

## Henry V abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 2.1

### Proposal

**Situation:** Henry V sends his brothers and his uncle Exeter to negotiate the final terms of a peace agreement with the French principals, keeping the French king's daughter Katherine and her English teacher Alice with him as "our capital demand." He makes a request to Katherine.

HENRY: Fair Katherine, will you vouchsafe to teach a soldier terms to plead his love-suit to her gentle heart?

KATHERINE: I cannot speak your England.

HENRY: Do you like me, Kate?

KATHERINE: I cannot tell what is "like me."

HENRY: An angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel.

#### Henry V to Katherine, No. 1

I'm glad thou canst speak no better English;  
If thou couldst, thou surely wouldst wish  
To find me a less plain king, one who could  
Say "I love you" with more eloquence than  
I. I've not rhymes of a poet and should  
Have more measure in my step. If a man  
Who could win at leapfrog, I'd soon a wife.  
I've oaths before God, Kate, which in this life  
I use not till urged and never break for  
Urging. There are men of varied tongues who  
Can rhyme themselves to ladies' favors; or,  
Take a plain and constant man who must do  
Thee right, for he hath, with all God's graces,  
Not the gift to woo in other places.

KATHERINE: I cannot tell what is dat.

#### Henry V to Katherine, No. 2

These men of infinite tongue do always  
Reason themselves out again. Rhymers gaze  
As idle praters; poems are but ballads,  
A straight back will stoop, a good leg will wear  
Thin, a full black beard will turn white, a lad's  
Pate of curly hair will grow bald, a fair  
Face'll wither and a full eye wax hollow,  
But a good heart, as the sun, doth shine so

Bright and never changes but keeps its course  
Truly. If thou would have such a one, take  
Me. Kate, do dare to love England's new force  
For France? You should love me for France's sake,  
For I love France, to be mine, which is fine;  
I'm yours, then yours is France, and you are mine.