

Henry VI, part 3

by William Shakespeare

Act 1, sc. 1 (line 215 - Verse - Intercut)

Queen Margaret

Who can be patient in such extremes?

Ah, wretched man! would I had died a maid

And never seen thee, never borne thee son,

Seeing thou hast proved so unnatural a father

Hath he deserved to lose his birthright thus?

Hadst thou but loved him half so well as I,

Or felt that pain which I did for him once,

Or nourish'd him as I did with my blood,

Thou wouldst have left thy dearest heart-blood there,

Rather than have that savage duke thine heir

And disinherited thine only son.

PRINCE EDWARD

*Father, you cannot disinherit me:
If you be king, why should not I succeed?*

KING HENRY VI

*Pardon me, Margaret; pardon me, sweet son:
The Earl of Warwick and the duke enforced me.*

QUEEN MARGARET

Enforced thee! art thou king, and wilt be forced?

I shame to hear thee speak. Ah, timorous wretch!

Thou hast undone thyself, thy son and me;

And given unto the house of York such head

As thou shalt reign but by their sufferance.

To entail him and his heirs unto the crown,

What is it, but to make thy sepulchre
And creep into it far before thy time?
Warwick is chancellor and the lord of Calais;
Stern Falconbridge commands the narrow seas;
The duke is made protector of the realm;
And yet shalt thou be safe? such safety finds
The trembling lamb environed with wolves.
Had I been there, which am a silly woman,
The soldiers should have toss'd me on their pikes
Before I would have granted to that act.
But thou preferr'st thy life before thine honour:
And seeing thou dost, I here divorce myself
Both from thy table, Henry, and thy bed,
Until that act of parliament be repeal'd
Whereby my son is disinherited.
The northern lords that have forsworn thy colours
Will follow mine, if once they see them spread;
And spread they shall be, to thy foul disgrace
And utter ruin of the house of York.
Thus do I leave thee. Come, son, let's away;
Our army is ready; come, we'll after them.