violence tear him from your palace
 And torture him with grievous lingering death.
 They say, by him the good Duke Humphrey died;
 They say, in him they fear your highness' death.

COMMONS

(within)

An answer from the king, or we will all break in!

HENRY VI

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.

MARGARET

O Henry, let me plead for gentle Suffolk!

HENRY VI

Ungentle queen, to call him gentle Suffolk!
 No more, I say: if thou dost plead for him,
 Thou wilt but add increase unto my wrath.
 Had I but said, I would have kept my word,
 But when I swear, it is irrevocable.

Exeunt all but QUEEN MARGARET and SUFFOLK.

MARGARET

Mischance and sorrow go along with you!
 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.

MARGARET

Fie, coward woman and soft-hearted wretch!
 Hast thou not spirit to curse thine enemy?

SUFFOLK

No, by the ground that I am banish'd from,
Well could I curse away a winter's night,
Though standing naked on a mountain top,
Where biting cold would never let grass grow,
And think it but a minute spent in sport.

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.
Go; speak not to me; even now be gone.
O, go not yet! Even thus two friends condemn'd
Embrace and kiss and take ten thousand leaves,
Loather a hundred times to part than die.
Yet now farewell; and farewell life with thee!

SUFFOLK

Thus is poor Suffolk ten times banished;
Once by the king, and three times thrice by thee.

MARGARET

To France, sweet Suffolk: let me hear from thee;
For whereso'er thou art in this world's globe,
I'll have an Iris that shall find thee out.

SUFFOLK

I go.

MARGARET

And take my heart with thee.

SUFFOLK

A jewel, lock'd 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.

MARGARET

This way for me.

Exeunt severally.

ACT III, SCENE 2 - KENILWORTH CASTLE

Sound trumpets. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET, and BUCKINGHAM, on the terrace.

HENRY VI

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

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Please it your grace to be advised
The Duke of York is newly come from Ireland,
And with a puissant and a mighty power
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 traitor.

HENRY VI

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,
Until his army be dismiss'd from him.
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.

HENRY VI

Come, wife, let's in, and learn to govern better;
For yet may England curse my wretched reign.

Fourish. Exuent.

ACT III, SCENE 3 - FIELDS BETWEEN DARTFORD AND BLACKHEATH

*Enter RICHARD PLANTAGENET and his army of
Irish, with drum and colours.*

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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.

Enter BUCKINGHAM.

Who have we here? Buckingham, to disturb me?
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.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Upon thine honour, is he prisoner?

BUCKINGHAM

Upon mine honour, he is prisoner.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Then, Buckingham, I do dismiss my powers.

BUCKINGHAM

York, I commend this kind submission:
We twain will go into his highness' tent.

Enter KING HENRY VI, WARWICK, and attendants.

HENRY VI

Buckingham, doth York intend no harm to us,
That thus he marcheth with thee arm in arm?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

In all submission and humility
York doth present himself unto your highness.

HENRY VI

Then what intends these forces thou dost bring?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

To heave the traitor Somerset from hence.

Enter EXETER and SOMERSET.

HENRY VI

See, Buckingham, Somerset comes with Exeter:
Go, bid him hide him quickly from the duke.

SOMERSET

For thousand Yorks he shall not hide his head,
But boldly stand and front him to his face.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

How now! is Somerset at liberty?
Then, York, unloose thy long-imprison'd 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?
King did I call thee? no, thou art not king.
That head of thine doth not become a crown;
That gold must round engirt these brows of mine.
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.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Wouldst have me kneel? first let me ask of thee,
If they can brook I bow a knee to man.
Sirrah, call in my sons to be my bail.

Exit BUCKINGHAM.

SOMERSET

Call hither Clifford! bid him come amain,
To say if that the bastard boys of York
Shall be the surety for their traitor father.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

The sons of York, thy betters in their birth,
Shall be their father's bail, and bane to those
That for my surety will refuse the boys!

Enter EDWARD IV *and* RICHARD III.

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

Enter CLIFFORD.

SOMERSET

And here comes Clifford to deny their bail.

CLIFFORD

Health and happiness to my lord the king!

Kneels.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

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 mistakest me much to think I do:
To Bedlam with him! is the man grown mad?

HENRY VI

Ay, Clifford; a bedlam and ambitious humour
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.

SOMERSET

He is arrested, but will not obey;
His sons, he says, shall give their words for him.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Will you not, sons?

EDWARD IV

Ay, noble father, if our words will serve.

RICHARD III

And if words will not, then our weapons shall.

CLIFFORD

Why, what a brood of traitors have we here!

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Look in a glass, and call thy image so.
I am thy king, and thou a false-heart traitor.
Will you we show our title to the crown?
If not, our swords shall plead it in the field.

HENRY VI

What title hast thou, traitor, to the crown?
Thy father was, as thou art, Duke of York:
I am the son of Henry the Fifth,
Who made the Dauphin and the French to stoop
And seized upon their towns and provinces.

WARWICK

Talk not of France, sith thou hast lost it all.

HENRY VI

The lord protector lost it, and not I:
When I was crown'd I was but nine months old.

RICHARD III

You are old enough now, and yet, methinks, you lose.
Father, tear the crown from the usurper's head.

HENRY VI

Think'st thou that I will leave my kingly throne,
Wherein my grandsire and my father sat?
No: first shall war unpeople this my realm;
Ay, and their colours, often borne in France,
And now in England to our heart's great sorrow,
Shall be my winding-sheet. Why faint you, lords?
My title's good, and better far than his.

WARWICK

Prove it, Henry, and thou shalt be king.

HENRY VI

Henry the Fourth by conquest got the crown.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

'Twas by rebellion against his king.

HENRY VI

(aside)

I know not what to say; my title's weak.
--Tell me, may not a king adopt an heir?

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

What then?

HENRY VI

An if he may, then am I lawful king;
For Richard, in the view of many lords,

Resign'd the crown to Henry the Fourth,
Whose heir my father was, and I am his.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

He rose against him, being his sovereign,
And made him to resign his crown perforce.

WARWICK

Suppose, my lord, he did it unconstrain'd,
Think you 'twere prejudicial to his crown?

EXETER

No; for he could not so resign his crown
But that the next heir should succeed and reign.

HENRY VI

Art thou against us, Duke of Exeter?

EXETER

His is the right, and therefore pardon me.

HENRY VI

(aside)

All will revolt from me, and turn to him.
--My Lord of Warwick, hear me but one word:
Let me for this my life-time reign as king.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Confirm the crown to me and to mine heirs,
And thou shalt reign in quiet while thou livest.

HENRY VI

I am content: Richard Plantagenet,
Enjoy the kingdom after my decease.

CLIFFORD

What wrong is this unto the prince your son!

WARWICK

What good is this to Engalnd and himself!

CLIFFORD

How hast thou injured both thyself and us!

SOMERSET

I cannot stay to hear these articles.

CLIFFORD

Come, cousin, let us tell the queen these news.

SOMERSET

Farewell, faint-hearted and degenerate king,
In whose cold blood no spark of honour bides.

CLIFFORD

Be thou a prey unto the house of York,
And die in bands for this unmanly deed!

Exeunt CLIFFORD and SOMERSET.

WARWICK

Turn this way, Henry, and regard them not.

EXETER

They seek revenge and therefore will not yield.

HENRY VI

Ah, Exeter!

WARWICK

Why should you sigh, my lord?

HENRY VI

Not for myself, Lord Warwick, but my son,
Whom I unnaturally shall disinherit.
But be it as it may: I here entail
The crown to thee and to thine heirs for ever;
Conditionally, that here thou take an oath
To cease this civil war, and whilst I live,
To honour me as thy king and sovereign,
And neither by treason nor hostility
To seek to put me down and reign thyself.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

This oath I willingly take and will perform.

WARWICK

Long live King Henry! Plantagenet, embrace him.

HENRY VI

And long live thou and these thy forward sons!

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Now York and Lancaster are reconciled.

EXETER

Accursed be he that seeks to make them foes!

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Farewell, my gracious lord; I'll to my castle.

Exeunt all but KING HENRY VI and EXETER.

HENRY VI

And I, with grief and sorrow, to the court.

Enter QUEEN MARGARET and PRINCE EDWARD.

EXETER

Here comes the queen, whose looks bewray her anger:
I'll steal away.

HENRY VI

Exeter, so will I.

MARGARET

Nay, go not from me; I will follow thee.

HENRY VI

Be patient, gentle queen, and I will stay.

MARGARET

Who can be patient in such extremes?
Ah, wretched man! would I had died a maid

And never seen thee, never borne thee son,
 Seeing thou hast proved so unnatural a father.
 Hath he deserved to lose his birthright thus?

PRINCE EDWARD

Father, you cannot disinherit me:
 If you be king, why should not I succeed?

HENRY VI

Pardon me, Margaret; pardon me, sweet son:
 The Earl of Warwick and the duke enforced me.

MARGARET

Enforced thee! art thou king, and wilt be forced?
 I shame to hear thee speak. Ah, timorous wretch!
 Thou hast undone thyself, thy son and me,
 And given unto the house of York such head
 As thou shalt reign but by their sufferance.
 To entail him and his heirs unto the crown,
 What is it, but to make thy sepulchre
 And creep into far before thy time?
 Had I been there, which am a silly woman,
 The soldiers should have toss'd me on their pikes
 Before I would have granted to that act.
 But thou prefer'st thy life before thine honour:
 And seeing thou dost, I here divorce myself
 Both from thy table, Henry, and thy bed,
 Until that act of parliament be repeal'd
 Whereby my son is disinherited.
 The northern lords that have forsworn thy colours
 Will follow mine, if once they see them spread;
 And spread they shall be, to thy foul disgrace
 And utter ruin of the house of York.
 Thus do I leave thee. Come, son, let's away.

HENRY VI

Stay, gentle Margaret, and hear me speak.

MARGARET

Thou hast spoke too much already: get thee gone.

HENRY VI

Gentle son Edward, thou wilt stay with me?

PRINCE EDWARD

When I return with victory from the field
I'll see your grace: till then I'll follow her.

Exeunt.

ACT III, SCENE 4 - SANDAL CASTLE

Enter RICHARD III and EDWARD IV.

RICHARD III

Brothers, though I be youngest, give me leave.

EDWARD IV

No, I can better play the orator.

RICHARD III

But I have reasons strong and forcible.

Enter RICHARD PLANTAGENET.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Why, how now, sons and brothers! at a strife?
What is your quarrel? how began it first?

EDWARD IV

No quarrel, but a slight contention.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

About what?

RICHARD III

About that which concerns your grace and us;
The crown of England, father, which is yours.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Mine, boy? not till King Henry be dead.

RICHARD III

Your right depends not on his life or death.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

I took an oath that he should quietly reign.

RICHARD III

An oath is of no moment, being not took
 Before a true and lawful magistrate,
 That hath authority over him that swears:
 Henry had none, but did usurp the place;
 Then, seeing 'twas he that made you to depose,
 Your oath, my lord, is vain and frivolous.
 Therefore, to arms! And father, do but think
 How sweet a thing it is to wear a crown.
 Why do we finger thus? I cannot rest
 Until the white rose that I wear be dyed
 Even in the lukewarm blood of Henry's heart.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Richard, enough; I will be king, or die.

Enter a MESSENGER.

But, stay: what news? Why comest thou in such post?

MESSENGER

The queen with all the northern earls and lords
 Intends here to besiege you in your castle:
 She is hard by with twenty thousand men;
 And therefore fortify your hold, my lord.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Ay, with my sword. What! think'st thou that we fear them?

RICHARD III

A woman's general; what should we fear?

A march afar off.

EDWARD IV

I hear their drums: let's set our men in order,
And issue forth and bid them battle straight.

Alarum. Exeunt.

ACT III, SCENE 5 - FIELD OF BATTLE BETWIXT SANDAL CASTLE AND
WAKEFIELD

Alarums. Enter RUTLAND and his TUTOR.

RUTLAND

Ah, whither shall I fly to 'scape their hands?
Ah, tutor, look where bloody Clifford comes!

Enter CLIFFORD and soldiers.

TUTOR

Ah, Clifford, murder not this innocent child,
Lest thou be hated both of God and man!

RUTLAND

Sweet Clifford, hear me speak before I die.
I am too mean a subject for thy wrath:
Be thou revenged on men, and let me live.

CLIFFORD

Had thy brethren here, their lives and thine
Were not revenge sufficient for me;
No, if I digg'd up thy forefathers' graves
And hung their rotten coffins up in chains,
It could not slake mine ire, nor ease my heart.

RUTLAND

Ah, let me live in prison all my days;
And when I give occasion of offence,
Then let me die, for now thou hast no cause.

CLIFFORD

No cause!
Thy father slew my father; therefore, die.

Stabs him.

RUTLAND

Di faciant laudis summa sit ista tuae!

Dies.

CLIFFORD

Plantagenet! I come, Plantagenet!
And this thy son's blood cleaving to my blade
Shall rust upon my weapon, till thy blood,
Congeal'd with this, do make me wipe off both.

Exit.

ACT III, SCENE 5 - ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

Alarum. Enter RICHARD PLANTAGENET.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

The army of the queen hath got the field,
And all my followers to the eager foe
Turn back and fly, like ships before the wind
Or lambs pursued by hunger-starved wolves.
My sons, God knows what hath bechanced them.

A short alarum within.

Ah, hark! the fatal followers do pursue;
And I am faint and cannot fly their fury:
And were I strong, I would not shun their fury:
The sands are number'd that make up my life;
Here must I stay, and here my life must end.

*Enter QUEEN MARGARET, CLIFFORD, PRINCE
EDWARD and soldiers.*

CLIFFORD

Yield to our mercy, proud Plantagenet.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

My ashes, as the phoenix, may bring forth
A bird that will revenge upon you all.
Why come you not? what! multitudes, and fear?

They lay hands on RICHARD PLANTAGENET, who struggles.

CLIFFORD

What would your grace have done unto him now?

MARGARET

Come, make him stand upon this molehill here.
 What! was it you that would be England's king?
 Was't you that revell'd in our parliament,
 And made a preachment of your high descent?
 Where are your mess of sons to back you now?
 The wanton Edward, and the lusty George?
 And where's that valiant crook-back prodigy,
 Dicky your boy, that with his grumbling voice
 Was wont to cheer his dad in mutinies?
 Or, with the rest, where is your darling Rutland?
 Look, York: I stain'd this napkin with the blood
 That valiant Clifford, with his rapier's point,
 Made issue from the bosom of the boy;
 And if thine eyes can water for his death,
 I give thee this to dry thy cheeks withal.
 What, hath thy fiery heart so parch'd thine entrails
 That not a tear can fall for Rutland's death?
 Why art thou patient, man? thou shouldst be mad;
 And I, to make thee mad, do mock thee thus.
 Stamp, rave, and fret, that I may sing and dance.
 Thou wouldst be fee'd, I see, to make me sport:
 York cannot speak, unless he wear a crown.
 A crown for York! and lords, bow low to him.

Putting a paper crown on his head.

Ay, marry, sir, now looks he like a king!
 Ay, this is he that took King Henry's chair,
 And this is he was his adopted heir.
 But how is it that great Plantagenet
 Is crown'd so soon, and broke his solemn oath?
 O, 'tis a fault too too unpardonable!
 Off with the crown, and with the crown his head;
 And whilst we breathe, take time to do him dead.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

She-wolf of France, but worse than wolves of France,
 Whose tongue more poisons than the adder's tooth!
 How ill beseeeming it is in thy sex
 To triumph, like an Amazonian trull,
 Upon the woes whom fortune captivates!
 O tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide!
 How couldst thou drain the life-blood of the child,
 To bid the father wipe his eyes withal?
 Keep thou the napkin, and go boast of this:
 And if thou tell'st the heavy story right,
 Upon my soul, the hearers will shed tears;
 Yea, even my foes will shed fast-falling tears,
 And say, 'Alas, it was a piteous deed!'
 There, take the crown, and with the crown, my curse;
 And in thy need such comfort come to thee
 As now I reap at thy too cruel hand!
 Hard-hearted Clifford, take me from the world:
 My soul to heaven, my blood upon your heads!

CLIFFORD

Here's for my oath, here's for my father's death.

Stabbing him

MARGARET

And here's to right our gentle-hearted king.

Stabbing him

RICHARD PLANTAGENET

Open Thy gate of mercy, gracious God!
 My soul flies through these wounds to seek out Thee.

Dies.

MARGARET

Off with his head, and set it on York gates;
 So York may overlook the town of York.

Flourish. Exeunt.

ACT III, SCENE 7 - A PLAIN NEAR MORTIMER'S CROSS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

A march. Enter EDWARD IV, RICHARD III and their power.

EDWARD IV

I wonder how our princely father 'scaped
From Clifford's and Northumberland's pursuit.
How fares my brother? why is he so sad?

RICHARD III

I cannot joy, until I be resolved
Where our right valiant father is become.

Enter a MESSENGER.

But what art thou, whose heavy looks foretell
Some dreadful story hanging on thy tongue?

MESSENGER

Ah, one that was a woeful looker-on
When as the noble Duke of York was slain,
Your princely father and my loving lord!

EDWARD IV

O, speak no more, for I have heard too much.

RICHARD III

Say how he died, for I will hear it all.

MESSENGER

By many hands your father was subdued;
But only slaughter'd by the ireful arm
Of unrelenting Clifford and the queen,
Who crown'd the gracious duke in high despite,
Laugh'd in his face; and when with grief he wept,
The ruthless queen gave him to dry his cheeks
A napkin steeped in the harmless blood
Of sweet young Rutland, by rough Clifford slain:
And after many scorns, many foul taunts,
They took his head, and on the gates of York

They set the same; and there it doth remain,
The saddest spectacle that e'er I view'd.

EDWARD IV

Sweet Duke of York, our prop to lean upon,
Now thou art gone, we have no staff, no stay.

RICHARD III

I cannot weep; for all my body's moisture
Scarce serves to quench my furnace-burning heart.
To weep is to make less the depth of grief:
Tears then for babes; blows and revenge for me.
Richard, I bear thy name; I'll venge thy death,
Or die renowned by attempting it.

March. Enter WARWICK and his army.

WARWICK

How now, fair lords! What fare? what news abroad?

EDWARD IV

O Warwick, Warwick! that Plantagenet,
Which held three dearly as his soul's redemption,
Is by stern Lord Clifford done to death.

WARWICK

Ten days ago I drown'd these news in tears.

RICHARD III

But in this troublous time what's to be done?
Shall we go throw away our coats of steel,
And wrap our bodies in black mourning gowns,
Numbering out Ave-Maries with our beads?
Or shall we on the helmets of our foes
Tell our devotion with revengeful arms?
If for the last, say ay, and to it, lords.

WARWICK

Why, Via! To London will we march amain,
And once again bestride our foaming steeds,
And once again cry 'Charge upon our foes!'
But never once again turn back and fly.

EDWARD IV

Then strike up drums: God and Saint George for us!

Enter a MESSENGER.

WARWICK

How now! what news?

MESSENGER

The queen is coming with a puissant host;
And craves your company for speedy counsel.

Exeunt.

ACT III, SCENE 8 - BEFORE YORK

*Flourish. Enter KING HENRY VI, QUEEN
MARGARET, PRINCE EDWARD and CLIFFORD,
with drum and trumpets.*

MARGARET

Welcome, my lord, to this brave town of York.
Yonder's the head of that arch-enemy
That sought to be encompass'd with your crown.

HENRY VI

To see this sight, it irks my very soul.
Withhold revenge, dear God! 'tis not my fault,
Nor wittingly have I infringed my vow.
Ah, cousin York! would thy best friends did know
How it doth grieve me that thy head is here!

MARGARET

My lord, cheer up your spirits: our foes are nigh,
And this soft courage makes your followers faint.
You promised knighthood to our forward son:
Unsheathe your sword, and dub him presently.
Edward, kneel down.

HENRY VI

Edward Plantagenet, arise a knight.
And learn this lesson, draw thy sword in right.

PRINCE EDWARD

My gracious father, by your kingly leave,
I'll draw it as apparent to the crown,
And in that quarrel use it to the death.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Royal commanders, be in readiness:
For with a band of thirty thousand men
Comes Warwick, backing of the Duke of York;
And in the towns, as they do march along,
Proclaims him king, and many fly to him:
Darraign your battle, for they are at hand.

CLIFFORD

I would your highness would depart the field:
The queen hath best success when you are absent.

MARGARET

Ay, good my lord, and leave us to our fortune.

HENRY VI

Why, that's my fortune too; therefore I'll stay.

*March. Enter EDWARD IV, RICHARD III, WARWICK
and soldiers.*

EDWARD IV

Now, perjured Henry! wilt thou kneel for grace,
And set thy diadem upon my head;
Or bide the mortal fortune of the field?

MARGARET

Go, rate thy minions, proud insulting boy!
Becomes it thee to be thus bold in terms
Before thy sovereign and thy lawful king?

EDWARD IV

I am his king, and he should bow his knee;
I was adopted heir by his consent:
Since when, his oath is broke; for, as I hear,
You, that are king, though he do wear the crown,
Have caused him, by new act of parliament,
To blot out me, and put his own son in.

CLIFFORD

Who should succeed the father but the son?

RICHARD III

Are you there, butcher? O, I cannot speak!

CLIFFORD

Ay, crook-back, here I stand to answer thee,
Or any he the proudest of thy sort.

RICHARD III

'Twas you that kill'd young Rutland, was it not?

CLIFFORD

Ay, and old York, and yet not satisfied.

RICHARD III

For God's sake, lords, give signal to the fight!

WARWICK

What say'st thou, Henry, wilt thou yield the crown?

HENRY VI

Have done with words, my lords, and hear me speak.

MARGARET

Defy them then, or else hold close thy lips.

EDWARD IV

A wisp of straw were worth a thousand crowns,
To make this shameless callet know herself.
For what hath broach'd this tumult but thy pride?
Hadst thou been meek, our title still had slept;

And we, in pity of the gentle king,
Had slipp'd our claim until another age.

RICHARD III

Yet, know thou, since we have begun to strike,
We'll never leave till we have hewn thee down.

EDWARD IV

And, in this resolution, I defy thee;
Not willing any longer conference,
Since thou deniest the gentle king to speak .
Sound trumpets! let our bloody colours wave!
And either victory, or else a grave.

MARGARET

Stay, Edward.

EDWARD IV

No, wrangling woman, we'll no longer stay:
These words will cost ten thousand lives this day.

Exeunt.

ACT IV, SCENE 1 - A FIELD OF BATTLE BETWEEN TOWTON AND SAXTON,
IN YORKSHIRE.

Excursions. Enter RICHARD III and CLIFFORD.

RICHARD III

Now, Clifford, I have singled thee alone:
Suppose this arm is for the Duke of York,
And this for Rutland; both bound to revenge.

CLIFFORD

Now, Richard, I am with thee here alone:
This is the hand that stabb'd thy father York;
And this the hand that slew thy brother Rutland;
And here's the heart that triumphs in their death
And cheers these hands that slew thy sire and brother
To execute the like upon thyself;
And so, have at thee!

They fight. WARWICK comes. CLIFFORD flies.

RICHARD III

Nay Warwick, single out some other chase;
For I myself will hunt this wolf to death.

Exeunt.

ACT IV, SCENE 2 - ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

Alarum. Enter KING HENRY VI, alone.

HENRY VI

Here on this molehill will I sit me down.
To whom God will, there be the victory!
For Margaret my queen, and Clifford too,
Have chid me from the battle; swearing both
They prosper best of all when I am thence.
O God! methinks it were a happy life,
To be no better than a homely swain;
To sit upon a hill, as I do now,
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,
Thereby to see the minutes how they run,
How many make the hour full complete;
How many hours bring about the day;
How many days will finish up the year;
How many years a mortal man may live.
Ah, what a life were this! how sweet! how lovely!
Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy
To kings that fear their subjects' treachery?
O, yes, it doth; a thousand-fold it doth.
And to conclude, the shepherd's homely curds,
His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,
All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,
Is far beyond a prince's delicates,
His viands sparkling in a golden cup,

His body couched in a curious bed,
When care, mistrust and treason waits on him.

Enter QUEEN MARGARET and PRINCE EDWARD.

PRINCE EDWARD

Fly, father fly! for all your friends are fled,
And Warwick rages like a chafed bull:
Away! for death doth hold us in pursuit.

MARGARET

Mount you, my lord; towards Berwick post amain:
Edward and Richard, like a brace of greyhounds
Having the fearful flying hare in sight,
With fiery eyes sparkling for very wrath,
And bloody steel grasp'd in their ireful hands,
Are at our backs; and therefore hence amain.

Exeunt.

ACT IV, SCENE 3 - ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

A loud alarum. Enter CLIFFORD, wounded.

CLIFFORD

Here burns my candle out; ay, here it dies,
Which, whiles it lasted, gave King Henry light.
O Lancaster, I fear thy overthrow
More than my body's parting with my soul!
O, Henry, hadst thou sway'd as kings should do,
I and ten thousand in this luckless realm
Had left no mourning widows for our death.
No way to fly, nor strength to hold out flight:
The air hath got into my deadly wounds,
And much effuse of blood doth make me faint.
Come, York and Richard, Warwick and the rest;
I stabb'd your fathers' bosoms, split my breast.

He faints.

*Alarum and retreat. Enter EDWARD IV, RICHARD III,
CLARENCE, WARWICK and soldiers.*

EDWARD IV

Now breathe we, lords: good fortune bids us pause,
And smooth the frowns of war with peaceful looks.

CLIFFORD *groans and dies.*

Whose soul is that which takes her heavy leave?
See who it is: and, now the battle's ended,
If friend or foe, let him be gently used.

RICHARD III

Revoke that doom of mercy, for 'tis Clifford.

WARWICK

Ay, but he's dead: off with the traitor's head,
And rear it in the place your father's stands.
And now to London with triumphant march,
There to be crowned England's royal king,
From whence shall Warwick cut the sea to France,
And ask the Lady Bona for thy queen.
So shalt thou sinew both these lands together;
And, having France thy friend, thou shalt not dread
The scatter'd foe that hope to rise again.

Exeunt.

ACT IV, SCENE 4 - A FOREST IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND

Enter two KEEPERS, with cross-bows in their hands.

FIRST KEEPER

Under this thick-grown brake we'll shroud ourselves;
For through this laund anon the deer will come;
Here stand we both, and aim we at the best
And, for the time shall not seem tedious,
I'll tell thee what befell me on a day
In this self-place where now we mean to stand.

SECOND KEEPER

Here comes a man; let's stay till he be past.

Enter KING HENRY VI, disguised, with a prayer-book.

HENRY VI

From Scotland am I stol'n, even of pure love,
 To greet mine own land with my wishful sight.
 My queen and son are gone to France for aid;
 And, as I hear, the great commanding Warwick
 Is thither gone, to crave the French king's sister
 To wife for Edward: if this news be true,
 Poor queen and son, your labour is but lost;
 For Warwick is a subtle orator,
 And Charles a prince soon won with moving words.

SECOND KEEPER

Say, what art thou that talk'st of kings and queens?

HENRY VI

More than I seem, and less than I was born to:
 A man at least, for less I should not be;
 And men may talk of kings, and why not I?

SECOND KEEPER

Ay, but thou talk'st as if thou wert a king.

HENRY VI

Why, so I am, in mind; and that's enough.

SECOND KEEPER

You are the king King Edward hath deposed;
 And we his subjects sworn in all allegiance
 Will apprehend you as his enemy.

FIRST KEEPER

We charge you, in God's name and the king's,
 To go with us unto the officers.

HENRY VI

In God's name, lead; your king's name be obey'd:
 And what God will, that let your king perform;
 And what he will, I humbly yield unto.

Exeunt.

ACT IV, SCENE 5 - LONDON, THE PALACE

Enter KING EDWARD IV, RICHARD III, CLARENCE
and LADY GREY.

EDWARD IV

My brother Richard, at Saint Alban's field
This lady's husband, Sir Richard Grey, was slain,
His lands then seized on by the conqueror:
Her suit is now to repossess those lands;
Which we in justice cannot well deny,
Because in quarrel of the house of York
The worthy gentleman did lose his life.

RICHARD III

Your highness shall do well to grant her suit;
It were dishonour to deny her.

EDWARD IV

It were no less; but yet I'll make a pause.

RICHARD III

(aside to CLARENCE)

Yea, is it so?
I see the lady hath a thing to grant,
Before the king will grant her humble suit.

EDWARD IV

Widow, we will consider of your suit;
And come some other time to know our mind.

LADY GREY

Right gracious lord, I cannot brook delay:
May it please your highness to resolve me now;
And what your pleasure is shall satisfy me.

EDWARD IV

How many children hast thou, widow? tell me.

CLARENCE

(aside to RICHARD III)

I think he means to beg a child of her.

LADY GREY

Three, my most gracious lord.

EDWARD IV

'Twere a pity they should lose their father's lands.

LADY GREY

Be pitiful, dread lord, and grant it then.

EDWARD IV

Lords, give us leave: I'll try this widow's wit.

RICHARD III *and* CLARENCE *retire.*

EDWARD IV

Now tell me, madam, do you love your children?

LADY GREY

Ay, full as dearly as I love myself.

EDWARD IV

And would you not do much to do them good?

LADY GREY

To do them good, I would sustain some harm.

EDWARD IV

Then get your husband's lands, to do them good.

LADY GREY

Therefore I came unto your majesty.

EDWARD IV

What service wilt thou do me, if I give them?

LADY GREY

What you command that rests in me to do.

EDWARD IV

But you will take exceptions to my boon.

LADY GREY

No, gracious lord, except I cannot do it.

EDWARD IV

Ay, but thou canst do what I mean to ask.

LADY GREY

Why, then I will do what your grace commands.
Why stops my lord, shall I not hear my task?

EDWARD IV

An easy task; 'tis but to love a king.

LADY GREY

That's soon perform'd, because I am a subject.

EDWARD IV

No, by my troth, I did not mean such love.

LADY GREY

Why, then you mean not as I thought you did.

EDWARD IV

But now you partly may perceive my mind.

LADY GREY

My mind will never grant what I perceive
Your highness aims at, if I aim aright.

EDWARD IV

Why, then thou shalt not have thy husband's lands.
Therein thou wrong'st thy children mightily.

LADY GREY

Herein your highness wrongs both them and me.
But, mighty lord, this merry inclination
Accords not with the sadness of my suit:
Please you dismiss me either with 'ay' or 'no.'

EDWARD IV

Ay, if thou wilt say 'ay' to my request;
No if thou dost say 'no' to my demand.

LADY GREY

Then no, my lord. My suit is at an end.

RICHARD III

(aside to CLARENCE)

The widow likes him not, she knits her brows.

CLARENCE

(aside to RICHARD III)

He is the bluntest wooer in Christendom.

EDWARD IV

(aside)

Her looks do argue her replete with modesty;
Her words do show her wit incomparable;
All her perfections challenge sovereignty:
One way or other, she is for a king;
And she shall be my love, or else my queen.
--Say that King Edward take thee for his queen?

LADY GREY

I know I am too mean to be your queen,
And yet too good to be your concubine.

EDWARD IV

You cavil, widow: I did mean, my queen.

LADY GREY

'Twill grieve your grace my sons should call you father.

EDWARD IV

No more than when my daughters call thee mother.
Answer no more, for thou shalt be my queen.

Kisses her.

Brothers, you muse what chat we two have had.

RICHARD III

The widow likes it not, for she looks very sad.

EDWARD IV

You'll think it strange if I should marry her.

CLARENCE

To whom, my lord?

EDWARD IV

Why, Clarence, to myself.

RICHARD III

That would be ten days' wonder at the least.

EDWARD IV

Well, jest on, brothers: I can tell you both
Her suit is granted for her husband's lands.

Enter a NOBELMAN.

NOBLEMAN

My gracious lord, Henry your foe is taken,
And brought your prisoner to your palace gate.

EDWARD IV

See that he be convey'd unto the Tower:
And go we, brothers, to the man that took him,
To question of his apprehension.
Widow, go you along. Lords, use her honourably.

Exeunt.

ACT IV, SCENE 6 - FRANCE, KING CHARLES'S PALACE

*Flourish. Enter CHARLES, his sister BONA, PRINCE
EDWARD and QUEEN MARGARET.*

CHARLES

Fair Queen of England, worthy Margaret,
 Sit down with us: it ill befits thy state
 And birth, that thou shouldst stand while Charles doth sit.

MARGARET

No, mighty King of France: now Margaret
 Must strike her sail and learn awhile to serve
 Where kings command. I was, I must confess,
 Great Albion's queen in former golden days:
 But now mischance hath trod my title down,
 And with dishonour laid me on the ground;
 Where I must take like seat unto my fortune,
 And to my humble seat conform myself.

CHARLES

Why, say fair queen, whence springs this deep despair?
 Be plain, Queen Margaret, and tell thy grief;
 It shall be eased, if France can yield relief.

MARGARET

Those gracious words revive my drooping thoughts
 And give my tongue-tied sorrows leave to speak.
 Now, therefore, be it known to noble Charles,
 That Henry, sole possessor of my love,
 Is of a king become a banish'd man,
 And forced to live in Scotland a forlorn;
 While proud ambitious Edward Duke of York
 Usurps the regal title and the seat
 Of England's true-anointed lawful king.

Enter WARWICK

CHARLES

What's he approacheth boldly to our presence?

MARGARET

Our Earl of Warwick, Edward's greatest friend.

CHARLES

Welcome, brave Warwick! What brings thee from France?

MARGARET

Ay, now begins a second storm to rise;
For this is he that moves both wind and tide.

WARWICK

From worthy Edward, King of Albion,
My lord and sovereign, and thy vowed friend,
I come, in kindness and unfeigned love,
First, to do greetings to thy royal person;
And then to crave a league of amity;
And lastly, to confirm that amity
With a nuptial knot, if thou vouchsafe to grant
That virtuous Lady Bona, thy fair sister,
To England's king in lawful marriage

MARGARET

King Charles and Lady Bona, hear me speak,
Before you answer Warwick. His demand
Springs not from Edward's well-meant honest love,
But from deceit bred by necessity;
For how can tyrants safely govern home,
Unless abroad they purchase great alliance?

WARWICK

Injurious Margaret!

PRINCE EDWARD

And why not queen?

WARWICK

Because thy father Henry did usurp;
And thou no more are prince than she is queen.

CHARLES

Vouchsafe, at our request, to stand aside,
While I use further conference with Warwick.

They stand aloof.

MARGARET

Heavens grant Warwick's words bewitch him not!

CHARLES

Now Warwick, tell me, even upon thy conscience,
Is Edward your true king? for I were loath
To link with him that were not lawful chosen.

WARWICK

Thereon I pawn my credit and mine honour.

CHARLES

But is he gracious in the people's eye?

WARWICK

The more that Henry was unfortunate.

CHARLES

Then, Warwick, thus: our sister shall be Edward's;
And now forthwith shall articles be drawn
Touching the jointure that your king must make,
Which with her dowry shall be counterpoised.
Draw near, Queen Margaret, and be a witness
That Bona shall be wife to the English king.

MARGARET

Deceitful Warwick! it was thy device
By this alliance to make void my suit:
Before thy coming Charles was Henry's friend.

WARWICK

Henry now lives in Scotland at his ease,
Where having nothing, nothing can he lose.
And as for you yourself, our quondam queen,
You have a father able to maintain you;
And better 'twere you troubled him than France.

MARGARET

Peace, impudent and shameless Warwick, peace,
Proud setter up and puller down of kings!

I will not hence, till, with my talk and tears,
Both full of truth, I make King Charles behold
Thy sly conveyance and thy lord's false love;
For both of you are birds of selfsame feather.

POST blows a horn within.

CHARLES

Warwick, this is some post to us or thee.

Enter POST.

POST

(to WARWICK)

My lord ambassador, these letters are for you.

(to KING Charles)

These from our king unto your majesty:

(to QUEEN MARGARET)

And, madam, these for you; from whom I know not.

They all read their letters.

CHARLES

Warwick, what are thy news? and yours, fair queen?

MARGARET

Mine, such as fill my heart with unhoped joys.

WARWICK

Mine, full of sorrow and heart's discontent.

CHARLES

What! has your king married the Lady Grey!
And now, to soothe your forgery and his,
Sends me a paper to persuade me patience?
Is this the alliance that he seeks with France?
Dare he presume to scorn us in this manner?

MARGARET

I told your majesty as much before:
This proveth Edward's love and Warwick's honesty.

WARWICK

King Charles, I here protest, in sight of heaven,
And by the hope I have of heavenly bliss,
That I am clear from this misdeed of Edward's,
No more my king, for he dishonours me,
But most himself, if he could see his shame.
I here renounce him and return to Henry.
My noble queen, let former grudges pass,
And henceforth I am thy true servitor:
I will revenge his wrong to Lady Bona,
And replant Henry in his former state.

MARGARET

Warwick, these words have turn'd my hate to love;
And I forgive and quite forget old faults,
And joy that thou becomest King Henry's friend.

WARWICK

So much his friend, ay, his unfeigned friend,
That, if King Charles vouchsafe to furnish us
With some few bands of chosen soldiers,
I'll undertake to land them on our coast
And force the tyrant from his seat by war.

BONA

Dear brother, how shall Bona be revenged
But by thy help to this distressed queen?

MARGARET

Renowned prince, how shall poor Henry live,
Unless thou rescue him from foul despair?

BONA

My quarrel and this English queen's are one.

WARWICK

And mine, fair lady Bona, joins with yours.

CHARLES

And mine with hers, and thine, and Margaret's.
Therefore at last I firmly am resolved
You shall have aid.

MARGARET

Let me give humble thanks for all at once.

CHARLES

Then, England's messenger, return in post,
And tell false Edward, thy supposed king,
That Charles of France is sending over masquers
To revel it with him and his new bride:
Thou seest what's past, go fear thy king withal.

MARGARET

Tell him, my mourning weeds are laid aside,
And I am ready to put armour on.

WARWICK

Tell him from me that he hath done me wrong,
And therefore I'll uncrown him ere't be long.
There's thy reward: be gone.

Exeunt.

ACT V, SCENE 1 - BARNET FIELDS

*Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV with RICHARD III,
CLARENCE and the rest.*

EDWARD IV

Thus far our fortune keeps an upward course,
And we are graced with wreaths of victory.
But, in the midst of this bright-shining day,
I spy a black, suspicious, threatening cloud;
I mean, my lords, those powers that the queen

Hath raised in Gallia have arrived our coast
And, as we hear, march on to fight with us.

RICHARD III

The queen is valued thirty thousand strong.
If she have time to breathe be well assured
Her faction will be full as strong as ours.

EDWARD IV

We are advised by our loving friends
That they do hold their course toward Tewkesbury:
We, having now the best at Barnet Field,
Will thither straight, for willingness rids way;
And, as we march, our strength will be augmented
In every county as we go along.
Strike up the drum; cry 'Courage!' and away.

Exeunt.

ACT V, SCENE 2 - PLAINS NEAR TEWKESBURY

*March. Enter QUEEN MARGARET, PRINCE
EDWARD and others.*

MARGARET

Great lords, wise men ne'er sit and wail their loss,
But cheerly seek how to redress their harms.
What though the mast be now blown overboard,
The cable broke, the holding-anchor lost,
And half our sailors swallow'd in the flood?
We will not from the helm to sit and weep,
But keep our course, though the rough wind say no,
From shelves and rocks that threaten us with wreck.
And what is Edward but ruthless sea?
What Clarence but a quicksand of deceit?
And Richard but a ragged fatal rock?
All these the enemies to our poor bark.
Say you can swim; alas, 'tis but a while!
Tread on the sand; why, there you quickly sink:
Bestride the rock; the tide will wash you off,
Or else you famish; that's a threefold death.
This speak I, lords, to let you understand,

If case some one of you would fly from us,
 That there's no hoped-for mercy with the brothers
 More than with ruthless waves, with sands and rocks.
 Why, courage then! what cannot be avoided
 'Twere childish weakness to lament or fear.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Prepare you, lords, for Edward is at hand.

MARGARET

Here pitch our battle; hence we will not budge.

*Flourish and march. Enter KING EDWARD IV,
 RICHARD III, CLARENCE and soldiers.*

EDWARD IV

Brave followers, yonder stands the thorny wood,
 Which, by the heavens' assistance and your strength,
 Must by the roots be hewn up yet ere night.
 I need not add more fuel to your fire,
 For well I wot ye blaze to burn them out
 Give signal to the fight, and to it, lords!

MARGARET

Lords, knights, and gentlemen, what I should say
 My tears gainsay; for every word I speak,
 Ye see, I drink the water of mine eyes.
 Therefore, no more but this: Henry, your sovereign,
 Is prisoner to the foe; his state usurp'd,
 His realm a slaughter-house, his subjects slain,
 His statutes cancell'd and his treasure spent;
 And yonder is the wolf that makes this spoil.
 You fight in justice: then, in God's name, lords,
 Be valiant and give signal to the fight.

Alarum. Retreat. Excursions. Exeunt.

ACT V, SCENE 3 - ANOTHER PART OF THE FIELD

Enter EDWARD IV, RICHARD III, CLARENCE and soldiers, with PRINCE EDWARD and QUEEN MARGARET.

EDWARD IV

Bring forth the gallant, let us hear him speak.
What! can so young a thorn begin to prick?
Edward, what satisfaction canst thou make
For bearing arms, for stirring up my subjects,
And all the trouble thou hast turn'd me to?

PRINCE EDWARD

Speak like a subject, proud ambitious York!
Suppose that I am now my father's mouth;
Resign thy chair, and where I stand kneel thou,
Whilst I propose the selfsame words to thee,
Which traitor, thou wouldst have me answer to.

EDWARD IV

Peace, willful boy, or I will charm your tongue.

PRINCE EDWARD

I know my duty; you are all undutiful:
Lascivious Edward, and thou perjured George,
And thou mis-shapen Dick, I tell ye all
I am your better, traitors as ye are:
And thou usurp'st my father's right and mine.

EDWARD IV

Take that, thou likeness of this railer here.

Stabs him.

RICHARD III

Sprawl'st thou? take that, to end thy agony.

Stabs him.

CLARENCE

And there's for twitting me with perjury.

Stabs him.

MARGARET

O, kill me too!

RICHARD III

Marry, and shall.

Offers to kill her.

EDWARD IV

Hold, Richard, hold; for we have done too much.

RICHARD III

Why should she live, to fill the world with words?

EDWARD IV

What, doth she swoon? use means for her recovery.

RICHARD III

Clarence, excuse me to the king my brother;
I'll hence to London on a serious matter:
Ere ye come there, be sure to hear some news.

CLARENCE

What? what?

RICHARD III

The Tower, the Tower.

Exit.

MARGARET

O Ned, sweet Ned! speak to thy mother, boy!
Canst thou not speak? O traitors! murderers!
What's worse than murderer, that I may name it?
No, no, my heart will burst, and if I speak:
And I will speak, that so my heart may burst.
Butchers and villains! bloody cannibals!
How sweet a plant have you untimely cropp'd!
You have no children, butchers! if you had,

The thought of them would have stirr'd up remorse:
 But if you ever chance to have a child,
 Look in his youth to have him so cut off
 As, deathmen, you have rid this sweet young prince!

EDWARD IV

Away with her; go, bear her hence perforce.

MARGARET

Nay, never bear me hence, dispatch me here,
 Here sheathe thy sword, I'll pardon thee my death:
 What, wilt thou not? then, Clarence, do it thou.

CLARENCE

By heaven, I will not do thee so much ease.

EDWARD IV

Away, I say; I charge ye, bear her hence.

MARGARET

So come to you and yours, as to this Prince!

Exit, led out forcibly.

EDWARD IV

Where's Richard gone?

CLARENCE

To London, all in post; and, as I guess,
 To make a bloody supper in the Tower.

EDWARD IV

He's sudden, if a thing comes in his head.
 Now march we hence: discharge the common sort
 With pay and thanks, and let's away to London
 And see our gentle queen how well she fares:
 By this, I hope, she hath a son for me.

Exeunt.

ACT V, SCENE 4 - LONDON, THE TOWER

*Enter KING HENRY VI and RICHARD III, with the
LIEUTENANT on the walls.*

RICHARD III

Good day, my lord. What, at your book so hard?

(to the LIEUTENANT)

Sirrah, leave us to ourselves: we must confer.

Exit LIEUTENANT.

HENRY VI

So flies the reckless shepherd from the wolf;
So first the harmless sheep doth yield his fleece
And next his throat unto the butcher's knife.

RICHARD III

Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind;
Think'st thou I am an executioner?

HENRY VI

A persecutor, I am sure, thou art:
If murdering innocents be executing,
Why, then thou art an executioner.

RICHARD III

Thy son I kill'd for his presumption.

HENRY VI

Hadst thou been kill'd when first thou didst presume,
Thou hadst not lived to kill a son of mine.
And thus I prophesy, that many a thousand,
Shall rue the hour that ever thou wast born.
Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,
And, yet brought forth less than a mother's hope,
To wit, an indigested and deformed lump,
Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.
Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born,
To signify thou camest to bite the world:
And, if the rest be true which I have heard,
Thou camest--

RICHARD III

I'll hear no more: die, prophet, in thy speech:

Stabs him

For this amongst the rest, was I ordain'd.

HENRY VI

Ay, and for much more slaughter after this.
God forgive my sins, and pardon thee!

Dies.

RICHARD III

See how my sword weeps for the poor king's death!
If any spark of life be yet remaining,
Down, down to hell; and say I sent thee thither:

Stabs him again

I, that have niether pity, love nor fear.
I have no brother, I am like no brother;
And this word 'love,' which gray beards call divine,
Be resident in men like one another
And not in me: I am myself alone.
Clarence, beware; thou keep'st me from the light:
But I will sort a pitchy day for thee;
For I will buz abroad such prophecies
That Edward shall be fearful of his life,
And then, to purge his fear, I'll be thy death.
King Henry and the prince his son are gone:
Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest,
Counting myself but bad till I be best.
I'll throw thy body in another room
And triumph, Henry, in thy day of doom.

Exit, with the body.

ACT V, SCENE 5 - LONDON, THE PALACE

Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV, QUEEN
ELIZABETH, CLARENCE, RICHARD III *and*
attendants.

EDWARD IV

Once more we sit in England's royal throne,
 Re-purchased with the blood of enemies.
 What valiant foemen, like to autumn's corn,
 Have we mow'd down, in tops of all their pride!
 Thus have we swept suspicion from our seat
 And made our footstool of security.

CLARENCE

What will your grace have done with Margaret?

EDWARD IV

Away with her, and waft her hence to France.
 And now what rests but that we spend the time
 With stately triumphs, mirthful comic shows,
 Such as befits the pleasure of the court?
 Sound drums and trumpets! farewell sour annoy!
 For here, I hope, begins our lasting joy.

Exeunt all but RICHARD III.

RICHARD III

Now is the winter of our discontent
 Made glorious summer by this sun of York;
 And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house
 In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
 Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths;
 Our bruised arms hung up for monuments;
 Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
 Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
 Grim-visaged war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front;
 And now, instead of mounting barded steeds
 To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
 He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
 To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.
 But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
 Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;
 I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
 Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
 Deformed, unfinish'd, sent before my time

Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
And descant on mine own deformity:
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
I am determined to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
And, if I fall not in my deep intent,
Clarence hath not another day to live:
Which done, God take King Edward to his mercy,
And leave the world for me to bustle in!

Exit.