

Henry VI, Part One

Cast

King Henry VI *David Tennant*
Duke of Gloucester *Norman Rodway*
Talbot *John Bowe*
Joan de Pucelle *Amanda Root*
Richard Plantagenet *Clive Merrison*
Earl of Suffolk *Nigel Cooke*
Bishop of Winchester *Steve Hodson*
Countess of Auvergne *Isla Blair*
Duke of Bedford *Christopher Benjamin*
Duke of Exeter *Anthony Jackson*
Duke of Somerset *Michael N. Harbour*
Earl of Salisbury *Christian Rodska*
Charles, Dauphin of France *David Yelland*
Margaret of Anjou *Kelly Hunter*
Duke of Burgundy *Raymond Bowers*
Duke of Alençon *Mark Lambert*
Bastard of Orleans *Nicholas Rowe*
Duke of Anjou *John Hollis*
Edmund Mortimer *Trevor Martin*
Young Talbot *John McAndrew*
Other parts played by: Alex Boyd-Williams, Alan Cox, Arthur Cox,
Alex Lowe, Nicholas Murchie and Jonathan Tafler

Play description

ACT I

Scene 1. At the funeral of Henry V, the Duke of Gloucester and the Bishop of Winchester cannot conceal their enmity. News comes of war and loss of lands in France; the Dauphin has been crowned king and the valiant Talbot has been taken prisoner. Winchester plans secretly to take power through young King Henry.

Scene 2. The French are driven back by the English at Orleans. Joan Pucelle, a charismatic shepherdess who claims that the Virgin Mary has ordered her to free her country from the English, is presented to King Charles, who is awestruck.

Scene 3. Winchester refuses Gloucester entry to the Tower of London, and their men fight.

Scene 4. As the English besiege Orleans, Salisbury is delighted to see the newly ransomed Talbot. Salisbury is shot and as he lies dying, Charles and Pucelle approach.

Scene 5. Talbot and Pucelle fight, and she then succeeds in raising the siege of Orleans.

Scene 6. The French are jubilant.

ACT II

Scene 1. A night attack by Talbot and Burgundy has the French fleeing.

Scene 2. Talbot vows to avenge Salisbury's death.

Scene 3. The Countess of Auvergne taunts Talbot with weakness and announces that she is taking him prisoner. When he summons his soldiers, she quickly backs down.

Scene 4. In London's Temple Garden, a quarrel brews between Richard Plantagenet and the Earl of Somerset. Neither Warwick nor Suffolk will take sides, so Plantagenet invites those who support him to pluck a white rose; Somerset responds by picking a red rose. Warwick follows Plantagenet, while Suffolk sides with Somerset. When Somerset taunts Plantagenet saying that his father was executed for treason by Henry V, Plantagenet vows revenge.

Scene 5. Hoping to learn why his father was executed, Plantagenet visits his dying uncle Mortimer who is imprisoned in the Tower. Mortimer explains that he is the rightful heir of Richard II, who was deposed by the present king's grandfather. Plantagenet's father was executed for conspiring to put Mortimer on the throne. Mortimer names Plantagenet his heir and dies.

ACT III

Scene 1. Winchester and Gloucester's quarrel flares up in Parliament. King Henry begs them to bury their differences and they reluctantly make peace, though Winchester has no intention of honoring it. Henry restores Plantagenet's title; he is now Duke of York. Once the King has left for his coronation in France, Exeter recalls a prophecy that this Henry would lose all that Henry V had won before him.

Scene 2. Pucelle and Charles capture Rouen, but the city is quickly recaptured by Talbot. During the fighting, Sir John Falstaff deserts his compatriots.

Scene 3. Pucelle persuades the Duke of Burgundy to join forces with the French.

Scene 4. Henry makes Talbot Earl of Shrewsbury. Vernon and Basset continue the quarrel of their masters, York and Somerset.

ACT IV

Scene 1. Falstaff brings Henry a letter from Burgundy. When Talbot recognizes the cowardly knight, he removes his badge of the Order of the Garter, saying that he is unfit to wear this emblem of courage. The king then banishes Falstaff and sends Talbot to deal with Burgundy. Vernon and Basset want to resolve their quarrel with a duel. Commanding them to forget their differences, Henry puts on a red rose, declaring that this does not indicate a preference for Somerset, since York is his kinsman too, and he loves them equally. York is privately uneasy at the King's action.

Scene 2. Talbot is trapped on all sides by the French at Bordeaux.

Scene 3. Learning of Talbot's fatal predicament, York curses Somerset for delaying a crucial supply of horsemen.

Scene 4. Somerset insists that York could send the necessary aid to Talbot. When York agrees to send horsemen, Sir William Lucy believes it to be too late.

Scene 5. Talbot is reunited with his son John after seven years. He urges him to flee the battle but John refuses.

Scene 6. Talbot rescues John and they plunge back into the fray.

Scene 7. Talbot is wounded and dies, cradling his dead son in his arms.

ACT V

Scene 1. In London, Gloucester tells Henry that the Pope and others are anxious to end the bloody conflict between England and France. He suggests that marriage to the daughter of King Charles' kinsman, the Earl of Armagnac, would cement peace. Henry appoints Winchester to broker the accord. Winchester privately reaffirms his determination to destroy Gloucester.

Scene 2. At Angiers, Charles learns that the divided English army has joined forces and is preparing for battle.

Scene 3. Pucelle, having been deserted by her magic spirits, is taken prisoner by York. Suffolk takes as prisoner Reignier's daughter Margaret. He is enchanted by her but, being married himself, organizes a match with King Henry.

Scene 4. Joan is to be burnt as a witch. She angrily disowns a shepherd claiming to be her father, insisting that she is descended from kings. Despite her statement that she is pregnant, York is unrelenting, and she goes to the flames. Winchester arrives to negotiate peace but York is appalled that so much slaughter should end in "effeminate peace." Charles agrees to swear fealty to Henry.

Scene 5. In London, Henry is dazzled by Suffolk's account of Margaret. He resolves to marry her, despite Gloucester's reminder that he is already betrothed to Armagnac's daughter. Suffolk is exultant: "I will rule both her, the king, and realm."

Track list

Disc 1			Disk 2			Disk 3		
Track 1	Act I	Scene i	Track 1	Act III	Scene i	Track 1	Act V	Scene i
Track 2	Act I	Scene ii	Track 2	Act III	Scene ii	Track 2	Act V	Scene ii
Track 3	Act I	Scene iii	Track 3	Act III	Scene iii	Track 3	Act V	Scene iii
Track 4	Act I	Scene iv–v	Track 4	Act III	Scene iv	Track 4	Act V	Scene iv
Track 5	Act I	Scene vi	Track 5	Act IV	Scene i	Track 5	Act V	Scene v
Track 6	Act II	Scene i	Track 6	Act IV	Scene ii			
Track 7	Act II	Scene ii	Track 7	Act IV	Scene iii			
Track 8	Act II	Scene iii	Track 8	Act IV	Scene iv			
Track 9	Act II	Scene iv	Track 9	Act IV	Scene v			
Track 10	Act II	Scene v	Track 10	Act IV	Scene vi			
			Track 11	Act IV	Scene vii			