

Henry VI Part 1 abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 4

Inspiration

Situation: The earl of Salisbury, one of John of Gaunt's grandsons in the Beaufort line and a first class English hero, greets John Talbot who has just escaped from French detention. John Talbot has rejoined the English forces at Orleans.

SALISBURY: Talbot, my life, my joy, again returned! How wert thou handled being prisoner?

TALBOT: O, the treacherous Fastolfe wounds my heart, whom with my bare fists I would execute, if I now had him brought into my power.

SALISBURY: Yet tellst thou not how thou wert entertained.

Talbot to Salisbury, No. 1

There they with contemptuous scorns did taunt
Me in the open market, to but daunt
My spirit. Here, said they, is the terror
Of the French that affrights our children so.
Then I, breaking free through a guard's error,
Dugged stones with my nails from the ground to throw
At the beholders of my shame. None come
Near, fearing sudden death. In iron walls some
Deemed me not secure. So great was their fear
There that they supposed bars of steel could be
Bent by me. They so afraid to be near
Me, the guards were, that they walked about me
Every minute, while if I did but start
Out of bed they set to shoot to my heart.