

Henry V

The Short Story (abridged synopsis)

The Archbishop of Canterbury, worried over impending legislation that would effectively rob the Church in England of its power and wealth, convinces Henry V to forego this pursuit in favor of laying claim to France. Armed with a legal technicality, Henry means to take the throne of France by whatever means necessary. The Dauphin's insulting response—sending an ambassador with a gift of tennis balls—convinces Henry that the French will only respond to war; thus, he arranges for an army to invade France. However, rebellion has always seemed to follow when the king's away, and Henry makes certain that he leaves behind enough troops in England to quell any potential uprising. That leaves him with a relatively small invasion force.

In fact, Henry must deal with one plot before even crossing the Channel. Lords Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey are discovered to be conspiring to assassinate Henry (paid for by the French). Henry makes a very public example of all three, arresting them in person and seeing to their execution. The army then lays siege to Harfleur, capturing it after heavy losses in battle with the city's defenders. Henry attempts to take his army out of France before the onset of winter; however, now the French are certain that they can teach the young king a humiliating lesson on the field of battle. Henry is resolute, nonetheless. If the French want a decisive battle, they will have it.

While in camp, Henry disguises himself as a common soldier in order to mingle with his troops before the battle. There he talks candidly with his men, and they with him. The men may be leery of their king, but their willingness to battle the French army is undaunted. The next day at Agincourt, Henry makes the stirring St. Crispin's Day speech, knowing his army is outnumbered five to one. Aided mightily by the longbows of his archers, Henry makes the day a rout for the French. The French must now sue for peace, which Henry will grant—completely on his own terms, of course. According to the terms of the Treaty of Troyes, Henry will marry Princess Katherine of France and will be named as heir to the French throne. England and France will thus be united in peace.

Dramatis Personae

Chorus

King Henry V

The Dukes of Gloucester and Bedford,

The King's brothers

Duke of Exeter, the King's uncle

Duke of York, the King's cousin

The Earls of Salisbury, Westmoreland and

Warwick

Archbishop of Canterbury

Bishop of Ely

Earl of Cambridge

Lord Scroop and Sir Thomas Grey,

conspirators against the King

Sir Gower, English,

Fluellen, Welsh, *Macmorris,* Irish and

Jamy, Scottish

All Captains in the King's army

Bates, Court, Williams, Nym, Bardolph,

Pistol, all soldiers in the King's army

Hostess of the Boar's Head, nee' Quickly,

married to Pistol

The French Court

Charles VI of France

Isabel, Queen of France

Princess Katherine

Lewis, the Dauphin,

The Duke's of *Burgundy, Orleans, Berri,*

Britaine, Bourbon

The Constable of France

Rambures, Grandpre, French lords

Governor of Harfleur

Alice, lady to Katherine

Montjoy, a French herald

Te Deum

Te Deum laudamus,
Te Dominum confitemur.
Te aeternum Patrem,
Omnis terra veneratur.
Tibi omnes Angeli,
Tibi caeli et universae Potestates,
Tibi cherubim et Seraphim
Incessabili voce proclamant:
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra
Maiestatis gloriae tuae.

We Praise you, O God,
And acknowledge you as Lord.
You, the eternal Father,
Venerated by all the Earth.
To You all the angels,
The heavens, the universal powers,
The Cherubim, and the Seraphim
Cry unceasingly:

Holy,
Holy,
Holy,

Lord God of Hosts.
The Heavens and the Earth are full
Of the glory of your majesty.

**“Do we all holy rites:
Let there be sung Nom Nobis and Te Deum,
The dead with charitie enclos’d in clay”**

Henry, Act IV, scene viii