

HENRY VI, PART 3

A line-by-line translation

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Alarm. Enter YORK, EDWARD, RICHARD, NORFOLK, MONTAGUE, WARWICK, and Soldiers

WARWICK

I wonder how the king escaped our hands.

YORK

While we pursued the horsemen of the north,
He slyly stole away and left his men:
Whereat the great Lord of Northumberland,
5 Whose warlike ears could never brook retreat,
Cheer'd up the drooping army; and himself,
Lord Clifford and Lord Stafford, all abreast,
Charged our main battle's front, and breaking in
Were by the swords of common soldiers slain.

EDWARD

10 Lord Stafford's father, Duke of Buckingham,
Is either slain or wounded dangerously;
I cleft his beaver with a downright blow:
That this is true, father, behold his blood.

MONTAGUE

15 And, brother, here's the Earl of Wiltshire's blood,
Whom I encounter'd as the battles join'd.

RICHARD

Speak thou for me and tell them what I did.

Throwing down SOMERSET's head

YORK

Richard hath best deserved of all my sons.
But is your grace dead, my Lord of Somerset?

NORFOLK

20 Such hope have all the line of John of Gaunt!

RICHARD

Thus do I hope to shake King Henry's head.

WARWICK

And so do I. Victorious Prince of York,
Before I see thee seated in that throne
Which now the house of Lancaster usurps,
25 I vow by heaven these eyes shall never close.
This is the palace of the fearful king,
And this the regal seat: possess it, York;
For this is thine and not King Henry's heirs'.

YORK

30 Assist me, then, sweet Warwick, and I will;
For hither we have broken in by force.

NORFOLK

We'll all assist you; he that flies shall die.

Shakescleare Translation

An alarm sounds. YORK, EDWARD, RICHARD, NORFOLK, MONTAGUE, WARWICK, and soldiers enter.

WARWICK

I wonder how the king escaped us.

YORK

While we followed the horsemen of the north, he tricked us, ran away, and left his men. After that, the great Lord of Northumberland, whose ears were used to the sounds of war and hated for his soldiers ever to retreat, encouraged his spiritless army. He himself, Lord Clifford, and Lord Stafford, all in armor, charged at the front of our battalion. When they got through, they were killed by the swords of ordinary soldiers.

EDWARD

Lord Stafford's father, the Duke of Buckingham, is either killed or hurt badly. I split his helmet visor with a hit directly from above. You can see that it's true, father – look at his blood.

MONTAGUE

And, brother, here is the Earl of Wiltshire's blood. I fought with him when the battle started.

RICHARD

[To Somerset's head] And you speak for me and tell them what I did.


RICHARD throws SOMERSET's head down.

YORK

Out of all my sons, Richard deserves the most. But, are you dead, my Lord of Somerset?

NORFOLK

I hope all the descendants of [John of Gaunt](#) meet the same fate!

 *John of Gaunt is the father of Henry IV and appears in Shakespeare's play Richard II.*

RICHARD

And I hope to deal similarly with King Henry's head.

WARWICK

And so do I. Victorious Prince of York, I swear by heaven that my eyes shall never close until I see you seated in that throne, which has been stolen by the house of Lancaster. This is the palace of the frightened king, and this is the royal throne. Sit on it, York! Because it is yours and does not belong to King Henry's heirs.

YORK

Help me, then, my good Warwick, and I will, since we have already broken in by force.

NORFOLK

We'll all help you out. He that runs away shall die.

YORK

Thanks, gentle Norfolk: stay by me, my lords;
And, soldiers, stay and lodge by me this night.

They go up

WARWICK

35 And when the king comes, offer no violence,
Unless he seek to thrust you out perforce.

YORK

The queen this day here holds her parliament,
But little thinks we shall be of her council:
By words or blows here let us win our right.

RICHARD

40 Arm'd as we are, let's stay within this house.

WARWICK

The bloody parliament shall this be call'd,
Unless Plantagenet, Duke of York, be king,
And bashful Henry deposed, whose cowardice
Hath made us by-words to our enemies.

YORK

45 Then leave me not, my lords; be resolute;
I mean to take possession of my right.

WARWICK

Neither the king, nor he that loves him best,
The proudest he that holds up Lancaster,
Dares stir a wing, if Warwick shake his bells.
50 I'll plant Plantagenet, root him up who dares:
Resolve thee, Richard; claim the English crown.

*Flourish. Enter KING HENRY VI, CLIFFORD, NORTHUMBERLAND,
WESTMORELAND, EXETER, and the rest*

KING HENRY VI

My lords, look where the sturdy rebel sits,
Even in the chair of state: belike he means,
55 Back'd by the power of Warwick, that false peer,
To aspire unto the crown and reign as king.
Earl of Northumberland, he slew thy father.
And thine, Lord Clifford; and you both have vow'd
revenge
60 On him, his sons, his favourites and his friends.

NORTHUMBERLAND

If I be not, heavens be revenged on me!

CLIFFORD

The hope thereof makes Clifford mourn in steel.

WESTMORELAND

What, shall we suffer this? let's pluck him down:
My heart for anger burns; I cannot brook it.

KING HENRY VI

65 Be patient, gentle Earl of Westmoreland.

CLIFFORD

Patience is for poltroons, such as he:
He durst not sit there, had your father lived.
My gracious lord, here in the parliament
Let us assail the family of York.

NORTHUMBERLAND

70 Well hast thou spoken, cousin: be it so.

YORK

Thanks, noble Norfolk. Stay next to me, my lords. And
soldiers, stay and settle next to me tonight.

They go up to the throne.

WARWICK

And when the king comes, don't be violent towards him,
unless he tries to push you out by force.

YORK

The queen holds her parliament here today, but she doesn't
know that we'll be her council. Let us win our right to the
throne here—either with words or hits!

RICHARD

Let's stay inside this house, armed as we are now.

WARWICK

We will call it the bloody parliament, unless Plantagenet,
Duke of York, is king, and shy Henry deposed. His
cowardliness has made us well-known to our enemies.

YORK

Don't leave me, then, my lords. Be bold! I am planning to
claim my right.

WARWICK

Neither the king, nor he who loves him the most, the
proudest one that supports his House of Lancaster, will
dare to move, if Warwick threatens to swoop down on
them. I'll establish Plantagenet as king—try to unseat
him if you dare. Be resolved, Richard! Take hold of the
English crown!

*A trumpet sounds. KING HENRY VI, CLIFFORD,
NORTHUMBERLAND, WESTMORELAND, EXETER, and others
enter.*

KING HENRY VI

My lords, look where the obstinate rebel is sitting—on the
throne! Perhaps he plans to take over the crown and rule as
king, supported by the power of Warwick, that disloyal lord.
Earl of Northumberland, he killed your father. And yours,
Lord Clifford. And you both have sworn to take revenge on
him, his sons, his acolytes, and his friends.

NORTHUMBERLAND

If I am not avenged, heavens take revenge on me!

CLIFFORD

In hope of that revenge, I'll wear armor instead of black
mourning clothes.

WESTMORELAND

What? Shall we allow this? Let's put him in his place. My
heart burns with anger and I can't endure it.

KING HENRY VI


Be patient, gentle Earl of Westmoreland.

CLIFFORD

Patience is for cowards like him! He would not have dared
to sit there if your father were alive. My gracious lord, let us
attack the family of York here in the parliament.

NORTHUMBERLAND

You have spoken well, cousin. Let's do it.

 Plantagenet is the Duke of York's last name.

KING HENRY VI

Ah, know you not the city favours them,
And they have troops of soldiers at their beck?

EXETER

But when the duke is slain, they'll quickly fly.

KING HENRY VI

75 Far be the thought of this from Henry's heart,
To make a shambles of the parliament-house!
Cousin of Exeter, frowns, words and threats
Shall be the war that Henry means to use.
Thou factious Duke of York, descend my throne,
80 and kneel for grace and mercy at my feet;
I am thy sovereign.

YORK

I am thine.

EXETER

For shame, come down: he made thee Duke of York.

YORK

'Twas my inheritance, as the earldom was.

EXETER

Thy father was a traitor to the crown.

WARWICK

85 Exeter, thou art a traitor to the crown
In following this usurping Henry.

CLIFFORD

Whom should he follow but his natural king?

WARWICK

True, Clifford; and that's Richard Duke of York.

KING HENRY VI

And shall I stand, and thou sit in my throne?

YORK

90 It must and shall be so: content thyself.

WARWICK

Be Duke of Lancaster; let him be king.

WESTMORELAND

He is both king and Duke of Lancaster;
And that the Lord of Westmoreland shall maintain.

WARWICK

And Warwick shall disprove it. You forget
95 That we are those which chased you from the field
And slew your fathers, and with colours spread
March'd through the city to the palace gates.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Yes, Warwick, I remember it to my grief;
And, by his soul, thou and thy house shall rue it.

WESTMORELAND

100 Plantagenet, of thee and these thy sons,
Thy kinsman and thy friends, I'll have more lives
Than drops of blood were in my father's veins.

KING HENRY VI

Ah, don't you know that the citizens of London like them
and that they have a group of soldiers at their command?

EXETER

But when the duke is killed, they'll run away quickly.

KING HENRY VI

This couldn't be further from my thoughts. To make a
slaughter-house of the parliament house!? Cousin of Exeter,
I will use frowns, words and threats instead of weapons.
You, rebellious Duke of York, step down from my throne and
kneel for grace and mercy at my feet. I am your king.

YORK


No, I am yours.

EXETER

For shame, come down! He made you Duke of York.

YORK

It was my inheritance and so is my right to the throne.

 York claims that he has the right to the throne because of the earldom that he inherited which had belonged to the Mortimer family (which thought it had a stronger claim to the throne than Henry and the Lancastrians).

EXETER

Your father was a traitor to the crown.

WARWICK

Exeter, you are a traitor to the crown because you follow
Henry who usurped the throne.

CLIFFORD

Whom should we follow but his rightful king?

WARWICK

That's true, Clifford. And his rightful king is Richard Duke of
York.

KING HENRY VI

So I should stand here while you sit on my throne?

YORK

That must be and shall be what happens. Accept it.

WARWICK

Be Duke of Lancaster and let him be king.

WESTMORELAND

He is both king and Duke of Lancaster. The Lord of
Westmoreland will stand by that.

WARWICK

And Warwick will disagree with it. You are forgetting that
we're the ones who chased you from the battlefield and
killed your fathers, and marched through the city to the
palace gates with military flags.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Yes, Warwick. I remember it and it makes me grieve. And, I
swear by my father's soul, you and your house will regret it.

WESTMORELAND

[To YORK] Plantagenet, by the time I've through with you,
your sons here, your kinsmen, and your friends, I'll have
killed more men than there were drops of blood in my
father's veins.

CLIFFORD

Urge it no more; lest that, instead of words,
I send thee, Warwick, such a messenger
105 As shall revenge his death before I stir.

WARWICK

Poor Clifford! how I scorn his worthless threats!

YORK

Will you we show our title to the crown?
If not, our swords shall plead it in the field.

KING HENRY VI

What title hast thou, traitor, to the crown?
110 Thy father was, as thou art, Duke of York;
Thy grandfather, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March:
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

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

KING HENRY VI

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

RICHARD

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

EDWARD

120 Sweet father, do so; set it on your head.

MONTAGUE

Good brother, as thou lovest and honourest arms,
Let's fight it out and not stand cavilling thus.

RICHARD

Sound drums and trumpets, and the king will fly.

YORK

Sons, peace!

KING HENRY VI

125 Peace, thou! and give King Henry leave to speak.

WARWICK

Plantagenet shall speak first: hear him, lords;
And be you silent and attentive too,
For he that interrupts him shall not live.

KING HENRY VI

130 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?
135 My title's good, and better far than his.

WARWICK

Prove it, Henry, and thou shalt be king.

KING HENRY VI

Henry the Fourth by conquest got the crown.

YORK

'Twas by rebellion against his king.

CLIFFORD

You'd better stop talking now, Warwick. Or else, instead of
exchanging words, I'll send you a messenger who will
revenge Westmoreland's father's death before I even move.

WARWICK

Poor Clifford! How I mock his meaningless threats!

YORK

Do you want me to explain my claim to the throne? If not,
our swords will make a case for it in the battlefield.

KING HENRY VI

What title do you have, you traitor to the crown? Your father
was Duke of York, just like you. Your grandfather, Roger
Mortimer, was the Earl of March. I am the son of Henry V,
who made the French prince and the French people submit
and he took over their towns and provinces.

WARWICK

Don't talk about France since you have lost all of it.

KING HENRY VI

I didn't lose it. The Lord Protector did. I was only nine
months old when I was crowned king.

RICHARD

You are old enough now, and I think you're losing even now.
Father, tear the crown off the usurper's head.

EDWARD

Sweet father, do it. Put in on your own head.

MONTAGUE

Good brother, since you love and honor fighting, let's fight
it out and not stand arguing here over details.

RICHARD

Let the drums and trumpets sound, and the king will run
away.


YORK

Sons, calm down!

KING HENRY VI

You calm down! And let King Henry speak.

WARWICK

Plantagenet shall speak first . Hear him, lords. And be
silent and pay attention too, because whoever interrupts
him will be killed.

KING HENRY VI

Do you think that I will leave my kingly throne, where my
grandfather and my father sat? No. I'd sooner let war kill
everyone in my kingdom. Yes, and their military flags will be
my burial sheet. Those flags were often carried in France,
and now, it makes us sad to say, they're flown in England
too. Why do you lose heart, lords? My claim to the throne is
good and much better than his.

WARWICK


Prove it, Henry, and you'll be king.

KING HENRY VI

Henry the Fourth got the crown by conquering.

YORK

He won it in a rebellion against his king.

 King Henry VI and Warwick both
refer to themselves in the third
person.

KING HENRY VI

[Aside] I know not what to say; my title's weak.--

140 Tell me, may not a king adopt an heir?

YORK

What then?

KING 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,
145 Whose heir my father was, and I am his.

YORK

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

WARWICK

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

EXETER

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

KING HENRY VI

Art thou against us, Duke of Exeter?

EXETER

His is the right, and therefore pardon me.

YORK

Why whisper you, my lords, and answer not?

EXETER

155 My conscience tells me he is lawful king.

KING HENRY VI

[Aside] All will revolt from me, and turn to him.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Plantagenet, for all the claim thou lay'st,
Think not that Henry shall be so deposed.

WARWICK

Deposed he shall be, in despite of all.

NORTHUMBERLAND

160 Thou art deceived: 'tis not thy southern power,
Of Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, nor of Kent,
Which makes thee thus presumptuous and proud,
Can set the duke up in despite of me.

CLIFFORD

165 King Henry, be thy title right or wrong,
Lord Clifford vows to fight in thy defence:
May that ground gape and swallow me alive,
Where I shall kneel to him that slew my father!

KING HENRY VI

O Clifford, how thy words revive my heart!

YORK

170 Henry of Lancaster, resign thy crown.
What mutter you, or what conspire you, lords?

KING HENRY VI

[To himself] I don't know what to say now. My claim to the throne is indeed weak.

[To YORK] Tell me, can't a king adopt an heir?

YORK

And then what?

KING HENRY VI

And if he may, then I am the lawful king because, as many lords saw in person, Richard resigned the crown to Henry IV. Henry IV's heir was my father, and I am my father's heir.

Shakespeare depicts Henry IV's conquest of the throne in *Richard II*. The story of King Henry's father is told in *Henry IV, Parts One and Two*, and *Henry V*.

YORK

Henry rose up against Richard, although Richard was his king, and forced him to give up his crown.

WARWICK

Suppose, my lords, that Richard gave it up voluntarily. Don't you think that would invalidate his family's right to the crown?

York's claim to the throne (the Mortimer family claim) descends from *Richard II*.

EXETER

No, because he would not have willingly given up his crown except to make sure that the next rightful heir would succeed him and rule.

KING HENRY VI

Are you against us, Duke of Exeter?

EXETER

York has the better claim to the throne, and so forgive me.

YORK

Why do you whisper, my lords, and not answer?

EXETER

My conscience tells me he is the lawful king.

KING HENRY VI

[To himself] Everyone will rebel against me and turn to him.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Plantagenet, although you claim that it's your right to be king, don't think that Henry will be removed so easily.

WARWICK

He shall be removed in spite of everything.

NORTHUMBERLAND

You are mistaken. You're so presumptuous and proud about your powers in the south, but not all of them taken together—Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Kent—would be strong enough to put the Duke of York on the throne if I stand in his way.

CLIFFORD

King Henry, I don't care if your claim to the throne is right or wrong. I, Lord Clifford, vow to fight to defend you. Let the ground open up and swallow me alive, if ever I kneel to the man that killed my father!

KING HENRY VI

Oh, Clifford! Your words bring my heart back to life.

YORK

Henry of Lancaster, give up your crown. What are you muttering about, or what are you conspiring, lords?

WARWICK

Do right unto this princely Duke of York,
Or I will fill the house with armed men,
And over the chair of state, where now he sits,
Write up his title with usurping blood.

175

He stamps with his foot and the soldiers show themselves

KING HENRY VI

My Lord of Warwick, hear me but one word:
Let me for this my life-time reign as king.

YORK

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

KING HENRY VI

180 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 England and himself!

WESTMORELAND

Base, fearful and despairing Henry!

CLIFFORD

185 How hast thou injured both thyself and us!

WESTMORELAND

I cannot stay to hear these articles.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Nor I.

CLIFFORD

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

WESTMORELAND

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

NORTHUMBERLAND

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

CLIFFORD

In dreadful war mayst thou be overcome,
Or live in peace abandon'd and despised!

195

Exeunt NORTHUMBERLAND, CLIFFORD, and WESTMORELAND

WARWICK

Turn this way, Henry, and regard them not.

EXETER

They seek revenge and therefore will not yield.

KING HENRY VI

Ah, Exeter!

WARWICK

Why should you sigh, my lord?

KING HENRY VI

200 Not for myself, Lord Warwick, but my son,
Whom I unnaturally shall disinherit.

WARWICK

Give up the throne to this noble Duke of York. If not, I will fill
this Parliament House with armed soldiers, and I'll write the
Duke's title above the throne he now sits on with the blood
of the usurping Henry.

WARWICK stamps his foot and the soldiers reveal themselves.

KING HENRY VI

My Lord of Warwick, listen to just one word. Let me rule as
king for my lifetime.

YORK

If you leave the crown to me and my heirs after you die,
we'll let you rule in peace for the rest of your life.

KING HENRY VI

I am satisfied. Richard Plantagenet, you can have the
kingdom after my death.

CLIFFORD

You do a great wrong to your son, the prince!

WARWICK

But it's good for England and the king himself!

WESTMORELAND

Unworthy, fearful and despairing Henry!

CLIFFORD

How you have hurt both yourself and us!

WESTMORELAND

I can't stay to hear the terms of agreement.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Neither can I.

CLIFFORD

Come, friend, and let us tell the queen these news.

WESTMORELAND

Goodbye, you timid and wretched king. There is no honor
at all in your weak blood.

NORTHUMBERLAND

I hope you'll be fall prey to the House of York and die in
chains for this unmanly decision!

CLIFFORD

I hope you'll be killed in a terrible war or else live in peace
but abandoned and despised!

NORTHUMBERLAND, CLIFFORD, and WESTMORELAND exit.

WARWICK

Look this way, Henry, and don't pay attention to them.

EXETER

They are looking for revenge so they won't give up.

KING HENRY VI

Ah, Exeter!

WARWICK

Why do you sigh, my lord?

KING HENRY VI

Not for myself, Lord Warwick, but for my son. I have
unnaturally disinherited him. But it is what it is. I here

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
205 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.

YORK

This oath I willingly take and will perform.

WARWICK

210 Long live King Henry! Plantagenet embrace him.

KING HENRY VI

And long live thou and these thy forward sons!

YORK

Now York and Lancaster are reconciled.

EXETER

Accursed be he that seeks to make them foes!

Sennet. Here they come down

YORK

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

WARWICK

And I'll keep London with my soldiers.

NORFOLK

And I to Norfolk with my followers.

MONTAGUE

And I unto the sea from whence I came.

*Exeunt YORK, EDWARD, EDMUND, GEORGE, RICHARD, WARWICK,
NORFOLK, MONTAGUE, their Soldiers, and Attendants*

KING HENRY VI

220 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.

KING HENRY VI

Exeter, so will I.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

KING HENRY VI

Be patient, gentle queen, and I will stay.

QUEEN 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,
230 Seeing thou hast proved so unnatural a father.
Hath he deserved to lose his birthright thus?
Hadst thou but loved him half so well as I,
Or felt that pain which I did for him once,
Or nourish'd him as I did with my blood,
235 Thou wouldst have left thy dearest heart-blood there,
Rather than have that savage duke thine heir
And disinherited thine only son.

bequeath the crown to you and to your heirs forever. Under
this condition: that you swear to me here to stop this civil
war and to honor me as your king while I live. And that you
promise not to attempt to overthrow me and rule yourself,
either by committing treason or declaring open war against
me.

YORK

I will gladly take this oath and keep it.

WARWICK

Long live King Henry! Embrace him, Plantagenet.

KING HENRY VI

And long live you and these eager sons of yours!

YORK

Now York and Lancaster have made peace.

EXETER

Cursed be he who tries to make them enemies!

*There is a trumpet call signaling a procession. York and his
sons come down from the throne here.*

YORK

Goodbye, my gracious lord. I'll go to my castle.

WARWICK

And I'll stay in London with my soldiers.

NORFOLK

And I'll go to Norfolk with my followers.

MONTAGUE

And I'll go to the sea where I came from.

*YORK, EDWARD, EDMUND, GEORGE, RICHARD, WARWICK,
NORFOLK, MONTAGUE, their Soldiers, and Attendants all
exit.*

KING HENRY VI

And I'll go to the court with my grief and sorrow.

QUEEN MARGARET and PRINCE EDWARD enter.

EXETER

Here comes the queen and her looks give away her anger.
I'll slip away.

KING HENRY VI

Exeter, so will I.

QUEEN MARGARET

No, don't go away from me. I will follow you.

KING HENRY VI

Be patient, gentle queen, and I will stay.

QUEEN MARGARET

Who can be patient in such extreme situations? Ah, you
wretched man! I wish I had died a virgin and never had seen
you or given birth to your son, now that you've proven to be
such an unloving father. Has he deserved to lose his
inheritance like this? If you had loved him half as much as I
do, or felt my labor pains, or nursed him with my breast
milk, you would have shed blood from your heart rather
than make that barbarous duke your heir and disinherit
your only son.

PRINCE EDWARD

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

KING HENRY VI

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

QUEEN 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;
245 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 it far before thy time?
250 Warwick is chancellor and the lord of Calais;
Stern Falconbridge commands the narrow seas;
The duke is made protector of the realm;
And yet shalt thou be safe? such safety finds
The trembling lamb environed with wolves.
255 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
260 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;
265 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;
Our army is ready; come, we'll after them.

KING HENRY VI

Stay, gentle Margaret, and hear me speak.

QUEEN MARGARET

270 Thou hast spoke too much already: get thee gone.

KING HENRY VI

Gentle son Edward, thou wilt stay with me?

QUEEN MARGARET

Ay, to be murder'd by his enemies.

PRINCE EDWARD

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

QUEEN MARGARET

275 Come, son, away; we may not linger thus.

Exeunt QUEEN MARGARET and PRINCE EDWARD

KING HENRY VI

Poor queen! how love to me and to her son
Hath made her break out into terms of rage!
Revenged may she be on that hateful duke,
280 Whose haughty spirit, winged with desire,
Will cost my crown, and like an empty eagle
Tire on the flesh of me and of my son!
The loss of those three lords torments my heart:
I'll write unto them and entreat them fair.
285 Come, cousin you shall be the messenger.

EXETER

And I, I hope, shall reconcile them all.

Exeunt

PRINCE EDWARD

Father, you can't disinherit me! If you are the king, why
shouldn't I be next in line for the throne?

KING HENRY VI

I am sorry, Margaret. I am sorry, my sweet son. The Earl of
Warwick and the duke forced me to do it.

QUEEN MARGARET

Forced you! Are you a king who will be forced? I am
ashamed to hear you speak. Ah, fearful rascal! You have
ruined yourself, your son, and me. And you have given so
much free rein to the house of York that now you rule with
their permission. Leaving the throne to him and his heirs
can only mean that you're digging your own grave and
creeping into it long before your time? Warwick is
chancellor and the lord of Calais, stern Falconbridge rules
over the seas, the duke is the protector of the country and
yet you think you're safe? This is a safety that's like when a
shaking lamb is surrounded by wolves. If I—a silly
woman—had been there, the soldiers would have thrown
my head on their spears before I would have made this
agreement. But you care more about your life than your
honor. Because I have seen that now, I divorce myself from
you here, both from your royal table, Henry, and from your
bed, until this parliamentary act disinheriting my son is
revoked. The northern lords that have falsely sworn their
loyalty to you will follow my own flag once they see it fly.
And it will be flown indeed, which will disgrace you and
utterly ruin the House of York. And so I leave you with that
thought. Come, son, let's go. Our army is ready. Come, we'll
follow them.

KING HENRY VI

Stay, gentle Margaret, and hear me speak.

QUEEN MARGARET

You have spoken too much already. Get lost.

KING HENRY VI

Gentle son Edward, will you stay with me?

QUEEN MARGARET

Yes, to be murdered by his enemies.

PRINCE EDWARD

When I return victorious from the battlefield, I'll come see
you. Until then, I'll stick with her.

QUEEN MARGARET

Come, son, let's go. We can't stay here any longer.

QUEEN MARGARET and PRINCE EDWARD exit.

KING HENRY VI

Poor queen! It's love for me and her son that has made her
express this great rage! I hope she'll be revenged on that
hateful duke, whose arrogance, combined with desire for
power, will deprive me of my crown. Like a hungry eagle, he
will feed on the body of me and of my son! The loss of those
three lords troubles me greatly. I'll write to them and plead
with them to come back to me. Come, friend, you will be my
messenger.

EXETER

And I, I hope, that I can make peace between them all.

All exit.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter RICHARD, EDWARD, and MONTAGUE

RICHARD

Brother, though I be youngest, give me leave.

EDWARD

No, I can better play the orator.

MONTAGUE

But I have reasons strong and forcible.

Enter YORK

YORK

5 Why, how now, sons and brother! At a strife?
What is your quarrel? How began it first?

EDWARD

No quarrel, but a slight contention.

YORK

About what?

RICHARD

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

YORK

Mine boy? not till King Henry be dead.

RICHARD

Your right depends not on his life or death.

EDWARD

15 Now you are heir, therefore enjoy it now:
By giving the house of Lancaster leave to breathe,
It will outrun you, father, in the end.

YORK

I took an oath that he should quietly reign.

EDWARD

But for a kingdom any oath may be broken:
I would break a thousand oaths to reign one year.

RICHARD

No; God forbid your grace should be forsworn.

YORK

20 I shall be, if I claim by open war.

RICHARD

I'll prove the contrary, if you'll hear me speak.

YORK

Thou canst not, son; it is impossible.

Shakescleare Translation

RICHARD, EDWARD, and MONTAGUE enter.

RICHARD

Brother, let me do this, even though I'm the youngest.

EDWARD

No, I am a better public speaker than you.

MONTAGUE

But I have strong and compelling reasons to be the one.

YORK enters.

YORK

What's going on, my sons and brother? Are you fighting?
What is your argument about? What started it?

EDWARD

It's not an argument. Just a small disagreement.

YORK

What about?

RICHARD

About something that concerns your grace and us—the
English crown, father, which is yours.

YORK

Mine, boy? Not until King Henry is dead.

RICHARD

Your right to the throne doesn't depend on his life or death.

EDWARD

You're the rightful heir, so take the throne now. Father,
giving the house of Lancaster time to rest and recover itself
will bring you down in the end.

YORK

I took an oath that he could reign peacefully.

EDWARD

But any promise can be broken for the sake of a kingdom. I
would break a thousand promises if I could only rule for
one year.

RICHARD

No, God forbid that your grace should break an oath.

YORK

I would be breaking one, if I started an open war to claim
the throne.

RICHARD

I'll prove otherwise, if you'll hear what I have to say.

YORK

You can't, son. It's impossible.

RICHARD

An oath is of no moment, being not took
 Before a true and lawful magistrate,
 25 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
 30 How sweet a thing it is to wear a crown;
 Within whose circuit is Elysium
 And all that poets feign of bliss and joy.
 Why do we finger thus? I cannot rest
 Until the white rose that I wear be dyed
 35 Even in the lukewarm blood of Henry's heart.

YORK

Richard, enough; I will be king, or die.
 Brother, thou shalt to London presently,
 And whet on Warwick to this enterprise.
 Thou, Richard, shalt to the Duke of Norfolk,
 40 And tell him privily of our intent.
 You Edward, shall unto my Lord Cobham,
 With whom the Kentishmen will willingly rise:
 In them I trust; for they are soldiers,
 Witty, courteous, liberal, full of spirit.
 45 While you are thus employ'd, what resteth more,
 But that I seek occasion how to rise,
 And yet the king not privy to my drift,
 Nor any of the house of Lancaster?

Enter a Messenger

YORK

But, stay: what news? Why comest thou in such post?
 50

MESSENGER

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

YORK

55 Ay, with my sword. What! think'st thou that we fear
 them?
 Edward and Richard, you shall stay with me;
 My brother Montague shall post to London:
 Let noble Warwick, Cobham, and the rest,
 60 Whom we have left protectors of the king,
 With powerful policy strengthen themselves,
 And trust not simple Henry nor his oaths.

MONTAGUE

65 Brother, I go; I'll win them, fear it not:
 And thus most humbly I do take my leave.

Exit

Enter JOHN MORTIMER and HUGH MORTIMER



YORK


Sir John and Sir Hugh Mortimer, mine uncles,
 You are come to Sandal in a happy hour;
 The army of the queen mean to besiege us.


JOHN MORTIMER

She shall not need; we'll meet her in the field.

RICHARD

The oath isn't binding because it wasn't sworn before a real
 and lawful judge who can hold you legally to your promise.
 Henry had no such authority but forcefully took your place
 on the thrown. And since it was him that made you give up
 the crown, your promise, my lord, is silly and worthless.
 Therefore, let's fight! And think about how sweet it would
 feel to wear a crown, father. Paradise  can be found in the
 circle of a crown along with all the joy and happiness that
 poets imagine. Why do we wait around? I won't rest until
 the white rose  that I wear will be dyed with the cowardly
 blood of Henry's heart.

 "Elysium" is the paradise in Greek mythology where heroes would be delivered by the gods after death. In the second scene of *Twelfth Night*, Viola tells the Captain that her supposed-drowned brother Sebastian "is in Elysium."

 The conflict between the Lancastrians and the Yorks (two branches of the Plantagenet family) begins in earnest in a garden as depicted in *1 Henry VI*. In that play, the Duke of York picks a white rose and tells any nobleman who sides with him to do the same while the Duke of Somerset and the loyalists to the king pick red roses.

YORK

Richard, that's enough! I will be king or die. Brother, go to
 London at once and encourage Warwick to think about this.
 You, Richard, will go to the Duke of Norfolk and tell him
 about our intentions in secret. You, Edward, will go to Lord
 Cobham, who the soldiers from Kent would willingly join in
 rebellion. I believe in them because they are soldiers—
 witty, polite, generous, and full of courage. While you are
 running these errands, what else is there for me to do but
 prepare for the opportunity to take power without the king
 or the house of Lancaster being aware of my intentions?

A messenger enters.

YORK

Wait! What's the news? Why do you come here in such a
 hurry?

MESSENGER

The queen with all the northern earls and lords plans to
 attack you here in your castle. She is nearby with twenty
 thousand men. You should guard your fortress, my lord.

YORK

Yes, I'll guard it with my sword! What, do you think that we
 are afraid of them? Edward and Richard, you will stay with
 me. I'll send my brother Montague to ride to London swiftly.
 Let noble Warwick, Cobham, and the others, whom we have
 left as protectors of the king, now protect themselves with
 cunning and plotting rather than trusting foolish Henry or
 his promises.

MONTAGUE

I will go, brother. I'll win them over, don't worry. And so I
 humbly leave you.

MONTAGUE exits.

JOHN MORTIMER and HUGH MORTIMER enter.

YORK

My uncles, Sir John and Sir Hugh Mortimer, you have
 arrived in Sandal at a good time. The queen's army plans to
 attack us.

JOHN MORTIMER

She won't need to. We'll meet her in the field in battle.

YORK

70 What, with five thousand men?

RICHARD

Ay, with five hundred, father, for a need:
A woman's general; what should we fear?

A march afar off

EDWARD

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

YORK

Five men to twenty! Though the odds be great,
I doubt not, uncle, of our victory.
Many a battle have I won in France,
When as the enemy hath been ten to one:
80 Why should I not now have the like success?

Alarum. Exeunt

YORK

What, with five thousand men?

RICHARD

Yes, with five hundred if we need to, father! It's a woman's
army so why should we be scared?

The sounds of a march are heard far away.

EDWARD

I hear their drums of war. Let's make sure our men are
ready, and then we'll send them into battle straight away.

YORK

Five men for every twenty! Although the odds are great, I
don't doubt that we'll win, uncle. I have won many battles
in France, when the enemy was ten to one. Why shouldn't I
have the same success now?

An alarm sounds. All exit.

Act 1, Scene 3

Shakespeare

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

CLIFFORD

Chaplain, away! Thy priesthood saves thy life.
5 As for the brat of this accursed duke,
Whose father slew my father, he shall die.

TUTOR

And I, my lord, will bear him company.

CLIFFORD

Soldiers, away with him!

TUTOR

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

Exit, dragged off by Soldiers

CLIFFORD

How now! is he dead already? Or is it fear
That makes him close his eyes? I'll open them.

RUTLAND

So looks the pent-up lion o'er the wretch
15 That trembles under his devouring paws;
And so he walks, insulting o'er his prey,
And so he comes, to rend his limbs asunder.
Ah, gentle Clifford, kill me with thy sword,
And not with such a cruel threatening look.
20 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.

Shakesclore Translation

Alarms sound. RUTLAND and his tutor enter.

RUTLAND

Ah, where should I run to escape them? Tutor, look, the
bloodthirsty Clifford is coming!

CLIFFORD and soldiers enter.

CLIFFORD

Go away, clergyman! Your holy position saves your life. And,
as for the kid of this damned Duke, whose father killed my
father, he will die.

TUTOR

And I will die with him, my lord.

CLIFFORD

Soldiers, take him away!

TUTOR

Clifford, don't murder this innocent child, or you will be
hated both by God and mankind!

TUTOR exits, dragged off by Soldiers.

CLIFFORD

What's happened? Is he already dead? Or does fear make
him close his eyes? I'll open them.

RUTLAND

That's just how the caged lion looks at the poor victim that
shakes under the lion's hungry paws. And that's just how the
lion walks, conquering his prey. And that's just how the lion
comes nearer to tear his victim's limbs apart. Ah, gentle
Clifford, kill me with your sword and not with such a cruel,
threatening stare. Kind Clifford, listen to what I have to say
before you kill me. I am too young for your anger. Take your
revenge on men, and let me live.

CLIFFORD

In vain thou speak'st, poor boy; my father's blood
Hath stopp'd the passage where thy words should enter.

RUTLAND

25 Then let my father's blood open it again:
He is a man, and, Clifford, cope with him.

CLIFFORD

Had thy brethren here, their lives and thine
Were not revenge sufficient for me;
No, if I digg'd up thy forefathers' graves
30 And hung their rotten coffins up in chains,
It could not slake mine ire, nor ease my heart.
The sight of any of the house of York
Is as a fury to torment my soul;
And till I root out their accursed line
35 And leave not one alive, I live in hell.
Therefore—

Lifting his hand

RUTLAND

O, let me pray before I take my death!
To thee I pray; sweet Clifford, pity me!

CLIFFORD

Such pity as my rapier's point affords.

RUTLAND

40 I never did thee harm: why wilt thou slay me?

CLIFFORD

Thy father hath.

RUTLAND

But 'twas ere I was born.
Thou hast one son; for his sake pity me,
Lest in revenge thereof, sith God is just,
45 He be as miserably slain as I.
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!
50 Thy father slew my father; therefore, die.

Stabs him

RUTLAND

Di faciant laudis summa sit ista tuae!

Dies

CLIFFORD

Plantagenet! I come, Plantagenet!
55 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

CLIFFORD

You speak in vain, poor boy. Thinking about my father's death and his spilled blood has prevented your words from reaching me.

RUTLAND

Then let my father's blood make it up to you. He is a man and you can fight him instead, Clifford.

CLIFFORD

Even if your brothers were here, killing you and killing them would not be enough of revenge for me. Even if I dug up your ancestors' graves and hung their rotting coffins up in chains, it still wouldn't calm my anger or soothe my heart. Just seeing anyone from the house of York torments my soul. And until I destroy your whole damned family line, leaving no one alive, I continue to live in hell. That's why—

CLIFFORD lifts his hand.

RUTLAND

Oh, let me pray before I die! I pray to you, kind Clifford, take pity on me!

CLIFFORD

I'll take as much pity as the blade of my sword allows me to.

RUTLAND

I never hurt you. Why do you want to kill me?

CLIFFORD

Your father hurt me.

RUTLAND


But that was before I was even born. You have one son. Take pity on me for his sake, in case, since God is just, your son is killed just as horribly as I am. Oh, let me stay in prison for the rest of my life, and if I give you any reason to be angry with me there, then let me die. You have no reason to kill me now.


CLIFFORD

No reason! Your father killed my father. And so, you die.

CLIFFORD stabs RUTLAND.

RUTLAND

May the Gods ensure that this is the high point of your glory. 

 Rutland speaks in Latin in the original. The quotation, "The gods grant that this may be the height of your glory," is from Ovid's *Heroides*.

RUTLAND dies.

CLIFFORD

Plantagenet! I am coming for you, Plantagenet! And your son's blood here, clinging to my sword, will stay rusting here until your blood mixes with his. Then I'll wipe off both your blood and his.

All exit.

Act 1, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Alarum. Enter YORK

YORK

The army of the queen hath got the field:
My uncles both are slain in rescuing me;
And all my followers to the eager foe
Turn back and fly, like ships before the wind
5 Or lambs pursued by hunger-starved wolves.
My sons, God knows what hath bechanced them:
But this I know, they have demean'd themselves
Like men born to renown by life or death.
Three times did Richard make a lane to me.
10 And thrice cried 'Courage, father! fight it out!'
And full as oft came Edward to my side,
With purple falchion, painted to the hilt
In blood of those that had encounter'd him:
And when the hardiest warriors did retire,
15 Richard cried 'Charge! and give no foot of ground!'
And cried 'A crown, or else a glorious tomb!
A sceptre, or an earthly sepulchre!'
With this, we charged again: but, out, alas!
We boded again; as I have seen a swan
20 With bootless labour swim against the tide
And spend her strength with over-matching waves.

A short alarum within

YORK

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:
25 The sands are number'd that make up my life;
Here must I stay, and here my life must end.

Enter QUEEN MARGARET, CLIFFORD, NORTHUMBERLAND, PRINCE EDWARD, and Soldiers

YORK

Come, bloody Clifford, rough Northumberland,
I dare your quenchless fury to more rage:
I am your butt, and I abide your shot.
30

NORTHUMBERLAND

Yield to our mercy, proud Plantagenet.

CLIFFORD

Ay, to such mercy as his ruthless arm,
With downright payment, show'd unto my father.
Now Phaethon hath tumbled from his car,
35 And made an evening at the noontide prick.

YORK

My ashes, as the phoenix, may bring forth
A bird that will revenge upon you all:
And in that hope I throw mine eyes to heaven,
Scorning whate'er you can afflict me with.
40 Why come you not? what! multitudes, and fear?

CLIFFORD

So cowards fight when they can fly no further;
So doves do peck the falcon's piercing talons;
So desperate thieves, all hopeless of their lives,

Shakescleare Translation

An alarm sounds. YORK enters.

YORK

The queen's army has won. Both of my uncles died as they were rescuing me. All of my followers turned their backs to the savage enemy and ran away like ships blown away the wind or lambs chased by starving wolves. Only God know what has happened to my sons. But I do know this—they have behaved like men born to be remembered as heroes whether they live or die. Richard tried to get to me three times, and three times he shouted, "Courage, father! Keep fighting!" And Edward came to me just as frequently, with bloodied sword, which was covered with blood of those that had fought him. And when the strongest warriors were falling and fleeing, Richard still shouted, "Charge! And don't let your feet touch the ground!" And he also shouted: "We'll get the crown or we'll go to our graves! A scepter or a tomb!" Hearing this, we charged again. But, sad to say, we were overwhelmed again. It reminded me of when I once saw a swan hopelessly swimming against the tide and using up her strength to swim through waves that were much more powerful than she was.


A short alarm sounds offstage.


YORK

Ah, listen! These enemies who want to kill me are after me. And I am weak and cannot escape their rage. And even if I were strong, I would not flee their rage. The sands in the hourglass of my life are running out. I must stay here, and my life must end here.

QUEEN MARGARET, CLIFFORD, NORTHUMBERLAND, PRINCE EDWARD, and Soldiers enter.

YORK


Come, blood-thirsty Clifford, violent Northumberland. I dare you to increase your unsatisfied fury to even more rage. I am your target , and I am waiting for your shot.


 "Butt," in the original text, is an archery term for "target."

NORTHUMBERLAND


Surrender to us, proud Plantagenet!


CLIFFORD

Yes, we'll show him as much mercy as he showed my father when he brought his sword down on him in one fatal sword-stroke. Now the sun's fallen out of the sky and it's night at noon. 

 Phaeton, in Greek mythology, was the son of Apollo. Apollo let his son drive the chariot that brought the sun into the sky each morning, but Phaeton lost control and both chariot and sun fell out of the sky. The sun was also an emblem for the house of York so Clifford is referring to York's loss in battle.

YORK

My dead body may provoke my followers to take revenge on all of you, like a phoenix rising from the ashes . And I prepare for death with that hope. Nothing you torment me with can bother me now. Why aren't you coming for me? What? There are more of you and yet you're afraid?

 The phoenix is a mythical bird that was thought to die and be resurrected from its own ashes. (You may remember Fawkes from the Harry Potter series!)

CLIFFORD

That's how cowards fight when they can no longer run away. That's how doves peck hopelessly at the falcon's piercing claws. And that's how desperate thieves, with no

Breathe out invectives 'gainst the officers.

YORK

45 O Clifford, but bethink thee once again,
And in thy thought o'er-run my former time;
And, if though canst for blushing, view this face,
And bite thy tongue, that slanders him with cowardice
Whose frown hath made thee faint and fly ere this!

CLIFFORD

50 I will not bandy with thee word for word,
But buckle with thee blows, twice two for one.

QUEEN MARGARET

Hold, valiant Clifford! for a thousand causes
I would prolong awhile the traitor's life.
Wrath makes him deaf: speak thou, Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND

55 Hold, Clifford! do not honour him so much
To prick thy finger, though to wound his heart:
What valour were it, when a cur doth grin,
For one to thrust his hand between his teeth,
When he might spurn him with his foot away?
60 It is war's prize to take all vantages;
And ten to one is no impeach of valour.

They lay hands on YORK, who struggles

CLIFFORD

Ay, ay, so strives the woodcock with the gin.

NORTHUMBERLAND

So doth the cony struggle in the net.

YORK

So triumph thieves upon their conquer'd booty;
65 So true men yield, with robbers so o'ermatch'd.

NORTHUMBERLAND

What would your grace have done unto him now?

QUEEN MARGARET

Brave warriors, Clifford and Northumberland,
Come, make him stand upon this molehill here,
That wrought at mountains with outstretched arms,
70 Yet parted but the shadow with his hand.
What! was it you that would be England's king?
Was't you that revell'd in our parliament,
And made a preaching of your high descent?
Where are your mess of sons to back you now?
75 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?
80 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.
85 Alas poor York! but that I hate thee deadly,
I should lament thy miserable state.
I prithee, grieve, to make me merry, York.
What, hath thy fiery heart so parch'd thine entrails
That not a tear can fall for Rutland's death?
90 Why art thou patient, man? thou shouldst be mad;
And I, to make thee mad, do mock thee thus.

chance of being saved, shout out insults against the officers
who arrest them.

YORK

Oh, Clifford, use your brain once again, and think over the
life I have lived. And, if you can do it without blushing, look
at my face and shut your mouth, rather than calling me a
coward when my very frown used to make you feel weak
and run away!

CLIFFORD

I won't exchange insults with you back and forth, but I will
have a little combat with you and strike you four times for
every one time you strike me.

QUEEN MARGARET

Wait, brave Clifford! I would prolong the life of this traitor a
little bit longer for a thousand reasons. Anger makes
Clifford deaf. Speak, Northumberland.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Wait, Clifford! Don't give him the honor of letting him prick
your finger in combat even if it means you get to stab him
through the heart. When a dog shows its teeth, is it brave to
put your hand in his mouth when you could just as easily
kick him away with your foot? In war, you get to take
everything you can. It's not even dishonorable for ten men
to attack one.

*NORTHUMBERLAND and CLIFFORD grab YORK. He struggles
against them.*

CLIFFORD

Yes, yes, so the stupid little bird is trying to get out of the
trap.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Just like a rabbit struggling to get out of the net.

YORK

And you're just like thieves enjoying the goods they've
stolen. And I'm just like a real man, giving up when he
knows he is outmatched by petty robbers like you.

NORTHUMBERLAND

[To Queen Margaret] What does your grace want done to
him now?

QUEEN MARGARET

Brave warriors, Clifford and Northumberland, come! Come,
make him stand on this molehill here. He reached for
mountains with his outstretched arms, but he only
managed to obtain the shadow of a mountain. Hey! Wasn't
it you who said you would be the king of England? Wasn't it
you who threw a fit in our parliament and lectured us about
your important ancestors? Where is your quartet of sons
now? The wild Edward, and the lustful George? And where's
that brave hunchbacked monster, your boy Dicky, that
cheered up his dad with his grumbly voice during the fight?
And, come to think of it, where is your darling Rutland?
Look, York. I stained this napkin with the blood that brave
Clifford got from your son's chest with his sword. And if you
can cry for his death, I'll offer you this napkin to dry your
cheeks with. Oh, poor York! If I didn't hate you so much, I
would feel sorry that you're in such bad shape. I beg you, be
sad in order to make me happy, York. Has your fiery heart
dried up your insides so much that you can't even shed one
tear for Rutland's death? Why are you so calm, man? You
should be mad! And I will mock you now to make you mad.
Stamp your foot, rant, and panic, so I can sing and dance.
Oh, I see you won't humor me with such entertainment
unless you've been paid. York can't speak unless he wears a
crown. A crown for York! And bow low to him, lords. Hold
his hands while I place it on his head.

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.

95 A crown for York! and, lords, bow low to him:
Hold you his hands, whilst I do set it on.

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.
100 But how is it that great Plantagenet
Is crown'd so soon, and broke his solemn oath?
As I bethink me, you should not be king
Till our King Henry had shook hands with death.
And will you pale your head in Henry's glory,
105 And rob his temples of the diadem,
Now in his life, against your holy 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.

CLIFFORD

110 That is my office, for my father's sake.

QUEEN MARGARET

Nay, stay; lets hear the orisons he makes.

YORK

She-wolf of France, but worse than wolves of France,
Whose tongue more poisons than the adder's tooth!
How ill-beseeming is it in thy sex

115 To triumph, like an Amazonian trull,
Upon their woes whom fortune captivates!
But that thy face is, visor-like, unchanging,
Made impudent with use of evil deeds,
I would assay, proud queen, to make thee blush.
120 To tell thee whence thou camest, of whom derived,
Were shame enough to shame thee, wert thou not
shameless.

Thy father bears the type of King of Naples,
Of both the Sicils and Jerusalem,

125 Yet not so wealthy as an English yeoman.
Hath that poor monarch taught thee to insult?
It needs not, nor it boots thee not, proud queen,
Unless the adage must be verified,
That beggars mounted run their horse to death.
130 'Tis beauty that doth oft make women proud;
But, God he knows, thy share thereof is small:
'Tis virtue that doth make them most admired;
The contrary doth make thee wonder'd at:
'Tis government that makes them seem divine;

135 The want thereof makes thee abominable:
Thou art as opposite to every good
As the Antipodes are unto us,
Or as the south to the septentrion.
O tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide!
140 How couldst thou drain the life-blood of the child,
To bid the father wipe his eyes withal,
And yet be seen to bear a woman's face?
Women are soft, mild, pitiful and flexible;
Thou stern, obdurate, flinty, rough, remorseless.
145 Bids't thou me rage? why, now thou hast thy wish:
Wouldst have me weep? why, now thou hast thy will:
For raging wind blows up incessant showers,
And when the rage allays, the rain begins.
These tears are my sweet Rutland's obsequies:
150 And every drop cries vengeance for his death,
'Gainst thee, fell Clifford, and thee, false
Frenchwoman.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Beshrew me, but his passion moves me so
That hardly can I cheque my eyes from tears.

QUEEN MARGARET puts a paper crown on YORK's head.

Ah, there, sir, now he looks like a king! Yes, this is the man that took King Henry's throne and also the man who was chosen to be his heir. But how is it possible that the great Plantagenet has crowned so quickly? How did he break his sacred promise? I thought you weren't supposed to be king until King Henry had died. And will you wear Henry's glory, stealing the crown from off his head while he's still alive, despite your holy promise? Oh, that's an unforgivable crime!

[To soldiers] Off with the crown, and with it, off with his head. And, while I rest, take your time to kill him.

CLIFFORD

I must do the deed, for my father's sake.

QUEEN MARGARET

No, wait. Let's hear his prayers.

YORK

You're a French she-wolf, but worse than French wolves, since your tongue is more poisonous than the tooth of a venomous snake. It is so unattractive when women, like Amazonian whores, rejoice in the misery of men brought down by fortune. If your face wasn't like a unchanging mask, hardened by your evil deeds, I would attempt, proud queen, to make you blush. If you weren't shameless, just saying where you came from and who your ancestors are would have been enough disgrace to make you feel ashamed. Your father bears the title of the King of Naples, ruling over Sicily and Jerusalem, too, yet he is not as rich as an English landowner. Has that poor king taught you to curse? It's not necessary, and it doesn't do you any good, proud queen, unless the old saying proves true that beggars on horseback will drive their horses to death. It's usually beauty that makes women proud but God knows that your share of beauty is small. It's usually virtue that makes women admired, but it's the opposite of virtue that makes people stare at you. It's usually self-control that makes women seem heavenly. Your total lack of self-control makes you abominable. You are as opposite to everything that is good as people living on the other side of the world in the Antipodes are to us, or as the south is to the north. Oh, you have a tiger's heart wrapped in a woman's skin! How could you drain the blood of a child and make the father wipe his eyes with it, and still appear to have a woman's face? Women are soft, mild, compassionate and yielding. You are stern, stubborn, hard, violent and without remorse. You ask me to be angry? Well, now your wish will come true. Do you want me to cry? Well, now you'll get what you want. The raging wind blows rain showers up into the air, but when the wind calms down, the rain begins to fall. These tears are my sweet Rutland's funeral prayers, and every drop cries for vengeance for his death against you, cruel Clifford, and you, treacherous Frenchwoman.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Damn me, but his grief is so moving that I can hardly stop myself from crying.

⁴ In Greek mythology, the Amazons were a society of female warriors.

⁵ The proverb may mean that, given power, beggars (like the queen and her poor monarch father) will go wild with their newfound power (as demonstrated by Margaret's curses).

⁶ "Septentrion" refers to the north, or, literally, the seven stars that make up the Ursa Major constellation.

YORK

155 That face of his the hungry cannibals
 Would not have touch'd, would not have stain'd with
 blood:
 But you are more inhuman, more inexorable,
 O, ten times more, than tigers of Hyrcania.
 160 See, ruthless queen, a hapless father's tears:
 This cloth thou dip'dst in blood of my sweet boy,
 And I with tears do wash the blood away.
 Keep thou the napkin, and go boast of this:
 And if thou tell'st the heavy story right,
 165 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
 170 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!

NORTHUMBERLAND

Had he been slaughter-man to all my kin,
 I should not for my life but weep with him.
 175 To see how inly sorrow gripes his soul.

QUEEN MARGARET

What, weeping-ripe, my Lord Northumberland?
 Think but upon the wrong he did us all,
 And that will quickly dry thy melting tears.

CLIFFORD

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

180

*Stabbing him***QUEEN MARGARET**

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

*Stabbing him***YORK**

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

*Dies***QUEEN MARGARET**

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

*Flourish. Exeunt***YORK**

Not even hungry cannibals would have touched Rutland's
 face or stained it with blood. But you are ten times more
 inhuman and more relentless than the tigers of Hyrcania.
 See, ruthless queen, here are the tears of an unfortunate
 father. With these tears, I wash away the blood from this
 napkin that you dipped in the blood of my sweet son. You
 can keep the napkin and go boast of my murder. And if you
 tell the tragic story right, I swear that the listeners will cry.
 Yes, even my enemies will cry heavily and they'll say, "Oh, it
 was a terrible act!" Here, take the crown, and, with the
 crown also take my curse. I want you to have as much
 comfort as your too cruel hand is now giving me!
 Unmerciful Clifford, take me away from this world! My soul
 will go to heaven and my blood will be on your hands!

NORTHUMBERLAND

Even if he were the murderer of all my family, I would cry
 with him, seeing how his soul is gripped by sorrow.

QUEEN MARGARET

What, are you on the verge of tears, my Lord
 Northumberland? Just think about the wrong he did to all
 of us, and that will quickly dry your dripping tears.

CLIFFORD

Here is what I promised you for killing my father.

*CLIFFORD stabs YORK.***QUEEN MARGARET**

And this is to secure the power of our gentle-hearted king.

*QUEEN MARGARET stabs YORK.***YORK**

Open your gates of mercy, kind God! My soul flies through
 these wounds to look for you!

*YORK dies.***QUEEN MARGARET**

Off with his head, and put it on the gates of York, so that
 York's head may look over the town of York.

Trumpets sound. All exit.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare*A march. Enter EDWARD, RICHARD, and their power***EDWARD**

I wonder how our princely father 'scaped,
 Or whether he be 'scaped away or no
 From Clifford's and Northumberland's pursuit:
 Had he been ta'en, we should have heard the news;
 5 Had he been slain, we should have heard the news;
 Or had he 'scaped, methinks we should have heard
 The happy tidings of his good escape.
 How fares my brother? why is he so sad?

Shakescleare Translation*A military march. EDWARD, RICHARD, and their army enter.***EDWARD**

I wonder how our father managed to escape, or if he even
 did escape from Clifford and Northumberland chasing after
 him. If he were taken, we would have heard the news
 already. If we were killed, we would have heard the news
 already. Or if he escaped, I think we would have heard the
 happy news of his fortunate escape. Now, how are you,
 brother? Why are you so sad?

RICHARD

I cannot joy, until I be resolved
 10 Where our right valiant father is become.
 I saw him in the battle range about;
 And watch'd him how he singled Clifford forth.
 Methought he bore him in the thickest troop
 As doth a lion in a herd of neat;
 15 Or as a bear, encompass'd round with dogs,
 Who having pinch'd a few and made them cry,
 The rest stand all aloof, and bark at him.
 So fared our father with his enemies;
 So fled his enemies my warlike father:
 20 Methinks, 'tis prize enough to be his son.
 See how the morning opes her golden gates,
 And takes her farewell of the glorious sun!
 How well resembles it the prime of youth,
 Trimm'd like a younker prancing to his love!

EDWARD

25 Dazzle mine eyes, or do I see three suns?

RICHARD

Three glorious suns, each one a perfect sun;
 Not separated with the racking clouds,
 But sever'd in a pale clear-shining sky.
 See, see! they join, embrace, and seem to kiss,
 30 As if they vow'd some league inviolable:
 Now are they but one lamp, one light, one sun.
 In this the heaven figures some event.

EDWARD

'Tis wondrous strange, the like yet never heard of.
 I think it cites us, brother, to the field,
 35 That we, the sons of brave Plantagenet,
 Each one already blazing by our meeds,
 Should notwithstanding join our lights together
 And over-shine the earth as this the world.
 Whate'er it bodes, henceforward will I bear
 40 Upon my target three fair-shining suns.

RICHARD

Nay, bear three daughters: by your leave I speak it,
 You love the breeder better than the male.

Enter a Messenger

RICHARD

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

MESSENGER

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

EDWARD

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

RICHARD

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

MESSENGER

Environed he was with many foes,
 And stood against them, as the hope of Troy
 Against the Greeks that would have enter'd Troy.
 55 But Hercules himself must yield to odds;
 And many strokes, though with a little axe,
 Hew down and fell the hardest-timber'd oak.
 By many hands your father was subdued;
 But only slaughter'd by the ireful arm
 Of unrelenting Clifford and the queen,
 60 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

RICHARD

I can't be happy until I am told where our brave father is. I saw him in the battle moving around, and I watched how he singled out Clifford. I thought father placed himself in the busiest area of the battle as if he were a lion in a group of cattle. Or else like a bear, surrounded with dogs, who, once the bear has bitten a few and made them cry, stand at a distance and bark at him. That's how our father dealt with our enemies. That's how our warrior father escaped his enemies. I think it's enough of a prize to be his son. See how the morning opens her golden arms, and says goodbye to the glorious sun! The morning looks very much like the peak of youth, dressed like a fashionable young man leaping towards his love!

EDWARD

Are my eyes blinded by the beams, or do I see three suns?

RICHARD

Three glorious suns. Each one is a perfect sun, not just seeming to be separated by the drifting clouds but actually separate in a pale, clear sky. Look, look! They come together and embrace. They look like they're kissing as if they promised to join in an indestructible union. Now they are joined together like one lamp, one light, one sun. The heavens must be predicting some event by showing this.

EDWARD

It's very strange, something that I've never heard of. I think it is calling us to the battlefield, brother. It means that we, the sons of the brave Plantagenet, since each of us is already renowned for our own individual successes, we should nevertheless join our strengths and outshine the earth just like these three suns shine over the world. Whatever it means, I will wear the image of three shining suns on my shield from now on.

RICHARD

No, you should wear three daughters instead. I speak this with your permission. You love women more than men.

A messenger enters.

RICHARD

But who are you? Your frowns predict some terrible story that you are going to tell.

MESSENGER

Ah, I am someone who was an unlucky bystander when the noble Duke of York was killed, your father and my beloved lord.

EDWARD

Oh, stop speaking, for I have already heard too much.

RICHARD

Tell us how he died. I'm going to hear it all.

MESSENGER

He was surrounded by many enemies, and he stood against them, like when Hector stood against the Greeks that were trying to get into Troy. But even Hercules himself would have to surrender when outnumbered. And even a little axe can cut down the toughest oak with many strokes. Your father was captured by many soldiers, but he was killed only the hateful hands of the remorseless Clifford and the queen. She mockingly crowned the duke to spite him, laughed in his face, and, when he cried with grief, the cruel queen gave him a napkin to dry his cheeks that was dipped in the innocent blood of sweet, young Rutland, who rough Clifford killed. And after many insults, many nasty taunts,

65 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

70 Sweet Duke of York, our prop to lean upon,
Now thou art gone, we have no staff, no stay.
O Clifford, boisterous Clifford! Thou hast slain
The flower of Europe for his chivalry;
And treacherously hast thou vanquish'd him,
75 For hand to hand he would have vanquish'd thee.
Now my soul's palace is become a prison:
Ah, would she break from hence, that this my body
Might in the ground be closed up in rest!
For never henceforth shall I joy again,
80 Never, O never shall I see more joy!

RICHARD

I cannot weep; for all my body's moisture
Scarce serves to quench my furnace-burning heart:
Nor can my tongue unload my heart's great burthen;
For selfsame wind that I should speak withal
85 Is kindling coals that fires all my breast,
And burns me up with flames that tears would quench.
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,
90 Or die renowned by attempting it.

EDWARD

His name that valiant duke hath left with thee;
His dukedom and his chair with me is left.

RICHARD

Nay, if thou be that princely eagle's bird,
Show thy descent by gazing 'gainst the sun:
95 For "chair and dukedom," "throne and kingdom" say;
Either that is thine, or else thou wert not his.

March. Enter WARWICK, MONTAGUE, and their army

WARWICK

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

RICHARD

Great Lord of Warwick, if we should recount
Our baleful news, and at each word's deliverance
100 Stab poniards in our flesh till all were told,
The words would add more anguish than the wounds.
O valiant lord, the Duke of York is slain!

EDWARD

O Warwick, Warwick! That Plantagenet,
Which held thee dearly as his soul's redemption,
105 Is by the stern Lord Clifford done to death.

WARWICK

Ten days ago I drown'd these news in tears;
And now, to add more measure to your woes,
I come to tell you things sith then befall'n.
After the bloody fray at Wakefield fought,
110 Where your brave father breathed his latest gasp,
Tidings, as swiftly as the posts could run,
Were brought me of your loss and his depart.
I, then in London keeper of the king,
Muster'd my soldiers, gather'd flocks of friends,
115 And very well appointed, as I thought,
March'd toward Saint Alban's to intercept the queen,

they cut off his head and put it up on the gates of York. And it's still there now. It's the saddest sight that I've ever seen.

EDWARD

Sweet Duke of York, the father we could lean on, you are now gone and we have nothing to support us. Oh, Clifford, wild Clifford! You have killed the flower of Europe for his bravery. You've treacherously slaughtered him, a man who would have destroyed you in hand-to-hand combat. Now my body has become a prison. Ah, if only my soul would break away from my body so that my body could be buried in the ground! Because I'll never be happy from now on! Never, oh never, shall I experience joy again!

RICHARD

I am not able to cry because all of the wetness of my body is being used to try to put out the fire of my burning heart. I can't speak my grief either because the same air that I would speak with is lighting the fire in my chest, burning me with flames that tears would extinguish. To cry is to lessen the depth of grief. Tears are for children, fighting and revenge are for me. Richard, my father, I share your name. I'll revenge your death or earn fame when I die in the attempt.

EDWARD

That brave duke left his name with you. He left his dukedom and his power with me.

RICHARD

No, if you're truly a prince, show your power by looking directly into the sun without blinking like an eagle: instead of "power and dukedom," say "throne and kingdom." They rightfully belong to you, too, or else you're not our father's son.

A march is heard. WARWICK, MONTAGUE, and their army enter.

WARWICK

How are you, my lords? What success have you had? Have you heard any news from abroad?

RICHARD

Great lord of Warwick, if we should repeat our deadly news, and stab daggers in our flesh as each word is spoken until our speech was done, the words would be more painful than the wounds. Oh, brave lord, the Duke of York is killed!

EDWARD

Oh, Warwick, Warwick! Plantagenet, who cared about you as much as he cared about his own soul's salvation, was killed by the cruel Clifford.

WARWICK

I cried after hearing this news ten days ago. And now, to add even more to your misery, I am here to tell you what's happened since. After the bloody battle was fought at Wakefield, where your brave father drew his last breath, news was brought to me of your loss and his death as swiftly as the messengers could carry it. I was then in London, watching over the king, so I gathered my soldiers and many friends, and well-prepared (as I thought), headed towards Saint Alban's to block the queen's way. I took the king with me for my own advantage. I was warned by my spies that she was coming fully intending to overturn our

Bearing the king in my behalf along;
 For by my scouts I was advertised
 That she was coming with a full intent
 120 To dash our late decree in parliament
 Touching King Henry's oath and your succession.
 Short tale to make, we at Saint Alban's met
 Our battles join'd, and both sides fiercely fought:
 But whether 'twas the coldness of the king,
 125 Who look'd full gently on his warlike queen,
 That robb'd my soldiers of their heated spleen;
 Or whether 'twas report of her success;
 Or more than common fear of Clifford's rigour,
 Who thunders to his captives blood and death,
 130 I cannot judge : but to conclude with truth,
 Their weapons like to lightning came and went;
 Our soldiers', like the night-owl's lazy flight,
 Or like an idle thresher with a flail,
 Fell gently down, as if they struck their friends.
 135 I cheer'd them up with justice of our cause,
 With promise of high pay and great rewards:
 But all in vain; they had no heart to fight,
 And we in them no hope to win the day;
 So that we fled; the king unto the queen;
 140 Lord George your brother, Norfolk and myself,
 In haste, post-haste, are come to join with you:
 For in the marches here we heard you were,
 Making another head to fight again.

EDWARD

Where is the Duke of Norfolk, gentle Warwick?
 145 And when came George from Burgundy to England?

WARWICK

Some six miles off the duke is with the soldiers;
 And for your brother, he was lately sent
 From your kind aunt, Duchess of Burgundy,
 With aid of soldiers to this needful war.

RICHARD

150 'Twas odds, belike, when valiant Warwick fled:
 Oft have I heard his praises in pursuit,
 But ne'er till now his scandal of retire.

WARWICK

Nor now my scandal, Richard, dost thou hear;
 For thou shalt know this strong right hand of mine
 155 Can pluck the diadem from faint Henry's head,
 And wring the awful sceptre from his fist,
 Were he as famous and as bold in war
 As he is famed for mildness, peace, and prayer.

RICHARD

I know it well, Lord Warwick; blame me not:
 160 'Tis love I bear thy glories makes me speak.
 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 our Ave-Maries with our beads?
 165 Or shall we on the helmets of our foes
 Tell our devotion with revengful arms?
 If for the last, say ay, and to it, lords.

WARWICK

Why, therefore Warwick came to seek you out;
 And therefore comes my brother Montague.
 170 Attend me, lords. The proud insulting queen,
 With Clifford and the haught Northumberland,
 And of their feather many more proud birds,
 Have wrought the easy-melting king like wax.
 He swore consent to your succession,
 His oath enrolled in the parliament;
 175 And now to London all the crew are gone,
 To frustrate both his oath and what beside
 May make against the house of Lancaster.

recent agreement in the parliament—the one about King Henry's oath and your succession to the throne. To make a long story short, we met at Saint Alban's, our armies crossed swords, and both sides fought fiercely. But I don't know if it was the coldness of the king, who looked gently on his warrior-like queen, that took away the fiery passion from my soldiers, or if it was the news of her success, or the general fear of cruel Clifford, who treats the ones he captures with blood and death—I can't tell what did it in the end. But to sum it all up truthfully, their weapons came and went like flashes of lightning. Our soldiers fell down gently, like the lazy flight of a night owl or a useless farmer in a wheat field, as if they were attacking their friends and not their enemies. I encouraged them by reminding them about the justice we were fighting for and by promising them high pay and great rewards. But it was all in vain. They didn't have the heart to fight and we had no hope in them to win the battle. So we ran away. The king ran to the queen, while your brother Lord George, Norfolk, and myself have come quickly as we can to join you. Near the Welsh border, we heard heard that you were here, getting an army together for another fight.

EDWARD

Where is the Duke of Norfolk, kind Warwick? And when did George come from Burgundy to England?

WARWICK

The duke and his soldiers are around six miles away. Your brother recently left your kind aunt, the Duchess of Burgundy, who gave him soldiers to help populate our depleted army.

RICHARD

The odds must have been very unfavorable if brave Warwick ran away. I have often heard you praised for following the enemy, but I've never heard of your disgrace in fleeing until now.

WARWICK


You don't hear of my disgrace now, Richard. You will see that this strong right hand of mine can tear the crown off weak Henry's head, and wrench the staff from his fist. I'd do so even if he were as renowned and as brave in war as he is famous for his mildness, peacefulness and praying.


RICHARD

I know that's true, Lord Warwick. Don't blame me. It's the love that I have for your glory that makes me speak. But what should we do in these troubling times? Shall we go and throw away our steel armor and wear black mourning clothes, counting Hail Marys with our rosary beads? Or, instead, should we show our devotion and count the strokes we make with our vengeful swords on the helmets of our enemies? If you think it's the latter, say yes, and let's get to it, lords!

WARWICK

Well, that's why I came to look for you and that's why my brother Montague is coming. Listen to me, lords. The proud insulting queen, with Clifford and the arrogant Northumberland, and many proud folks like them, have molded this king as if he were easily melted wax. He swore an oath that you would succeed him, and his promise was officially recorded in the parliament. And now all the men are going to London to overturn both his promise and anything else that can be used against the House of Lancaster. I think they have thirty thousand soldiers. Now, if we put together the soldiers that Norfolk and I are

 "Ave-Maries" were Hail Marys, prayers frequently recited while holding a rosary.

 Edward carries the title of Earl of March, but, at the end of this scene,

180 Their power, I think, is thirty thousand strong:
Now, if the help of Norfolk and myself,
With all the friends that thou, brave Earl of March,
Amongst the loving Welshmen canst procure,
Will but amount to five and twenty thousand,
185 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.

RICHARD

Ay, now methinks I hear great Warwick speak:
Ne'er may he live to see a sunshine day,
190 That cries 'Retire,' if Warwick bid him stay.

EDWARD

Lord Warwick, on thy shoulder will I lean;
And when thou fail'st--as God forbid the hour!--
Must Edward fall, which peril heaven forbid!

WARWICK

No longer Earl of March, but Duke of York:
195 The next degree is England's royal throne;
For King of England shalt thou be proclaim'd
In every borough as we pass along;
And he that throws not up his cap for joy
Shall for the fault make forfeit of his head.
200 King Edward, valiant Richard, Montague,
Stay we no longer, dreaming of renown,
But sound the trumpets, and about our task.

RICHARD

Then, Clifford, were thy heart as hard as steel,
As thou hast shown it flinty by thy deeds,
205 I come to pierce it, or to give thee mine.

EDWARD

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

Enter a Messenger

WARWICK

How now! What news?


MESSENGER

The Duke of Norfolk sends you word by me,
210 The queen is coming with a puissant host;
And craves your company for speedy counsel.

WARWICK

Why then it sorts, brave warriors, let's away.

Exeunt

providing, all the friends that you—brave Earl of March 
—can gather from the loving Welshmen, it will only be
about twenty-five thousand total. I say, "onward," then!
We'll go straight to London, and once again ride our horses,
and once again shout, "Charge at our enemies!" but we'll
never again turn back and flee.

*Warwick acknowledges that he is now
actually the Duke of York.*

RICHARD

Yes, now that sounds like the Warwick I know and love. I
don't think a man would live to see the sun rise again if he
cried, "Withdraw! once Warwick told him to stay.

EDWARD

Lord Warwick, I will lean on your shoulder and when you
fail in your mission—God forbid!--Edward will also fall,
heaven forbid!


WARWICK


You are no longer Earl of March but Duke of York! Next stop:
the throne of England. You shall be named the King of
England in every part of the country that we pass. And
anyone who won't throw up his hat in joy shall lose his
head for that mistake. King Edward, brave Richard,
Montague, let's not stay here for much longer, only
dreaming of glory. Let's sound the trumpets, and carry out
our mission.

RICHARD

Then, Clifford, even if your heart is as hard as steel, as you
have shown it to be steely by your actions, I'd come either
to pierce your heart or to give you my own heart and
loyalty.

EDWARD

Then sound the drums! God and Saint George  support
us!

 "Saint George" is the patron saint
of England.

A messenger enters.

WARWICK

What now? What's the news?

MESSENGER

The Duke of Norfolk sends me with a message for you. The
queen is coming with a powerful army and he desires your
company for a immediate consultation.

WARWICK

Well, then, things are falling into place. Brave warriors, let's
go!

All exit.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

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

Shakescleare Translation

*Trumpets sound. KING HENRY VI, QUEEN MARGARET,
PRINCE EDWARD, CLIFFORD, and NORTHUMBERLAND
enter, with a drummer and trumpeters.*

QUEEN 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:
Doth not the object cheer your heart, my lord?

KING HENRY VI

5 Ay, as the rocks cheer them that fear their wreck:
To see this sight, it irks my very soul.
Withhold revenge, dear God! 'Tis not my fault,
Nor wittingly have I infringed my vow.

CLIFFORD

10 My gracious liege, this too much lenity
And harmful pity must be laid aside.
To whom do lions cast their gentle looks?
Not to the beast that would usurp their den.
Whose hand is that the forest bear doth lick?
Not his that spoils her young before her face.
15 Who 'scapes the lurking serpent's mortal sting?
Not he that sets his foot upon her back.
The smallest worm will turn being trodden on,
And doves will peck in safeguard of their brood.
Ambitious York doth level at thy crown,
20 Thou smiling while he knit his angry brows:
He, but a duke, would have his son a king,
And raise his issue, like a loving sire;
Thou, being a king, blest with a goodly son,
Didst yield consent to disinherit him,
25 Which argued thee a most unloving father.
Unreasonable creatures feed their young;
And though man's face be fearful to their eyes,
Yet, in protection of their tender ones,
Who hath not seen them, even with those wings
30 Which sometime they have used with fearful flight,
Make war with him that climb'd unto their nest,
Offer their own lives in their young's defence?
For shame, my liege, make them your precedent!
Were it not pity that this goodly boy
35 Should lose his birthright by his father's fault,
And long hereafter say unto his child,
'What my great-grandfather and his grandsire got
My careless father fondly gave away?'
Ah, what a shame were this! Look on the boy;
40 And let his manly face, which promiseth
Successful fortune, steel thy melting heart
To hold thine own and leave thine own with him.

KING HENRY VI

Full well hath Clifford play'd the orator,
Inferring arguments of mighty force.
45 But, Clifford, tell me, didst thou never hear
That things ill-got had ever bad success?
And happy always was it for that son
Whose father for his hoarding went to hell?
I'll leave my son my virtuous deeds behind;
50 And would my father had left me no more!
For all the rest is held at such a rate
As brings a thousand-fold more care to keep
Than in possession and jot of pleasure.
Ah, cousin York! Would thy best friends did know
55 How it doth grieve me that thy head is here!

QUEEN 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.
60 Edward, kneel down.

KING HENRY VI

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

QUEEN MARGARET

Welcome to this splendid town of York, my lord. Over there
is the head of our biggest enemy that wanted to take over
your crown. Doesn't it cheer you to look on it, my lord?

KING HENRY VI

Yes, as the rocks cheer up those that fear they'll crash on
them. To see this disturbs my soul. Stop this revenge, dear
God! It's not my fault and I haven't knowingly broken my
oath.

CLIFFORD

My gracious lord, this harmful mildness and pity must be
put to one side. At whom do lions look gently? Not the
beast that wants to take over their cave. Whose hand does
the forest bear lick? Not the hunter that slaughters her
young in front of her. Who escapes the sting of the sneaky,
venomous snake? Not the man that puts his foot on her
back. The smallest worm will grown violent when someone
steps on it, and doves will peck to keep their littles ones
safe. Ambitious York aims at your crown! You smile while he
furrows his angry brows. He is only a duke and wants his
son to be a king! Like a loving father, he'd raise up his
offspring. You, a king's who's lucky to have a fine son,
agreed to disinherit him which made you look like a rather
unloving father. Even creatures without reason feed their
young. And though they view man's face as scary, who
hasn't seen them use their wings, which were meant for
taking flight, to fight in protection of their young ones
against any man who invades their nest? They offer their
own lives in defense of their young! For shame, my king,
take those creatures as an example! Wouldn't it be a pity if
this fine young boy should lose his birthright because of the
mistake his father made? And, in years to come, he'll say to
his own child, "That which my great-grandfather and my
grand-father got, my father threw away carelessly"? Ah,
what a shame that would be! Look at this boy. Let his manly
face, which promises good fortune, harden your melting
heart into fighting to hold your title and let him inherit it.

KING HENRY VI

Clifford has played the role of orator very well, offering
powerful arguments. But, tell me Clifford, have you never
heard that things wrongfully gained end up turning out
badly? And was it always a happy ending for the son whose
father went to hell for hoarding his money? My son will
inherit my virtuous actions, and I wish my father left me
nothing but those too! Because the rest that I've inherited is
considered to be worth so much that it brings a thousand
times more troubles to hold on to than it does to possess or
enjoy it. Ah, cousin York! I wish your best friends knew how
grief-stricken I am that that your head is here!

QUEEN MARGARET

My lord, cheer up. Our enemies are near and this lack of
courage makes your followers weak. You promised our
impressive son a knighthood. Unsheathe your sword and
dub him a knight immediately. Edward, kneel.

KING HENRY VI

Edward Plantagenet, stand as a knight. And learn this
lesson: only use your sword for a just cause.

PRINCE

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

CLIFFORD

Why, that is spoken like a toward prince.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

Royal commanders, be in readiness:
For with a band of thirty thousand men
70 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:
75 The queen hath best success when you are absent.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

KING HENRY VI

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

NORTHUMBERLAND

Be it with resolution then to fight.

PRINCE EDWARD

My royal father, cheer these noble lords
80 And hearten those that fight in your defence:
Unsheathe your sword, good father; cry 'Saint George!'

March. Enter EDWARD, GEORGE, RICHARD, WARWICK, NORFOLK, MONTAGUE, and Soldiers

EDWARD

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

QUEEN 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

I am his king, and he should bow his knee;
90 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

95 And reason too:
Who should succeed the father but the son?

RICHARD

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

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

PRINCE

My gracious father, if you allow me, I'll use my sword to
fight for my right to be heir to the crown. In that fight, I'll
fight with this sword to the death.

CLIFFORD

You spoke that like a brave prince.

A messenger enters.

MESSENGER

Royal leaders, prepare yourselves. Warwick is coming with a
group of thirty thousand men, supporting the Duke of York.
And in the towns through which they pass, they proclaim
him king and many join him. Get the soldiers ready because
they are nearly here.

CLIFFORD

I wish your highness would leave the battlefield. The queen
is most successful when you're not there.

QUEEN MARGARET

Yes, my good lord. And leave us to our own fate.

KING HENRY VI

But that's my fate too. So I'll stay.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Then let's go fight with determination.

PRINCE EDWARD

My royal father, cheer up these brave lords and encourage
those that fight to defend you. Take up your sword, good
father, and shout, "Saint George!"

A march is heard. EDWARD, GEORGE, RICHARD, WARWICK, NORFOLK, MONTAGUE, and Soldiers enter.

EDWARD

Now, lying Henry! Will you kneel for mercy, and put your
crown on my head? Or will you await your fate on the
battlefield?

QUEEN MARGARET

Go and scold your followers, you proud, insulting boy! Do
you dare address your sovereign and your lawful king with
these rude words?

EDWARD

[To QUEEN MARGARET]

I am his king, and he should bend his knee. I was made heir
with his consent. Since then, he's broken his oath. For, I've
heard tell, you, who acts as the real king, even though he
might wear the crown, have made him cross my name out
in favor of his own son, by a new act of parliament.

CLIFFORD

And there's a good reason for that too. Who should follow
the father but his son?

RICHARD

Are you there, murderer? Oh, I cannot speak!

CLIFFORD

Yes, hunchback! I am standing here to answer you or
whoever's the most foolhardy of your mob.

RICHARD

It was you who killed young Rutland, wasn't it?

CLIFFORD

Ay, and old York, and yet not satisfied.

RICHARD

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

WARWICK

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

QUEEN MARGARET

105 Why, how now, long-tongued Warwick! Dare you speak?
When you and I met at Saint Alban's last,
Your legs did better service than your hands.

WARWICK

Then 'twas my turn to fly, and now 'tis thine.

CLIFFORD

You said so much before, and yet you fled.

WARWICK

'Twas not your valour, Clifford, drove me thence.

NORTHUMBERLAND

110 No, nor your manhood that durst make you stay.

RICHARD

Northumberland, I hold thee reverently.
Break off the parley; for scarce I can refrain
The execution of my big-swoln heart
Upon that Clifford, that cruel child-killer.

CLIFFORD

115 I slew thy father, call'st thou him a child?

RICHARD

Ay, like a dastard and a treacherous coward,
As thou didst kill our tender brother Rutland;
But ere sunset I'll make thee curse the deed.

KING HENRY VI

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

QUEEN MARGARET

120 Defy them then, or else hold close thy lips.

KING HENRY VI

I prithe, give no limits to my tongue:
I am a king, and privileged to speak.

CLIFFORD

My liege, the wound that bred this meeting here
Cannot be cured by words; therefore be still.

RICHARD

125 Then, executioner, unsheathe thy sword:
By him that made us all, I am resolved
that Clifford's manhood lies upon his tongue.

EDWARD

130 Say, Henry, shall I have my right, or no?
A thousand men have broke their fasts to-day,
That ne'er shall dine unless thou yield the crown.

WARWICK

If thou deny, their blood upon thy head;
For York in justice puts his armour on.

CLIFFORD

Yes, and I killed old York. But I'm still not satisfied.

RICHARD

For God's sake, lords, give a signal to start the fight.

WARWICK

What do you say, Henry? Will you give up your crown?

QUEEN MARGARET

Ah, how are you, you blabbing Warwick? Do you dare to
speak? When we last met at Saint Alban's, you were running
away instead of fighting.

WARWICK

Then it was my time to flee, and now it's yours.

CLIFFORD

You said that before, and yet it was you who ran away.

WARWICK

It wasn't your bravery that made me run, Clifford.

NORTHUMBERLAND

But your manliness didn't make you stay either.

RICHARD

Northumberland, I respect you. End the conversation
because I can barely stop my swollen heart from taking
revenge upon Clifford, the cruel child-killer!

CLIFFORD

I killed your father. Do you call him a child?

RICHARD

Yes, you did, like a treasonous coward, just as you killed our
young brother Rutland. But I will make you regret that you
did before the sun sets.

KING HENRY VI

Stop squabbling, my lords, and listen to me now.

QUEEN MARGARET

Challenge them then, or if you won't, then keep your mouth
closed.

KING HENRY VI

Please, don't tell me what my tongue can do. I am a king
and I am privileged to speak.

CLIFFORD

My king, the wound that is the cause of this meeting can't
be healed by words. Therefore, be silent.

RICHARD

Then, murderer, unsheathe your sword. By God, I am
convinced that Clifford's manliness exists only in his words.

EDWARD

Tell me, Henry, will I have my right to the throne or not? A
thousand men had breakfast this morning, but they'll never
eat dinner again if you don't give up the crown.

WARWICK

If you deny him his right, their blood will be on your head.
York justly puts on his armor.

PRINCE EDWARD

If that be right which Warwick says is right,
There is no wrong, but every thing is right.

RICHARD

135 Whoever got thee, there thy mother stands;
For, well I wot, thou hast thy mother's tongue.

QUEEN MARGARET

But thou art neither like thy sire nor dam;
But like a foul mis-shapen stigmatic,
Mark'd by the destinies to be avoided,
140 As venom toads, or lizards' dreadful stings.

RICHARD

Iron of Naples hid with English guilt,
Whose father bears the title of a king,--
As if a channel should be call'd the sea,--
Shamest thou not, knowing whence thou art extraught,
145 To let thy tongue detect thy base-born heart?

EDWARD

A wisp of straw were worth a thousand crowns,
To make this shameless callet know herself.
Helen of Greece was fairer far than thou,
Although thy husband may be Menelaus;
150 And ne'er was Agamemnon's brother wrong'd
By that false woman, as this king by thee.
His father revell'd in the heart of France,
And tamed the king, and made the dauphin stoop;
And had he match'd according to his state,
155 He might have kept that glory to this day;
But when he took a beggar to his bed,
And graced thy poor sire with his bridal-day,
Even then that sunshine brew'd a shower for him,
That wash'd his father's fortunes forth of France,
160 And heap'd sedition on his crown at home.
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.

GEORGE

165 But when we saw our sunshine made thy spring,
And that thy summer bred us no increase,
We set the axe to thy usurping root;
And though the edge hath something hit ourselves,
Yet, know thou, since we have begun to strike,
170 We'll never leave till we have hewn thee down,
Or bathed thy growing with our heated bloods.

EDWARD

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

PRINCE EDWARD

If what Warwick says is right is actually right, then there is
nothing wrong in the world, but everything is right.

RICHARD

Whoever your father may be, I know it's your mother who
stands over there. For I can tell you have your mother's
tongue.



QUEEN MARGARET

But you aren't like your father or your mother. Instead,
you're like a ugly, deformed monster, branded by the
fates as someone who should be avoided, like poisonous
toads or the stings of dreadful lizards.

RICHARD

You cheap Naples girl, disguised in English robes. Your
father has the title of a king but in the same way we could
also call a channel the sea. Are you not ashamed of yourself,
knowing where you come from, to let your tongue reveal
your lowly origins?

EDWARD



I'd pay a thousand crowns to make this shameless whore
know herself for what she is . Helen of Greece was more
beautiful than you although your husband may be
Menelaus. But Menelaus, Agamemnon's brother , was
never wronged by that false woman like you have wronged
this king. The king's father, Henry V, had great success in
the heart of France, where he won over the king of France,
and made the dauphin, the prince, bow to him too. And if
this king here had married according to his station, he
might have retained his father's glory until today.

[To QUEEN MARGARET]

But when he married a beggar, honoring your impoverished
father on your wedding day, even then the sunshine that
day prepared a future rainshower for him. That rain has
washed his father's power out of France and led to rebellion
against his power at home. For what else initiated this
chaos but your pride? If you had stayed in your place, we
wouldn't have awoken our claim to the throne. And we,
pitying the gentle king, would have waited until another era
to claim our right to the crown.


GEORGE


[To QUEEN MARGARET]


But when we saw that our toil was making you successful,
and that your reaped the rewards without helping us in
return, we decided to rise up against your usurping claim to
the throne. And although we've had some losses too now,
you should know that, since we've started this rebellion,
we'll never leave until we have cut you down entirely , or
until all of our warm  blood has been spilt.


EDWARD

And, in that spirit, I refuse to listen to you any longer since
you won't let the gentle king speak. Let the trumpets
sound! Let our bloody flags wave! We'll either have victory
or death.

 Women who were deemed to be scolds or shrews were forced to wear or hold straw in public as part of a shaming punishment ritual.

 These are all mythological figures from the Trojan War (Helen was married to Menelaus, the King of Sparta whose brother was Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek army that took down Troy).

 Check out the imagery in the original text. Throughout this entire speech, Shakespeare creates an extended agricultural/harvest metaphor.

 You may have noticed a repeated mention of different temperature bloods throughout this act -- warm blood, cold-bloodedness, etc. This is connected to the early modern belief in the four humors, bodily fluids that corresponded to moods/emotions and temperatures and needed to be balanced.

QUEEN MARGARET

Stay, Edward.

EDWARD

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

180

Exeunt

QUEEN MARGARET

Stay, Edward.

EDWARD

No, you bargaining woman. We won't stay any longer.
These words will cost ten thousand soldiers their lives
today.

All exit.

Act 2, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Alarum. Excursions. Enter WARWICK

WARWICK

Forspent with toil, as runners with a race,
I lay me down a little while to breathe;
For strokes received, and many blows repaid,
Have robb'd my strong-knit sinews of their strength,
5 And spite of spite needs must I rest awhile.

Enter EDWARD, running

EDWARD

Smile, gentle heaven! Or strike, ungentle death!
For this world frowns, and Edward's sun is clouded.

WARWICK

How now, my lord! What hap? What hope of good?

Enter GEORGE

GEORGE

Our hap is loss, our hope but sad despair;
10 Our ranks are broke, and ruin follows us:
What counsel give you? Whither shall we fly?

EDWARD

Bootless is flight, they follow us with wings;
And weak we are and cannot shun pursuit.

Enter RICHARD

RICHARD

15 Ah, Warwick, why hast thou withdrawn thyself?
Thy brother's blood the thirsty earth hath drunk,
Broach'd with the steely point of Clifford's lance;
And in the very pangs of death he cried,
Like to a dismal clangour heard from far,
20 'Warwick, revenge! brother, revenge my death!'
So, underneath the belly of their steeds,
That stain'd their fetlocks in his smoking blood,
The noble gentleman gave up the ghost.

WARWICK

25 Then let the earth be drunken with our blood:
I'll kill my horse, because I will not fly.
Why stand we like soft-hearted women here,
Wailing our losses, whiles the foe doth rage;
And look upon, as if the tragedy
Were play'd in jest by counterfeiting actors?
30 Here on my knee I vow to God above,
I'll never pause again, never stand still,
Till either death hath closed these eyes of mine

Shakescleare Translation

*An alarm sounds. There is fighting across the stage.
WARWICK enters.*

WARWICK

I am exhausted from all the fighting, like runners are
exhausted after a race. I'll lay down a little to catch my
breath. The hits I received, and the ones that I gave in
return, have tired out my strong muscles, and come what
may, I have to rest for a while.

EDWARD enters, running.

EDWARD

Smile on us, kind heaven! Or strike us down, you unkind
death! Because this world is frowning and the sun that
represents me is clouded with darkness.

WARWICK

What's happening, my lord? What luck? Do we have hope
for a happy outcome?

GEORGE enters.

GEORGE

Our luck is gone and our hope is only sad desperation. They
got through the first row of our soldiers and so we're
ruined. What advice do you give us? Where should we run?

EDWARD

Running away is pointless. They'll follow us as if they have
wings. And we are weak and can't escape their pursuit.

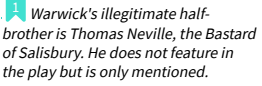
RICHARD enters.

RICHARD

Ah, Warwick! Why have you left the fighting? The thirsty
earth is now soaked with your brother's blood. He was
pierced by Clifford's spear. And when he was dying he
shouted, as if an ominous ringing heard from far away,
"Warwick, revenge me! Brother, revenge my death!" And so,
under the horse's belly, with the horse's legs stained with
your brother's streaming blood, the noble gentleman died.

WARWICK

Then let the earth drown in our blood. I'll kill my horse
because I will not run away. Why do we stand here like weak
women, crying over what we lost, while our enemies are in
a frenzy? Why do we look on it all as if the tragedy was only
make-believe, performed by actors playing pretend? I go
down on my knee now and swear to God above that I'll
never stop again, I'll never stand still, until either death
closes my eyes or I get to take my revenge, if fate allows it.

 Warwick's illegitimate half-brother is Thomas Neville, the Bastard of Salisbury. He does not feature in the play but is only mentioned.

Or fortune given me measure of revenge.

EDWARD

O Warwick, I do bend my knee with thine;
 35 And in this vow do chain my soul to thine!
 And, ere my knee rise from the earth's cold face,
 I throw my hands, mine eyes, my heart to thee,
 Thou setter up and plucker down of kings,
 Beseeching Thee, if with Thy will it stands
 40 That to my foes this body must be prey,
 Yet that thy brazen gates of heaven may ope,
 And give sweet passage to my sinful soul!
 Now, lords, take leave until we meet again,
 Where'er it be, in heaven or in earth.

RICHARD

45 Brother, give me thy hand; and, gentle Warwick,
 Let me embrace thee in my weary arms:
 I, that did never weep, now melt with woe
 That winter should cut off our spring-time so.

WARWICK

Away, away! Once more, sweet lords farewell.

GEORGE

50 Yet let us all together to our troops,
 And give them leave to fly that will not stay;
 And call them pillars that will stand to us;
 And, if we thrive, promise them such rewards
 As victors wear at the Olympian games:
 55 This may plant courage in their quailing breasts;
 For yet is hope of life and victory.
 Forslow no longer, make we hence amain.

Exeunt

EDWARD

Oh, Warwick! I go down on my knees with you and I swear to join my soul with yours! And before I rise from the cold ground, I give over my hands, my eyes, and my heart to my God who establishes and removes kings. I beg you, God, if its your will agree that my body must become prey for my enemies that your brass gates of heaven may open allow in my sinful soul! Now, lords, you can go until we meet again. Wherever that may be, in heaven or on earth.

RICHARD

Give me your hand, brother. And kind Warwick, let me embrace you with my weak arms. I that have never cried am now melting with sorrow at the fact that we should be separated so soon.

WARWICK

Let's go, let's go! Once more goodbye, sweet lords.

GEORGE

Let us all go together to our soldiers and tell those who don't want to stay to run away. If they'll stand next to us and support us, we'll call them pillars. And, if we are successful, we'll promise them rewards like the winners wear at the Olympic Games. This may give them courage in their quivering hearts since there is still hope of life and victory. Let's not delay. Let's go speedily!

All exit.

Act 2, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Excursions. Enter RICHARD and CLIFFORD

RICHARD

Now, Clifford, I have singled thee alone:
 Suppose this arm is for the Duke of York,
 And this for Rutland; both bound to revenge,
 Wert thou environ'd with a brazen wall.

CLIFFORD

5 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
 10 To execute the like upon thyself;
 And so, have at thee!

They fight. WARWICK comes; CLIFFORD flies

RICHARD

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

Exeunt

Shakesclore Translation

There is fighting across the stage. RICHARD and CLIFFORD enter.

RICHARD

Now I have isolated you away from the rest, Clifford. Let's pretend that this arm is for the Duke of York and this one is for Rutland. Both will have revenge, even if you were surrounded by a brass wall.

CLIFFORD

Now, I am here alone with you, Richard. This is the hand that stabbed your father York and this is the hand that killed your brother Rutland. And here's the heart that is happy because of their deaths and encourages these hands that killed your father and brother to also kill you. And so, here I come!

RICHARD and CLIFFORD fight. WARWICK enters and CLIFFORD flees.

RICHARD

No, Warwick, choose some other prey. I will hunt this wolf alone until he's met his death.

All exit.

Act 2, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Alarm. Enter KING HENRY VI alone

KING HENRY VI

This battle fares like to the morning's war,
When dying clouds contend with growing light,
What time the shepherd, blowing of his nails,
Can neither call it perfect day nor night.
5 Now sways it this way, like a mighty sea
Forced by the tide to combat with the wind;
Now sways it that way, like the selfsame sea
Forced to retire by fury of the wind:
Sometime the flood prevails, and then the wind;
10 Now one the better, then another best;
Both tugging to be victors, breast to breast,
Yet neither conqueror nor conquered:
So is the equal poise of this fell war.
Here on this molehill will I sit me down.
15 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.
Would I were dead! if God's good will were so;
20 For what is in this world but grief and woe?
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,
25 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.
30 When this is known, then to divide the times:
So many hours must I tend my flock;
So many hours must I take my rest;
So many hours must I contemplate;
So many hours must I sport myself;
35 So many days my ewes have been with young;
So many weeks ere the poor fools will ean;
So many years ere I shall shear the fleece:
So minutes, hours, days, months, and years,
Pass'd over to the end they were created,
40 Would bring white hairs unto a quiet grave.
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
45 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,
50 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.

Alarm. Enter a Son that has killed his father, dragging in the dead body

SON

55 Ill blows the wind that profits nobody.
This man, whom hand to hand I slew in fight,
May be possessed with some store of crowns;
And I, that haply take them from him now,
May yet ere night yield both my life and them
60 To some man else, as this dead man doth me.
Who's this? O God! It is my father's face,

Shakescleare Translation

An alarm sounds. KING HENRY VI enters alone.

KING HENRY VI

This battle is like the time between early morning and day, when fading clouds fight with the growing light. At such a time, the shepherd, warming his hands by blowing on them, can't call it completely day or night. Now it goes one way, like a powerful sea forced by the tide to fight with the wind. And now it inclines the other way, like that same sea forced to give up fighting because of the wind's intensity. Sometimes the sea wins, sometimes the wind. Now is one the better one, then the other. Both are fighting to be the winner, face to face. Yet neither is winner or loser. And that's how it is with the equal balance of this war. I will sit down here on this molehill. Whoever God wants to win, will win! My queen Margaret, and Clifford too, told me to stay away from the battle. Both said that they fight best when I am not there. I wish I were dead! If only God would allow it, because what's left in this world apart from grief and sorrow? Oh, God! I think life would be happy if we could all be just simple countrymen. We could sit on a hill, like I do now and carve out sundials skillfully, bit by bit, to watch the minutes as they fly by. How many make one hour, how many hours make one day, how many days make one year, how many years a man can live. When we know this, we can then divide the time. I must spend this many hours taking care of the flock. I must spend this many hours thinking. I must spend this many hours enjoying myself. This many days have my sheep been pregnant. This many weeks before they give birth. This many years before I shall shear the sheep's wool. And so minutes, hours, days, months and years, used in the ways they were meant for, would make us white-haired before our peaceful dying day. Ah, what a life that would be! How sweet and how lovely! Doesn't the hawthorn bush give a nicer shade to shepherds looking after their sheep than a richly embroidered canopy in a procession does for kings who are afraid that their people may betray them? Oh, yes, it does! A thousand times nicer! And, in conclusion, the shepherd's homemade cheese, his cold drink out of his leather bottle, his usual sleep under the shade of a fresh tree—all that he enjoys carefree and happy—are far better than luxuries belonging to a prince. Even if his food is sparkling in a golden cup and his body is lying in a fine bed, what is that worth when troubles, mistrust and treason are all around him?

An alarm sounds. A son enters who has killed his father, dragging the dead body after him.

SON

There's nothing good about events that nobody profits from. This man, whom I killed in a hand to hand fight may have some gold coins on his body. I'll take them gladly from him now, but I may lose both my life and these coins to another man before the end of the night just as this man lost them to me. But who is this? Oh, God! It is the face of my father, whom I have killed in this fight, unaware of who

Whom in this conflict I unwares have kill'd.
 O heavy times, begetting such events!
 From London by the king was I press'd forth;
 65 My father, being the Earl of Warwick's man,
 Came on the part of York, press'd by his master;
 And I, who at his hands received my life, him
 Have by my hands of life bereaved him.
 Pardon me, God, I knew not what I did!
 70 And pardon, father, for I knew not thee!
 My tears shall wipe away these bloody marks;
 And no more words till they have flow'd their fill.

KING HENRY VI

O piteous spectacle! O bloody times!
 Whiles lions war and battle for their dens,
 75 Poor harmless lambs abide their enmity.
 Weep, wretched man, I'll aid thee tear for tear;
 And let our hearts and eyes, like civil war,
 Be blind with tears, and break o'ercharged with grief.

Enter a Father that has killed his son, bringing in the body

FATHER

Thou that so stoutly hast resisted me,
 80 Give me thy gold, if thou hast any gold:
 For I have bought it with an hundred pounds.
 But let me see: is this our foeman's face?
 Ah, no, no, no, it is mine only son!
 Ah, boy, if any life be left in thee,
 85 Throw up thine eye! See, see what showers arise,
 Blown with the windy tempest of my heart,
 Upon thy wounds, that kill mine eye and heart!
 O, pity, God, this miserable age!
 What stratagems, how fell, how butcherly,
 90 Erroneous, mutinous and unnatural,
 This deadly quarrel daily doth beget!
 O boy, thy father gave thee life too soon,
 And hath bereft thee of thy life too late!

KING HENRY VI

Woe above woe! Grief more than common grief!
 95 O that my death would stay these ruthless deeds!
 O pity, pity, gentle heaven, pity!
 The red rose and the white are on his face,
 The fatal colours of our striving houses:
 The one his purple blood right well resembles;
 100 The other his pale cheeks, methinks, presenteth:
 Wither one rose, and let the other flourish;
 If you contend, a thousand lives must wither.

SON

How will my mother for a father's death
 Take on with me and ne'er be satisfied!

FATHER

105 How will my wife for slaughter of my son
 Shed seas of tears and ne'er be satisfied!

KING HENRY VI

How will the country for these woeful chances
 Misthink the king and not be satisfied!

SON

Was ever son so rued a father's death?

FATHER

110 Was ever father so bemoan'd his son?

KING HENRY VI

Was ever king so grieved for subjects' woe?
 Much is your sorrow; mine ten times so much.

he was. Oh, these are sad times when such things can
 happen! I came from London because the king called us to
 battle. My father, since he is one of the Earl of Warwick's
 men, came to fight for York, commanded to do so by his
 master. And I, who was given my life from his hands, have
 now taken life from him by my hands. Pardon me, God, I
 didn't know what I was doing! And forgive me, father,
 because I didn't know it was you! My tears will wash away
 these bloody stains and I will speak no more words until my
 tears have fully flowed.

KING HENRY VI

Oh, miserable sight! Oh, these are bloody times! While lions
 fight one another for their dens, poor harmless lambs have
 to survive their conflict. Weep, miserable man, I'll help you
 by shedding a tear for each of yours. And let our hearts and
 eyes be blind with tears, like this civil war itself, until our
 hearts and eyes break with grief.

*A father enters who has killed his son, bringing the body
 with him.*

FATHER

You that have fought me so bravely, give me your gold now,
 if you have any gold. I have earned it with those hundred
 times I hit you. But let me see: is this the face of our enemy?
 Ah, no, no, no, it's my only son! Ah, boy, if there is any life
 left in you, open your eyes! Look, look, at these rain
 showers that fall, blown by the windy tempest inside my
 heart, on to your wounds, wounds that poison my eye and
 break my heart! Oh, God, take pity on these miserable
 times! The deadly fight daily causes these violent actions
 that are so cruel, so bloody, so wrongful, so rebellious, and
 so unnatural! Oh, boy, your father brought you into this
 world too soon and has taken you out of it too early!

KING HENRY VI

Sorrow on top of sorrow! Grief more than the usual grief!
 Oh, that my death could prevent these lamentable actions!
 Oh, pity, take pity, gentle heaven, take pity! There's both
 the red rose and the white rose on his face, the deadly
 colors of the enemy houses. His purple blood looks like the
 red rose while it seems to me his pale cheeks look like the
 white rose. Let one rose fade away and let the other grow
 strong. If you fight, a thousand lives will be lost.

SON

Imagine how my mother will deal with me to learn of my
 father's death—she'll never be satisfied!

FATHER

Imagine how my wife will shed seas worth of tears for the
 murder of my son—she'll never be satisfied!

KING HENRY VI

Imagine how the country will think badly of the king after
 these unfortunate circumstances—they'll never be
 satisfied!

SON

Has ever a son lamented a father's death so much?

FATHER

Has ever a father so wailed for his son so much?

KING HENRY VI

Has ever a king grieved for his people's sorrows so much?
 Your sorrow is great, but mine is ten times stronger.

SON

I'll bear thee hence, where I may weep my fill.

Exit with the body

FATHER

- 115 These arms of mine shall be thy winding-sheet;
My heart, sweet boy, shall be thy sepulchre,
For from my heart thine image ne'er shall go;
My sighing breast shall be thy funeral bell;
And so obsequious will thy father be,
120 Even for the loss of thee, having no more,
As Priam was for all his valiant sons.
I'll bear thee hence; and let them fight that will,
For I have murdered where I should not kill.

Exit with the body

KING HENRY VI

- 125 Sad-hearted men, much overgone with care,
Here sits a king more woeful than you are.

Alarums: excursions. Enter QUEEN MARGARET, PRINCE EDWARD, and EXETER

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.

QUEEN MARGARET

- 130 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.

EXETER

- 135 Away! For vengeance comes along with them:
Nay, stay not to expostulate, make speed;
Or else come after: I'll away before.

KING HENRY VI

- 140 Nay, take me with thee, good sweet Exeter:
Not that I fear to stay, but love to go
Whither the queen intends. Forward; away!


Exeunt


SON

I'll take you away from here to somewhere where I can
weep until I can weep no more.

The son exits with his father's body.

FATHER

My arms shall be your burial shroud! My heart, sweet boy,
shall be your grave, because your image will never leave it.
My sighs will be your funeral bell. And your father will be so
dutiful in performing funeral rites for your loss, since I have
no more sons, just as Priam  observed all the rituals for
all of his brave sons. I'll take you away from here. Let others
fight if they want to, but I have murdered the very person I
should never kill.

 All fifty of the sons of Priam, the mythical King of Troy, were killed in the Trojan War.

Father exits with his son's body.

KING HENRY VI

Men with sadness in their hearts, overcome with trouble:
here sits a king more sorrowful than you are.

An alarm sounds. There is fighting across the stage. QUEEN MARGARET, PRINCE EDWARD, and EXETER enter.

PRINCE EDWARD

Run away, father, run! All your friends have fled and
Warwick is raging like an angry bull. Let's go! Death is
chasing after us.

QUEEN MARGARET

Mount your horse, my lord, and ride towards Berwick as
fast as you can. Edward and Richard, like a pair of
greyhounds who can see the frightened fleeing rabbit in
front of them, are right behind us, with fiery eyes sparkling
in their blinding anger. They are holding bloody swords in
their angry hands. So, let's go quickly!

EXETER

Let's go! They're coming for vengeance. No, don't stay to
debate the matter. Hurry or otherwise follow after us. I'll go
away before you.

KING HENRY VI

No, take me with you, good, sweet Exeter. It's not that I am
afraid to stay, but I want to go wherever my queen is going.
Let's go—away!

All exit.

Act 2, Scene 6

Shakespeare

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!
5 My love and fear glued many friends to thee;
And, now I fall, thy tough commixture melts.
Impairing Henry, strengthening misproud York,
The common people swarm like summer flies;
And whither fly the gnats but to the sun?
10 And who shines now but Henry's enemies?
O Phoebus, hadst thou never given consent


Shakescleare Translation

A loud alarm sounds. CLIFFORD enters, wounded.

CLIFFORD

My life's candle burns out here. Yes, it dies here. While it
lasted, it gave light to King Henry. Oh, Lancaster, I'm more
afraid you'll be defeated than I am of death! Love for me,
and fear of me, helped you make a lot of friends, and now,
as I'm I fall, all of that is falling apart. The common people
are swarming everywhere like flies in the summer—hurting
Henry and strengthening the wrongfully proud York—and
where do such gnats fly but to the sun ? And aren't only
Henry's enemies shining now? Oh, Phoebus , if only you
hadn't given permission to Phaethon, allowing him to ride
your horses, your chariot would never have burned the

 The "sun" again refers to the emblem of Edward Plantagenet.

 Phoebus is the sun god in Greek/Roman mythology.

That Phaethon should cheque thy fiery steeds,
 Thy burning car never had scorch'd the earth!
 And, Henry, hadst thou sway'd as kings should do,
 15 Or as thy father and his father did,
 Giving no ground unto the house of York,
 They never then had sprung like summer flies;
 I and ten thousand in this luckless realm
 Had left no mourning widows for our death;
 20 And thou this day hadst kept thy chair in peace.
 For what doth cherish weeds but gentle air?
 And what makes robbers bold but too much lenity?
 Bootless are complaints, and cureless are my wounds;
 No way to fly, nor strength to hold out flight:
 25 The foe is merciless, and will not pity;
 For at their hands I have deserved no pity.
 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;
 30 I stabb'd your fathers' bosoms, split my breast.

He faints

Alarm and retreat. Enter EDWARD, GEORGE, RICHARD, MONTAGUE, WARWICK, and Soldiers

EDWARD

Now breathe we, lords: good fortune bids us pause,
 And smooth the frowns of war with peaceful looks.
 Some troops pursue the bloody-minded queen,
 That led calm Henry, though he were a king,
 35 As doth a sail, fill'd with a fretting gust,
 Command an argosy to stem the waves.
 But think you, lords, that Clifford fled with them?

WARWICK

No, 'tis impossible he should escape,
 For, though before his face I speak the words
 40 Your brother Richard mark'd him for the grave:
 And wheresoe'er he is, he's surely dead.

CLIFFORD groans, and dies

EDWARD

Whose soul is that which takes her heavy leave?

RICHARD

A deadly groan, like life and death's departing.

EDWARD

45 See who it is: and, now the battle's ended,
 If friend or foe, let him be gently used.

RICHARD

Revoke that doom of mercy, for 'tis Clifford;
 Who not contented that he lopp'd the branch
 In hewing Rutland when his leaves put forth,
 50 But set his murdering knife unto the root
 From whence that tender spray did sweetly spring,
 I mean our princely father, Duke of York.

WARWICK

From off the gates of York fetch down the head,
 Your father's head, which Clifford placed there;
 55 Instead whereof let this supply the room:
 Measure for measure must be answered.

EDWARD

Bring forth that fatal screech-owl to our house,
 That nothing sung but death to us and ours:
 Now death shall stop his dismal threatening sound,
 60 And his ill-boding tongue no more shall speak.

earth! And Henry, if only you ruled like kings should do, or as your father and his father did, and hadn't made this oath to the House of York, they would never have sprung up like swarms of flies in summer. In this unfortunate kingdom, then, ten thousand men, I among them, wouldn't have left mourning widows grieving our deaths. And today, you'd have kept your throne entirely in peace. Isn't it gentle air that makes weeds grow? Isn't it leniency in the law that makes robbers bold? Complaints are useless, and my wounds cannot be cured. There is nowhere I can flee to, and I wouldn't have the strength to run either. The enemy has no mercy and won't pity me because I don't deserve pity from them. The air has gotten into my deadly wounds, and the loss of blood makes me weak. Come, York, Richard, Warwick and all the rest of you. I stabbed your fathers' chests, you should split open mine.

CLIFFORD faints.

An alarm sounds and there is a military fanfare signaling retreat. EDWARD, GEORGE, RICHARD, MONTAGUE, WARWICK, and Soldiers enter.

EDWARD

Now we can breathe, lords. Our good fortune makes us stop for a while and look peacefully instead of frowning like we did while fighting. Some soldiers follow after the blood-thirsty queen. She ruled Henry, even though he is a king, like a ship's sail, blown around with a nasty wind, steers a large merchant ship to cut through the waves. But do you think Clifford fled with them, lords?

WARWICK

No, it's impossible that he could have escaped. Your brother Richard's right in front of me, but I'll tell you that Richard wounded Clifford seriously. Wherever he may be, he is surely dead.

CLIFFORD groans and dies.

EDWARD

Who is that who dies with such suffering?

RICHARD

A deadly groan, like the separation between life and death.

EDWARD

See who it is. Now that the battle is over, treat him honorably, whether he's a friend or an enemy.

RICHARD


Take back that sentence of mercy, because it's Clifford. He wasn't content to have killed the child, young Rutland, just as he'd started to grow. Clifford then turned his murderous knife upon the root from which young Rutland grew. I mean our royal father, the Duke of York.

WARWICK

Take the head down from off the gates of York—your father's head, which Clifford put there. Instead, let Clifford's head take its place. An eye for an eye.

EDWARD

Bring forward that creature who was deadly to our house, who did nothing but bring death to us and our loved ones. Now death shall stop his gloomy, threatening voice, and his ominous tongue shall speak no more.

 Check out the original text here. Shakespeare returns again to his tree/root/branch/leaf imagery, here conjuring up visions of a fallen family tree.

WARWICK

I think his understanding is bereft.
 Speak, Clifford, dost thou know who speaks to thee?
 Dark cloudy death o'ershades his beams of life,
 And he nor sees nor hears us what we say.

RICHARD

65 O, would he did! And so perhaps he doth:
 'Tis but his policy to counterfeit,
 Because he would avoid such bitter taunts
 Which in the time of death he gave our father.

GEORGE

If so thou think'st, vex him with eager words.

RICHARD

70 Clifford, ask mercy and obtain no grace.

EDWARD

Clifford, repent in bootless penitence.

WARWICK

Clifford, devise excuses for thy faults.

GEORGE

While we devise fell tortures for thy faults.

RICHARD

Thou didst love York, and I am son to York.

EDWARD

75 Thou pitied'st Rutland; I will pity thee.

GEORGE

Where's Captain Margaret, to fence you now?

WARWICK

They mock thee, Clifford: swear as thou wast wont.

RICHARD

What, not an oath? Nay, then the world goes hard
 When Clifford cannot spare his friends an oath.

80 I know by that he's dead; and, by my soul,
 If this right hand would buy two hour's life,
 That I in all despite might rail at him,
 This hand should chop it off, and with the
 issuing blood

85 Stifle the villain whose unstanched thirst
 York and young Rutland could not satisfy.

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,
 90 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
 95 The scatter'd foe that hopes to rise again;
 For though they cannot greatly sting to hurt,
 Yet look to have them buzz to offend thine ears.
 First will I see the coronation;
 And then to Brittany I'll cross the sea,
 100 To effect this marriage, so it please my lord.

EDWARD

Even as thou wilt, sweet Warwick, let it be;
 For in thy shoulder do I build my seat,
 And never will I undertake the thing
 Wherein thy counsel and consent is wanting.
 105 Richard, I will create thee Duke of Gloucester,
 And George, of Clarence: Warwick, as ourself,

WARWICK

I think he can't perceive us anymore. Clifford, speak! Do you know who is speaking to you? Dark, cloudy death covers up the sunbeams of his life, and he neither sees us nor hears what we are saying.

RICHARD

Oh, I wish he did! And maybe he does but it's his strategy to pretend because he doesn't want to hear the sort of angry taunts which he delivered to our father at the time of his death.

GEORGE

If you think so, irritate him with sharp words.

RICHARD

Clifford, ask for mercy and receive no grace.

EDWARD

Clifford, repent with fruitless remorse.

WARWICK

Clifford, make up excuses for your crimes.

GEORGE

While we think of brutal tortures for your actions.

RICHARD

You loved York and I am York's son.

EDWARD

You pitied Rutland and now I will pity you.

GEORGE

Where's Captain Margaret to protect you now?

WARWICK

They mock you, Clifford. Swear as you used to.

RICHARD

What? Not a single curse? Wow, well the world has become a sad place when Clifford doesn't have one curse for his friends. Well, that's how we know that he's dead. By my soul, if this right hand would bring him back to life for two hours just so I could insult and taunt him, I'd cut it off. Then I'd use the blood pouring out the wound to choke this villain whose insatiable thirst for blood couldn't be satisfied by killing York and the young Rutland.

WARWICK

Yes, but he's dead. Off with the traitor's head and put it up in the place where your father's head is. And now let's march triumphantly to London. There you'll be crowned king of England. From there, I'll cross the sea to France and arrange for Lady Bona to be your queen. That way you'll tie these two nations together. And, having France as an ally, you won't fear that the enemy, now dispersed but hoping to return, will ever rise again. Even though they can't do much to hurt you now, expect them to make trouble and spread rumors to offend you. First, I will see the coronation and then I'll go to Brittany across the sea to make this marriage happen, if my lord agrees.

EDWARD

Just as you wish, sweet Warwick, let it happen. I build my throne relying on your support, and I will never do anything if you counsel me against it or don't give consent. Richard, I will make you Duke of Gloucester and George, I'll make you Duke of Clarence. Warwick, in my name, shall do and undo whatever he wants.

Shall do and undo as him pleaseth best.

RICHARD


Let me be Duke of Clarence, George of Gloucester;
For Gloucester's dukedom is too ominous.


WARWICK

110 Tut, that's a foolish observation:
Richard, be Duke of Gloucester. Now to London,
To see these honours in possession.

Exeunt

RICHARD

Let me be Duke of Clarence, George of Gloucester. Being
Duke of Gloucester is too dangerous .

 The three previous Dukes of Gloucester had all met violent deaths.

WARWICK

Oh, please, that's a silly comment: Richard, Duke of
Gloucester. Now, let's go to London, so you can receive
these honors.

All exit.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

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;
And in this covert will we make our stand,
Culling the principal of all the deer.

SECOND KEEPER

5 I'll stay above the hill, so both may shoot.

FIRST KEEPER

That cannot be; the noise of thy cross-bow
Will scare the herd, and so my shoot is lost.
Here stand we both, and aim we at the best:
And, for the time shall not seem tedious,
10 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 prayerbook

KING HENRY VI

From Scotland am I stol'n, even of pure love,
15 To greet mine own land with my wishful sight.
No, Harry, Harry, 'tis no land of thine;
Thy place is fill'd, thy sceptre wrung from thee,
Thy balm wash'd off wherewith thou wast anointed:
No bending knee will call thee Caesar now,
20 No humble suitors press to speak for right,
No, not a man comes for redress of thee;
For how can I help them, and not myself?

FIRST KEEPER

Ay, here's a deer whose skin's a keeper's fee:
This is the quondam king; let's seize upon him.

KING HENRY VI

25 Let me embrace thee, sour adversity,
For wise men say it is the wisest course.

SECOND KEEPER

Why linger we? Let us lay hands upon him.

FIRST KEEPER

Forbear awhile; we'll hear a little more.

Shakesclare Translation

Two gamekeepers enter with crossbows in their hands.

FIRST KEEPER

We'll hide under this thick bush, because the deer will soon
come through this clearing. We can make a hiding place
from which to shoot in this concealed spot. We'll aim at the
superior deer.

SECOND KEEPER

I'll stay above the hill so that both of us can shoot.

FIRST KEEPER

That won't work. The noise of your bow will scare the herd
and my shot will be pointless. Let us both stand here and
aim at the best deer. And, so that the time won't seem too
long, I'll tell you what happened to me one day in this same
place where we're planning to stand now.

SECOND KEEPER

Look a man is coming our way. Let's not move until he's
gone.

KING HENRY VI enters, disguised, with a prayer book.

KING HENRY VI

I have snuck away from Scotland out of pure love in order
to look longingly at my own land. No, Harry, Harry, it's not
your land. Your throne is filled, your scepter taken from you,
the oil that once blessed you at your coronation has now
washed away. No citizens on bended knee will call you
Caesar now. No humble people will come to you to ask for
justice. No, no one at all will come to ask for help from you.
Because how can I help them when I could not help myself?

FIRST KEEPER

Ah, well here's a deer whose skin is worth a high price. This
is the former king. Let's grab him.

KING HENRY VI

Let me embrace you, sour misery, because wise men say
that's the wisest thing to do.

SECOND KEEPER

Why do we wait? Let's get him.

FIRST KEEPER

Wait a while. Let's hear a little more.

KING HENRY VI

My queen and son are gone to France for aid;
 30 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,
 35 And Lewis a prince soon won with moving words.
 By this account then Margaret may win him;
 For she's a woman to be pitied much:
 Her sighs will make a battery in his breast;
 Her tears will pierce into a marble heart;
 40 The tiger will be mild whiles she doth mourn;
 And Nero will be tainted with remorse,
 To hear and see her complaints, her brinish tears.
 Ay, but she's come to beg, Warwick to give;
 She, on his left side, craving aid for Henry,
 45 He, on his right, asking a wife for Edward.
 She weeps, and says her Henry is deposed;
 He smiles, and says his Edward is install'd;
 That she, poor wretch, for grief can speak no more;
 Whiles Warwick tells his title, smooths the wrong,
 50 Inferreth arguments of mighty strength,
 And in conclusion wins the king from her,
 With promise of his sister, and what else,
 To strengthen and support King Edward's place.
 O Margaret, thus 'twill be; and thou, poor soul,
 55 Art then forsaken, as thou went'st forlorn!

SECOND KEEPER

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

KING 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

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

KING HENRY VI

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

SECOND KEEPER

But, if thou be a king, where is thy crown?

KING HENRY VI

My crown is in my heart, not on my head;
 Not decked with diamonds and Indian stones,
 65 Nor to be seen: my crown is called content:
 A crown it is that seldom kings enjoy.

SECOND KEEPER

Well, if you be a king crown'd with content,
 Your crown content and you must be contented
 To go along with us; for as we think,
 70 You are the king King Edward hath deposed;
 And we his subjects sworn in all allegiance
 Will apprehend you as his enemy.

KING HENRY VI

But did you never swear, and break an oath?

SECOND KEEPER

No, never such an oath; nor will not now.


KING HENRY VI


75 Where did you dwell when I was King of England?

SECOND KEEPER

Here in this country, where we now remain.

KING HENRY VI

My queen and son have gone to France for help. I hear that the great, powerful Warwick has also gone there to ask if the French king's sister-in-law will be Edward's wife. If this news is true, your efforts are in vain, poor queen and son, because Warwick is a persuasive speaker and Lewis is a king who is too easily won by well-spoken words. But, then, in the same way, Margaret might convince him too, since she's a woman who can be much pitied. Her sighs will make an assault on his chest, her tears will pierce into his marble heart. The tiger in her will act gentle while she bewails her situation, and even Emperor Nero  would be moved to hear and see her laments and her salty tears. Yes, but she's come to beg and Warwick's going to make an offer. She, one on side, comes begging for aid for Henry. Warwick, on the other side, comes asking for a wife for Edward. She weeps and says her Henry's been deposed. He smiles and says his Edward is made king. She, the poor woman, says she can't speak anymore because of her grief while Warwick announces his title, glosses over the conflict, presents very strong arguments, and finally wins the king from her, with a promise of his sister in marriage. Besides the marriage, he'll get anything he needs to strengthen and support King Edward's power. Oh, Margaret, that's how it will be. And you, poor soul, will then be abandoned, as miserable leaving as when you came!

 Nero was known for his sadistic and violent madness.

SECOND KEEPER

Tell us, who are you who speaks of kings and queens?

KING HENRY VI

More than I seem and less than I was born to be. I am a man at least, because I shouldn't be less than that. And since men may talk of kings, why shouldn't I?

SECOND KEEPER

Yes, but you speak as if you were a king.

KING HENRY VI

Well, I am, in my mind. And that's enough.

SECOND KEEPER

But if you are a king, where is your crown?

KING HENRY VI

My crown is in my heart, not on my head. It's not decorated with diamonds and Indian jewels and it can't be seen. My crown is called contentedness. It's a crown that kings don't often get to enjoy wearing.

SECOND KEEPER

Well, if you are a king crowned with contentedness, both your happy crown and yourself must be content to come with us. We think that you are the king who was deposed by King Edward. We, his subjects, sworn to be faithful to him, will arrest you as his enemy.

KING HENRY VI

But have you never sworn and then broken the oath?

SECOND KEEPER

No, I've never sworn an oath like that. And I won't do it now.

KING HENRY VI

Where did you live when I was King of England?

SECOND KEEPER

Here in this region, where we are now.

KING HENRY VI

I was anointed king at nine months old;
My father and my grandfather were kings,
And you were sworn true subjects unto me:
80 And tell me, then, have you not broke your oaths?

FIRST KEEPER

No;
For we were subjects but while you were king.

KING HENRY VI

Why, am I dead? Do I not breathe a man?
Ah, simple men, you know not what you swear!
85 Look, as I blow this feather from my face,
And as the air blows it to me again,
Obeying with my wind when I do blow,
And yielding to another when it blows,
Commanded always by the greater gust;
90 Such is the lightness of you common men.
But do not break your oaths; for of that sin
My mild entreaty shall not make you guilty.
Go where you will, the king shall be commanded;
And be you kings, command, and I'll obey.

FIRST KEEPER

95 We are true subjects to the king, King Edward.

KING HENRY VI

So would you be again to Henry,
If he were seated as King Edward is.

FIRST KEEPER

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

KING HENRY VI

100 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

KING HENRY VI

I became king when I was nine months old. My father and my grandfather were kings and you were sworn to be my faithful subjects. Tell me, then, haven't you broken your oaths to me?

FIRST KEEPER

No, because we were loyal subjects to you while you were king.

KING HENRY VI

Well, am I dead? Am I not breathing like any man? Ah, foolish men, you don't know what you swore! Look, I blow this feather from my face and the air blows it back to me again. It follows my breath when I blow, and it surrenders to the wind when it blows. The feather is always commanded by the more powerful gust. The fickleness of you common men is the same. But don't break your oaths. My mild plea shall not make you guilty of that sin. Go wherever you want and you can command the king. As if you were kings, command me and I'll obey you.

FIRST KEEPER

We are faithful subjects of the king, King Edward.

KING HENRY VI

And you would be again to Henry, if he was seated where King Edward sits.

FIRST KEEPER

We order you, in God's name and the king's, to go with us to the officers.

KING HENRY VI

In God's name, lead on. Your king's name will be obeyed. Whatever God wills, that's what your king will do. And what he wants me to do, I'll yield to him.

All exit.

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and LADY GREY

KING EDWARD IV

Brother of Gloucester, 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;
5 Which we in justice cannot well deny,
Because in quarrel of the house of York
The worthy gentleman did lose his life.

GLOUCESTER

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

KING EDWARD IV

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

Shakesclare Translation

KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and LADY GREY enter.

KING EDWARD IV


Brother Gloucester, this lady's husband, Sir Richard Grey, was killed at Saint Alban's battlefield. His lands were taken over by the enemy. She now wants to make a case to get back those lands, which we cannot justly deny her, since the worthy gentleman lost his life fighting for the house of York.

GLOUCESTER

Your highness would do well to give her what she wants. It would be dishonorable to deny it to her.

KING EDWARD IV

That's true, but I'll pause before agreeing.

 From this point forward, the text refers to Richard as the Duke of Gloucester.

GLOUCESTER

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

CLARENCE

15 *[Aside to GLOUCESTER]* He knows the game: how true
he keeps the wind!

GLOUCESTER

[Aside to CLARENCE] Silence!

KING EDWARD IV

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

LADY GREY

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

GLOUCESTER

25 *[Aside to CLARENCE]* Ay, widow? Then I'll warrant
you all your lands,
An if what pleases him shall pleasure you.
Fight closer, or, good faith, you'll catch a blow.

CLARENCE

[Aside to GLOUCESTER] I fear her not, unless she
chance to fall.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside to CLARENCE] God forbid that! For he'll
take vantages.

KING EDWARD IV

30 How many children hast thou, widow? Tell me.

CLARENCE

[Aside to GLOUCESTER] I think he means to beg a
child of her.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside to CLARENCE] Nay, whip me then: he'll rather
give her two.

LADY GREY

35 Three, my most gracious lord.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside to CLARENCE] You shall have four, if you'll
be ruled by him.

KING EDWARD IV

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

LADY GREY

Be pitiful, dread lord, and grant it then.

KING EDWARD IV

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

GLOUCESTER

[Aside to CLARENCE] Ay, good leave have you; for
you will have leave,
Till youth take leave and leave you to the crutch.


GLOUCESTER and CLARENCE retire

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] Oh, is that it? I see that the
lady has something she can offer him, before the king will
agree to her humble request.

CLARENCE

[So only GLOUCESTER can hear] He knows how to play the
game. Oh, how coyly he plots this conquest!

 George is now known as the Duke of Clarence.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] Be quiet!


KING EDWARD IV


I will consider your request, widow. Come some other time
to find out what I've decided.

LADY GREY

My gracious lord, I can't delay finding out your answer.
Would it be possible for your highness to answer me now?
Whatever you decide, that will satisfy me.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] Yes, widow? Then I bet you
that all your lands will be yours, if what pleases him will
please you too. She needs to fight closer to the enemy or,
I'd wager, she'll get hit .

 There is ample sexual wordplay throughout this scene.

CLARENCE

[So only GLOUCESTER can hear] I'm not afraid for her,
unless she should chance to fall under him.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] God prevent that from
happening! Because then he'll take advantage.

KING EDWARD IV

How many children do you have, widow? Tell me.

CLARENCE

[So only GLOUCESTER can hear] I think he wants to beg her
to give him a child.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] No, whip me if you're right
about that. He'd rather give her two of his own children.

LADY GREY

Three, my most gracious lord.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] You will have four, if you'll be
ruled by him.

KING EDWARD IV

It's a shame that they should lose their father's lands.

LADY GREY

Feel sorry for them, honorable lord, and give me the land
then.

KING EDWARD IV

Lords, leave us alone. I'll test the intellect of this widow.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] Yes, enjoy your privacy. You'll
take what you can get until you lose your youth and you're
hobbling around on a crutch in old age.

GLOUCESTER and CLARENCE move out of the way.

KING EDWARD IV
45 Now tell me, madam, do you love your children?

LADY GREY
Ay, full as dearly as I love myself.

KING EDWARD IV
And would you not do much to do them good?

LADY GREY
To do them good, I would sustain some harm.

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

LADY GREY
50 Therefore I came unto your majesty.

KING EDWARD IV
I'll tell you how these lands are to be got.

LADY GREY
So shall you bind me to your highness' service.

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

LADY GREY
What you command, that rests in me to do.

KING EDWARD IV
55 But you will take exceptions to my boon.

LADY GREY
No, gracious lord, except I cannot do it.

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

LADY GREY
Why, then I will do what your grace commands.

GLOUCESTER
60 *[Aside to CLARENCE]* He plies her hard; and much rain wears the marble.

CLARENCE
[Aside to GLOUCESTER] As red as fire! nay, then her wax must melt.

LADY GREY
Why stops my lord, shall I not hear my task?

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

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

KING EDWARD IV
Why, then, thy husband's lands I freely give thee.

LADY GREY
I take my leave with many thousand thanks.

GLOUCESTER
[Aside to CLARENCE] The match is made; she seals it with a curtsy.

KING EDWARD IV
Now, madam, tell me, do you love your children?

LADY GREY
Yes, as much as I love myself.

KING EDWARD IV
And wouldn't you do a lot for them?

LADY GREY
For them, I would even undergo being hurt.

KING EDWARD IV
Then get them your husband's lands to do good by them.

LADY GREY
That's why I came to your majesty.

KING EDWARD IV
I'll tell you how you can get these lands.

LADY GREY
If you can get them, I'll be your highness' faithful servant.

KING EDWARD IV
What service can you do for me, if I give you the lands?

LADY GREY
Whatever you command, it'll be my responsibility to carry out.

KING EDWARD IV
But you think there are exceptions to my request.

LADY GREY
No, gracious lord, unless I can't do it.

KING EDWARD IV
Yes, but you can do what I'm planning to ask you to do.

LADY GREY
Well, then, I will do what your grace commands.

GLOUCESTER
[So only CLARENCE can hear] He is working on her persistently. He's wearing down her stony exterior.

CLARENCE
[So only GLOUCESTER can hear] He is as hot as fire! Her wax must melt under him.

LADY GREY
Why does my lord stop? Shall I not hear what I have to do?

KING EDWARD IV
It's an easy job—only to love a king.

LADY GREY
That can be done easily because I am one of your loyal subjects.

KING EDWARD IV
Well, then, I give you back your husband's lands freely.

LADY GREY
And I leave with a thousand thanks.

GLOUCESTER
[So only CLARENCE can hear] The match is made. She seals the deal by curtsying.

KING EDWARD IV

70 But stay thee, 'tis the fruits of love I mean.

LADY GREY

The fruits of love I mean, my loving liege.

KING EDWARD IV

Ay, but, I fear me, in another sense.
What love, think'st thou, I sue so much to get?

LADY GREY

75 My love till death, my humble thanks, my prayers;
That love which virtue begs and virtue grants.

KING EDWARD IV

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

LADY GREY

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

KING EDWARD IV

But now you partly may perceive my mind.

LADY GREY

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

KING EDWARD IV

To tell thee plain, I aim to lie with thee.

LADY GREY

To tell you plain, I had rather lie in prison.

KING EDWARD IV

Why, then thou shalt not have thy husband's lands.

LADY GREY

85 Why, then mine honesty shall be my dower;
For by that loss I will not purchase them.

KING EDWARD IV

Therein thou wrong'st thy children mightily.

LADY GREY

90 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.'

KING 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.

GLOUCESTER

95 *[Aside to CLARENCE]* The widow likes him not, she
knits her brows.

CLARENCE

[Aside to GLOUCESTER] He is the bluntest wooer in
Christendom.

KING EDWARD IV

100 *[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;

KING EDWARD IV

But wait. I'm talking about the enjoyment of love.

LADY GREY

I'm also talking about the enjoyment of love, my loving
lord.

KING EDWARD IV

Yes, but I think you mean it in another sense. What kind of
love, do you think, do I try so hard to get from you?

LADY GREY

My love until death, my humble thanks, my prayers. A kind
of love that being virtuous asks of me and being virtuous
then makes me be.

KING EDWARD IV

No, to tell you the truth, I didn't mean that kind of love.

LADY GREY

Well, then you don't mean what I thought you did.

KING EDWARD IV

But now you may partially understand what I meant.

LADY GREY

My mind will never allow me to think what I imagine your
highness means, if I guess correctly.

KING EDWARD IV

I'll say it simply then. I want to sleep with you.

LADY GREY

To say it simply, I would rather sleep in prison.

KING EDWARD IV

Well, then you won't have your husband's lands.

LADY GREY

Well, then my chastity will be payment enough. No, I won't
pay for these lands with my virtue.

KING EDWARD IV

You wrong your children so much by refusing.

LADY GREY

Your highness wrongs both them and me in making this
demand. But, powerful king, this playful toying with me
does not fit well with the seriousness of my request. Please,
let me go and either tell me "yes" or "no."

KING EDWARD IV

"Yes," if you'll say "yes" to what I request. "No," if you'll say
"no" to what I demand.

LADY GREY

Then, I say "no," my lord. My pleas to you are over.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] The widow doesn't like him,
she's frowning.

CLARENCE

[So only GLOUCESTER can hear] He makes his sexual offer
more directly than any man in the Christian world.

KING EDWARD IV

[To himself] Her appearance proves that she is full of
modesty. Her words show her matchless intellect. All the
ways in which she seems perfect make the case for her to

And she shall be my love, or else my queen.

[To LADY GREY]

Say that King Edward take thee for his queen?

LADY GREY

'Tis better said than done, my gracious lord:
I am a subject fit to jest withal,
105 But far unfit to be a sovereign.

KING EDWARD IV

Sweet widow, by my state I swear to thee
I speak no more than what my soul intends;
And that is, to enjoy thee for my love.

LADY GREY

110 And that is more than I will yield unto:
I know I am too mean to be your queen,
And yet too good to be your concubine.

KING EDWARD IV

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

LADY GREY

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

KING EDWARD IV

115 No more than when my daughters call thee mother.
Thou art a widow, and thou hast some children;
And, by God's mother, I, being but a bachelor,
Have other some: why, 'tis a happy thing
To be the father unto many sons.
120 Answer no more, for thou shalt be my queen.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside to CLARENCE] The ghostly father now hath done
his shrift.

CLARENCE

[Aside to GLOUCESTER] When he was made a shriver,
'twas for shift.

KING EDWARD IV

125 Brothers, you muse what chat we two have had.

GLOUCESTER

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

KING EDWARD IV

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

CLARENCE

To whom, my lord?

KING EDWARD IV

Why, Clarence, to myself.

GLOUCESTER

130 That would be ten days' wonder at the least.

CLARENCE

That's a day longer than a wonder lasts.

be queen. One way or another, she's meant for a king's bed.
And she shall be my lover, or, if not, my queen.

[To LADY GREY] What about if King Edward takes you for his
queen?

LADY GREY

That's easier said than done, my royal lord. I am a lowly
subject that's only fit to joke with on this topic, but I'm
certainly not fit to be a ruler.

KING EDWARD IV

Sweet widow, I swear to you, by my royal standing, that I
don't say anything I don't intend to make true. That is, I'm
going to enjoy you as a lover.

LADY GREY

And that's more than I'll consent to. I know I am too poor to
be your queen and yet too good to be your mistress.

KING EDWARD IV

You're just coming up with excuses, widow. I really mean to
make you my queen.

LADY GREY

It will make you upset to hear my sons call you father.

KING EDWARD IV

Not more than when my daughters call you mother. You are
a widow and you have some children. And, holy moly, even
though I'm only a bachelor, I do have some other children
myself. It's a happy thing to be a father to many sons. Don't
say anything else since you will be my queen.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear] He's like a priest who's heard
her confession and granted absolution.

CLARENCE

[So only GLOUCESTER can hear] He became like a priest to
get her to sleep with him.

KING EDWARD IV

Brothers, you must be wondering what we've been talking
about.

GLOUCESTER

Whatever it was, the widow doesn't like it. She looks very
sad.

KING EDWARD IV

You would think it's strange if I said I'm going to marry her.

CLARENCE

Marry her to whom, my lord?

KING EDWARD IV


Well, Clarence, to myself.

GLOUCESTER

That would be a wonder lasting ten days at least.

CLARENCE

That's one day longer than a wonder lasts.

 Richard (Duke of Gloucester) plays on the proverb, "A wonder lasts but nine days."

GLOUCESTER

By so much is the wonder in extremes.

KING EDWARD IV

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

135

Enter a Nobleman

NOBLEMAN

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

KING 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.

140

Exeunt all but GLOUCESTER

GLOUCESTER

Ay, Edward will use women honourably.
Would he were wasted, marrow, bones and all,
That from his loins no hopeful branch may spring,
To cross me from the golden time I look for!
And yet, between my soul's desire and me--
The lustful Edward's title buried--
Is Clarence, Henry, and his son young Edward,
And all the unlook'd for issue of their bodies,
To take their rooms, ere I can place myself:
A cold premeditation for my purpose!
Why, then, I do but dream on sovereignty;
Like one that stands upon a promontory,
And spies a far-off shore where he would tread,
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye,
And chides the sea that sunders him from thence,
Saying, he'll lade it dry to have his way:
So do I wish the crown, being so far off;
And so I chide the means that keeps me from it;
And so I say, I'll cut the causes off,
Flattering me with impossibilities.
My eye's too quick, my heart o'erween's too much,
Unless my hand and strength could equal them.
Well, say there is no kingdom then for Richard;
What other pleasure can the world afford?
I'll make my heaven in a lady's lap,
And deck my body in gay ornaments,
And witch sweet ladies with my words and looks.
O miserable thought! And more unlikely
Than to accomplish twenty golden crowns!
Why, love forswore me in my mother's womb:
And, for I should not deal in her soft laws,
She did corrupt frail nature with some bribe,
To shrink mine arm up like a wither'd shrub;
To make an envious mountain on my back,
Where sits deformity to mock my body;
To shape my legs of an unequal size;
To disproportion me in every part,
Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear-whelp
That carries no impression like the dam.
And am I then a man to be beloved?
O monstrous fault, to harbour such a thought!
Then, since this earth affords no joy to me,
But to command, to check, to o'erbear such
As are of better person than myself,
I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown,
And, whiles I live, to account this world but hell,
Until my mis-shaped trunk that bears this head
Be round impaled with a glorious crown.
And yet I know not how to get the crown,
For many lives stand between me and home:
And I,--like one lost in a thorny wood,
That rends the thorns and is rent with the thorns,

195

GLOUCESTER

Yes, I meant that it would be extraordinary even for a wonder.

KING EDWARD IV

Well, keep joking about it, brothers. I can tell you both that
I'll grant her request and return her husband's lands.

A nobleman enters.

NOBLEMAN

My gracious lord, your enemy Henry was captured and
brought as your prisoner to your palace gates.


KING EDWARD IV


Make sure that he is taken to the Tower. And let's go,
brothers, to the man that captured him, so we can find out
how he was taken. Widow, go along, and, lords, treat her
well.

All exit except for GLOUCESTER.

GLOUCESTER

Yes, Edward will treat women well. I wish he were
consumed with disease, in his bone marrow, bones and
everything else, so that he could father no future monarchs
who would prevent me from getting the crown myself! And
yet, even once Edward's dead, Clarence, Henry, and his son
young Edward, stand in my way of getting the throne too.
Not to mention all the as-yet-unborn children they may
father, who will take over for them before I can put myself
on the throne. Well, this is an unfortunate thing to
anticipate if I want to be king! Honestly, I can only dream of
being the king, like a man who stands on a cliff, looking at a
faraway shore where he wants to walk, wishing that his foot
was already in the place he's seeing. He curses the sea that
keeps him so far from that land, and says that he'll drain it
dry in order to get there. That's how much I want to have
the crown, even though it's so far away from me, and so I
curse the obstacles that keep me from obtaining it. And so I
say that I'll murder those in my way. I am deluding myself
with impossibilities. I look too far ahead, my heart
presumes too much about what I am capable of, unless my
hand and strength could do what my mind and heart
imagine. Well, let's say that I'll never be king. What other
pleasures can the world offer me? I can enjoy women and
wear lavish clothing and seduce sweet ladies with my
words and looks. Oh, what a hopeless idea! It's more
unlikely than obtaining twenty different kingdoms! After all,
love rejected me when I was in my mother's womb. In order
that I'd never have anything to do with love, maybe love
bribed gullible nature to shrink my arm like it was a
decaying bush. What's more, to make a disgusting
mountain on my back, which makes everyone see that my
body is deformed. Also, to make my legs different sizes and
to make me disproportional in all my body parts. I am like a
shapeless mass, or like an unformed bear cub before its
mother has licked into shape. And with all this, I'm
supposed to be a man who's loved? Oh, it's a horrible
mistake to even entertain such a thought! Then, since this
world doesn't offer me any happiness, apart from ruling,
punishing, and dominating those people that have better
appearances than I do, I'll make it my heaven on earth to
dream about the crown. And, while I live, I will consider this
world hell until my misshapen body will be topped by a
glorious crown encircling my head. But I still don't know
how to get the crown since many people stand between me
and my goal. And I'm like someone lost in a thorny forest
who pushes the thorns out of the way but is scratched by
the thorns at the same time, looking for a path and straying
from the path, not knowing how to find the way out, but
desperately trying to find it. Just like that, I torment myself
about finding a way to seize the English crown. I will free
myself from that torment or I'll cut my way through with a
bloody axe. After all, I can smile, and murder while I'm

 In classical mythology, sirens were mermaid-like creatures who sang sweetly in order to lure sailors to crash their ships on to the rocks.

 The basilisk was a mythical snake whose gaze had the power to kill. (You

Seeking a way and straying from the way;
 Not knowing how to find the open air,
 But toiling desperately to find it out,--
 Torment myself to catch the English crown:
 And from that torment I will free myself,
 200 Or hew my way out with a bloody axe.
 Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile,
 And cry 'Content' to that which grieves my heart,
 And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
 And frame my face to all occasions.
 205 I'll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall;
 I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk;
 I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
 Deceive more slyly than Ulysses could,
 And, like a Sinon, take another Troy.
 210 I can add colours to the chameleon,
 Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,
 And set the murderous Machiavel to school.
 Can I do this, and cannot get a crown?
 Tut, were it farther off, I'll pluck it down.

Exit

smiling. I can pretend that I'm happy about that which makes me sad and I can cry fake tears and put on whatever expressions are necessary for any situation. I'll drown more sailors than the sirens ⁵ did, I'll kill more onlookers than the basilisk ⁶ did. I'll persuade people with my rhetoric just like Nestor ⁷ did, and I'll deceive them more cunningly than Ulysses ⁸ could. And, like Sinon ⁹, I will bring down a kingdom just like he brought down Troy. I can show more different colors than a chameleon, and I can change my shape with more variety than Proteus. ¹⁰ I can teach the murderous Machiavelli ¹¹ a thing or two. How can I do all of this and fail to win the crown? Hah, even if I was further down the line of succession, I'd still win it.

GLOUCESTER exits.

may likely know the basilisk from Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets!

⁷ Nestor was a famously well-spoken soldier for the Greeks in the mythical Trojan War.

⁸ Ulysses (or Odysseus) was the mythical King of Ithaca. He was known for his slyness.

⁹ Sinon was a Greek soldier responsible for the fall of Troy in the mythical Trojan War. He delivered a giant wooden horse to the Trojan gates, telling the Trojans that the Greeks had left Troy, but, in fact, the Greek soldiers were hidden inside the horse.

¹⁰ In Greek mythology, Proteus is a shape-shifting sea god.

¹¹ Niccolò Machiavelli was the author of *The Prince*, a 1513 treatise that advocated using ruthless political deception and cunning in order to gain power.

Act 3, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter KING LEWIS XI, his sister BONA, his Admiral, called BOURBON, PRINCE EDWARD, QUEEN MARGARET, and OXFORD. KING LEWIS XI sits, and riseth up again

KING LEWIS XI

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

QUEEN MARGARET

5 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,
 10 And with dishonour laid me on the ground;
 Where I must take like seat unto my fortune,
 And to my humble seat conform myself.

KING LEWIS XI

Why, say, fair queen, whence springs this deep despair?

QUEEN MARGARET

15 From such a cause as fills mine eyes with tears
 And stops my tongue, while heart is drown'd in cares.

KING LEWIS XI

Whate'er it be, be thou still like thyself,
 And sit thee by our side:

Seats her by him

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet fanfare plays. KING LEWIS XI, his sister LADY BONA, his Admiral BOURBON, PRINCE EDWARD, QUEEN MARGARET, and OXFORD enter. KING LEWIS XI sits and then stands up again.

KING LEWIS XI

Fair Queen of England, good Margaret: sit down next to us. It doesn't fit your position and birthright that you should stand up while I sit.

QUEEN MARGARET

No, powerful King of France. Margaret must lower herself now and learn for a while to serve where kings rule. Yes, I was, I must confess, England's queen in golden days of the past. But now misfortune has taken my title, and dishonor has forced me to the ground where I must sit. And so I'll just have to adjust to my new lowly situation.

KING LEWIS XI

Tell me, fair queen, where does this deep despair come from?

QUEEN MARGARET

From a cause that makes me cry when I think about it. It's hard for me to speak about it because I'm filled to the brim with worries.

KING LEWIS XI

Whatever it may be, always act like a queen and sit next to me.

KING LEWIS XI sits MARGARET next to him.

KING LEWIS XI

Yield not thy neck

- 20 To fortune's yoke, but let thy dauntless mind
Still ride in triumph over all mischance.
Be plain, Queen Margaret, and tell thy grief;
It shall be eased, if France can yield relief.

QUEEN MARGARET

- Those gracious words revive my drooping thoughts
25 And give my tongue-tied sorrows leave to speak.
Now, therefore, be it known to noble Lewis,
That Henry, sole possessor of my love,
Is of a king become a banish'd man,
And forced to live in Scotland a forlorn;
30 While proud ambitious Edward Duke of York
Usurps the regal title and the seat
Of England's true-anointed lawful king.
This is the cause that I, poor Margaret,
With this my son, Prince Edward, Henry's heir,
35 Am come to crave thy just and lawful aid;
And if thou fail us, all our hope is done:
Scotland hath will to help, but cannot help;
Our people and our peers are both misled,
Our treasures seized, our soldiers put to flight,
40 And, as thou seest, ourselves in heavy plight.

KING LEWIS XI

Renowned queen, with patience calm the storm,
While we bethink a means to break it off.

QUEEN MARGARET

The more we stay, the stronger grows our foe.

KING LEWIS XI

The more I stay, the more I'll succor thee.

QUEEN MARGARET

- 45 O, but impatience waiteth on true sorrow.
And see where comes the breeder of my sorrow!

Enter WARWICK

KING LEWIS XI

What's he approacheth boldly to our presence?

QUEEN MARGARET

Our Earl of Warwick, Edward's greatest friend.

KING LEWIS XI

- 50 Welcome, brave Warwick! What brings thee to France?

He descends. She ariseth

QUEEN 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,
55 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
60 With a nuptial knot, if thou vouchsafe to grant
That virtuous Lady Bona, thy fair sister,
To England's king in lawful marriage.

QUEEN MARGARET

[Aside] If that go forward, Henry's hope is done.

KING LEWIS XI

Don't let fortune run wildly over you, but let your
courageous mind still triumph over the bad things that
happen. Be straightforward, Queen Margaret, and tell me
about your grief. It shall be made easier to bear if the King
of France can offer some help.

QUEEN MARGARET

Those gracious words lift my spirits and make it possible for
me to speak my silent sorrows. Now, then, let it be known
to noble Lewis that Henry, the only one that has my love, is
no longer a king but a banished man and is forced to live as
an outcast in Scotland. Meanwhile, arrogant, ambitious
Edward, Duke of York has stolen his title and has usurped
the throne of England's rightful and lawful king. This is the
reason why I, poor Margaret, with my son here, Prince
Edward, Henry's heir, have come to ask for your just and fair
help. And if you won't help us, all our hope is gone.
Scotland wants to help but can't help. Our people and our
noble followers are all led astray. Our possessions have
been taken, our soldiers forced to flee, and as you can see,
we are in a sorrowful situation ourselves.

KING LEWIS XI

Famous queen, calm your grief with patience, while I think
of a way to end your sadness.

QUEEN MARGARET

The longer we wait here, the stronger our enemy grows.

KING LEWIS XI

The longer I pause, the more I can help you.

QUEEN MARGARET

Oh, but impatience is part of real sorrow. And look, here
comes the creator of all my sorrow!

WARWICK enters.

KING LEWIS XI

Who is it that comes in such a bold way into the kingly
presence?

QUEEN MARGARET

Our Earl of Warwick, Edward's best friend.

KING LEWIS XI

Welcome, brave Warwick! What brings you to France?

*KING LEWIS XI steps down from the throne. MARGARET
stands up.*

QUEEN MARGARET

Yes, now a second storm begins to rise, since this is the man
who is so powerful that he can move both the wind and the
tide.

WARWICK

I come from the great Edward, King of England, my lord and
ruler, and your sworn friend. I come in kindness and
genuine love. First, I want to greet your royal highness.
Then, I want to ask to form an alliance of friendship. Lastly, I
want to confirm that friendship with a marriage contract, if
you agree to give your sister-in-law, the virtuous Lady Bona,
to the King of England as his wife.

QUEEN MARGARET

[To herself]

WARWICK

[To BONA] And, gracious madam, in our king's behalf,
 65 I am commanded, with your leave and favour,
 Humbly to kiss your hand, and with my tongue
 To tell the passion of my sovereign's heart;
 Where fame, late entering at his heedful ears,
 Hath placed thy beauty's image and thy virtue.

QUEEN MARGARET

70 King Lewis 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,
 75 Unless abroad they purchase great alliance?
 To prove him tyrant this reason may suffice,
 That Henry liveth still: but were he dead,
 Yet here Prince Edward stands, King Henry's son.
 Look, therefore, Lewis, that by this league and
 80 marriage
 Thou draw not on thy danger and dishonour;
 For though usurpers sway the rule awhile,
 Yet heavens are just, and time suppresseth wrongs.

WARWICK

Injurious Margaret!

PRINCE EDWARD

85 And why not queen?

WARWICK

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

OXFORD

Then Warwick disannuls great John of Gaunt,
 Which did subdue the greatest part of Spain;
 90 And, after John of Gaunt, Henry the Fourth,
 Whose wisdom was a mirror to the wisest;
 And, after that wise prince, Henry the Fifth,
 Who by his prowess conquered all France:
 From these our Henry lineally descends.

WARWICK

95 Oxford, how haps it, in this smooth discourse,
 You told not how Henry the Sixth hath lost
 All that which Henry Fifth had gotten?
 Methinks these peers of France should smile at that.
 But for the rest, you tell a pedigree
 100 Of threescore and two years; a silly time
 To make prescription for a kingdom's worth.

OXFORD

Why, Warwick, canst thou speak against thy liege,
 Whom thou obeyed'st thirty and six years,
 And not bewray thy treason with a blush?

WARWICK

105 Can Oxford, that did ever fence the right,
 Now buckler falsehood with a pedigree?
 For shame! Leave Henry, and call Edward king.

OXFORD

Call him my king by whose injurious doom
 My elder brother, the Lord Aubrey Vere,
 110 Was done to death? And more than so, my father,
 Even in the downfall of his mellow'd years,
 When nature brought him to the door of death?
 No, Warwick, no; while life upholds this arm,
 This arm upholds the house of Lancaster.

If that happens, there is no hope for Henry left.

WARWICK

[To LADY BONA]

And, gracious madam, in the name of our king, I am
 ordered, if you'll let me, to kiss your hand and speak to you
 about the passion of my king's heart. Recently, reports of
 you that were brought to him have created an image of your
 beauty and your virtue in that very heart.

QUEEN MARGARET

King Lewis and Lady Bona, listen to what I have to say
 before you give an answer to Warwick. His request doesn't
 come from Edward's honest love. He's just trying to trick
 you because they have no other choice. How can usurpers
 safely rule at home unless they make a great alliance
 abroad? I can prove that he's a usurper simply by one
 reason: Henry still lives. But, even if he were dead, here
 stands Prince Edward, King Henry's son. Beware, Lewis,
 that you won't endanger and dishonor yourself by this
 union and marriage. Even though usurpers may be in power
 for a while, the heavens are fair, and wrongdoers will be
 punished in time.

WARWICK

Offensive Margaret!

PRINCE EDWARD

And why not "queen"?

WARWICK

Because your father Henry usurped the throne, so you are
 no more a prince than she is a queen.

OXFORD

Then, Warwick, you ignore the great John of Gaunt, who
 conquered a big part of Spain. After John of Gaunt came
 Henry the Fourth, who was as wise as the wisest man there
 is. And, after that wise prince, there was Henry V, who
 conquered all of France by his power. And these are the
 kings from whom our Henry descends.

WARWICK

Oxford, how does it happen, in this smooth-talking story,
 you didn't mention how Henry the Sixth lost everything
 that Henry the Fifth had won? I think that these noblemen
 of France would find that amusing. But, as for all the rest,
 you recount a family tree of sixty-two years, which is not
 much time to make a long-term claim for a kingdom.

OXFORD

Can you speak against your king, Warwick—a king you
 obeyed for thirty-six years—and not betray your treason by
 blushing?

WARWICK

Can Oxford, who always fought for justice, now hide lies
 behind a family tree? Shame on you! Get over Henry and
 accept Edward as king.

OXFORD

Accept him as my king? The man who wrongfully sentenced
 my older brother, the Lord Aubrey Vere, to death? And,
 besides that, sentenced my father to death even though he
 was nearing the end of his life anyway and was declining
 towards death already? No, Warwick, no. As long as I'm
 alive, I'll defend the house of Lancaster.

WARWICK

115 And I the house of York.

KING LEWIS XI

Queen Margaret, Prince Edward, and Oxford,
Vouchsafe, at our request, to stand aside,
While I use further conference with Warwick.

They stand aloof

QUEEN MARGARET

120 Heavens grant that Warwick's words bewitch him not!

KING LEWIS XI

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.

KING LEWIS XI

125 But is he gracious in the people's eye?

WARWICK

The more that Henry was unfortunate.

KING LEWIS XI

Then further, all dissembling set aside,
Tell me for truth the measure of his love
Unto our sister Bona.

WARWICK

130 Such it seems
As may beseem a monarch like himself.
Myself have often heard him say and swear
That this his love was an eternal plant,
Whereof the root was fix'd in virtue's ground,
135 The leaves and fruit maintain'd with beauty's sun,
Exempt from envy, but not from disdain,
Unless the Lady Bona quit his pain.

KING LEWIS XI

Now, sister, let us hear your firm resolve.

BONA

Your grant, or your denial, shall be mine:

[to WARWICK]

Yet I confess that often ere this day,
When I have heard your king's desert recounted,
Mine ear hath tempted judgment to desire.

KING LEWIS XI

140 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
145 That Bona shall be wife to the English king.

PRINCE EDWARD

To Edward, but not to the English king.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

WARWICK

And I will defend the house of York.

KING LEWIS XI

Queen Margaret, Prince Edward and Oxford. If you don't
mind, at my request, to stand aside while I talk further with
Warwick.

*QUEEN MARGARET, PRINCE EDWARD, and OXFORD stand to
one side together.*

QUEEN MARGARET

God forbid that Warwick's words charm him!

KING LEWIS XI

Warwick, tell me now, deep in your heart, is Edward your
true king? Because I would hate to join with one who was
not rightfully chosen.

WARWICK

I swear it on my reputation and my honor.

KING LEWIS XI

But is he popular with the people?

WARWICK

He is, especially because Henry was so unpopular.

KING LEWIS XI

Then, also, just speaking honestly, tell me truthfully how
much he really loves my sister-in-law Lady Bona.

WARWICK

He loves her as much as it suits a king like himself. I have
often heard him speak and swear that his love was like a
plant that will never die. It will never die because the root is
buried in the field of virtue and the sun of beauty shines
upon the leaves and the fruit. His love is free from jealousy
but not from the possibility of being hurt by Lady Bona's
scorn, unless she should end his pain by returning his love.

KING LEWIS XI

Sister, we want to hear your decision now.

BONA

Whether you agree to this, or refuse it, I'll go along with
whatever you say.

[To WARWICK]

But I confess that often before today, whenever I heard your
king's virtue being talked about, I was tempted to desire
him.

KING LEWIS XI

Then, Warwick, here's my decision: my sister-in-law will be
Edward's wife. Now conditions must be drawn up to
determine what your king must give us as part of the
marriage settlement. Her dowry shall be equal to whatever
he pays us. Come close, Queen Margaret, and act as a
witness to the agreement that Lady Bona shall become the
wife of the English king.

PRINCE EDWARD

A wife to Edward but not to the English king.

QUEEN MARGARET

You deceitful Warwick! It was your plan to nullify my plea to
King Lewis with this marriage alliance. Lewis was Henry's
friend before you came here.

KING LEWIS XI

150 And still is friend to him and Margaret:
But if your title to the crown be weak,
As may appear by Edward's good success,
Then 'tis but reason that I be released
From giving aid which late I promised.
155 Yet shall you have all kindness at my hand
That your estate requires and mine can yield.

WARWICK

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

QUEEN 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,
165 Both full of truth, I make King Lewis behold
Thy sly conveyance and thy lord's false love;
For both of you are birds of selfsame feather.

Post blows a horn within

KING LEWIS XI

Warwick, this is some post to us or thee.

Enter a Post

POST

170 [To WARWICK] My lord ambassador, these letters are for
you,
Sent from your brother, Marquess Montague.

To KING LEWIS XI

POST

These from our king unto your majesty.

To QUEEN MARGARET

POST

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

They all read their letters

OXFORD

I like it well that our fair queen and mistress
Smiles at her news, while Warwick frowns at his.

PRINCE EDWARD

Nay, mark how Lewis stamps, as he were nettled:
I hope all's for the best.

KING LEWIS XI

180 Warwick, what are thy news? And yours, fair queen?

QUEEN MARGARET

Mine, such as fill my heart with unhop'd joys.

WARWICK

Mine, full of sorrow and heart's discontent.

KING LEWIS XI

What! Has your king married the Lady Grey?
And now, to soothe your forgery and his,
185 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?

KING LEWIS XI

And he is still a friend to Henry and Margaret. But if your
claim to the throne is weak, as it seems to be judging from
Edward's success, then it makes sense that I shouldn't have
to give the help that I had recently promised. Yet you will
have all the kindness you deserve from me, whatever
kindness is appropriate for your position and whatever
kindness I'm able to give.

WARWICK

Henry now lives in Scotland peacefully, and since he has
nothing there, he has nothing to lose. And as for you, our
former queen, you have a father that is able to take care of
you and it would be better if you went over to him and
troubled him than troubled the King of France.

QUEEN MARGARET

Shut up, you insolent, shameless Warwick, be quiet, proud
man who establishes and removes kings! I won't leave this
place until with my words and tears, both of which are real,
I make King Lewis recognize your cunning trickery and the
falseness of your lord's love for Lady Bona. Both you and
the king are made of the same stuff.

A messenger blows a horn offstage.

KING LEWIS XI

Warwick, there is some letter for us or for you.

A messenger enters.

MESENTER

[To WARWICK] My lord ambassador, these letters are for
you. They are from your brother, Marquess Montague.

The messenger addresses KING LEWIS XI.

MESENTER

These are from our king to your king.

The messenger addresses QUEEN MARGARET.

MESENTER

And madam, these are for you. I don't know who sent them.

They all read their letters.

OXFORD

I like that our queen is smiling at the news she's received
while Warwick is frowning at the news he's received.

PRINCE EDWARD

No, look at how Lewis stamps his foot, as if he was irritated
by something. I hope all's going to turn out well.

KING LEWIS XI

What is your news, Warwick? And yours, fair queen?

QUEEN MARGARET

Mine fill my heart with happiness I did not hope for.

WARWICK

Mine is full of sorrow and makes my heart heavy.

KING LEWIS XI

Madness! Has your king married the Lady Grey? And now, to
smooth over your lies and his lies, he sends me a note to tell
me to be calm? Is this the alliance that he wants to make
with France? How can he dare to insult us in this way?

QUEEN MARGARET

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

WARWICK

190 King Lewis, 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.
195 Did I forget that by the house of York
My father came untimely to his death?
Did I let pass the abuse done to my niece?
Did I impale him with the regal crown?
Did I put Henry from his native right?
200 And am I guerdon'd at the last with shame?
Shame on himself! For my desert is honour:
And to repair my honour lost for him,
I here renounce him and return to Henry.
My noble queen, let former grudges pass,
205 And henceforth I am thy true servitor:
I will revenge his wrong to Lady Bona,
And replant Henry in his former state.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

WARWICK

So much his friend, ay, his unfeigned friend,
That, if King Lewis vouchsafe to furnish us
With some few bands of chosen soldiers,
I'll undertake to land them on our coast
215 And force the tyrant from his seat by war.
'Tis not his new-made bride shall succor him:
And as for Clarence, as my letters tell me,
He's very likely now to fall from him,
For matching more for wanton lust than honour,
220 Or than for strength and safety of our country.

BONA

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

BONA

225 My quarrel and this English queen's are one.

WARWICK

And mine, fair lady Bona, joins with yours.

KING LEWIS XI

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

QUEEN MARGARET

230 Let me give humble thanks for all at once.

KING LEWIS XI

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

QUEEN MARGARET

I warned your majesty about this before. It proves the
falseness of Edward's love and Warwick's honesty.

WARWICK

King Lewis, I swear, in front of heaven, and by the hope that
I have of going to heaven, that I am innocent when it comes
to Edward's crime. He is no longer my king because he
dishonors me but he dishonors himself more, if he could
only see how ashamed he should be. Did I forget that my
father died prematurely because of the house of York? Did I
forget about what Edward tried to do to my niece? Did I
put the royal crown on his head? Did I tear Henry off his
rightful throne? And am I ultimately rewarded with shame?
Shame on him! I wanted to follow an honorable king. And
to repair my honor that I lost because of him, I will abandon
him and return to Henry's service.

(to QUEEN MARGARET)

My noble queen, let us forget our old disagreements, and
let me be your true servant from now on. I will revenge the
harm he did to Lady Bona and I will put Henry back on the
throne.

QUEEN MARGARET

Warwick, your words have turned my hate to love. I forgive
and completely forget your old mistakes, and I am happy
that you have returned to be King Henry's friend.

WARWICK

Yes, I am so much his friend, his genuine friend, that, if King
Lewis will be willing to send us with some troops of
selected soldiers, I'll take them to our coast and try to force
the tyrant out of his throne through war. His new bride
won't be able to help him. And, when it comes to Clarence,
my letters tell me that he's very likely to abandon him,
because he married Lady Gray for lust and for honor or the
strength and safety of our country.

BONA

Dear brother, how else can I be revenged except by your
helping this distressed queen?

QUEEN MARGARET

Famous prince, how can poor Henry live if you don't save
him from his miserable situation?

BONA

My argument and the English queen's argument are one
and the same.

WARWICK

And my argument, fair Lady Bona, is the same as yours too.

KING LEWIS XI

And mine is the same as hers and yours and Margaret's. And
so I have definitely decided to offer you help.


QUEEN MARGARET


Let me thank you for all you'll do for us at once.

KING LEWIS XI

[To the messenger]

Then return quickly, English messenger, and tell false
Edward, your so-called king, that Lewis of France is sending
over performers to stage a masque and celebrate with
him and his new bride. You see what's happened here so
now go frighten your king with the news.

 The "abuse" done to Warwick's niece is recorded in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, one of Shakespeare's key sources for his history plays. Edward had tried to sleep with the daughter or niece of Warwick.

 Masques were entertainments staged at court for kings & queens involving dancing and elaborate costumes. They were often performed

to celebrate royal and aristocratic marriages. King Lewis "masquers" are, of course, his soldiers; he speaks sarcastically.

BONA

Tell him, in hope he'll prove a widower shortly,
I'll wear the willow garland for his sake.

QUEEN MARGARET

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

WARWICK

240 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.

Exit Post

KING LEWIS XI

But, Warwick,
245 Thou and Oxford, with five thousand men,
Shall cross the seas, and bid false Edward battle;
And, as occasion serves, this noble queen
And prince shall follow with a fresh supply.
Yet, ere thou go, but answer me one doubt,
250 What pledge have we of thy firm loyalty?

WARWICK

This shall assure my constant loyalty,
That if our queen and this young prince agree,
I'll join mine eldest daughter and my joy
To him forthwith in holy wedlock bands.

QUEEN MARGARET

255 Yes, I agree, and thank you for your motion.
Son Edward, she is fair and virtuous,
Therefore delay not, give thy hand to Warwick;
And, with thy hand, thy faith irrevocable,
That only Warwick's daughter shall be thine.

PRINCE EDWARD

260 Yes, I accept her, for she well deserves it;
And here, to pledge my vow, I give my hand.

He gives his hand to WARWICK

KING LEWIS XI

Why stay we now? These soldiers shall be levied,
And thou, Lord Bourbon, our high admiral,
265 Shalt waft them over with our royal fleet.
I long till Edward fall by war's mischance,
For mocking marriage with a dame of France.

Exeunt all but WARWICK

WARWICK

I came from Edward as ambassador,
But I return his sworn and mortal foe:
270 Matter of marriage was the charge he gave me,
But dreadful war shall answer his demand.
Had he none else to make a stale but me?
Then none but I shall turn his jest to sorrow.

BONA

[To the messenger]

Tell him I'll wear a willow garland, the sign of a lover who's
been thrown aside, in hopes that he'll soon be widowed.

QUEEN MARGARET

[To the messenger]

Tell him that my mourning clothes have been cast aside
and I am ready to put on my armor.

WARWICK

[To the messenger]

Tell him from me that he has wronged me and that's why I'll
take away his crown before too long. There's your
payment. Go!

The messenger exits.

KING LEWIS XI

Warwick, you and Oxford will cross the sea with five
thousand men and challenge the false Edward to fight. And,
when it makes sense, this noble queen and prince will
follow with more reinforcements. But, before you go,
answer one question: how can we be sure of your
unwavering loyalty?

WARWICK

This will prove my eternal loyalty: if our queen and this
young prince agree, I joyfully offer my eldest daughter to
the prince for holy marriage.

QUEEN MARGARET

Yes, I agree and I thank you for that suggestion. Edward, my
son, she is beautiful and virtuous. Therefore, don't hesitate,
and give your hand to Warwick. Clasp hands, swear that
you'll be constant forever and you'll be faithful to Warwick's
daughter.

PRINCE EDWARD

Yes, I accept her because she deserves it. And here, as part
of my vow, I give you my hand.

PRINCE EDWARD shakes hands with WARWICK.

KING LEWIS XI

What are we waiting for? These soldiers will be recruited,
and you, Lord Bourbon, our High Admiral, shall convey
them over the sea with our royal navy. I can't wait until
Edward falls to bad fortune in this war as punishment for
toying with marriage with a French lady.

All exit except for WARWICK.

WARWICK

I came as an ambassador from Edward, but I return as his
sworn and deadly enemy. He told me to take care of his
marriage, but he'll have war instead. Didn't he have
someone other than me to make into a laughingstock? Well,
then no one but me will turn his joke into sorrow. I was the
most effective in raising him up to get the crown and I'll be

I was the chief that raised him to the crown,
 275 And I'll be chief to bring him down again:
 Not that I pity Henry's misery,
 But seek revenge on Edward's mockery.

Exit

the most effective in bringing him down again. I don't particularly feel bad for Henry's misery, but I must seek revenge for Edward's mockery of me.

WARWICK exits.

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, SOMERSET, and MONTAGUE

GLOUCESTER

Now tell me, brother Clarence, what think you
 Of this new marriage with the Lady Grey?
 Hath not our brother made a worthy choice?

CLARENCE

Alas, you know, 'tis far from hence to France;
 5 How could he stay till Warwick made return?

SOMERSET

My lords, forbear this talk; here comes the king.

GLOUCESTER

And his well-chosen bride.

CLARENCE

I mind to tell him plainly what I think.

Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV, attended; QUEEN ELIZABETH, PEMBROKE, STAFFORD, HASTINGS, and others

KING EDWARD IV

10 Now, brother of Clarence, how like you our choice,
 That you stand pensive, as half malcontent?

CLARENCE

As well as Lewis of France, or the Earl of Warwick,
 Which are so weak of courage and in judgment
 That they'll take no offence at our abuse.

KING EDWARD IV

15 Suppose they take offence without a cause,
 They are but Lewis and Warwick: I am Edward,
 Your king and Warwick's, and must have my will.

GLOUCESTER

And shall have your will, because our king:
 Yet hasty marriage seldom proveth well.

KING EDWARD IV

20 Yea, brother Richard, are you offended too?

GLOUCESTER

Not I:
 No, God forbid that I should wish them sever'd
 Whom God hath join'd together; ay, and 'twere pity
 To sunder them that yoke so well together.


Shakescleare Translation


GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, SOMERSET, and MONTAGUE enter.

GLOUCESTER

Now tell me, brother Clarence, what do you think of this new marriage between Edward and Lady Grey? Don't you think our brother chose well?

CLARENCE

Alas, you know, it is far from here to France. I guess he just couldn't possibly have waited to get married until Warwick returned .

 Clarence's speech drips with sarcasm as does his response to King Edward a few lines later.

SOMERSET

Don't talk about this now, my lords. Here comes the king.

GLOUCESTER

And his well-chosen bride.

CLARENCE

I intend to tell him simply what I think of this.

A trumpet fanfare plays. KING EDWARD IV, enters, accompanied by his servants, along with QUEEN ELIZABETH (formerly LADY GRAY), PEMBROKE, STAFFORD, HASTINGS, and others.

KING EDWARD IV

Clarence, brother, now how do you like our choice, since you're standing there looking so thoughtful as if you were partly dissatisfied?

CLARENCE

I like it as well as King Lewis of France or the Earl of Warwick, who have such little courage or sense that they surely won't be offended by this insult to them.

KING EDWARD IV

Maybe they are insulted without a reason. They are only Lewis and Warwick, after all. I am Edward, your king and Warwick's king, too. And my wishes must be fulfilled.

GLOUCESTER

And you will have your wishes fulfilled because you're the king. Still, quick marriages rarely turn out well.

KING EDWARD IV

Okay, Richard, my brother. Are you insulted too?

GLOUCESTER

Not me! No, God forbid that I would want two lovebirds joined by God to be separated. Yes, and it would be a shame to break apart a pair that goes together so well.

KING EDWARD IV

25 Setting your scorns and your dislike aside,
Tell me some reason why the Lady Grey
Should not become my wife and England's queen.
And you too, Somerset and Montague,
Speak freely what you think.

CLARENCE

30 Then this is mine opinion: that King Lewis
Becomes your enemy, for mocking him
About the marriage of the Lady Bona.

GLOUCESTER

And Warwick, doing what you gave in charge,
Is now dishonoured by this new marriage.

KING EDWARD IV

35 What if both Lewis and Warwick be appeased
By such invention as I can devise?

MONTAGUE

Yet, to have join'd with France in such alliance
Would more have strengthen'd this our commonwealth
'Gainst foreign storms than any home-bred marriage.

HASTINGS

40 Why, knows not Montague that of itself
England is safe, if true within itself?

MONTAGUE

But the safer when 'tis back'd with France.

HASTINGS

'Tis better using France than trusting France:

Let us be back'd with God and with the seas

45 Which He hath given for fence impregnable,
And with their helps only defend ourselves;
In them and in ourselves our safety lies.

CLARENCE

For this one speech Lord Hastings well deserves
To have the heir of the Lord Hungerford.

KING EDWARD IV

50 Ay, what of that? It was my will and grant;
And for this once my will shall stand for law.

GLOUCESTER

And yet methinks your grace hath not done well,
To give the heir and daughter of Lord Scales
Unto the brother of your loving bride;

55 She better would have fitted me or Clarence:
But in your bride you bury brotherhood.

CLARENCE

Or else you would not have bestow'd the heir
Of the Lord Bonville on your new wife's son,
And leave your brothers to go speed elsewhere.

KING EDWARD IV

60 Alas, poor Clarence! Is it for a wife
That thou art discontent? I will provide thee.

CLARENCE

In choosing for yourself, you show'd your judgment,
Which being shallow, you give me leave
To play the broker in mine own behalf;

65 And to that end I shortly mind to leave you.

KING EDWARD IV

Putting your mockery and your displeasure on one side for
a moment, tell me any reason why the Lady Grey shouldn't
become my wife and Queen of England. And you too,
Somerset and Montague, tell me freely what you think.

CLARENCE

Then this is my opinion: King Lewis will become your
enemy because you humiliated him by not marrying Lady
Bona.

GLOUCESTER

And Warwick, who was only doing what you told him to do,
now feels dishonored by this new marriage.

KING EDWARD IV

What if both Lewis and Warwick could be calmed down by a
plan that I come up with?

MONTAGUE

Yes, if we had joined with France in this alliance, it would
have strengthened our kingdom against foreign enemies
more than any marriage made at home could do.

HASTINGS

Yes, but doesn't you know, Montague, that England can be
safe alone if it stays purely English?

MONTAGUE

But it is safer when it is supported by France.

HASTINGS

It's better to use France than to trust France. Let us be
supported by God and by the seas around us which he has
given us as a strong defense. With that help alone we can
defend ourselves. Our safety relies on that help and in
ourselves.

CLARENCE

Lord Hastings really deserves to marry a wealthy
noblewoman just for that speech alone.

KING EDWARD IV

Oh, why do you bring that up? It was what I wanted and
commanded, and what I say in this case is the law.

GLOUCESTER

But I think that your grace hasn't done very well in this case
to marry the heir and daughter of Lord Scales to your loving
bride's brother. She would have been a better fit for me or
Clarence. But you abandon your brothers for your wife.

CLARENCE

Or otherwise you wouldn't have betrothed the daughter of
Lord Bonville to your new stepson, leaving your brothers to
try their luck elsewhere.

KING EDWARD IV

Ah, poor Clarence! Are you dissatisfied because you want a
wife so badly? I will get you one.

CLARENCE

You showed us your judgment in choosing wives when you
chose one for yourself. And since that judgment was
unimpressive, I'm going to ahead and play matchmaker for
myself. And in order to do that, I'm planning to leave you
shortly.

KING EDWARD IV

Leave me, or tarry, Edward will be king,
And not be tied unto his brother's will.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

My lords, before it pleased his majesty
To raise my state to title of a queen,
70 Do me but right, and you must all confess
That I was not ignoble of descent;
And meaner than myself have had like fortune.
But as this title honours me and mine,
So your dislike, to whom I would be pleasing,
75 Doth cloud my joys with danger and with sorrow.

KING EDWARD IV

My love, forbear to fawn upon their frowns:
What danger or what sorrow can befall thee,
So long as Edward is thy constant friend,
And their true sovereign, whom they must obey?
80 Nay, whom they shall obey, and love thee too,
Unless they seek for hatred at my hands;
Which if they do, yet will I keep thee safe,
And they shall feel the vengeance of my wrath.

GLOUCESTER

85 *[Aside]* I hear, yet say not much, but think the more.

Enter a Post

KING EDWARD IV

Now, messenger, what letters or what news
From France?

POST

90 My sovereign liege, no letters; and few words,
But such as I, without your special pardon,
Dare not relate.

KING EDWARD IV

Go to, we pardon thee: therefore, in brief,
Tell me their words as near as thou canst guess them.
What answer makes King Lewis unto our letters?

POST

At my depart, these were his very words:
95 'Go tell false Edward, thy supposed king,
That Lewis of France is sending over masquers
To revel it with him and his new bride.'

KING EDWARD IV

Is Lewis so brave? Belike he thinks me Henry.
But what said Lady Bona to my marriage?

POST

100 These were her words, utter'd with mad disdain:
'Tell him, in hope he'll prove a widower shortly,
I'll wear the willow garland for his sake.'

KING EDWARD IV

105 I blame not her, she could say little less;
She had the wrong. But what said Henry's queen?
For I have heard that she was there in place.

POST

'Tell him,' quoth she, 'my mourning weeds are done,
And I am ready to put armour on.'

KING EDWARD IV

Belike she minds to play the Amazon.
But what said Warwick to these injuries?

KING EDWARD IV

Leave me or stay, but I will still be king, and won't be tied to
my brother's wishes.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

My lords, even before his majesty decided to raise me up to
be the queen, you'd do right by me to admit that I already
was from a noble family. Those of worse-born families have
had my luck before me. But just as this title honors me and
my family, your disapproval distracts me from my joy with
thoughts of danger and sorrow because I want to please
you.

KING EDWARD IV

My love, keep showing your affection for them even when
they're frowning at you. What danger or tragedy can
happen to you as long as I am loyal to you and serve as
their ruler whom they must obey? Yes, they will obey me
and love you, unless they want me to hate them. If they do,
I'll stay loyal to you and keep you safe and they will
experience my vengeful wrath.

GLOUCESTER

[To himself] I listen, but I don't say much, but I keep
thinking.

A messenger enters.

KING EDWARD IV

Now, messenger, what letters or news do you bring from
France?

MESSENGER

My royal lord, I bring no letters. I don't have many words
either, but I don't dare to say them without your special
permission.

KING EDWARD IV

Go on, I give you permission. So, tell me quickly the words
as closely as you can remember them. How does King Lewis
respond to my letters?

MESSENGER

When I was leaving, these were his exact words: "Go tell the
false Edward, your so-called king, that Lewis of France is
sending over masque performers to celebrate with him and
his new bride."

KING EDWARD IV

Is Lewis so boldly rude? Maybe he thinks I'm like Henry. But
what did Lady Bona say about my marriage?

MESSENGER

These were her words, spoken with mad anger: "Tell him I'll
wear a willow garland, the sign of a lover who's been
thrown aside, in hopes that he'll soon be widowed."

KING EDWARD IV

I don't blame her because she couldn't say anything
different. She was wronged. But what did Henry's queen
say? Because I heard that she was there too.

MESSENGER

"Tell him," she said, "that my mourning clothes have been
cast aside and I am ready to put on my armor."

KING EDWARD IV

Maybe she intends to act like a wild Amazon warrior. What
did Warwick say about these insults?

POST

110 He, more incensed against your majesty
Than all the rest, discharged me with these words:
'Tell him from me that he hath done me wrong,
And therefore I'll uncrown him ere't be long.'

KING EDWARD IV

Ha! durst the traitor breathe out so proud words?
Well I will arm me, being thus forewarn'd:
They shall have wars and pay for their presumption.
But say, is Warwick friends with Margaret?

POST

Ay, gracious sovereign; they are so link'd in
friendship
120 That young Prince Edward marries Warwick's daughter.

CLARENCE

Belike the elder; Clarence will have the younger.
Now, brother king, farewell, and sit you fast,
For I will hence to Warwick's other daughter;
That, though I want a kingdom, yet in marriage
125 I may not prove inferior to yourself.
You that love me and Warwick, follow me.

Exit CLARENCE, and SOMERSET follows

GLOUCESTER

[Aside] Not I:
My thoughts aim at a further matter; I
Stay not for the love of Edward, but the crown.

KING EDWARD IV

130 Clarence and Somerset both gone to Warwick!
Yet am I arm'd against the worst can happen;
And haste is needful in this desperate case.
Pembroke and Stafford, you in our behalf
Go levy men, and make prepare for war;
135 They are already, or quickly will be landed:
Myself in person will straight follow you.

Exeunt PEMBROKE and STAFFORD

KING EDWARD IV

But, ere I go, Hastings and Montague,
Resolve my doubt. You twain, of all the rest,
Are near to Warwick by blood and by alliance:
140 Tell me if you love Warwick more than me?
If it be so, then both depart to him;
I rather wish you foes than hollow friends:
But if you mind to hold your true obedience,
Give me assurance with some friendly vow,
145 That I may never have you in suspect.

MONTAGUE

So God help Montague as he proves true!

HASTINGS

And Hastings as he favours Edward's cause!

KING EDWARD IV

Now, brother Richard, will you stand by us?

GLOUCESTER

Ay, in despite of all that shall withstand you.

MESSENGER

He was more furious at your majesty than anyone else, and he dismissed me with these words: "Tell him from me that he has wronged me and that's why I'll take away his crown before too long."

KING EDWARD IV

Ha! Did the traitor speak these proud words? Well, I will put armor on since I've been warned. They shall have wars and pay for their boldness. But, tell me, is Warwick friends with Margaret?

POST

Yes, gracious lord, they are such close friends that the young Prince Edward will marry Warwick's daughter.

CLARENCE

[To himself] Probably the older daughter. I will have the younger one.

[To KING EDWARD]

Now, I say goodbye, my kingly brother. And hold on to your throne because I will go to Warwick's other daughter. Even though I don't have a kingdom, I may not out to be less important than you, at least based on who we both marry. Whoever supports me and Warwick, come with me.

CLARENCE exits and SOMERSET follows after.

GLOUCESTER

[To himself] I won't be going with you. My thoughts are focused on something else entirely. I don't stay here for because I love Edward but because I want the crown.

KING EDWARD IV

Clarence and Somerset have both gone to Warwick! But I am prepared for the worst that can happen and moving quickly is necessary in this extreme situation. Pembroke and Stafford, go and gather men in my name, and prepare for war. They have already landed or they will be landing soon. I will follow you straight away myself.

PEMBROKE and STAFFORD exit.

KING EDWARD IV

But, before I go, Hastings and Montague, clear up something for me. Of all of them, you two are closest to Warwick by blood and friendship. Tell me, do you love Warwick more than you love me? If that's the case, then you can both leave to go to him. I would rather have you as enemies than insincere friends. But if you want to be truly obedient to me, give me your word with a friendly promise so that I never need to suspect you of treachery.

MONTAGUE

God help me while I prove my loyalty!

HASTINGS


And God help me while I fight for Edward!

KING EDWARD IV

Richard, my brother, will you stand with me?

GLOUCESTER

Yes, I'll stand with you against your enemies.

 Richard (Gloucester) puns on "withstand": his brother thinks he's pledging his loyalty, but, in fact, the audience knows that Richard is plotting against King Edward and he

secretly means "withstand you" in the sense of "put up with you."

KING EDWARD IV

150 Why, so! Then am I sure of victory.
Now therefore let us hence; and lose no hour,
Till we meet Warwick with his foreign power.

Exeunt

KING EDWARD IV

Well, there you go! Then I am sure I'll win. Now let us go from here and let's not lose time until we find Warwick with his foreign army.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter WARWICK and OXFORD, with French soldiers

WARWICK

Trust me, my lord, all hitherto goes well;
The common people by numbers swarm to us.

Enter CLARENCE and SOMERSET

WARWICK

5 But see where Somerset and Clarence come!
Speak suddenly, my lords, are we all friends?

CLARENCE

Fear not that, my lord.

WARWICK

Then, gentle Clarence, welcome unto Warwick;
And welcome, Somerset: I hold it cowardice
10 To rest mistrustful where a noble heart
Hath pawn'd an open hand in sign of love;
Else might I think that Clarence, Edward's brother,
Were but a feigned friend to our proceedings:
But welcome, sweet Clarence; my daughter shall be
15 thine.
And now what rests but, in night's coverture,
Thy brother being carelessly encamp'd,
His soldiers lurking in the towns about,
And but attended by a simple guard,
20 We may surprise and take him at our pleasure?
Our scouts have found the adventure very easy:
That as Ulysses and stout Diomed
With sleight and manhood stole to Rhesus' tents,
And brought from thence the Thracian fatal steeds,
25 So we, well cover'd with the night's black mantle,
At unawares may beat down Edward's guard
And seize himself; I say not, slaughter him,
For I intend but only to surprise him.
You that will follow me to this attempt,
30 Applaud the name of Henry with your leader.

They all cry, 'Henry!'

WARWICK

Why, then, let's on our way in silent sort:
For Warwick and his friends, God and Saint George!

Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation

WARWICK and OXFORD enter, with French soldiers.

WARWICK

Trust me, my lord. Everything has gone well so far. The commoners rush to support us in huge number.

CLARENCE and SOMERSET enter.

WARWICK

But look at Somerset and Clarence coming! Tell us immediately, my lords—are we all friends?

CLARENCE

Don't be worried about that, my lord.

WARWICK

Then, kind Clarence, welcome to Warwick, and you too, Somerset. I think it's cowardly not to trust a noble man who has pledged his love and loyalty to you and shaken hands on it. Otherwise, I might think that Edward's brother Clarence was only pretending to be friendly to our side of the battle. But you are welcome, sweet Clarence and my daughter will be yours. And now what's left for us to do but attack by cover of darkness? Since your brother's camp is not well set up, and he just has a low-key guard while his soldiers are wandering about the town, we can surprise him and capture him whenever we feel like it. Our spies have found sneaking into Edward's camp easy. We'll be just like Ulysses and the bold Diomedes in the Trojan War who snuck into Rhesus' tents with macho cunning, and stole the deadly Thracian horses. Just like that, covered with the dark cape of night, we'll catch them unawares, knock out Edward's guard, and capture him. I don't say "kill him" because I only want to capture him. Anyone who wants to attempt this with me, shout the name of Henry with your leader.

They all shout "Henry!"

WARWICK

Well, then, let's go in a silent manner. For Warwick and his friends, God and Saint George!

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Shakescleare Translation

Enter three Watchmen, to guard KING EDWARD IV's tent

FIRST WATCHMAN

Come on, my masters, each man take his stand:
The king by this is set him down to sleep.

SECOND WATCHMAN

What, will he not to bed?

FIRST WATCHMAN

Why, no; for he hath made a solemn vow
5 Never to lie and take his natural rest
Till Warwick or himself be quite suppress'd.

SECOND WATCHMAN

To-morrow then belike shall be the day,
If Warwick be so near as men report.

THIRD WATCHMAN

But say, I pray, what nobleman is that
10 That with the king here resteth in his tent?

FIRST WATCHMAN

'Tis the Lord Hastings, the king's chiefest friend.

THIRD WATCHMAN

O, is it so? But why commands the king
That his chief followers lodge in towns about him,
While he himself keeps in the cold field?

SECOND WATCHMAN

15 'Tis the more honour, because more dangerous.

THIRD WATCHMAN

Ay, but give me worship and quietness;
I like it better than a dangerous honour.
If Warwick knew in what estate he stands,
'Tis to be doubted he would waken him.

FIRST WATCHMAN

20 Unless our halberds did shut up his passage.

SECOND WATCHMAN

Ay, wherefore else guard we his royal tent,
But to defend his person from night-foes?

Enter WARWICK, CLARENCE, OXFORD, SOMERSET, and French
soldiers, silent all

WARWICK

This is his tent; and see where stand his guard.
25 Courage, my masters! Honour now or never!
But follow me, and Edward shall be ours.

FIRST WATCHMAN

Who goes there?

SECOND WATCHMAN

Stay, or thou diest!

WARWICK and the rest cry all, "Warwick! Warwick!" and set upon the
Guard, who fly, crying, "Arm! arm!" WARWICK and the rest following
them

The drum playing and trumpet sounding, reenter WARWICK,
SOMERSET, and the rest, bringing KING EDWARD IV out in his gown,
sitting in a chair. RICHARD and HASTINGS fly over the stage

SOMERSET

30 What are they that fly there?

Three guards enter to watch KING EDWARD IV's tent.

FIRST GUARD

Come on, gentlemen, take your positions, everyone. The
king has fallen asleep in his chair by now.

SECOND GUARD

What, he's not sleeping in his bed?

FIRST GUARD

No, he's not, because he made a solemn vow never to lie
down and sleep normally until either Warwick or himself
has been conquered.

SECOND GUARD

Maybe tomorrow will be the day, if Warwick is as close as
men report.

THIRD GUARD

But, tell me, who is the nobleman who is resting with the
king here in his tent?

FIRST GUARD

It's Lord Hastings, the king's best friend.

THIRD GUARD

Oh, is that true? But why does the king order his closest
followers to stay in towns around him while he himself
sleeps on the cold ground?

SECOND GUARD

It's more honorable because it's more dangerous.

THIRD GUARD

Yes, but I'd rather have dignity and peace. I prefer that to
receiving a dangerous honor. If Warwick knew what
condition the king is in, I fear he would wake him up and kill
him.

FIRST GUARD

Unless our weapons could prevent him from entering.

SECOND GUARD

Yes, why else would we guard his royal tent but to defend
him from enemies in the night?

WARWICK, CLARENCE, OXFORD, SOMERSET, and French
soldiers silently enter.

WARWICK

This is his tent. Look at his guards standing there. Take
courage, my men! Gain honor now or never! Follow me and
Edward will be captured by us.

FIRST GUARD

Who's there?

SECOND GUARD

Stop, or you'll die!

WARWICK and the others cry, "Warwick! Warwick!" and
attack the guards, who run away shouting, "Arm
yourselves!" WARWICK and the others follow them.

While drums and trumpets are played, WARWICK,
SOMERSET, and the rest re-enter, bringing KING EDWARD IV
outside in his dressing gown, sitting in a chair. RICHARD and
HASTINGS run across the stage.

SOMERSET

Who is it running around here?

WARWICK

Richard and Hastings: let them go; here is The duke.

KING EDWARD IV

The duke! Why, Warwick, when we parted,
Thou call'dst me king.

WARWICK

Ay, but the case is alter'd:
35 When you disgraced me in my embassy,
Then I degraded you from being king,
And come now to create you Duke of York.
Alas! How should you govern any kingdom,
That know not how to use ambassadors,
40 Nor how to be contented with one wife,
Nor how to use your brothers brotherly,
Nor how to study for the people's welfare,
Nor how to shroud yourself from enemies?

KING EDWARD IV

Yea, brother of Clarence, are thou here too?
45 Nay, then I see that Edward needs must down.
Yet, Warwick, in despite of all mischance,
Of thee thyself and all thy complices,
Edward will always bear himself as king:
Though fortune's malice overthrow my state,
50 My mind exceeds the compass of her wheel.

WARWICK

Then, for his mind, be Edward England's king:

Takes off his crown

But Henry now shall wear the English crown,
And be true king indeed, thou but the shadow.
55 My Lord of Somerset, at my request,
See that forthwith Duke Edward be convey'd
Unto my brother, Archbishop of York.
When I have fought with Pembroke and his fellows,
I'll follow you, and tell what answer
60 Lewis and the Lady Bona send to him.
Now, for a while farewell, good Duke of York.

They lead him out forcibly

KING EDWARD IV

What fates impose, that men must needs abide;
It boots not to resist both wind and tide.

Exit, guarded

OXFORD

65 What now remains, my lords, for us to do
But march to London with our soldiers?

WARWICK

Ay, that's the first thing that we have to do;
To free King Henry from imprisonment
And see him seated in the regal throne.
70

Exeunt

WARWICK

Richard and Hastings, let them be. We have the duke.

KING EDWARD IV

The duke! Warwick, when we said goodbye, you called me king.

WARWICK

Yes, but now the circumstances are different. When you shamed me in my ambassadorial mission, then I said you were no king of mine and now I've come to demote you to Duke of York. Alas, how could you rule over any kingdom when you don't know how to treat ambassadors? Or how to be happy with one wife? Or how to treat your brothers with like brothers? Or how to work for people's well-being? or how to protect yourself from enemies?

KING EDWARD IV

Oh, my brother Clarence are you also here? Well, then I see that my kingship must end. Yet, Warwick, despite the mistreatment I've received from you and all your accomplices, I'll always carry myself like a king. Even though my bad fortune has dethroned me, I'm thinking about things above and beyond what fortune has in store for me.

WARWICK

Then you can stay the King of England in your thoughts.

WARWICK takes off KING EDWARD IV's crown.

But Henry shall now wear the English crown and be the true king while you'll be only a shadow of a king. Lord of Somerset, I'm requesting that you make sure that Duke Edward here is taken immediately to my brother, the Archbishop of York. After I have fought with Pembroke and his followers, I'll follow you and tell you what message Lewis and Lady Bona have for Edward. Goodbye for a while now, good Duke of York.

They lead KING EDWARD IV out by force.

KING EDWARD IV

What fate prepares for you, men must endure. It is useless to resist fate.

KING EDWARD IV exits, guarded.

OXFORD

What else do we have left to do, my lords, but to march to London with our soldiers?

WARWICK

Yes, that's the first thing we have to do in order to rescue King Henry from imprisonment and put him back on the throne.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and RIVERS

Shakescleare Translation

QUEEN ELIZABETH and RIVERS enter.

RIVERS

Madam, what makes you in this sudden change?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Why brother Rivers, are you yet to learn
What late misfortune is befall'n King Edward?

RIVERS

What! Loss of some pitch'd battle against Warwick?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

5 No, but the loss of his own royal person.

RIVERS

Then is my sovereign slain?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Ay, almost slain, for he is taken prisoner,
Either betray'd by falsehood of his guard
Or by his foe surprised at unawares:
10 And, as I further have to understand,
Is new committed to the Bishop of York,
Fell Warwick's brother and by that our foe.

RIVERS

These news I must confess are full of grief;
Yet, gracious madam, bear it as you may:
15 Warwick may lose, that now hath won the day.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Till then fair hope must hinder life's decay.
And I the rather wean me from despair
For love of Edward's offspring in my womb:
This is it that makes me bridle passion
20 And bear with mildness my misfortune's cross;
Ay, ay, for this I draw in many a tear
And stop the rising of blood-sucking sighs,
Lest with my sighs or tears I blast or drown
King Edward's fruit, true heir to the English crown.

RIVERS

25 But, madam, where is Warwick then become?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

I am inform'd that he comes towards London,
To set the crown once more on Henry's head:
Guess thou the rest; King Edward's friends must down,
But, to prevent the tyrant's violence,—
30 For trust not him that hath once broken faith,—
I'll hence forthwith unto the sanctuary,
To save at least the heir of Edward's right:
There shall I rest secure from force and fraud.
Come, therefore, let us fly while we may fly:
35 If Warwick take us we are sure to die.

Exeunt

RIVERS

Madam, what's caused your sudden change of mood?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Rivers, my brother, haven't you heard about the recent
catastrophe that has happened to King Edward?

RIVERS

What happened? Did he lose some battle against Warwick?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

No, but he's lost his power.

RIVERS

You mean my king's been killed?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Yes, almost killed, since he has been captured and taken
prisoner. He was either betrayed by the treachery of his
guards or else his enemy ambushed him unexpectedly.
And, as I also understand, he is now in the custody of the
Archbishop of York, cruel Warwick's brother and, therefore,
our enemy.

RIVERS

I must admit this is miserable news. Yet, dear lady, deal
with your grief as best you can. Warwick may still lose the
war even though he won the battle.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Until then, I'll hold on to hope to delay my life falling apart.
And I especially want to avoid despair because I so love
Edward's child that's growing inside of me. This is what
makes me hold back my emotions and bear my bad luck
calmly. Yes, yes, it's because of this that I will prevent
myself again and again from crying a lot and I'll stop myself
from sighing too. I'm afraid my sighs and tears could blow
away or drown King Edward's unborn baby, the true heir to
the English crown.

RIVERS

But, madam, where has Warwick now gone?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

I was told that he is coming to London to crown Henry as
king again. You can guess the rest. King Edward's friends
must be defeated. But, to avoid the tyrant Edward's
violence—because you should never trust someone who
has once already broken a vow—I'll hide in safety, to
protect Edward's rightful heir at least. In a safe place, I can
rest easy and not have to worry about violence or treachery.
Come, then, and let us flee while we still can. If Warwick
captures us, we will surely die.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Enter GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, and STANLEY

GLOUCESTER

Now, my Lord Hastings and Sir William Stanley,
Leave off to wonder why I drew you hither,
Into this chiefest thicket of the park.
Thus stands the case: you know our king, my brother,
5 Is prisoner to the bishop here, at whose hands

Shakescleare Translation

GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, and STANLEY enter, with soldiers.

GLOUCESTER

Now, Lord Hastings and Sir William Stanley, stop wondering
why I brought you here, into the densest part of the hunting
woods. Here's the situation: you know that our king, my
brother, is a prisoner to the archbishop here. At his hands,
he has been treated well and has been given quite a lot of

He hath good usage and great liberty,
And, often but attended with weak guard,
Comes hunting this way to disport himself.
I have advertised him by secret means
10 That if about this hour he make his way
Under the colour of his usual game,
He shall here find his friends with horse and men
To set him free from his captivity.

Enter KING EDWARD IV and a Huntsman with him

HUNTSMAN

This way, my lord; for this way lies the game.

KING EDWARD IV

15 Nay, this way, man: see where the huntsmen stand.
Now, brother of Gloucester, Lord Hastings, and the
rest,
Stand you thus close, to steal the bishop's deer?

GLOUCESTER

20 Brother, the time and case requireth haste:
Your horse stands ready at the park-corner.

KING EDWARD IV

But whither shall we then?

HASTINGS

To Lynn, my lord,
And ship from thence to Flanders.

GLOUCESTER

Well guess'd, believe me; for that was my meaning.

KING EDWARD IV

25 Stanley, I will requite thy forwardness.

GLOUCESTER

But wherefore stay we? 'Tis no time to talk.

KING EDWARD IV

Huntsman, what say'st thou? Wilt thou go along?

HUNTSMAN

Better do so than tarry and be hang'd.

GLOUCESTER

Come then, away; let's ha' no more ado.

KING EDWARD IV

30 Bishop, farewell: shield thee from Warwick's frown;
And pray that I may repossess the crown.

Exeunt

freedom. And, only accompanied by weak guards, he often
comes hunting this way to entertain himself. I have told him
secretly that if he came this way right about now, under the
pretext of his usual hunting, he would find his friends here
with horses and men that will rescue him from his prison.

KING EDWARD IV enters with a huntsman.

HUNTSMAN

This way, my lord. The prey is over this way.

KING EDWARD IV

No, this way, man. Can you see where the huntsmen stand?
Now, brother of Gloucester, Lord Hastings and everyone
else, are you hiding yourself like this so you can steal the
bishop's deer?

GLOUCESTER

Brother, the time and circumstance presses us to do this
quickly. Your horse is here, ready at the corner of the
grounds.

KING EDWARD IV

But where shall we go from here?

HASTINGS

To Lynn, my lord, and then take a ship to Flanders from
there.

GLOUCESTER

[To himself]

Good plan! That was exactly what I was planning to do.

KING EDWARD IV

Stanley, I will reward your eagerness.

GLOUCESTER

But why are we still here? This is no time to talk!

KING EDWARD IV

What do you say, huntsman? Will you go with us?

HUNTSMAN

I'd rather go with you than stay behind and be hanged for
letting you go.

GLOUCESTER

Come then, let's go. Let's not waste any more time.

KING EDWARD IV

Goodbye archbishop. I hope you'll be protected from
Warwick's anger. Pray for me to regain the crown.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 6

Shakespeare

*Flourish. Enter KING HENRY VI, CLARENCE, WARWICK, SOMERSET,
HENRY OF RICHMOND, OXFORD, MONTAGUE, and Lieutenant of the
Tower*

Shakescleare Translation

*A trumpet fanfare is heard. KING HENRY VI, CLARENCE,
WARWICK, SOMERSET, HENRY OF RICHMOND, OXFORD,
MONTAGUE, and an officer of the Tower of London enter.*

KING HENRY VI

Master lieutenant, now that God and friends
Have shaken Edward from the regal seat,
And turn'd my captive state to liberty,
My fear to hope, my sorrows unto joys,
5 At our enlargement what are thy due fees?

LIEUTENANT

Subjects may challenge nothing of their sovereigns;
But if an humble prayer may prevail,
I then crave pardon of your majesty.

KING HENRY VI

For what, lieutenant? For well using me?
10 Nay, be thou sure I'll well requite thy kindness,
For that it made my imprisonment a pleasure;
Ay, such a pleasure as incaged birds
Conceive when after many moody thoughts
At last by notes of household harmony
15 They quite forget their loss of liberty.
But, Warwick, after God, thou set'st me free,
And chiefly therefore I thank God and thee;
He was the author, thou the instrument.
Therefore, that I may conquer fortune's spite
20 By living low, where fortune cannot hurt me,
And that the people of this blessed land
May not be punish'd with my thwarting stars,
Warwick, although my head still wear the crown,
I here resign my government to thee,
25 For thou art fortunate in all thy deeds.

WARWICK

Your grace hath still been famed for virtuous;
And now may seem as wise as virtuous,
By spying and avoiding fortune's malice,
For few men rightly temper with the stars:
30 Yet in this one thing let me blame your grace,
For choosing me when Clarence is in place.

CLARENCE

No, Warwick, thou art worthy of the sway,
To whom the heavens in thy nativity
Adjudged an olive branch and laurel crown,
35 As likely to be blest in peace and war;
And therefore I yield thee my free consent.

WARWICK

And I choose Clarence only for protector.

KING HENRY VI

Warwick and Clarence give me both your hands:
Now join your hands, and with your hands your hearts,
40 That no dissension hinder government:
I make you both protectors of this land,
While I myself will lead a private life
And in devotion spend my latter days,
To sin's rebuke and my Creator's praise.

WARWICK

45 What answers Clarence to his sovereign's will?

CLARENCE

That he consents, if Warwick yield consent;
For on thy fortune I repose myself.

WARWICK

Why, then, though loath, yet must I be content:
We'll yoke together, like a double shadow
50 To Henry's body, and supply his place;
I mean, in bearing weight of government,
While he enjoys the honour and his ease.
And, Clarence, now then it is more than needful
Forthwith that Edward be pronounced a traitor,
55

KING HENRY VI

Officer, now that God and my friends have removed Edward
from the throne and set me free, turning my fear to hope
and sorrow into joy, what money do I owe you for the food
received in prison?

LIEUTENANT

Subjects can't require any payment from their kings. But if
you'll hear my simple prayer, then I'll ask forgiveness from
your majesty.

KING HENRY VI

Forgiveness for what, lieutenant? For treating me well? No,
you can be sure that I'll repay your kindness, because you
made my imprisonment almost a pleasure. Yes, the kind of
pleasure that caged birds begin to experience after many
melancholy thoughts when, at last, by filling the house with
song, they completely forget that they are not free. But,
Warwick, besides God, you were my chief rescuer so I
particularly thank God and you. He was the creator and you
carried out his will. I want to avoid fate's hatred of me by
living humbly so fortune cannot hurt me, and I want to
ensure that the people of this blessed country won't get
punished for my bad luck along with me. Therefore,
Warwick, although I will still wear the crown, I turn over the
running of the government to you because you are lucky in
everything you do.

WARWICK

Your grace is renowned for being virtuous and now may be
as clever as he is virtuous, by foreseeing and avoiding the
hate of fortune. You're clever because only a few men don't
try to fight their fate. But let me correct your grace in this
one thing: don't choose me when you have Clarence ready
to rule.

CLARENCE

No, Warwick. You are worthy of the power. At your birth, the
stars aligned to symbolize an olive branch, a symbol of
peace, and a laurel crown, a symbol of victory, which meant
you would be blessed in peace and war alike. That's why I
grant you my willing consent for you to rule.

WARWICK

I think only Clarence should serve as Lord Protector in place
of the king if the king will not rule.

KING HENRY VI

Warwick and Clarence, both of you give me your hands.
Now join your hands together, and join your hearts together
with them so that no disagreement may stand in the way of
your governing. I make you both protectors of this country,
while I will lead a private life myself and spend my last days
in prayers, condemning sin and praising God.

WARWICK

What does Clarence say to his king's wishes?

CLARENCE

That he agrees, if Warwick agrees too, because I rely on
your decisions.

WARWICK

Well, although I am reluctant, I must be happy with it. We'll
join together, like a double shadow of Henry's body and fill
his place. I mean fill his place in carrying the weight of the
government while he enjoys living honorably and at ease.
And, Clarence, now it is even more necessary that Edward
quickly should be declared a traitor and all his lands and
possessions should be confiscated.

And all his lands and goods be confiscate.

CLARENCE

What else? And that succession be determined.

WARWICK

Ay, therein Clarence shall not want his part.

KING HENRY VI

But, with the first of all your chief affairs,
Let me entreat, for I command no more,
60 That Margaret your queen and my son Edward
Be sent for, to return from France with speed;
For, till I see them here, by doubtful fear
My joy of liberty is half eclipsed.

CLARENCE

It shall be done, my sovereign, with all speed.

KING HENRY VI

65 My Lord of Somerset, what youth is that,
Of whom you seem to have so tender care?

SOMERSET

My liege, it is young Henry, earl of Richmond.

KING HENRY VI

Come hither, England's hope.

Lays his hand on his head

70 If secret powers
Suggest but truth to my divining thoughts,
This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss.
His looks are full of peaceful majesty,
His head by nature framed to wear a crown,
75 His hand to wield a sceptre, and himself
Likely in time to bless a regal throne.
Make much of him, my lords, for this is he
Must help you more than you are hurt by me.

Enter a Post

WARWICK

What news, my friend?

POST

80 That Edward is escaped from your brother,
And fled, as he hears since, to Burgundy.

WARWICK

Unsavoury news! But how made he escape?

POST

He was convey'd by Richard Duke of Gloucester
And the Lord Hastings, who attended him
85 In secret ambush on the forest side
And from the bishop's huntsmen rescued him;
For hunting was his daily exercise.

WARWICK

My brother was too careless of his charge.
But let us hence, my sovereign, to provide
90 A salve for any sore that may betide.

Exeunt all but SOMERSET, HENRY OF RICHMOND, and OXFORD

SOMERSET

My lord, I like not of this flight of Edward's;
For doubtless Burgundy will yield him help,

CLARENCE

Obviously! And the order of succession must be determined.

WARWICK

Yes, you'll have be high up on that list, Clarence.

KING HENRY VI

For the first of your great tasks, since I have nothing else to command, let me ask that that you send for Queen Margaret and my son Edward to return quickly from France. Until I see them here, my joy at being free won't be complete because of my fears and doubts.

CLARENCE

It will be done as swiftly as possible, my king.

KING HENRY VI

My Lord Somerset, who is that young man that you seem to care for so much?

SOMERSET

My lord, this is young Henry, earl of Richmond.

KING HENRY VI

Come forward, hope of England's future.

KING HENRY VI puts his hand on RICHMOND's head.

If some secret powers bring any truth to my prophetic thoughts, this handsome boy will be our country's salvation. His looks are full of peace and majesty, his head is shaped by nature to wear a crown, his hand to hold a scepter and he himself is likely to sit in the throne soon enough. Be good to him, my lords, because you'll eventually get more help from him than you've had suffering because of me.

A messenger enters.

WARWICK

What news do you bring, my friend?

MESSENGER

Edward escaped from your brother and ran away to Burgundy, it has been said.

WARWICK

Distasteful news! But how did he escape?

MESSENGER

He was stolen away secretly by Richard, Duke of Gloucester and the Lord Hastings, who waited for him in hiding on the edge of the forest. They rescued him from the archbishop's huntsmen. Edward had been hunting daily.

WARWICK

My brother the archbishop was too careless with his prisoner. But let us go from here, my king, to provide healing to any injury that may occur.

All exit separate ways except for SOMERSET, HENRY OF RICHMOND, and OXFORD.

SOMERSET

My lord, I don't like Edward's escaping because Burgundy will definitely offer him help, and we shall have more wars

And we shall have more wars before 't be long.
 95 As Henry's late presaging prophecy
 Did glad my heart with hope of this young Richmond,
 So doth my heart misgive me, in these conflicts
 What may befall him, to his harm and ours:
 Therefore, Lord Oxford, to prevent the worst,
 100 Forthwith we'll send him hence to Brittany,
 Till storms be past of civil enmity.

OXFORD

Ay, for if Edward repossess the crown,
 'Tis like that Richmond with the rest shall down.

SOMERSET

It shall be so; he shall to Brittany.
 105 Come, therefore, let's about it speedily.

Exeunt

before too long. Just as Henry's recent forward-looking prophecy warmed my heart with hope of this young Richmond, so too is my heart worried about what may happen to Richmond in these battles that could hurt both him and ourselves. Therefore, Lord Oxford, to stop the worst from hasting, we'll quickly send him over to Brittany until this civil war is over.

OXFORD

Yes, because if Edwards gets the crown back, Richmond and everyone else will fall.

SOMERSET

It shall be so, he will go to Brittany. Come, then, let's deal with it quickly.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 7

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, and Soldiers

KING EDWARD IV

Now, brother Richard, Lord Hastings, and the rest,
 Yet thus far fortune maketh us amends,
 And says that once more I shall interchange
 My waned state for Henry's regal crown.
 5 Well have we pass'd and now repass'd the seas
 And brought desired help from Burgundy:
 What then remains, we being thus arrived
 From Ravenspurgh haven before the gates of York,
 But that we enter, as into our dukedom?

GLOUCESTER

10 The gates made fast! Brother, I like not this;
 For many men that stumble at the threshold
 Are well foretold that danger lurks within.

KING EDWARD IV

Tush, man, abodements must not now affright us:
 By fair or foul means we must enter in,
 15 For hither will our friends repair to us.

HASTINGS

My liege, I'll knock once more to summon them.

Enter, on the walls, the Mayor of York, and his Brethren

MAYOR

My lords, we were forewarned of your coming,
 And shut the gates for safety of ourselves;
 20 For now we owe allegiance unto Henry.

KING EDWARD IV

But, master mayor, if Henry be your king,
 Yet Edward at the least is Duke of York.

MAYOR

True, my good lord; I know you for no less.

KING EDWARD IV

Why, and I challenge nothing but my dukedom,
 25 As being well content with that alone.

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet fanfare plays. KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, and soldiers enter.

KING EDWARD IV

Now brother Richard, Lord Hastings and all of you: up until these gates, fortune has been repaying what it took from me. I believe the fates will allow me to trade in my diminished position for Henry's kingly crown. We've gone back and forth over the seas and brought the help we wanted from Burgundy. Now that we've traveled from Ravenspurgh haven and arrived in front of the gates of York, what is there to do besides enter our dukedom of York?

GLOUCESTER

The gates are tightly secured. I don't like this, brother. If you stumble over the threshold of a door, it's usually an omen that there's danger lurking inside.

KING EDWARD IV

Oh, come on, man! Omens won't scare us. We must get in by hook or by crook because our friends will rejoin us here when we're inside.

HASTINGS

My lord, I'll knock one more time to call them.

The MAYOR OF YORK enters above, on the town walls overlooking the gate, with other officials from York.

MAYOR

My lords, we were warned about you coming here, and we closed the gates to protect ourselves. Now we are loyal to Henry.

KING EDWARD IV

But, mayor, if Henry is your king, then I, Edward, am still at least the Duke of York.

MAYOR

True, my good lord. I know that to be your title.

KING EDWARD IV

Well, I'm insisting on nothing except being recognized as the duke, and I'll be perfectly happy with just that alone.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside] But when the fox hath once got in his nose,
He'll soon find means to make the body follow.

HASTINGS

Why, master mayor, why stand you in a doubt?
Open the gates; we are King Henry's friends.

MAYOR

30 Ay, say you so? The gates shall then be open'd.

They descend

GLOUCESTER

A wise stout captain, and soon persuaded!

HASTINGS

The good old man would fain that all were well,
So 'twere not 'long of him; but being enter'd,
I doubt not, I, but we shall soon persuade
35 Both him and all his brothers unto reason.

Enter the Mayor and two Aldermen, below

KING EDWARD IV

So, master mayor: these gates must not be shut
But in the night or in the time of war.
What! Fear not, man, but yield me up the keys;

Takes his keys

KING EDWARD IV

40 For Edward will defend the town and thee,
And all those friends that deign to follow me.

March. Enter MONTGOMERY, with drum and soldiers

GLOUCESTER

Brother, this is Sir John Montgomery,
Our trusty friend, unless I be deceived.

KING EDWARD IV

45 Welcome, Sir John! But why come you in arms?

MONTAGUE

To help King Edward in his time of storm,
As every loyal subject ought to do.

KING EDWARD IV

Thanks, good Montgomery; but we now forget
Our title to the crown and only claim
50 Our dukedom till God please to send the rest.

MONTAGUE

Then fare you well, for I will hence again:
I came to serve a king and not a duke.
Drummer, strike up, and let us march away.

The drum begins to march

KING EDWARD IV

55 Nay, stay, Sir John, awhile, and we'll debate
By what safe means the crown may be recover'd.

MONTAGUE

What talk you of debating? In few words,
If you'll not here proclaim yourself our king,

GLOUCESTER

[To himself] But once the fox has poked his nose inside the
chicken coop, he'll soon figure out a way to get his whole
body inside too.

HASTINGS

Why are you hesitating, mayor? Open the gates, we are King
Henry's friends.

MAYOR

Oh, are you, you say? Then we'll open the gates.

The MAYOR and his followers descend from the town walls.

GLOUCESTER

He is a wise, brave leader to be so easily persuaded of our
loyalty!

HASTINGS

The good old man just wants the conflicts to be resolved so
that he doesn't have to deal with it. But once we're in, I'm
sure we shall quickly persuade him and his followers to
listen to reason.

*The MAYOR and two city officials re-enter on the stage
level.*

KING EDWARD IV

So, mayor, these gates should only be closed during the
night or during wartime. Relax! Don't be scared—just give
me the keys.

KING EDWARD IV takes the MAYOR's keys.

KING EDWARD IV

Edward will defend you, your town, and all those friends of
yours that decide to follow me.

*A march is heard. MONTGOMERY enters, followed by
drummers and soldiers.*

GLOUCESTER

Brother, this is Sir John Montgomery. He is our trusted
friend, unless he is deceiving me.

KING EDWARD IV

Welcome, Sir John! But why do you come with armed
soldiers?

MONTAGUE

To help King Edward in this time of crisis, as every loyal
subject should.

KING EDWARD IV

Thanks, good Montgomery, but I've now cast aside my
claim to the throne and only declare myself the Duke of
York until God chooses to give me back my kingship.

MONTAGUE

Then goodbye, because I will leave again. I came to serve a
king, not a duke. Drummer, start playing, and let's march
away.

The drummer begins to play the marching tune.

KING EDWARD IV

No, stay here a while, Sir John, and we can debate how the
crown might be won back securely.

MONTAGUE

Why do you talk about debating it? Let me put it bluntly: if
you won't declare yourself our king, I'll leave you to your

I'll leave you to your fortune and be gone
60 To keep them back that come to succor you:
Why shall we fight, if you pretend no title?

GLOUCESTER

Why, brother, wherefore stand you on nice points?

KING EDWARD IV

When we grow stronger, then we'll make our claim:
Till then, 'tis wisdom to conceal our meaning.

HASTINGS

65 Away with scrupulous wit! Now arms must rule.

GLOUCESTER

And fearless minds climb soonest unto crowns.
Brother, we will proclaim you out of hand:
The bruit thereof will bring you many friends.

KING EDWARD IV

Then be it as you will; for 'tis my right,
70 And Henry but usurps the diadem.

MONTAGUE

Ay, now my sovereign speaketh like himself;
And now will I be Edward's champion.

HASTINGS

Sound trumpet; Edward shall be here proclaim'd:
75 Come, fellow-soldier, make thou proclamation.

Flourish

SOLDIER

Edward the Fourth, by the grace of God, king of
England and France, and lord of Ireland, & c.

MONTAGUE

And whosoe'er gainsays King Edward's right,
80 By this I challenge him to single fight.

Throws down his gauntlet

ALL

Long live Edward the Fourth!

KING EDWARD IV

Thanks, brave Montgomery; and thanks unto you all:
If fortune serve me, I'll requite this kindness.
Now, for this night, let's harbour here in York;
85 And when the morning sun shall raise his car
Above the border of this horizon,
We'll forward towards Warwick and his mates;
For well I wot that Henry is no soldier.
Ah, forward Clarence! How evil it besseems thee
90 To flatter Henry and forsake thy brother!
Yet, as we may, we'll meet both thee and Warwick.
Come on, brave soldiers: doubt not of the day,
And, that once gotten, doubt not of large pay.

Exeunt

own devices and will take away these men who have come
to support you. Why should we fight for you if you don't
claim to have a right to the throne?

GLOUCESTER

Brother, why are you quibbling over minor issues?

KING EDWARD IV

When my army has grown stronger, then I'll make my claim
to be the rightful king. Until then, it's wise to hide my
intentions.

HASTINGS

Enough with the overcautious overthinking! Battles must
decide what happens next now.

GLOUCESTER

And fearless men ascend most quickly the throne. Brother,
we will claim your kingship immediately, and the news of
that will bring you many friends.

KING EDWARD IV

Then do what you think best. It is my right after all and
Henry only usurps the crown.

MONTAGUE

Yes, now my king speaks like himself. Now I will fight for
Edward.

HASTINGS

Sound the trumpet. Edward will be proclaimed king here
and now. Come, soldier, you make the announcement.

A trumpet fanfare plays.

SOLDIER

Edward the Fourth, by the grace of God, you are the king of
England and France, and Lord of Ireland, et cetera.

MONTAGUE

And whoever dares to deny King Edward's right, I will
challenge him to single combat.

MONTAGUE throws down his glove 🗡️.

🗡️ In order to challenge someone to a single combat duel, a glove (or "gauntlet," the type of glove worn as part of soldiers' armor) would be thrown down.

ALL

Long live Edward the Fourth!

KING EDWARD IV

Thanks, brave Montgomery, and thanks to all of you. If luck
is on my side, I'll repay your kindness. Now, let's stay here in
York for tonight. And when the morning sun rises, we'll go
towards Warwick and his men, because I know well that
Henry is not a soldier. Ah, unreasonable Clarence! How evil
it seems for you to follow Henry and abandon your brother!
Yes, we may meet both you and Warwick in battle. Come
on, brave soldiers, do not doubt we'll have victory in battle.
And, once we have it, don't doubt that you'll be paid well
for it.

All exit.

Act 4, Scene 8

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter KING HENRY VI, WARWICK, MONTAGUE, CLARENCE, EXETER, and OXFORD

WARWICK

What counsel, lords? Edward from Belgia,
With hasty Germans and blunt Hollanders,
Hath pass'd in safety through the narrow seas,
And with his troops doth march amain to London;
5 And many giddy people flock to him.

KING HENRY VI

Let's levy men, and beat him back again.

CLARENCE

A little fire is quickly trodden out;
Which, being suffer'd, rivers cannot quench.

WARWICK

In Warwickshire I have true-hearted friends,
10 Not mutinous in peace, yet bold in war;
Those will I muster up: and thou, son Clarence,
Shalt stir up in Suffolk, Norfolk, and in Kent,
The knights and gentlemen to come with thee:
Thou, brother Montague, in Buckingham,
15 Northampton and in Leicestershire, shalt find
Men well inclined to hear what thou command'st:
And thou, brave Oxford, wondrous well beloved,
In Oxfordshire shalt muster up thy friends.
My sovereign, with the loving citizens,
20 Like to his island girt in with the ocean,
Or modest Dian circled with her nymphs,
Shall rest in London till we come to him.
Fair lords, take leave and stand not to reply.
Farewell, my sovereign.

KING HENRY VI

25 Farewell, my Hector, and my Troy's true hope.

CLARENCE

In sign of truth, I kiss your highness' hand.

KING HENRY VI

Well-minded Clarence, be thou fortunate!

MONTAGUE

Comfort, my lord; and so I take my leave.

OXFORD

And thus I seal my truth, and bid adieu.

KING HENRY VI

30 Sweet Oxford, and my loving Montague,
And all at once, once more a happy farewell.

WARWICK

Farewell, sweet lords: let's meet at Coventry.

Exeunt all but KING HENRY VI and EXETER

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet fanfare plays. KING HENRY VI, WARWICK, MONTAGUE, CLARENCE, EXETER, and OXFORD enter.

WARWICK

What advice would you give us, lords? Edward is coming from the Netherlands with quick-tempered Germans and uncivilized Dutchmen. They have passed the English Channel safely and he is marching rapidly towards London with his army. Many inconstant people join him.

KING HENRY VI

Let's muster our men and let's beat him back to where he came from.


CLARENCE


A little fire can be quickly extinguished. If it's allowed to grow, not even whole rivers can put it out.

WARWICK

I have good friends in Warwickshire. They don't rebel during times of peace, and they are brave during wartime. I will recruit those followers, and you, Clarence, my son-in-law, shall convince the knights and gentlemen in Suffolk, Norfolk and Kent to come with you. You, Montague, my brother, will find men in Buckingham, Northampton, and Leicestershire who will be happy to follow your command. And you, brave Oxford, hugely beloved, you'll recruit your friends in Oxfordshire. My king will remain in London with his supportive citizens until we come to him, like an island surrounded by the ocean, or the chaste goddess Diana surrounded by the nymphs that waited on her. Go, fair lords and do not wait to answer me. Goodbye, my king.

KING HENRY VI

Goodbye, my [Hector](#)  and the best hope for my Troy.

 *King Henry compares Warwick to Hector, the famous Trojan prince who fought to save Troy in the Trojan War, and compares his own nation under siege to Troy.*

CLARENCE

I kiss your hand as a sign of my loyalty.

KING HENRY VI

Loyal Clarence, I hope you will do well!

MONTAGUE

Take courage, my lord. And so I am going.

OXFORD

And I kiss your hand in loyalty too, and say goodbye.

KING HENRY VI

Sweet Oxford and my loving Montague both leaving me at the same time. Once again I wish you a fond farewell.

WARWICK

Goodbye, good lords. Let's meet at Coventry.

All exit except for KING HENRY VI and EXETER.

KING HENRY VI

Here at the palace I will rest awhile.

35 Cousin of Exeter, what thinks your lordship?
Methinks the power that Edward hath in field
Should not be able to encounter mine.

EXETER

The doubt is that he will seduce the rest.

KING HENRY VI

That's not my fear; my meed hath got me fame:

40 I have not stopp'd mine ears to their demands,
Nor posted off their suits with slow delays;
My pity hath been balm to heal their wounds,
My mildness hath allay'd their swelling griefs,
My mercy dried their water-flowing tears;
45 I have not been desirous of their wealth,
Nor much oppress'd them with great subsidies.
Nor forward of revenge, though they much err'd:
Then why should they love Edward more than me?
No, Exeter, these graces challenge grace:
50 And when the lion fawns upon the lamb,
The lamb will never cease to follow him.

Shout within. 'A Lancaster! A Lancaster!'

EXETER

Hark, hark, my lord! What shouts are these?

Enter KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, and soldiers

KING EDWARD IV

Seize on the shame-faced Henry, bear him hence;
And once again proclaim us King of England.

55 You are the fount that makes small brooks to flow:
Now stops thy spring; my sea shall suck them dry,
And swell so much the higher by their ebb.
Hence with him to the Tower; let him not speak.

Exeunt some with KING HENRY VI

And, lords, towards Coventry bend we our course

60 Where peremptory Warwick now remains:
The sun shines hot; and, if we use delay,
Cold biting winter mars our hoped-for hay.

GLOUCESTER

Away betimes, before his forces join,
And take the great-grown traitor unawares:

65 Brave warriors, march amain towards Coventry.

Exeunt

KING HENRY VI

I will stay here at the palace for a while. What do you think, Lord of Exeter? I think that the power that Edward has in the battlefield won't be able to match mine.

EXETER

The only fear is that he may persuade more soldiers to switch sides and fight for him.

KING HENRY VI

That's not what I fear. My virtue has made me famous. I haven't listening to my subjects' demands. I haven't put off listening to their petitions with long delays. My pity served as relief to heal their wounds, my mildness has soothed their growing griefs, my mercy dried their tears. I have never wanted their money, nor have I ever forced them to pay great taxes, nor did I ever harshly punish them even when they deserved my revenge. So then why should they love Edward more than me? No, Exeter, these virtuous actions of mine will command respect and love. When the lion acts tenderly to the lamb, the lamb will never stop following him.

A shout is heard from offstage: "A Lancaster! A Lancaster!"

EXETER

Listen, listen, my lord! What does this shouting mean?

KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, and soldiers enter.

KING EDWARD IV

Grab the bashful Henry and bring him here. Once again I proclaim myself the King of England. You are like the source from which small streams flow. Now your water stops flowing. The sea of my own power will make all of your streams dry up, and the sea levels of my power will only grow when yours diminishes. Take him to the Tower. Don't let him speak.

Some soldiers exit with KING HENRY VI.

And, lords, we turn towards Coventry, where the imperious Warwick is now. The sun shines hot. If we waste time, cold biting winter will ruin our harvest. ²

² King Edward refers once again to the York family symbol of the sun, suggesting, through metaphor, that if they don't move quickly to destroy Henry's army, the sun (York's army) will face the threat of sun-defeating winter (Henry's army).

GLOUCESTER

Away quickly, before his forces appear by surprise and steal back this great traitor. Brave warriors, march quickly towards Coventry!

All exit.

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter WARWICK, the Mayor of Coventry, two Messengers, and others upon the walls

WARWICK

Where is the post that came from valiant Oxford?
How far hence is thy lord, mine honest fellow?

Shakescleare Translation

Enter WARWICK, the MAYOR OF COVENTRY, two Messengers, and others, above on the walls overlooking Coventry.

WARWICK

Where is the messenger that came from brave Oxford? How far away is your lord, honest man?

FIRST MESSENGER

By this at Dunsmore, marching hitherward.

WARWICK

How far off is our brother Montague?
5 Where is the post that came from Montague?

SECOND MESSENGER

By this at Daintry, with a puissant troop.

Enter SIR JOHN SOMERVILLE

WARWICK

Say, Somerville, what says my loving son?
And, by thy guess, how nigh is Clarence now?

SOMERVILLE

10 At Southam I did leave him with his forces,
And do expect him here some two hours hence.

Drum heard

WARWICK

Then Clarence is at hand, I hear his drum.

SOMERVILLE

It is not his, my lord; here Southam lies:
The drum your honour hears marcheth from Warwick.

WARWICK

15 Who should that be? Belike, unlook'd-for friends.

SOMERVILLE

They are at hand, and you shall quickly know.

March: flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, and soldiers

KING EDWARD IV

Go, trumpet, to the walls, and sound a parle.

GLOUCESTER

See how the surly Warwick mans the wall!

WARWICK

O unbid spite! Is sportful Edward come?
20 Where slept our scouts, or how are they seduced,
That we could hear no news of his repair?

KING EDWARD IV

Now, Warwick, wilt thou ope the city gates,
Speak gentle words and humbly bend thy knee,
Call Edward king and at his hands beg mercy?
25 And he shall pardon thee these outrages.

WARWICK

Nay, rather, wilt thou draw thy forces hence,
Confess who set thee up and pluck'd thee own,
Call Warwick patron and be penitent?
And thou shalt still remain the Duke of York.

GLOUCESTER

30 I thought, at least, he would have said the king:
Or did he make the jest against his will?

WARWICK

Is not a dukedom, sir, a goodly gift?

FIRST MESSENGER

By now he'll be at Dunsmore, marching this way.

WARWICK

How far away is our brother Montague? Where is the
messenger that came from Montague?

SECOND MESSENGER

By now he'll be at Daintry, with a powerful army.

SIR JOHN SOMERVILLE enters.

WARWICK

Somerville, tell me, what does my loving son say? And can
you guess how close Clarence might be now?

SOMERVILLE

I left him at Southam with his army and I am expecting him
to be here in around two hours.

Drumming is heard.

WARWICK

Then Clarence is near. I hear his army's drum.

SOMERVILLE

It's not his, my lord. That's coming from the direction of
Southam. The drum that you hear is coming from Warwick.

WARWICK

Who could that be? Perhaps unexpected friends.

SOMERVILLE

They are near and you'll find out soon.

*A march and a trumpet fanfare is heard. KING EDWARD IV,
GLOUCESTER, and soldiers enter, on the stage level,
beneath the walls.*

KING EDWARD IV

Go, trumpeter to the walls and play a fanfare to call for
negotiations.

GLOUCESTER

Look how the arrogant Warwick guards the wall!

WARWICK

Oh, unwelcome hate! Is lecherous Edward here? Did our
spies fall asleep, or they were bribed, since they didn't bring
us any news of Edward coming towards us?

KING EDWARD IV

Warwick, will you open the city gates, speak kind words and
bend the knee to me? Will you call Edward your king and
ask for mercy at his hands? If so, I will forgive you for all
your crimes.

WARWICK

How about instead you withdraw your armies from here,
admit who got you your power and took it away, call me
your past protector, and be repentant? You can still be the
Duke of York.

GLOUCESTER

I thought at least he would have said "you can still be the
king." Or was he joking against his will?

WARWICK

Isn't being a duke, sir, a gift to be grateful for?

GLOUCESTER

Ay, by my faith, for a poor earl to give:
I'll do thee service for so good a gift.

WARWICK

35 'Twas I that gave the kingdom to thy brother.

KING EDWARD IV

Why then 'tis mine, if but by Warwick's gift.

WARWICK

Thou art no Atlas for so great a weight:
And weakling, Warwick takes his gift again;
And Henry is my king, Warwick his subject.

KING EDWARD IV

40 But Warwick's king is Edward's prisoner:
And, gallant Warwick, do but answer this:
What is the body when the head is off?

GLOUCESTER

Alas, that Warwick had no more forecast,
But, whiles he thought to steal the single ten,
45 The king was slily finger'd from the deck!
You left poor Henry at the Bishop's palace,
And, ten to one, you'll meet him in the Tower.

EDWARD

'Tis even so; yet you are Warwick still.

GLOUCESTER

50 Come, Warwick, take the time; kneel down, kneel down:
Nay, when? Strike now, or else the iron cools.

WARWICK

I had rather chop this hand off at a blow,
And with the other fling it at thy face,
Than bear so low a sail, to strike to thee.

KING EDWARD IV

Sail how thou canst, have wind and tide thy friend,
55 This hand, fast wound about thy coal-black hair
Shall, whiles thy head is warm and new cut off,
Write in the dust this sentence with thy blood,
'Wind-changing Warwick now can change no more.'

Enter OXFORD, with drum and colours

WARWICK

O cheerful colours! See where Oxford comes!

OXFORD

60 Oxford, Oxford, for Lancaster!

He and his forces enter the city

GLOUCESTER

The gates are open, let us enter too.

KING EDWARD IV

So other foes may set upon our backs.
Stand we in good array; for they no doubt
65 Will issue out again and bid us battle:
If not, the city being but of small defence,
We'll quickly rouse the traitors in the same.

WARWICK

O, welcome, Oxford! For we want thy help.

GLOUCESTER

Yes, only a gift that a poor earl could give. I'll fight you for giving such a good gift.

WARWICK

I was the man who gave the kingdom to your brother.

KING EDWARD IV

Well, then it belongs to me, even if only because you gave it to me.

WARWICK

You're not like Atlas, who carried the world on his shoulders, even though you once carried the weight of the country. You're a weakling and I'm taking back my gift. Henry is my king and Warwick is his faithful servant.

KING EDWARD IV

But your king is now my prisoner. And, answer this question, brave Warwick: What do you call a body when the head is cut off?

GLOUCESTER

Ah, what a shame that Warwick didn't see that coming. But while he thought to steal a only a 10 from the deck of cards, we stole a king while he wasn't looking! You left poor Henry at the Archbishop's palace and the odds are ten to one that you'll meet him in the Tower.

EDWARD

That's right, Warwick. Yet you still can be the Earl of Warwick.

GLOUCESTER

Come, Warwick. Take this opportunity. Kneel down, kneel down. If not now, when? Strike while the iron is hot.

WARWICK

I would rather chop off this hand and fling it at your face than stoop so low as to bow to you.

KING EDWARD IV

Good luck to you then, you'll need all the help you can get. When your head is still warm and just cut off, this hand, gripping your black hand tightly, will write this sentence in the dust with your blood: "Side-changing Warwick can change no more."

OXFORD enters, with drummers and military flag bearers.

WARWICK

Oh, friendly flags! Look, Oxford is coming!

OXFORD

Oxford! Oxford for Lancaster!

OXFORD and his army enter the city.

GLOUCESTER

The gates are open, let us go in too.

KING EDWARD IV

So that other enemies may attack our soldiers at the back? No, let's stand ready for battle because they will surely come out again and challenge us to fight. If not, the city is poorly fortified and we can quickly storm the walls and fight the traitors.

WARWICK

Oh, welcome, Oxford! We need your help.

Enter MONTAGUE with drum and colours

MONTAGUE

Montague, Montague, for Lancaster!

70

He and his forces enter the city

GLOUCESTER

Thou and thy brother both shall buy this treason
Even with the dearest blood your bodies bear.

KING EDWARD IV

The harder match'd, the greater victory:
My mind presageth happy gain and conquest.

75

Enter SOMERSET, with drum and colours

SOMERSET

Somerset, Somerset, for Lancaster!

He and his forces enter the city

GLOUCESTER

Two of thy name, both Dukes of Somerset,
Have sold their lives unto the house of York;
80 And thou shalt be the third if this sword hold.

Enter CLARENCE, with drum and colours

WARWICK

And lo, where George of Clarence sweeps along,
Of force enough to bid his brother battle;
With whom an upright zeal to right prevails
85 More than the nature of a brother's love!
Come, Clarence, come; thou wilt, if Warwick call.

CLARENCE

Father of Warwick, know you what this means?

Taking his red rose out of his hat

CLARENCE

Look here, I throw my infamy at thee
90 I will not ruin my father's house,
Who gave his blood to lime the stones together,
And set up Lancaster. Why, trow'st thou, Warwick,
That Clarence is so harsh, so blunt, unnatural,
To bend the fatal instruments of war
95 Against his brother and his lawful king?
Perhaps thou wilt object my holy oath:
To keep that oath were more impiety
Than Jephthah's, when he sacrificed his daughter.
I am so sorry for my trespass made
100 That, to deserve well at my brother's hands,
I here proclaim myself thy mortal foe,
With resolution, wheresoe'er I meet thee--
As I will meet thee, if thou stir abroad--
To plague thee for thy foul misleading me.
105 And so, proud-hearted Warwick, I defy thee,
And to my brother turn my blushing cheeks.
Pardon me, Edward, I will make amends:
And, Richard, do not frown upon my faults,
For I will henceforth be no more unconstant.

KING EDWARD IV

110 Now welcome more, and ten times more beloved,
Than if thou never hadst deserved our hate.

GLOUCESTER

Welcome, good Clarence; this is brotherlike.

MONTAGUE enters, with drummers and military flag bearers.

MONTAGUE

Montague! Montague for Lancaster!

MONTAGUE and his army enter the city.

GLOUCESTER

You and your brother shall both pay for this treason with all
the blood in your bodies.

KING EDWARD IV

The greater the enemy, the greater the victory. I predict
success and triumph.

*SOMERSET enters, with drummers and military flag
bearers.*

SOMERSET

Somerset! Somerset for Lancaster!

SOMERSET and his army enter the city.

GLOUCESTER

Two other men that had your name, both Dukes of
Somerset, have been killed by the house of York. You will be
the third if this sword is strong enough.

Enter CLARENCE, with drum and military flag bearers.

WARWICK


And look at George of Clarence coming along, with a big
enough army to battle his brother. In Clarence, his passion for
rightful justice is more powerful than his natural love of
a brother. Come, Clarence, come. You'll come when I call
you.

CLARENCE

Warwick, father-in-law, do you know what this means?

CLARENCE removes his red rose from his hat.

CLARENCE


Look here, I am throwing my bad reputation at you. I won't
destroy my father's house. My father gave his blood to join
the stones together and build Lancaster. Do you really
think, Warwick, that I'm so crude, so rough, and so
unnatural that I'd use weapons of war against my brother
and my lawful king? You will perhaps bring up that I made a
holy oath. But to keep to that promise would be more
blasphemous than when Jephthah  kept an oath to
sacrifice his daughter's life. I am so sorry for my crime here,
that in order to deserve good treatment from my brother's
hands, I here proclaim myself your mortal enemy. I swear
that wherever I find you—and I will, no matter how far you
go—I'll torment you for cruelly misleading me. And so,
proud Warwick, I reject you and I turn, ashamed, to my
brother. Forgive me, Edward, I will make up for it. And
Richard, don't hate me for my sins because I will never be
unfaithful again.

KING EDWARD IV

I fully welcome you, and I love you ten times more than I
would if you never had deserved my hate.

GLOUCESTER

Welcome, good Clarence. This is very brotherly of you.

 Clarence references the biblical figure of Jephthah, who swore to God that he would kill the first person he saw in exchange for winning a war victory; the first person he saw was his daughter.

WARWICK

O passing traitor, perjured and unjust!

KING EDWARD IV

115 What, Warwick, wilt thou leave the town and fight?
Or shall we beat the stones about thine ears?

WARWICK

Alas, I am not coop'd here for defence!
I will away towards Barnet presently,
And bid thee battle, Edward, if thou darest.

KING EDWARD IV

120 Yes, Warwick, Edward dares, and leads the way.
Lords, to the field; Saint George and victory!

Exeunt KING EDWARD and his company. March. WARWICK and his company follow

WARWICK

Oh, you total traitor! You've lied and acted unjustly!

KING EDWARD IV

Will you leave the town and fight, Warwick? Or shall we come in and throw stones at you?

WARWICK

Alas, my town is not built to defend against an army! I will go away to Barnet immediately and challenge you to a battle, Edward, if you dare to accept.

KING EDWARD IV

Yes, Warwick, I'll dare to fight you, and I'll go ahead of you. Lords, let's go to the battlefield! For Saint George and victory!

KING EDWARD and his soldiers exit. A military march is heard. WARWICK and his soldiers follow after them.

Act 5, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Alarm and excursions. Enter KING EDWARD IV, bringing forth WARWICK wounded

KING EDWARD IV

So, lie thou there: die thou, and die our fear;
For Warwick was a bug that fear'd us all.
Now, Montague, sit fast; I seek for thee,
That Warwick's bones may keep thine company.

5

Exit

WARWICK

Ah, who is nigh? Come to me, friend or foe,
And tell me who is victor, York or Warwick?
Why ask I that? My mangled body shows,
My blood, my want of strength, my sick heart shows,
10 That I must yield my body to the earth
And, by my fall, the conquest to my foe.
Thus yields the cedar to the axe's edge,
Whose arms gave shelter to the princely eagle,
Under whose shade the ramping lion slept,
15 Whose top-branch overpeer'd Jove's spreading tree
And kept low shrubs from winter's powerful wind.
These eyes, that now are dimm'd with death's black veil,
Have been as piercing as the mid-day sun,
20 To search the secret treasons of the world:
The wrinkles in my brows, now filled with blood,
Were liken'd oft to kingly sepulchres;
For who lived king, but I could dig his grave?
And who durst mine when Warwick bent his brow?
25 Lo, now my glory smear'd in dust and blood!
My parks, my walks, my manors that I had
Even now forsake me, and of all my lands
Is nothing left me but my body's length.
Why, what is pomp, rule, reign, but earth and dust?
30 And, live we how we can, yet die we must.

Enter OXFORD and SOMERSET

SOMERSET

Ah, Warwick, Warwick! Wert thou as we are.
We might recover all our loss again;
The queen from France hath brought a puissant power:
Even now we heard the news: ah, could'st thou fly!

Shakescleare Translation

An alarm sounds and fighting across the stage. KING EDWARD IV, carrying the wounded WARWICK.

KING EDWARD IV

So, lie there, Warwick. Die, and our fear will die with you. Warwick was a creature that scared all of us. Now, Montague, get ready. I am looking for you, so that Warwick's bones can keep your bones company.

KING EDWARD IV exits.

WARWICK

Ah, who is here? Come to me, whether you are a friend or an enemy and tell me who won—York or Warwick? Why do I ask that? My torn body, my blood, my weakness, and my sick heart all demonstrate that I am about to die. And, when I die, my enemy will be victorious. Just like this, the tree surrenders to the axe, a tree whose branches offered shelter to the princely eagle, under whose shade the pouncing lion slept. A tree whose top branches were taller than an oak and kept low bushes safe from the powerful winds of winter. The light of my eyes is dimming under the black veil of death. These eyes used to be as bright as the sun in the middle of the day, which illuminates all the secret treacheries in the world. My wrinkles are now filled with blood; they used to be compared to the graves of kings. Because what king could I not dig a grave for? And who would dare dig mine when I angrily furrowed my brow? Ah, now my glory is smeared with dust and blood! My parks, my garden paths, my palaces! I had it all. But they are all gone now and nothing is left of my lands but my body. What is all that pomp and circumstance, greatness and power but earth and dust? No matter how well we live, we must all die.

OXFORD and SOMERSET enter.

SOMERSET

Ah, Warwick, Warwick! If only you were standing strong like us. We might get back what we have lost. The queen has brought a powerful army from France. We have just heard the news. Ah, if only you could escape death!

WARWICK

35 Why, then I would not fly. Ah, Montague,
If thou be there, sweet brother, take my hand.
And with thy lips keep in my soul awhile!
Thou lovest me not; for, brother, if thou didst,
Thy tears would wash this cold congealed blood
40 That glues my lips and will not let me speak.
Come quickly, Montague, or I am dead.

SOMERSET

Ah, Warwick! Montague hath breathed his last;
And to the latest gasp cried out for Warwick,
And said 'Commend me to my valiant brother.'
45 And more he would have said, and more he spoke,
Which sounded like a clamour in a vault,
That mought not be distinguished; but at last
I well might hear, delivered with a groan,
'O, farewell, Warwick!'

WARWICK

50 Sweet rest his soul! Fly, lords, and save yourselves;
For Warwick bids you all farewell to meet in heaven.

Dies

OXFORD

Away, away, to meet the queen's great power!

Here they bear away his body. Exeunt

WARWICK

I wouldn't if I could. Oh, Montague, sweet friend, if you are there, take my hand. And kiss me to keep my dying soul from passing through my lips! You don't love me, because, if you did, friend, your tears would wash away this cold thick blood that makes my lips stick together and won't let me speak. Come quickly, Montague, or I'll be dead.

SOMERSET

Ah, Warwick! Montague has died too. And until his last breath, he cried out for Warwick and said, "Send my love to my brave comrade." And he would have said more and he did speak more, but it sounded like the echoes in a tomb. We couldn't make out what he was saying, but in the end, I imagined I could hear him saying, with a groan, "Oh, goodbye, Warwick!"

WARWICK

Let my soul rest in peace! Go, lords and save yourselves. Now Warwick says goodbye to you and may we all meet in heaven.

WARWICK dies.

OXFORD

Let's go, let's go! Let's meet the queen's great army!

They carry WARWICK's body away. All exit.

Act 5, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV in triumph; with GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and the rest

KING 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,
5 That will encounter with our glorious sun,
Ere he attain his easeful western bed:
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.

CLARENCE

10 A little gale will soon disperse that cloud
And blow it to the source from whence it came:
The very beams will dry those vapours up,
For every cloud engenders not a storm.

GLOUCESTER

The queen is valued thirty thousand strong,
15 And Somerset, with Oxford fled to her:
If she have time to breathe be well assured
Her faction will be full as strong as ours.


KING EDWARD IV


We are advertised by our loving friends
That they do hold their course toward Tewksbury:
20 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.

Shakescleare Translation

Celebratory trumpet fanfares are heard. KING EDWARD IV enters in a celebratory procession with GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and many others.

KING EDWARD IV

So far, our luck has been getting better and better, and we've been winning. But, in the middle of this bright sunny day, I see a black, ominous, threatening cloud that will meet our glorious sun  before it sets today. What I refer to, my lords, are those armies that the queen has recruited in France. They have arrived on our coast, and we hear that they are coming our way to fight with us.

 Edward returns again to the image of the sun that represents the House of York.

CLARENCE

A little wind will soon scatter the enemy cloud and blow it back to where it came from. The sun beams will vanquish those wisps, since not every cloud leads to a storm.

GLOUCESTER

The queen's army is estimated to be thirty thousand men. Somerset and Oxford joined her too. If she has time to gather her strength, her army will be as strong as ours.

KING EDWARD IV

We are informed by our loving friends that they are going towards Tewksbury. Since we have now won at the Barnet battlefield, we'll go there immediately. Where there's a will, there's a way. And, as we march, our strength will be increased in every part of the country that we pass. Start the drumming, shout "Courage!" and let's go.

Exeunt

All exit.

Act 5, Scene 4

Shakespeare

March. Enter QUEEN MARGARET, PRINCE EDWARD, SOMERSET, OXFORD, and soldiers

QUEEN 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,
5 And half our sailors swallow'd in the flood?
Yet lives our pilot still. Is't meet that he
Should leave the helm and like a fearful lad
With tearful eyes add water to the sea
And give more strength to that which hath too much,
10 Whiles, in his moan, the ship splits on the rock,
Which industry and courage might have saved?
Ah, what a shame! Ah, what a fault were this!
Say Warwick was our anchor; what of that?
And Montague our topmast; what of him?
15 Our slaughter'd friends the tackles; what of these?
Why, is not Oxford here another anchor?
And Somerset another goodly mast?
The friends of France our shrouds and tacklings?
And, though unskilful, why not Ned and I
20 For once allow'd the skilful pilot's charge?
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,
As good to chide the waves as speak them fair.
25 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!
30 Tread on the sand; why, there you quickly sink:
Bstride 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,
35 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.

PRINCE EDWARD

Methinks a woman of this valiant spirit
40 Should, if a coward heard her speak these words,
Infuse his breast with magnanimity
And make him, naked, foil a man at arms.
I speak not this as doubting any here
For did I but suspect a fearful man
45 He should have leave to go away betimes,
Lest in our need he might infect another
And make him of like spirit to himself.
If any such be here—as God forbid!—
Let him depart before we need his help.

OXFORD

50 Women and children of so high a courage,
And warriors faint! Why, 'twere perpetual shame.
O brave young prince! Thy famous grandfather
Doth live again in thee: long mayst thou live
To bear his image and renew his glories!

Shakescleare Translation

A march is heard. QUEEN MARGARET, PRINCE EDWARD, SOMERSET, OXFORD, and soldiers enter.

QUEEN MARGARET

Great lords, wise men never sit and cry about what they've lost. They cheerfully try to figure out how to make up their losses. So, what if the mast was blown overboard, the cable broke, the anchor was lost, and half of our sailors were drowned in the flood? Our captain is still alive. Is it right that he should abandon the wheel and like a fearful little boy add water to the sea with his tears, giving more strength to the sea that has too much water already, while, as he moans, the ship is dashed to pieces on the rock when it could have been saved by hard work and courage? Ah, what a shame that would be! Ah, what a terrible mistake this would be! Maybe Warwick was our anchor—who cares? Maybe Montague was our sail—get over it! And our slaughtered friends were the rigging—let's move on! Isn't Oxford another anchor? Isn't Somerset another mast? Aren't our French allies our ropes? And although we don't have much skill in battle, why shouldn't my son little Ned and I for once be allowed to take charge as captains? We won't sit and cry at the wheel, but we'll keep to our path and avoid the rocks and dangers, even if the rough winds tries to shipwreck us. We'll do better by attacking the waves than speaking gently and sweetly about them. And isn't Edward only a merciless sea? And Clarence only a deceitful quicksand? And Richard only an uneven deadly rock? All these are the enemies of our poor ship. Maybe you can swim, but that will only keep you alive for a while! Step on the sand and there you will quickly sink. Sit upon the rock, the tide will wash you off, or else you will starve. That's three ways to die. I speak all this, lords, to make myself clear that if one of you wants to desert us, you won't get any more mercy from those brother than you'd get from merciless waves or quicksand or rocks. Take courage then! It's childish weakness to fear and cry about what you can't avoid.

PRINCE EDWARD

I think a woman with such a brave spirit as my mother has could fill a coward's fearful heart with courage with her words, inspiring him to defeat an armed man with his bare hands. I don't say this doubting any of your bravery, because if I did suspect that any of you were fearful, I'd make you leave immediately to prevent you from infecting anyone else with your cowardice in our time of need. If that applies to anyone here—God forbid!—he should leave before we need his help.

OXFORD

Can you believe it, incredible courage from women and children, and weakness from warriors! This shame will last forever. Oh, brave young prince, your triumphant grandfather, Henry the Fifth, lives again in you. Live long and be like him, just as glorious in victory!

SOMERSET

55 And he that will not fight for such a hope.
Go home to bed, and like the owl by day,
If he arise, be mock'd and wonder'd at.

QUEEN MARGARET

Thanks, gentle Somerset; sweet Oxford, thanks.

PRINCE EDWARD

60 And take his thanks that yet hath nothing else.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

Prepare you, lords, for Edward is at hand.
Ready to fight; therefore be resolute.

OXFORD

I thought no less: it is his policy
To haste thus fast, to find us unprovided.

SOMERSET

65 But he's deceived; we are in readiness.

QUEEN MARGARET

This cheers my heart, to see your forwardness.

OXFORD

Here pitch our battle; hence we will not budge.

Flourish and march. Enter KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and soldiers

KING EDWARD IV

70 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!

QUEEN MARGARET

75 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,
80 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.

Alarm. Retreat. Excursions. Exeunt

SOMERSET

And anyone who won't fight for such a hope as that, go home to bed. Like an owl who is seen awake during the day, if you're a coward, you'll be mocked and treated like a strange creature.

QUEEN MARGARET

Thanks, gentle Somerset. Thanks, sweet Oxford.

PRINCE EDWARD

And take thanks from me since I have nothing else yet to give.

A messenger enters.

MESSENGER

Get ready, lords. Edward is near. He is ready to fight and so be bold.

OXFORD

I thought this would happen. It's his strategy to hurry so quickly and find us unprepared.

SOMERSET

But we've got him this time because we are prepared.

QUEEN MARGARET

It makes me happy to see your confidence.

OXFORD

Let's have the battle right here. We will not move from this spot.

A trumpet fanfare and march are heard. KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and soldiers enter.

KING EDWARD IV

My brave followers! Here's this army like a thorny wood. By the help of God, and the help all of your strength, men, we will cut these men down on the field like trees in a forest before the night is over. I don't need to add any more fuel to your fire, because I know that you're burning to tear these men down. Give the signal to fight, and go for it, lords!

QUEEN MARGARET

Lords, knights, and gentlemen, my tears will contradict whatever I would say. You see, my tears drip down my cheek with every word I speak. Therefore, I'll say nothing else but this: Henry, your king, is our enemy's prisoner, his throne has been usurped, his country has been made a slaughter-house, his people have been killed, his laws have been spoken, and his money has been spent. And over there is the wolf behind it all. You fight on the side of justice. Then, in God's name, lords, be brave and give the signal to fight.

An alarm sounds. A signal is heard telling the soldiers to retreat to their own sides. There is fighting across the stage. All exit.

Act 5, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and soldiers; with QUEEN MARGARET, OXFORD, and SOMERSET, prisoners

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet fanfare is heard. KING EDWARD IV, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and soldiers enter with QUEEN MARGARET, OXFORD, and SOMERSET as prisoners.

KING EDWARD IV

Now here a period of tumultuous broils.
Away with Oxford to Hames Castle straight:
For Somerset, off with his guilty head.
Go, bear them hence; I will not hear them speak.

OXFORD

5 For my part, I'll not trouble thee with words.

SOMERSET

Nor I, but stoop with patience to my fortune.

Exeunt OXFORD and SOMERSET, guarded

QUEEN MARGARET

So part we sadly in this troublous world,
To meet with joy in sweet Jerusalem.

KING EDWARD IV

10 Is proclamation made, that who finds Edward
Shall have a high reward, and he his life?

GLOUCESTER

It is: and lo, where youthful Edward comes!

Enter soldiers, with PRINCE EDWARD

KING EDWARD IV

Bring forth the gallant, let us hear him speak.
15 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!
20 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.

QUEEN MARGARET

Ah, that thy father had been so resolved!

GLOUCESTER

25 That you might still have worn the petticoat,
And ne'er have stol'n the breech from Lancaster.

PRINCE EDWARD

Let Aesop fable in a winter's night;
His currish riddles sort not with this place.

GLOUCESTER

By heaven, brat, I'll plague ye for that word.

QUEEN MARGARET

30 Ay, thou wast born to be a plague to men.

GLOUCESTER

For God's sake, take away this captive scold.

PRINCE EDWARD

Nay, take away this scolding crookback rather.

KING EDWARD IV

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

CLARENCE

Untutor'd lad, thou art too malapert.

KING EDWARD IV

Now we've reached the end of all the tumultuous fighting.
Take Oxford to Hames Castle immediately. As for Somerset,
off with his guilty head. Go, take them away. I won't to hear
them speak.

OXFORD

I will not trouble you with my words!

SOMERSET

Nor will I. But I submit to my fate patiently.

OXFORD and SOMERSET exit, guarded.

QUEEN MARGARET

So we say goodbye sadly in this troubled world, only to
greet joy in sweet heaven.

KING EDWARD IV

Has it been declared that whoever finds Edward will get a
big reward and be allowed to live?

GLOUCESTER

It is. And look: here comes the young Edward!

Soldiers enter with PRINCE EDWARD.

KING EDWARD IV

Bring the young man forward and let's hear him speak.
What? Can such a young boy be so rude already? Edward,
what is your excuse for bearing arms against me, stirring up
my people to violence, and for all the trouble you caused
me?

PRINCE EDWARD

You should speak like a subject, proud ambitious Duke of
York! I am representing my father. Give up the throne and
kneel where I stand, while I say the same words to you that
you've just said to me, you traitor.


QUEEN MARGARET


Oh, if only your father had been so strong-willed!

GLOUCESTER

Then you wouldn't have been the one wearing the pants in
your marriage.

PRINCE EDWARD

Let Aesop  tell tales on a winter's night. The hunchback's
rude riddles don't suit this occasion.

 Aesop, the author of Aesop's
Fables, like Richard (Gloucester), was
a hunchback.

GLOUCESTER

I swear to heaven, brat, I'll attack you like the plague for
saying that.

QUEEN MARGARET

Yes, you were born to be a plague for people.

GLOUCESTER

For God's sake, take away this shrewish prisoner!

PRINCE EDWARD

No, take away this shrewish hunchback instead.

KING EDWARD IV

Quiet, you headstrong boy, or I will silence your tongue
forever.

CLARENCE

Uneducated boy, you are too impudent.

PRINCE EDWARD

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

KING EDWARD IV

40 Take that, thou likeness of this railer here.

Stabs him

GLOUCESTER

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

Stabs him

CLARENCE

And there's for twitting me with perjury.

Stabs him

QUEEN MARGARET

45 O, kill me too!

GLOUCESTER

Marry, and shall.

Offers to kill her

KING EDWARD IV

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

GLOUCESTER

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

KING EDWARD IV

50 What, doth she swoon? Use means for her recovery.

GLOUCESTER

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?

GLOUCESTER

55 The Tower, the Tower.


Exit


QUEEN MARGARET

O Ned, sweet Ned! Speak to thy mother, boy!
Canst thou not speak? O traitors! Murderers!
They that stabb'd Caesar shed no blood at all,
60 Did not offend, nor were not worthy blame,
If this foul deed were by to equal it:
He was a man; this, in respect, a child:
And men ne'er spend their fury on a child.
What's worse than murderer, that I may name it?
65 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,

70

PRINCE EDWARD

I know my duty. None of you do. Lustful Edward, and you, treacherous George, and you, deformed Dick , I am telling you all: I am superior to you, even though you're traitors. You have usurped the throne from me and my father.

 "Dick" is a nickname for Richard, but it's also probably intended to be heard as rude slang at the same time.

KING EDWARD IV

Take that, you mirror image of your ranting mother here.

KING EDWARD IV stabs PRINCE EDWARD.

GLOUCESTER

Are you still writhing? Take that, to end your agony.

GLOUCESTER stabs PRINCE EDWARD.

CLARENCE

And here's for calling me treacherous.

CLARENCE stabs PRINCE EDWARD.

QUEEN MARGARET

Oh, kill me too!

GLOUCESTER

I will, gladly.

GLOUCESTER moves to kill QUEEN MARGARET.

KING EDWARD IV

Stop, Richard, stop. We have done too much.

GLOUCESTER

Why should she live and fill the world with her words?

KING EDWARD IV

Is she fainting? Help her recover.

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear]

Clarence, give my excuses to my brother the king. I'm off to London because to take care of some serious business. Before you come there, wait to hear some news from me.

CLARENCE

[So only GLOUCESTER can hear]

What? What?

GLOUCESTER

[So only CLARENCE can hear]

The Tower, the Tower.

GLOUCESTER exits.

QUEEN MARGARET

Oh, Ned, sweet Ned! Speak to your mother, boy! Can you not speak? Oh, traitors! Murderers! Compared to this horrible, act the men who stabbed Caesar spilled no blood at all, didn't offend anyone, and weren't deserving of blame. Caesar was a man. My son, in comparison, was a child. And men never act violently towards children. What's worse than being a murderer so I can call them that? No, no, my heart will burst if I speak: I will speak so my heart can burst. Butchers and villains! Bloody cannibals! You have cut short the life of this sweet boy too early. You have no children, butchers! If you did have children, the thought of them would have made you feel pity. But if you ever do

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!

KING EDWARD IV

Away with her; go, bear her hence performe.

QUEEN MARGARET

75 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.

QUEEN MARGARET

Good Clarence, do; sweet Clarence, do thou do it.

CLARENCE

80 Didst thou not hear me swear I would not do it?

QUEEN MARGARET

Ay, but thou usest to forswear thyself:
'Twas sin before, but now 'tis charity.
What, wilt thou not? Where is that devil's butcher,
Hard-favour'd Richard? Richard, where art thou?
85 Thou art not here: murder is thy alms-deed;
Petitioners for blood thou ne'er put'st back.

KING EDWARD IV

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

QUEEN MARGARET

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

Exit, led out forcibly

KING EDWARD IV

90 Where's Richard gone?

CLARENCE

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

KING EDWARD IV

He's sudden if a thing comes in his head.
Now march we hence: discharge the common sort
95 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

have a child, prepare to have him slaughtered in his youth
just as you killers have executed this sweet young prince!

KING EDWARD IV

Take her away from here with force.

QUEEN MARGARET

No, don't take me away from here, kill me here. Bury your
sword in my body and I'll forgive you for my death. What,
you won't do it? Then, Clarence, you do it.

CLARENCE

By heaven, I will not give you so much comfort.

QUEEN MARGARET

Good Clarence, do. Sweet Clarence, please do it.

CLARENCE

Didn't you hear me swear that I wouldn't do it?

QUEEN MARGARET

Yes but you are used to swearing and the breaking your
promise. It was a sin before, but now it is charity. What,
won't you do it? Where is that devilish slaughterer, ugly
Richard? Richard, where are you? You aren't here. Murder is
your act of charity. You never turn away those who are
begging for death.

KING EDWARD IV

I say, away! I order you, take her away from here.

QUEEN MARGARET

May the same happen to you and your family as it
happened to this Prince!

QUEEN MARGARET exits, led out forcibly.

KING EDWARD IV

Where has Richard gone?

CLARENCE

To London, in a big hurry.

[To himself] And I suspect he is going to be shedding blood
in the Tower.

KING EDWARD IV

He's impulsive when an idea comes into his head. Now let's
go from here. Tell the common soldiers to go. Pay them and
thank them. Let's go to London and see how my gentle
queen is doing. I hope that she has given birth to a son for
me by now.

All exit.

Act 5, Scene 6

Shakespeare

Enter KING HENRY VI and GLOUCESTER, with the Lieutenant, on the walls

GLOUCESTER

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

Shakescleare Translation

KING HENRY VI and GLOUCESTER enter on the walls of the Tower of London, with the Lieutenant standing guard.

GLOUCESTER

Hello, my lord. Are you reading your book so carefully?

KING HENRY VI

Ay, my good lord:--my lord, I should say rather;
'Tis sin to flatter; 'good' was little better:
'Good Gloucester' and 'good devil' were alike,
5 And both preposterous; therefore, not 'good lord.'

GLOUCESTER

Sirrah, leave us to ourselves: we must confer.

Exit Lieutenant

KING HENRY VI

So flies the reckless shepherd from the wolf;
So first the harmless sheep doth yield his fleece
10 And next his throat unto the butcher's knife.
What scene of death hath Roscius now to act?

GLOUCESTER

Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind;
The thief doth fear each bush an officer.

KING HENRY VI

The bird that hath been limed in a bush,
15 With trembling wings misdoubteth every bush;
And I, the hapless male to one sweet bird,
Have now the fatal object in my eye
Where my poor young was limed, was caught and kill'd.

GLOUCESTER

Why, what a peevish fool was that of Crete,
20 That taught his son the office of a fowl!
An yet, for all his wings, the fool was drown'd.

KING HENRY VI

I, Daedalus; my poor boy, Icarus;
Thy father, Minos, that denied our course;
The sun that sear'd the wings of my sweet boy
25 Thy brother Edward, and thyself the sea
Whose envious gulf did swallow up his life.
Ah, kill me with thy weapon, not with words!
My breast can better brook thy dagger's point
Than can my ears that tragic history.
30 But wherefore dost thou come? Is't for my life?

GLOUCESTER

Think'st thou I am an executioner?

KING HENRY VI

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

GLOUCESTER

35 Thy son I kill'd for his presumption.

KING 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,
Which now mistrust no parcel of my fear,
40 And many an old man's sigh and many a widow's,
And many an orphan's water-standing eye--
Men for their sons, wives for their husbands,
And orphans for their parents' timeless death--
Shall rue the hour that ever thou wast born.
45 The owl shriek'd at thy birth,--an evil sign;
The night-crow cried, aboding luckless time;
Dogs howl'd, and hideous tempest shook down trees;
The raven rook'd her on the chimney's top,
And chattering pies in dismal discords sung.
50 Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,

KING HENRY VI

Yes, my good lord. My lord, I should rather say. It's a sin to flatter. "Good" is basically flattery. "Good Gloucester" and "good devil" are also flattery, and both nonsensical to say, so I won't say "good lord."

GLOUCESTER

[To the Lieutenant] Sir, leave us alone. We must discuss something.

The Lieutenant exits.

KING HENRY VI

He leaves just like a careless shepherd fleeing when the wolf is near his sheep. First the harmless sheep gives up its wool to the shepherd and the next thing he knows his throat is slit by the butcher's knife. What type of death scene will be performing today?

GLOUCESTER

Fearful anticipations always haunt a guilty mind. The thief thinks every bush he sees is an officer.

KING HENRY VI

A bird that's been trapped by a hunter in a bush approaches every bush with trembling wings. And I, the unlucky father to one sweet child, now see the hunter before me upon whose weapon my poor child was trapped, caught, and killed.

GLOUCESTER

It reminds me of the silly fool from Crete, Daedalus, who made his son Icarus wings to fly! And yet, even though he had wings, the foolish boy drowned.

KING HENRY VI

I am Daedalus and my poor boy is Icarus. Your father is like Minos in the story, who imprisoned them. The sun burned the wings of my sweet boy. You and your brother Edward are like the sea in the story, whose angry depths swallowed up Icarus' body. Ah, kill me with your weapon, not with your words! My chest can endure your dagger's point better than my ears can endure hearing this tragic story. But why did you come here? Did you come for my life?

GLOUCESTER

Do you think I am an executioner?

KING HENRY VI


I'm sure you are a tormentor. If murdering innocent people is executing, then you're definitely an executioner.

GLOUCESTER

I killed your son because of his arrogance.

KING HENRY VI

If you were killed the first time you were arrogant, you wouldn't have been alive to kill my son. And so here I predict that as many as a thousand people, who now suspect no part of what I fear will happen, will curse the day that you were born with many sighs of old men and widows, many tears shed by orphans and by men for their sons, wives for their husbands, and orphans for their parents' premature deaths. The owl shrieked when you were born. That's an evil sign. The crow cried, predicting bad fortune. Dogs howled and a horrible tempest knocked down trees. The raven cowered on the top of the chimney, and magpies sang dissonantly. Your mother felt more than normal labor pains, and she gave birth to less than what mothers hope for. That is to say, a shapeless and deformed lump, not like the progeny that should come from such a

 Henry goes on in the next speech to compare each aspect of his own story with characters and events in the Greek myth of Icarus.

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,
55 To signify thou camest to bite the world:
And, if the rest be true which I have heard,
Thou camest--

GLOUCESTER

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

Stabs him

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

KING HENRY VI

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

Dies

GLOUCESTER

What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster
65 Sink in the ground? I thought it would have mounted.
See how my sword weeps for the poor king's death!
O, may such purple tears be always shed
From those that wish the downfall of our house!
If any spark of life be yet remaining,
70 Down, down to hell; and say I sent thee thither:

Stabs him again

I, that have neither pity, love, nor fear.
Indeed, 'tis true that Henry told me of;
For I have often heard my mother say
I came into the world with my legs forward:
75 Had I not reason, think ye, to make haste,
And seek their ruin that usurp'd our right?
The midwife wonder'd and the women cried
'O, Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth!'
And so I was; which plainly signified
80 That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.
Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,
Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.
I have no brother, I am like no brother;
And this word 'love,' which graybeards call divine,
85 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
90 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.
95 I'll throw thy body in another room
And triumph, Henry, in thy day of doom.

Exit, with the body

good lineage. You had teeth in your head when you were
born to show that you came to bite the world. And, if all the
other stories that I heard are true, you came--

GLOUCESTER

I won't hear anymore. Die speaking, prophet!

GLOUCESTER stabs KING HENRY VI.

I alone was destined for this.

KING HENRY VI

Yes, and for much more killing after this. May God forgive
my sins and may He forgive you!

KING HENRY VI dies.

GLOUCESTER

So, will the blood of the Lancaster who wanted to be king
sink in the ground? I thought it would have ascended. Look
how my sword drips blood like tears for the poor king's
death! Oh, I hope we'll always drip tears of blood from the
bodies of those who want to destroy our house! If there is
any life left in you, go down, down to hell, and say that I
sent you there.

GLOUCESTER stabs KING HENRY VI again.

Yes, I sent you there, I, that have neither pity, love nor fear.
Yes, it's true what Henry said about me. I have often heard
my mother say that I came into the world with my feet first.
Don't you think I had a good reason to hurry and aim to ruin
those that usurped our right to the throne? The midwife
was amazed and the women cried, "Oh Jesus, bless us! He
was born with teeth!" And so I was, which basically meant
that I would snarl and bite and act like a dog. Then, since
God in heaven has shaped my body in such way, let hell
make my mind deformed to match my body. There is no
one like me. I am like no one else. And this word, "love,"
which wise old men call divine, can be found in men who
are like one another but not in me. I am myself alone.
Clarence, be careful. You're between me and the crown. But
I will arrange a dark day for you. I will spread so many
rumors and omens all over the world that Edward will be
afraid for his life. And then to get rid of his fear of you, I'll
kill you, Clarence. King Henry and the prince his son are now
gone. Clarence, you're next, and then the rest. I consider
myself worth nothing until I am king. Henry, I'll throw your
body in another room and celebrate this day of your death.

GLOUCESTER exits with KING HENRY VI's body.

Act 5, Scene 7

Shakespeare

Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV, QUEEN ELIZABETH, CLARENCE, GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, a Nurse with the young Prince, and Attendants

Shakescleare Translation

A trumpet fanfare is heard. KING EDWARD IV, QUEEN ELIZABETH, CLARENCE, GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, a Nurse with the young Prince, and Attendants enter.

KING 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!
 5 Three Dukes of Somerset, threefold renown'd
 For hardy and undoubted champions;
 Two Cliffords, as the father and the son,
 And two Northumberlands; two braver men
 Ne'er spurr'd their coursers at the trumpet's sound;
 10 With them, the two brave bears, Warwick and Montague,
 That in their chains fetter'd the kingly lion
 And made the forest tremble when they roar'd.
 Thus have we swept suspicion from our seat
 And made our footstool of security.
 15 Come hither, Bess, and let me kiss my boy.
 Young Ned, for thee, thine uncles and myself
 Have in our armours watch'd the winter's night,
 Went all afoot in summer's scalding heat,
 That thou mightst repossess the crown in peace;
 20 And of our labours thou shalt reap the gain.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside] I'll blast his harvest, if your head were
 laid;
 For yet I am not look'd on in the world.
 This shoulder was ordain'd so thick to heave;
 25 And heave it shall some weight, or break my back:
 Work thou the way,—and thou shalt execute.

KING EDWARD IV

Clarence and Gloucester, love my lovely queen;
 And kiss your princely nephew, brothers both.

CLARENCE

The duty that I owe unto your majesty
 30 I seal upon the lips of this sweet babe.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Thanks, noble Clarence; worthy brother, thanks.

GLOUCESTER

[Aside] And, that I love the tree from whence thou
 sprang'st,
 Witness the loving kiss I give the fruit.
 35 To say the truth, so Judas kissed his master
 And cried 'all hail!' when as he meant all harm.

KING EDWARD IV

Now am I seated as my soul delights,
 Having my country's peace and brothers' loves.

CLARENCE

What will your grace have done with Margaret?
 40 Reignier, her father, to the king of France
 Hath pawn'd the Sicils and Jerusalem,
 And hither have they sent it for her ransom.

KING EDWARD IV

Away with her, and waft her hence to France.
 And now what rests but that we spend the time
 45 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

KING EDWARD IV

We sit on the English throne once more. We bought it back
 with the blood of our enemies. We have gotten rid of many
 brave enemies, at the height of their pride, mowing them
 down like corn in a harvest! Three Dukes of Somerset, all
 three renowned as bold and fearless warriors. Two
 Cliffords, the father and the son. Two Northumberlands:
 two braver men have never charged their horses into battle.
 Along with them, the two brave members of the House of
 Warwick—the Earl of Warwick and Montague—who
 captured the king and made the forest shake when they
 roared. And so we have removed all potential traitors from
 our kingdom and we can rest in safety and security. Come
 to me, Bess, and let me kiss my boy. Young Ned, it's all been
 for you that your uncles and myself have gone to war in the
 freezing winter night and marched to battle in the
 summer's scalding heat. All so that you may inherit the
 crown in peace after me, so that you can take reap the
 rewards of our labor.

GLOUCESTER

[To himself] I'll spoil that plan once your head's been cut
 off. I am not yet well-respected in the world. My hunchback
 was made so heavy to train me to lift weight, and I'll lift it
 up this weight or I'll break my back in trying. If I can come
 up with a plan, I'll execute it.

KING EDWARD IV

My brothers, Clarence and Gloucester, love my lovely queen
 and kiss your nephew the prince, both of you.

CLARENCE

I will kiss the lips of this sweet baby as an oath to stay true
 to the duty that I owe to your majesty.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Thanks, noble Clarence. Worthy brother, thank you.

GLOUCESTER

And because I love your father, the tree from which you
 came, watch the loving kiss I give to you, the fruit.

[To himself]

As a matter of fact, Judas kissed Jesus in the same way and
 cried, "All hail!" in support of Jesus, when he meant to
 harm him.

KING EDWARD IV

Now I am sitting on the throne with delight, since the
 country is peaceful and I have the love of both my brothers.

CLARENCE

What does your grace want to do with Margaret? Her father
 Reignier has sold Naples and Jerusalem to the king of
 France, and he's offered us the money to pay her ransom.

KING EDWARD IV

Let's be done with her and send her over to France. And
 now what else is there to do but spend our time with stately
 processions celebrating our victory, joyful comic shows,
 whatever the court finds pleasing? Play the drums and
 trumpets! Bitter trouble, goodbye! I hope that our long
 lasting happiness begins here.

Exit all.

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