

Henry V abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 4

Threat

Situation: As a response to the tax-the-church-problem, the bishops propose an over-the-top solution. They suggest the king needs to exercise his “rightful” position as French king, an entitled position they say through his great-great grandmother Queen Isabel, a one-time French princess, and that the church will help finance his effort to secure the French crown.

FRANCE: From our brother of England?

EXETER: From him, and thus he greets your Majesty.

Exeter to King of France

He wills that you divest the crown of France
That is his and his heirs by ordinance
Of times and custom. That he be derived
From his most famed of ancestors, Edward
The Third, he bids that you now be resigned
From your crown, held from him, too long deferred.
If you hide the crown, he comes in tempest
And bids you to take mercy on the best
Of your poor souls, for whom this hungry war
Opens his vasty jaws, turning tears to
Groans for those swallowed up in this quarrel, for
This is his claim and my message. For you
Dauphin, be assured you’ll find a difference
‘Tween his green days and these he masters since.

FRANCE: For us, we will consider of this further. Tomorrow shall you bear our full intent back to our brother of England.

DAUPHIN TO EXETER: For the Dauphin, I stand here for him. What to him from England?

EXETER: Scorn and defiance, slight regard, contempt. Thus says my king: do not sweeten the bitter mock you sent his Majesty.

DAUPHIN: Say, if my father render fair return, it is against my will, for I desire nothing but odds with England. To that end, as matching to his youth and vanity, I did present him with the tennis balls.

EXETER: He’ll make your Paris shake for it, were it the mistress court of mighty Europe. Be assured you’ll find a difference between the promise of his greener days and these he masters now.