

Henry V

Cast

Chorus..... **Brian Cox**
Henry **Jamie Glover**
King of France..... **Bill Nighy**
Hostess **Elizabeth Spriggs**
Pistol..... **Edward De Souza**
Constable..... **Malcolm Sinclair**
Dauphin **Charles Simpson**
Fluellen..... **Ian Hughes**
Exeter..... **Steve Hodson**
Canterbury..... **David Horovitch**
Katherine..... **Saira Todd**
Westmoreland..... **Philip Whitchurch**
William..... **Gary Bakewell**
Montjoy..... **Alan Cox**
Bedford..... **John McAndrew**
Bardolph **Sid Livingstone**
French Queen..... **Diana Quick**
Burgundy **David King**
Alice **Corinna Richards**

Other parts played by: Scott Cherry, Chris Crooks, Theo Fraser Steele, Peter Novis, Chris Pavlo, Paul Reynolds, Justin Salinger, Daniel Slater, and Kim Wall

Play description

ACT I

Scene 1. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely are anxious about a bill proposing to confiscate ecclesiastical property. They are, however, optimistic that King Henry will oppose it. They note that since the death of his father young Henry is a reformed character, no longer a rakish debauchee, but a gracious king. Canterbury has promised Henry a contribution from the clergy if he pursues the French crown, to which he has a claim through his great-great-grandmother, Isabella of France.

Scene 2. Wishing to establish the justice of his claim, Henry asks the Archbishop to expound the Salic Law which prohibits succession to the French throne through the female line. The Archbishop assures Henry that he can press his claim “with right and conscience.” Ambassadors from the Dauphin are admitted. They present Henry with a gift of tennis balls; angered, he warns them: “I am coming on/To venge me as I may.”

Act II

Scene 1. Nym, Bardolph, Pistol and Hostess Quickly meet on the street. Nym and Pistol were rivals for Quickly’s hand; Pistol having won the contest, Bardolph reconciles them.

Scene 2. Henry meets the Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop and Sir Thomas Grey who have conspired with the French against his life. Not knowing that their treason has been discovered, they urge harsh measures against a man convicted of speaking against the King. When Henry orders their arrest, however, they beg for forgiveness. They are sentenced to death.

Scene 3. Pistol, Nym, Bardolph and Hostess Quickly mourn the death of Falstaff. Quickly is sure that the Knight made a Christian end; the others are less convinced. They bid her farewell and set off for France.

Scene 4. In the French Palace the Dauphin describes Henry as “a vain, shallow, humorous youth,” but the Constable warns against underestimating him. Exeter arrives and demands that Charles the French King give up his throne to Henry.

Act III

Scene 1. Having rejected the French King’s offer of his daughter Katherine and some minor dukedoms, Henry lays siege to Harfleur. He urges his troops “Once more unto the breach, dear friends!”

Scene 2. Bardolph, Nym, Pistol and their Boy are reluctant to join the battle, but Fluellen drives them on. Fluellen tries, unsuccessfully, to engage the truculent Macmorris in discussion about the disciplines of war.

Scene 3. Harfleur surrenders to the English when the Dauphin fails to send help to the town.

Scene 4. Princess Katherine is given an English lesson by her attendant Alice.

Scene 5. The English are marching towards Calais and Charles urges his men to prepare for battle.

Scene 6. Pistol tells the Welsh Captain Fluellen how Bardolph is to be hanged for looting. When Fluellen refuses to intercede for him with the Duke of Exeter, Pistol is furious. Fluellen describes to Henry how Exeter has succeeded in defending the bridge. Montjoy, the French Herald, enters with the demand that Henry consider being ransomed. Henry is adamant that though his forces are weakened, he will lead them into battle.

Scene 7. At Agincourt, the Dauphin, Orleans and the Constable wait impatiently for dawn.

ACT IV

Scene 1. Henry disguises himself as a common soldier and walks through the camp. He meets Williams who believes the King will have to bear the sins of those killed in battle if the cause is not a just one. Henry disagrees and he and Williams exchange gloves; these they will wear in their hats so as to be able to recognize one another and continue the argument at a later time. Left alone, Henry ponders the burden of kingship. He begs God for protection in battle and expresses shame at the way his father took the crown from Richard II.

Scene 2. The French are jubilantly confident as they prepare to enter battle.

Scene 3. The English are anxious about the impending battle: "Tis a fearful odds." It is St. Crispin's day and Henry rouses the spirits of his troops by imagining the pride of the survivors when they look back on their victory. Montjoy arrives, urging the English to surrender, but Henry is determined: they will fight.

Scene 4. Pistol captures a French soldier but agrees to spare his life for a ransom.

Scene 5. The French are distraught as they realize that their ranks are broken.

Scene 6. Exeter recounts to Henry the heroic deaths of York and Suffolk.

Scene 7. Fluellen and Gower discuss Henry's bravery and his Welsh origins. Montjoy asks permission for the French to retrieve and bury their dead. He concedes that the English have won the day. Having come across Williams who still has the King's glove, Henry gives Williams' glove to Fluellen, telling him that whoever challenges it is his enemy. Williams accosts Fluellen and strikes him. The King pardons Williams. A Herald arrives with news that there are many French dead; the English, however, have lost few men.

ACT V

Scene 1. After his victory Henry offers a peace treaty to the French. Fluellen strikes Pistol for deriding Wales. Pistol has learned that his wife is dead; he will return to England.

Scene 2. In the presence of both kings, the Duke of Burgundy speaks of the blessings of peace. Henry woos the French King's daughter. Charles agrees to the English terms for peace and gives Katherine to Henry, making him heir to the French throne.

Track list

Disc 1

Track 1 Prologue
Track 2 Act I Scene i
Track 3 Act I Scene ii
Track 4 Act II Chorus
Track 5 Act II Scene i
Track 6 Act II Scene ii
Track 7 Act II Scene iii
Track 8 Act II Scene iv

Disk 2

Track 1 Act III Chorus
Track 2 Act III Scene i
Track 3 Act III Scene ii
Track 4 Act III Scene iii
Track 5 Act III Scene iv
Track 6 Act III Scene v
Track 7 Act III Scene vi
Track 8 Act III Scene vii
Track 9 Act IV Chorus
Track 10 Act IV Scene i
Track 11 Act IV Scene ii

Disk 3

Track 1 Act IV Scene iii
Track 2 Act IV Scene iv
Track 3 Act IV Scene v
Track 4 Act IV Scene vi
Track 5 Act IV Scene vii
Track 6 Act IV Scene viii
Track 7 Act V Chorus
Track 8 Act V Scene i
Track 9 Act V Scene ii
Track 10 Epilogue
(Chorus)