

# Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, the Prince, and the Pauper

## SCENE ONE (PP)- Tom's Family

*(Play fighting in the street. TOM strikes away the sword of his opponent, which clatters to ground. The boy falls to his knees. Bet is watching from the crowd, and moves forward)*

Tom: You have lost your sword. I will be merciful.

Bet: (teasingly) "Merciful!" Who d'you think you are Tom Canty?

Tom: (He 'knights' his opponent) Arise, my good knight! You are the faithful servant to a Prince.

Bet: (laughing) A prince! Don't make us laugh!

Mrs Canty: (calling from off stage) Tom! I expect he's down by the river again. You'll have to go and fetch him, Nan.

*(TOM glances at the boy and girl; now they are both looking at him)*

Bet: Listen Tom Canty! I can hear mother calling you.

Tom's Friend 1: Your mother, the Queen! She's calling from the palace window!

*(Ignoring them, TOM throws his sword down and moves to sit cross-legged centre stage. He opens a book, covers himself with a blanket and places a lighted candle on the floor next to him. He begins to read, drawing the blanket around himself. The BOY and GIRL exit as NAN and BET appear, watching their brother)*

Nan: So he turned to story books instead ....

Beth: While his sisters clean and scrub and beg ....

Tom: And his parents do nothing but argue and fight!

*(JOHN CANTY now emerges while Tom's SISTERS dissolve back. JOHN CANTY sits on a wooden stool, provided for him by his wife. He drinks from an ale bottle and is rather the worse for wear - though not amusingly so. MRS CANTY continues to scrub the washing).*

Mrs Canty: We've no food in the house. Nothing at all.

John Canty: What's that useless boy doing?

Mrs Canty: He was out begging all morning. Got nothing, he said, not even a crust.

John Canty: He's lying! (threateningly) He's with his books!

Mrs Canty: (frightenedly) Search me, I don't know where he is!

John Canty: That dreamer will be rubbing his wounds 'till Christmas, if I catch him!

Mrs Canty: Our Tom, all his reading and knowledge, he'll make something of himself one day! He'll be a teacher or a lawyer! He'll keep us in food until we die!

John Canty: (scornfully) He'll keep dreaming, and we'll all die hungry!

(He swipes at Tom, who remains seated throughout this, reading quietly, taking the blow. John collapses)

Mrs Canty: (calling) Tom, you'd better get out of here. Your father is on the prowl!

## **SCENE TWO (JH)- Utterson and Enfield**

*Utterson and Enfield walk onto stage, speaking pleasantly and laughing. Suddenly Enfield stops when he sees the door (center stage)*

Enfield: My dear Mr. Utterson, have you ever noticed that door before?

Utterson: I suppose.

Enfield: It is connected in my mind to a very strange story.

Utterson: Oh yes?

Enfield: I was headed home at around three o'clock on a black winter morning. The streets were completely deserted. Street after street, nothing but lamp posts like hovering ghostly orbs lighting the streets for none but me. It was incredibly unsettling and I longed for the sight of a policeman, simply to assure myself I had not found myself deserted by humanity.

Utterson: Mr. Enfield, I know that feeling well.

Enfield: Oh it was horrible! There was a small man and a young girl of eight or ten... (*Enfield and Utterson continue talking at the side, Enfields emotions and gestures mirroring the action on stage.*)

*Young Girl comes running past current Utterson and Enfield as Hyde enters from opposite side of stage. Hyde tramples calmly over Young Girl and leaves her screaming on the ground.*

*Both Girl and Hyde freeze.*

Utterson: Whatever did you do?

Enfield: I ran and caught the man!

*Young Girl and Hyde continue as before. Past Enfield runs in from same direction Hyde had come from, on his way to catch Hyde. A small group of people have gathered around the girl still laying on the street, crying.*

Mother: Oh my poor baby! What tragedy!

A Doctor: Step aside please, I'm a doctor. Let me look at the young miss. *(examines Girl)* I believe she will be fine. Just a bit shook up is all. *(To the Girl)* Why don't you try to stand up?

*Young Girl stands up, then suddenly clings to Mother as she sees Enfield return with Hyde. The rest of the group look at Hyde, hatred and rage on their faces. The women begin to assault Hyde, physically and verbally, but are pulled away by the men. All freeze.*

Enfield: I never saw a circle of such hateful faces, and there was the man in the middle, with a kind of black, sneering coolness - frightened, too, I could see that - but carrying it off, sir, really like Satan... *(Continues silent conversation with Utterson).*

*Hyde and the rest resume action.*

Hyde: If you choose to make money off this incident, I am helpless to stop it. I of course wish to avoid scandal. Name your price.

Mother: How can I put a price on my poor child's sanity? She'll have nightmares for months after this, and certainly can't afford to treat her should there be some unseen injury!

Doctor: You'll need to pay one hundred pounds sir, and not a shilling less.

Hyde: You have got to be joking! That is an outrageous sum.

A Woman: How dare you! This poor child may need to be hospitalized!

Hyde: You can plainly see she is fine.

A Man: Sir, I advise you pay the woman.

Hyde: Alright.

*Hyde unlocks and opens the door. He enters briefly and then returns with a check for 100 pounds.*

Mother: I ain't taking no check! What if it's fake?

Past Enfield: Sir, I know the name on this check and he is not you. The lady is right.

Hyde: Set your minds at rest. I shall wait with you until the bank opens and cash the check myself.

*All exit except present day Utterson and Enfield.*

Enfield: We went to the bank as a group. I handed the check over myself and informed them I had every reason to believe it was a forgery.

Uttersson: And was it?

Enfield: Not a bit. The check was genuine!

Uttersson: My, my. And what was the name of the man?

Enfield: He was a Mr. Hyde.

Uttersson: And you're sure he used a key to enter that door?

Enfield: Quite sure.

Uttersson: Than I know the name that was on the check. It was my fellow, Dr. Henry Jekyll.

Enfield: Indeed it was!

Uttersson: Have you seen this Mr. Hyde since?

Enfield: Just last week I saw him entering that same door. He is a vile creature. I cannot put a name to it, but there is something deeply unsettling about him.

Uttersson: We should not speak of this again.

Enfield: On that, I will shake. (*The two men shake hands and exit the stage.*)

### **SCENE THREE (JH)- Utterson w/Jekyll**

*Poole on stage, dusting. At center stage sits two empty chairs with a table between.*

*A knock comes from off stage, Poole goes to answer. Utterson comes in, handing Poole his hat and coat. The two men are speaking aside.*

Uttersson: How do you do Mr. Poole, is Doctor Jekyll at home?

Poole: I will see, Mr. Utterson.

Uttersson: Before you go, might I ask you something?

Poole: Of course, Mr. Utterson.

Uttersson: The other day a Mr. Hyde was seen entering in by the old dissecting-room door at a time when Doctor Jekyll was away. Is that right?

Poole: Quite right, Mr. Utterson, sir. Mr. Hyde has a key.

Uttersson: Your master seems to put a great deal of trust in the man.

Poole: Yes, sir, he does indeed. We all have orders to obey him.

Uttersson: I do not think I ever met Mr. Hyde?

Poole: Oh, dear, no, sir. He never dines here. Indeed, we see very little of him on this side of the house; he mostly comes and goes by the laboratory.

Uttersson: Thank you Poole. May I wait here for Doctor Jekyll?

Poole: Please sir, I'll let my master know you have arrived.

*Poole exists, a moment later Jekyll arrives from the same direction. Jekyll and Utterson great one another and sit.*

Utterson: I've been wanting to speak with you Jekyll, you know that will of yours?

Jekyll: My poor Utterson, you are unfortunate in such a client. I never saw a man so distressed as you were by my will; unless it were that Lanyon, at what he called my scientific heresies. Oh, I know he's a good fellow - you needn't frown - an excellent fellow, and I always mean to see more of him; but for all that the man is ignorant. I was never more disappointed in a man than Lanyon.

Utterson: You know I never approved of it.

Jekyll: My will? Yes, certainly, I know that. You have told me so.

Utterson: Well, I tell you so again. I have been learning something of young Hyde.

Jekyll: (*Clearly shaken*) I do not care to har more! This is a matter I thought we had agreed to drop.

Utterson: What I heard was abominable!

Jekyll: I can make no change. You do not understand my position. I am painfully situated, Utterson; my position is a very strange - a very strange one. It is one of those affairs that cannot be mended while talking.

Utterson: Jekyll, you know me; I am a man to be trusted. Make a clean breast of this in confidence; and make no doubt I can get you out of it.

Jekyll: My good Utterson, this is very good of you, this is downright good of you, and I cannot find words to thank you in. I believe you fully; I would trust you before any man alive, ay, before myself, if I could make the choice; but indeed it isn't what you think; it is not so bad as that; and just to put your good heart at rest, I will tell you one thing; the moment I choose, I can be rid of Mr. Hyde. I give you my hand upon that; and I thank you again and again; and I will just add one little word, Utterson, that I'm sure you'll take in good part; this is a private matter, and I beg of you to let it sleep.

Utterson: (*Quietly reflects for a moment before speaking*) I have no doubt you are perfectly right. (*Stands up, preparing to leave.*)

Jekyll: (*Stands as well*) Well, but since we have touched upon this business, and for the last time I hope, there is one point I should like you to understand. I have really a very great interest in poor Hyde; and if I am taken away, Utterson, I wish you to promise me that you will bear with him and get to him all that is his in my will. I think you would, if you knew all; and it would be a weight off my mind if you would promise.

Utterson: I can't pretend that I shall ever like him.

Jekyll: I don't ask that, I only ask for justice; I only ask you to help him for my sake, when I am no longer here.

Utterson: *(Sighs)* Well, I promise.

*The two men shake hands. Poole enters with Utterson's coat and hat. Utterson exits the way he came, Poole and Jekyll exit opposite*

#### **SCENE FOUR (PP)- Tom and Edward Meet**

*(TWO GUARDS appear, standing centre stage. The first faces TOM, as if barring his way, the second faces EDWARD, as if protecting him. Between them we must imagine an enormous gate)*

Tom: (looking around) I don't recognise this place.

First Guard: This is the Palace of Westminster. The home of King Henry the Eighth.

Tom: (turning to him) King Henry the Eighth? And Prince Edward Tudor?

*(EDWARD turns his head as he hears his name mentioned. He rises, and looks past the soldiers, through the "gate" they are guarding. The SECOND GUARD sees that EDWARD is looking through the gate at TOM)*

Edward: I heard someone say my name.

Second Guard: (to EDWARD) Some urchin out in the street, my Lord. No need to bother yourself.

*(The boys catch sight of one another).*

Edward and Tom: (together) There's a boy the other side of the gates. Standing there on his own. A boy of my own age.

Tom: (sotto voce) Surely that can't be him .... a real Prince! (He runs forward).

First Guard: (knocks him flying) Not so fast beggar boy! (He looks as if he is about to kick TOM back to the ground as he rises)

Edward: (shouting at the guard) No!

First Guard: (bowing nervously) Sir?

Edward: How dare you treat a boy like that!

First Guard: (bowing nervously) Sir, it is for your protection.

Edward: (softly) I'm sorry, boy. This man claims to be acting in my name. (He pushes past the guards to talk to TOM through the gate). Are you hurt?

Tom: (rising) I .... I'm fine.

Edward: What do they call you?

Tom: (stunned) Tom Canty, my Lord.

Edward: Well, Tom Canty, your coat has been torn and I fear it's my fault.

Tom: (horrified at the suggestion) Oh no ! No, my Lord!

Edward: (to the GUARDS) Open the gate and let him in! (They do so and TOM enters) You look hungry. (to the GUARDS) Fetch this boy something to eat, some chicken legs will do, I think, and some fresh water. (Pause) Well? Get on with it then!

Guards: (flabbergasted) My Lord, right away. (They close the gates and move off, bowing obsequiously).

### **SCENE FIVE (JH)- Utterson with his Guest**

*The two men are sitting together reading newspapers. A table between them is piled with various papers.*

Guest: Utterson, have you seen the news about Sir Danvers? What a tragedy!

Utterson: Yes Mr. Guest, I was one of the first on the scene, as it happened to occur along my walking path that evening.

Guest: Oh how frightful! What piece of evidence was it led them to suspect Edward Hyde?

Utterson: A cane, the instrument used, was left behind. I recognized it as belonging to the esteemed Dr. Jekyll, who admitted he had given the cane to Hyde as a gift.

Guest: Dr. Jekyll! He was a friend of Carew's, he must be devastated.

Utterson: He was quite ill when last I saw him. In fact, may I ask your opinion on something of a delicate matter? I know I can trust you to keep confidence and I am in great need.

Guest: But of course, how may I be of assistance?

Utterson: Do you still study handwriting?

Guest: I do.

Utterson: This letter was presented to me by Dr. Jekyll. (*Hands Guest a letter*) He had received it from Mr. Hyde. I would like you to analyze the writing to determine if Mr. Hyde is, in fact, mad.

Guest: (*Reads letter aloud*) My Dear Doctor Jekyll, You have given to me a thousand generousities and I have unworthily repaid them, causing you great distress and heartache. Please sir, labor no more under alarm for your safety. I have means of escape from this place and I will leave you in peace once more. Your Servant, Edward Hyde.

Utterson: Well, what do you make of it?

Guest: No sir, not mad. But it is an odd hand and, by all accounts, a very odd writer.

*Servant enters and hands Mr. Utterson a card.*

Servant: Sir, this just arrived for you. *(Servant leaves)*

Guest: Is that from Doctor Jekyll? I thought I recognized the handwriting. Is it private?

Utterson: Only an invitation to dinner. Why, would you like to see it?

Guest: One moment, I thank you, sir.

*Utterson hands Guest the invitation, who looks at the two papers side-by-side, studying them for a moment.*

Guest: Thank you, sir. *(Returns both papers to Utterson)* It's a very interesting autograph.

Utterson: Why did you compare them, Guest?

Guest: Well, sir, there's a rather singular resemblance; the two hands are in many points identical: only differently sloped.

Utterson: Rather quaint.

Guest: It is, as you say, rather quaint.

Utterson: I wouldn't speak of this note, you.

Guest: No, sir. I understand.

*Guest and Utterson say their goodbyes. Guest leaves.*

Utterson: What! Henry Jekyll forge for a murderer!

### **SCENE SIX (PP)- Edward Leaves the Palace**

Edward: The Prince has said you should unlock the gates for me. *(The GUARDS glance at TOM, who is still busy gorging on chicken legs)*

Tom: Oh! Yes!

Edward: He commands it!

Tom: Oh - yes - I mean - I command it!

First Guard: Very well, Sir.

Tom: But treat the boy kindly as he goes! As if he were a prince!

*(The GUARDS open the gate and EDWARD passes through. The GUARDS bow deeply - too deeply - as EDWARD heads out through the gates. The two boys briefly look at each other through the gates; the GUARDS take up their positions again. LADY FLEMING approaches TOM from the other direction, with the LORD CHANCELLOR)*

Lord Chancellor: Ah! There you are! At last I've found you.



Edward: (to TOM) Which way is it to Offal Court?

*(TOM points and turns as the LADY FLEMING curtsies briefly in front of him. With a backward glance, EDWARD heads off)*

Lady Fleming: My Lord, you are quite all right?

Lord Chancellor: There is some trivial disturbance outside the gates. We should ignore it.

Lady Fleming: (putting her hand to Tom's forehead) You look quite pale.

Lord Chancellor: Do you feel unwell?

Tom: I'm not sure.

Lady Fleming: Thankfully it is time for you to go inside.

Lord Chancellor: Your father is ready to see you.

Tom: (shocked and dazed) My father?

Lord Chancellor: Yes, the King. Come quickly. He is not well.

### **SCENE SEVEN (PP)- Edward in Trouble**

*(In a busy London street a STALLHOLDER stands over a cart laden with vegetables; people queue up to buy produce from her. They talk as they are served, each leaving the scene after they have paid for their purchases. In the queue is NAN, Tom's sister)*

Man: Such a wonderful occasion.

Doctor: More satin and lace that you'd ever set eyes on!

Woman: How fine the young prince looked.

Pauper Man: (nudging NAN) Hey, Nan, your brother Tom, what he would have given to be on one of those boats with their Lords, High and Mighty.

Nan: We don't know where Tom is.

Pauper Man: He'll have his head in a book somewhere! Tales of Kings and Princes!

Nan: Lost in dreamland, our father says.

Pauper Woman: Perhaps he's run away to become a servant in the royal household.

Pauper Man: Hah! If he's lucky he'll get to clean the Palace latrines.

Nan: Or be the Prince's whipping boy!

Pauper Woman: If he's lucky he'll rid himself of John Canty, once and for all, that's for sure.

*(They are so busy talking they haven't seen EDWARD - dressed in TOM'S clothes and looking like him - saunter boldly up to the cart and pick an apple off it)*

Stallholder: Hey! What d'you think you're doing?

Man: There's a queue here!

Nan: (shocked) Tom! (EDWARD has taken a bite from the apple).

Stallholder: (angry) Are you going to pay for that apple?

Edward: (puzzled and outraged) Pay?

Nan: Our father's looking for you!

Stallholder: (crossly) A farthing, that'll be.

Edward: (ignoring the stallholder) Our father? (scoffing) My father is at this moment in the Palace, talking with the French Ambassador!

*(The STALLHOLDERS laugh, mocking him)*

Stallholder: (She grabs EDWARD'S arm) Where's my money?

Edward: (He takes another bite from the apple) Get off me! (shaking her off) The Prince of Wales doesn't pay! You will show proper respect for the future King of England!

Pauper Woman: "Proper respect!"

Nan: It's one of his games again!

Woman: You make us laugh, Tom Canty, you and your make-believe.

*(There is more mocking laughter as JOHN CANTY, who has been watching the scene for some time, comes up behind EDWARD and collars him. BETH is with him. He is in a filthy mood)*

John Canty: So! Found you at last, you useless piece of vermin! I'll warrant you've brought nothing home for your poor mother and me! (He snatches the apple as EDWARD wriggles free from him). An apple, is that all?

Edward: You should bow, before speaking to me!

John Canty: Don't play games with me, boy! I'll break every bone in your body!

Edward: You will do no such thing! You will take me to the Palace, right away, and to my real father!

John Canty: (confused) The Palace? Your real father?

Pauper Man: Tom Canty's gone properly mad, John. He thinks he's the Prince of Wales!

John Canty: He does, does he....(He grabs the struggling boy again, holding him so he cannot speak).

*(FATHER ANDREW enters and approaches)*

Father Andrew: John Canty, leave the boy alone!

Nan: Father Andrew! No! Be careful!

John Canty: You! You're the cause of this madness! Putting ideas into his head from all that learning!

*(He lashes out and FATHER ANDREW falls to the ground. A couple of PAUPERS run to his aid).*

John Canty: Nan! Beth! You'd better be coming home with me. (He thumps EDWARD, who is still struggling, on the head then picks him up and puts him over his shoulder). Nan! Beth! Home! You heard! Or you'll get the same as your brother!

*(JOHN CANTY leaves with BETH and NAN in tow. Meanwhile some PAUPERS drag the lifeless body of FATHER ANDREW on to the vegetable seller's cart and offstage. Across stage, JOHN CANTY takes a bottle with both hands and drinks. He is forced to let go of EDWARD who slips away into the crowd)*

John Canty: The boy's gone! Catch him someone!

Edward: (emerging through the crowd and speaking to a Stranger) Which way is it to the Guildhall?

Stranger: You'll never get a glimpse of the Prince of Wales there, the crowd's ten deep!

Edward: Tell me!

Stranger: Follow this road straight. But you're better off watching from Southwark Bridge ....

*(EDWARD has gone)*

Edward: (re-emerging by some GUARDS) Is this the Guildhall?

First Guard: It is, Sir.

Edward: Let me in! I am the Prince of Wales!

Second Guard:(bemusedly) Sir, the Prince of Wales is inside!

Edward: He is an impostor! I am the true Prince of Wales!

First Guard: An impostor?

Second Guard: Hark at him! His big words!

*(The GUARDS begin to laugh at him, pushing him and joshing him.)*

## **SCENE EIGHT (JH)- Utterson Seeks Jekyll**

*(Utterson and Enfield walking together. They come upon the door.)*

Enfield: Well, that stories at an end at least. We shall never see more of Mr. Hyde.

Utterson: I hope not. Did I ever tell you that I once saw him, and shared your feeling of repulsion?

Enfield: It was impossible to do the one without the other. And by the way, what an ass you must have thought me, not to know that this was a back way to Dr. Jekyll's! It was partly your own fault that I found it out, even when I did.

Utterson: So, you found it did you? But if that be so, we may step into the courtyard and take a look at the windows. To tell the truth, I am uneasy about poor Jekyll; and even outside, I feel as if the presence of a friend might do him good.

*(The two men walk towards a window that is three fourths of the way open. Jekyll can be seen in the window.)*

Utterson: What, Dr. Jekyll! I trust you are better.

Jekyll: I am very low, Utterson, very low. It will not last long, thank God.

Utterson: You stay too much in-doors. You should be out whipping up the circulation like Mr. Enfield and me. Come now; get your hat and take a quick turn with us.

Jekyll: (Sighing) You are very good. I should like to very much; but no, no, no, it is quite impossible; I dare not. But indeed, Mr. Utterson, I am very glad to see you; this is really a great pleasure; I would ask you and Mr. Enfield up, but the place is really not fit.

Utterson: Why then, the best thing we can do is to stay down here and speak with you from where we are.

Jekyll: (Smiling) That is just what I was about to venture to propose.

*(Suddenly Jekyll's smile turns to a look of abject terror. Jekyll transforms into Hyde, who slams the window down and disappears into the room.)*

Utterson: (Horrified, looks at Enfield who returns his horror.) God forgive us. God forgive us.

(Enfield nods his head seriously, and the two walk off in silence.)

### **SCENE NINE (PP)- Coronation Day**

(The Palace. TOM is with the LORD CHANCELLOR and LADY FLEMING)

Tom: (to himself) I wonder how he's doing?

Lord Chancellor: My Lord, is anything the matter?

Tom: Oh, nothing. I was just thinking about a boy I know... (correcting himself) KNEW!

Lord Chancellor: You were talking to yourself!

Lady Fleming: Surely your majesty's strange memories are not returning?

Lord Chancellor: Today, of all days! When the crowds are ten deep, all the way to the Abbey!

Lady Fleming: How pleased they will be, to cheer their King on his way to be crowned.

Tom: Yes, right. I am to be crowned. I'm sorry. I'm quite all right, really. (Recovering) I asked you to bring some prisoners to the palace.

Lord Chancellor: I'm glad you remembered! (Pause) They are here.

Tom: I will see them now.

*(TOM and the LORD CHANCELLOR turn to the prisoners, who still stand rigidly in a line, and are "inspected" by TOM)*

Lord Chancellor: My Lord the King intends to mark the day of his coronation with an amnesty of prisoners. You have been brought here as representatives of the five thousand men, women and children who have been freed from prisons up and down the land.

Prisoner 1: My Lord, your generosity is overwhelming. (He bows deeply to TOM).

Lord Chancellor: The King has said his rule will be a generous one. Go and proclaim his Godly mercy on the streets of London! The People of England want to see their King crowned!

*(There is shifting of characters on stage. The PRISONERS move a coronation chair into position, centre stage, and then form part of the assembled crowd at the coronation, which begins to gather from this point. TOM, the LORD CHANCELLOR and LADY FLEMING exit. TOM then re-enters, dressed in his coronation robes; there is a flourish of trumpets. The LORD CHANCELLOR and the EARL OF HERTFORD follow behind him at a respectful distance. A GIRL approaches TOM, and kneels in front of him)*

Girl at Coronation: Welcome, O King! As much as hearts can think; welcome, again, as much as tongues can tell. God thee preserve, we pray, and wish thee ever well.

*(There is a general shout from the crowd, as TOM goes to sit on the coronation chair, flanked by the LORD CHANCELLOR and the EARL OF HERTFORD)*

Crowd: The King! The King! The King!

Tom: And all these wonders and all these marvels are to welcome me. Me!

*(Another flourish of trumpets. The ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY approaches him, accompanied by a SERVANT who carries a crown on a velvet cushion. They reach TOM. The ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY takes the crown and places it above TOM'S head, ready to crown him. At that moment, EDWARD enters)*

Edward: (shouting) Stop! I forbid you to place the crown of England on the head of that fraud!

*(There is a gasp from the crowd. Several GUARDS leap to pull EDWARD back)*

Tom: (Stands) Leave him alone! He is the King!

Earl of Hertford: Seize that boy! (The GUARDS hold EDWARD firmly).

Tom: No! Don't touch him!

Edward: Let go of me! (struggling) I am Edward, King of England, and my person is sacred.

Tom: What he says is true!

Lord Chancellor: (frantically) The King is ill again! Fetch his nurse!

Earl of Hertford: No! The Royal Physician!

Lord Chancellor: There will be no coronation today. Clear the Abbey!

Tom: (firmly) If you still say I am the King, then you must listen to what I'm telling you. (He moves forward). For the last time, I order you to let go of that boy!

*(The startled GUARDS let him go. TOM addresses EDWARD)*

Tom: It IS you!

Edward: Of course it's me!

Tom: You've turned up just in time. (He kneels in front of EDWARD). O My Lord, the King, let poor Tom Canty be the first to swear faithfulness to you.

Edward: Ah! Some proper respect at last!

Tom: (rising) You said you'd only be gone a couple of hours! (He begins taking off his magnificent robe) This is yours, I think.

*(He hands the robe over to EDWARD who puts it on. As the action continues they exchange more)*

Lord Chancellor: (To TOM) My Lord.

Edward: Yes? I think you mean me.

Earl of Hertford: What's going on?

Edward and Tom: (together) The rightful King of England is preparing to ascend his throne.

Lord Chancellor: But ....

Tom: We exchanged clothes. That morning in the Palace gardens.

Edward: It was meant to be a game!

Lord Chancellor: A game?

Edward: You got to play at being a prince.

Tom: And you got to play in the mud beside the river, by the looks of things! (Pause) That's why everyone thought I'd lost my memory. I haven't, though. I really AM Tom Canty, from Offal Court. All this time, you've been treating the wrong boy as a Prince.

Earl of Hertford: I don't believe you. This is a plot!

*(The GUARDS step forward, swords drawn, encircling the group at the centre of the stage)*

Edward: No. There is no need for any of that. What you've just heard is true. Ask me a question, if you need proof of who I am. One which only the true King can answer correctly.

Lord Chancellor: Don't be absurd, this boy is the real King, isn't he? (The boys have now exchanged clothes, and the LORD CHANCELLOR doesn't know who to address).

Earl of Hertford: No, that's the one who says he's a boy from the streets.

Lord Chancellor and Earl of Hertford: (together) We don't know who anyone is any more! (They hastily huddle together and talk).

Earl of Hertford: Lord Chancellor, I think we should take up the boy's offer.

Lord Chancellor: History would never forgive us, if we made a mistake now.

Earl of Hertford: Ask him a question!

Lord Chancellor: Very well then. (to EDWARD) Where is the great seal?

Edward: That's easy! Go into my rooms. Look in the far left hand corner, and you will see a brass nail. Press it firmly and a door will fly open nearby. That is where the seal is kept.

Earl of Hertford: You are a clever boy, to know of that particular secret hiding place.

Lord Chancellor: But unfortunately, we know about it too, and the seal isn't there!

Earl of Hertford: We've looked!

Lord Chancellor: This is all a tissue of lies! Seize this impostor!

*(The GUARDS move forward again. They seize TOM)*

Lord Chancellor: Not him! This one!

*(The guards seize EDWARD and start to drag him away)*

Tom: No! Wait!

Lord Chancellor: What?

Tom: The great seal. Is it a large object, with letters and engravings on it?

Earl of Hertford: Yes!

Tom: I know where you put that! I found it when I was in your rooms! Cast your mind back to that afternoon when we exchanged clothes. You must have come out into the garden to read?

Edward: I had just finished my fighting lesson with Sir Richard. I saw the seal lying around and couldn't be bothered to put it away properly.

Tom: (trying to get him to remember) You hid it somewhere!

Edward: Of course! In the headpiece of a suit of armour! The one outside my rooms, which my father gave to me for my birthday!

Tom: And that's where you'll find it!

Lord Chancellor: Well go and look then, someone!

Earl of Hertford: (He nods to the BOY who was holding the crown. He rushes off). If it's there ....

Lord Chancellor: .... this boy must be who he claims to be!

Earl of Hertford: What have we done?

Lord Chancellor: What will become of us?

Servant: (returning with the seal) This is it! It was where he said it would be!

Earl of Hertford: (takes seal and declares hesitantly) Long live the King! (with more confidence)

Long live the King!

Crowd: Long live the King!