

Henry VI Part 3 abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 1

Disclosure

Situation: The late Duke of York's sons, Edward and Richard, join forces with Richard Neville, the earl of Warwick, in an effort to defeat the queen; Warwick having just lost an encounter with the queen's forces; York's sons having just learned of their father's death.

WARWICK: What news abroad?

RICHARD: Great Lord of Warwick ---- O valiant lord, the Duke of York is slain.

WARWICK: Ten days ago I drowned these news in tears. I come to tell you things since then befall'n.

Warwick to Edward and Richard

In London, bearing the king, I mustered
My troops, having equipped them well, gathered
Friends, and marched to meet the queen, hearing she,
I the keeper of the king as ransom,
Was full intent to dash our late decree.
Whether 'twas word of her success, or from
The common fear that Clifford's rigor brought
That cooled my men's heated spleen, I cannot
Judge, but our men gently lay down their swords.
I cheered them with the justice of our cause,
With promise of high pay and great rewards,
But in vain. Soldiers, exposing their flaws,
Fled. Seeing they'd lost heart, the king was seen,
With no hope to win, fleeing to the queen.

WARWICK: Lord George your brother, Norfolk, and myself are come to join with you. For in the Welsh Marches here we heard you were, making another head to fight again.

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

WARWICK: For now my scandal, Richard, dost thou hear --- for thou shalt know this strong right hand of mine can pluck the diadem from faint Henry's head and wring the awe-inspiring scepter from his fist, were he as famous and as bold in war as he is famed for mildness, peace, and prayers.