

Henry VI Part 2 abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 2

Deviousness

Situation: John Hume, a priest, enters to tell Gloucester's ambitious wife Eleanor, known as the Duchess, that he has arranged a meeting for her with a witch and a conjurer, the two of them having promised "to show your Highness a spirit raised from depth underground," a "spirit" that can foretell events!

HUME: Jesus preserve your royal Majesty!

DUCHESS: What sayst thou? Majesty? I am but Grace.

HUME: But, by the grace of God and Hume's advice, your Grace's title shall be multiplied.

DUCHESS: What sayst thou, man? Hast thou as yet conferee with Margery Jourdain, the cunning witch, with Roger Bolingbroke, the conjurer? And will they undertake to do me good?

HUME: This they have promised, to show your Highness a spirit raised from depth of underground.

DUCHESS: It is enough. We'll see these things effected to the full. Here, Hume, take this reward. Make merry, man.

She exits.

Hume to himself

I'll make merry with the Duchess' gold.
But first Sir John Hume, say not a word; fold
Tight your lips. Dame Eleanor gives gold to
Bring the witch; gold be gold, the devil she
Be. The rich Cardinal and Suffolk do
Furnish me with their gold having hired me
To undermine the Duchess, knowing her
Aspiring ambition. Just their broker
Am I in this scheme, where they in this land
Are but a pair of crafty knaves. Hume sees
'Twill be the Duchess' undoing, and
Her disgrace will be the cause of Humphrey's
Fall. So, however, this is how it stands.
For my knavery, the gold ends in my hands.