

## Henry VI Part 2 abbreviated

Act 3, Scene 1

### Disillusionment

**Situation:** Having been the Protector of France, and France now having been lost to the French, the nobles gang up on Gloucester, claiming he “took bribes of France and stayed the soldiers’ pay.” The king leaves Gloucester to fend for himself, saying “’tis my special hope that you will clear yourself.”

SUFFOLK: My lord, these faults are easy, quickly answered; but mightier crimes are laid unto your charge. I do arrest you in His Highness’ name and here commit you to my lord Cardinal to keep, until your further time of trial.

KING: My lord of Gloucester, ‘tis my special hope that you will clear yourself from all suspense. My conscience tells me you are innocent.

#### Gloucester to King

**Ay, my lord, these are dangerous days. I  
Know their conspiracy is to have my  
Life; and if my death might make this island  
Happy, I would gladly expend it. But  
My death is but a prologue to this band  
Of plotters’ play, leading to peril. What  
Is seen in Beaufort’s eyes is malice and  
In Suffolk’s brow his stormy hate. The hand  
Of York stretcheth to accuse. My sovereign  
Lady hath stirred up my liege to be my  
Enemy. Ay, you come as one to turn  
Away my guiltless life. I want no lie  
Or false witness to condemn me nor wilt  
Accept false treasons to augment my guilt.**

GLOUCESTER: The ancient proverb will be well effected: “A staff is quickly found to beat a dog.”

CARDINAL: My liege, his railing is intolerable.

SUFFOLK: Hath he not twit our sovereign lady here with ignominious words.

QUEEN: But I can allow the loser his say.

GLOUCESTER: Far truer spoke than meant. I lose, indeed: beshrew the winners, for they played me false!

BUCKINGHAM: He’ll wrest the sense and hold us here all day. Lord Cardinal, he is your prisoner.