

# Henry VI Part 1 abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 1

## Death

**Situation:** While the body of Henry V was lying in state in Westminster Abbey, the country's nobles were mourning his death and beginning to compete for power, seeking their moment, now that the new king is the late king's eight month old son.

BEDFORD: Hung be the heavens with black, yield day to night!

**Bedford to the Nobles**

Seeing comets brandishing their tresses,  
Portending the change of times, distresses  
Me. Our England ne'er lost a king of so  
Much worth. King Henry the Fifth, too famous  
To live long, our brother. England doth owe  
Him. His sword blinded men, protecting us.  
Replete with wrathful fire, his sparkling eyes  
More dazzled than the sun, but that belies  
His virtue. What should I say? Never he  
Lifted up his hand but that he conquers  
The French. His deeds exceed all speech. Shall we  
Think the subtle-witted French, conjurers  
And sorcerers, unable to defend  
Themselves, have by magic contrived his end?

EXETER: Death's dishonorable victory we with our stately presence glorify. Shall we curse the planets of mishap that plotted thus our glory's overthrow?

WINCHESTER: He was a king blessed of the King of Kings. The church's prayers made him so prosperous.

GLOUCESTER: The church! Where is it? Had not churchmen prayed his thread of life had not so soon decayed.

WINCHESTER: Gloucester, thy wife is proud: she holdeth thee in awe, more than God or religious churchmen may.

GLOUCESTER: Name not religion. Ne'er throughout the year to church thou goest except it be to pray against thy foes.