CHAPTER SEVEN

Soundscape for an Offstage Beheading

Shakespeare's Revision of *2 Henry VI* 4.1

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Headless corpses and severed heads seem to have fascinated Shakespeare, appearing as they do from the earliest histories and tragedies down to *Cymbeline* and *Pericles*. The attention he paid to shaping and re-shaping decapitations particularly reveals itself through a complex network of textual variants related to the killing of the Duke of Suffolk in Act 4, scene 1, of *2 Henry VI*. We have three stages of text that clearly demarcate the elaboration of the narrative as it develops from a simple incident in the chronicle source, then dramatized imaginatively in the first-printed Quarto version, and finally radically expanded with more dialogue and sound effects in the Folio.

Shakespeare's two substantive texts begin with the sounds of a sea fight followed by the entrance of Suffolk and six other characters. I propose that dialogue unique to the Folio as well as a needed but unsupplied sound cue at the end of the scene in the Folio version invites the audience to share the theatrical viewpoint and political insight of an anonymous choric figure designated as "1. Gent." Through his ears and eyes and actions, we witness a political position separate from the binary alternatives of a murderous aristocracy represented by the Duke of Suffolk on the one hand and on the other an equally violent revolutionary uprising represented by the sailors who have captured him and the Cade faction which will be introduced for the first time in the scene immediately following.

After Suffolk is hauled off to his death, in the Folio version the anonymous choric figure stands alone on stage. He silently listens to what I propose

should be the sounds of Suffolk being decapitated offstage. He then sees one of the sailors bring on the Duke's body and head, drop the parts unceremoniously onto the ground, and exit with a cruel, denigrating salute. When the Gentleman is again alone, now sharing the stage with Suffolk's head and body, he takes upon himself the humane task of preserving the remains. Not a partisan of either faction, solely in the Folio text, he comments on the road ahead. At least for a moment in the Folio version, humanitarian generosity overshadows partisan vendetta.

This instance of soundscaping—the offstage execution plausibly accompanied by outcries of pain and the thudding fall of ax or cutlass, a body in pieces carried back on stage and unceremoniously dropped onto a resonating wooden platform, the choric figure's silent listening followed by his grim commentary, and, finally, with one hand holding Suffolk's head, the Prisoner's necessarily clumsy one-armed dragging off of the body—has passed unnoticed by editors and unexamined by critics.[1] Intricate webs of actions, ideas, and images show how Shakespeare first invented the fully realized and fiercely dramatic moment that appears in the Quarto. The more theatrically detailed, politically thoughtful, and emotionally elaborated version found in the Folio reveals Shakespeare at work designing for his audiences a ride distinctly more nuanced.

The bare outline of Suffolk's demise appears first in Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (1548; rpt.1809):

> intending to be transported into France, he was encountered with a ship of war appertaining to the Duke of Exeter . . . called "The Nicholas of the Tower." The captain of the same barque with small fight entered into the Duke's ship, and perceiving his person present, brought him to Dover road, and there on one side of a cock-boat caused his head to be stricken off, and left his body with the head upon the sands of Dover, which corpse was there found by a chaplain of his, and conveyed to Wingfield College in Suffolk, and there buried.[2]

At the opening of 4.1 in *2 Henry VI*, Shakespeare creates for his audience the "small fight" mentioned by Hall. He employs offstage sonic effects of trumpets, cannon (perhaps imitated by firing pistols into a resonating barrel), and (possibly) ships' whistles and mariners' calls, followed by the entrance of armed men (perhaps dressed as sailors) and their prisoners[3]: "Alarmes within, and the chambers be discharged, like as it were a fight at sea. And then enter the Captaine of the ship and the Maister, and the Maisters Mate, & the Duke of Suffolke disguised, and others with him, and Water Whickmore" (F1v; 4.1.0.s.d.). The Folio calls for the same opening action but with more

economical, even laconic, phrasing: "*Alarum. Fight at Sea. Ordnance goes off. Enter Lieutenant, Suffolke, and others*" (TLN 2168–2169; 4.1.0.s.d.).

The action and dialogue in the Quarto, running about eighty lines, presents what I believe is a draft that becomes more fully realized in the Folio. Out of the brief Chronicle story, Shakespeare creates the imagined circumstances immediately prior to the players' entry: a bloody battle in which some of the captives refused to surrender, some sailors on the victorious vessel were killed, and one lost an eye in combat. The Captain of the ship and the Duke of Suffolk (the only characters mentioned in the Chronicle) thus are augmented by two captives accompanying Suffolk, two anonymous sailors designated as the ship's Master and Master's Mate, and a third, the wounded sailor. Shakespeare invents this sailor and his name—spelled "Water Whickmore" in the Quarto and "Walter Whitmore" in the Folio—as part of his ironic, fictional set-up inserted earlier in the narrative. In both the Quarto and the Folio, Shakespeare has a conjurer prophesy that Suffolk will die by "water," an unsuspected homophone for the sailor's name which has dangled innocently in our sound-memory for roughly sixteen hundred lines.

At his entrance in the Quarto, the Captain raps out a quick series of commands to be carried out on the imagined seashore just offstage (lines 1 and 2, below). He distributes the captives as prizes to his men (lines 3–5) by verbally designating or physically handing each prisoner over to each sailor, and he sets the agenda for the next action, the prisoners' ransom (line 6):

> Bring forward these prisoners that scorn'd to yeeld,
> Unlade their goods with speed and sincke their ship,
> Here Maister, this prisoner I give to you.
> This other, the Maisters Mate shall have,
> And Water Whickmore thou shalt have [this] man,
> And let them paie their ransomes ere they passe.
> *Suffolke.* Water! *He starteth.* (F1v–F2; 4.1.1–7)

Upon hearing "Water" named by the Captain, Suffolk's alarmed reaction in the Quarto here presents a peculiarly syncopated or delayed physical jump. Note that Suffolk's one-word speech and the stage direction "He starteth" on the same line are both positioned well after the Captain completes the final line in his speech, a full seventeen syllables after the ominous name "Water" is voiced. In the Quarto arrangement, we have a very slow, somewhat unrealistic startle-response. In the Quarto dialogue below, Suffolk and the sailor "Water" exchange a total of six speeches, head-to-head. The word/name

"water" appears in the dialogue five times (aside from the speech prefixes), and the speakers comment about "water" each time.

Water Whickmore thou shalt have [this] man,
And let them paie their ransomes ere they passe.
Suffolke. Water! *He starteth.*
Water. How now, what doest feare me?
Thou shalt have better cause anon.
Suf. It is thy name affrights me, not thy selfe.
I do remember well, a cunning Wyssard told me,
That by Water I should die:
Yet let not that make thee bloudie minded.
Thy name being rightly sounded,
Is Gualter, not Water.
Water. Gaulter or Water, als one to me.
I am the man must bring thee to thy death.
Suf. I am a gentleman looke on my Ring,
Ransome me at what thou wilt, it shal be paid.
Water. I lost mine eye in boording of the ship,
And therefore ere I marchantlike sell blood for gold,
Then cast me headlong downe into the sea. (F2; 4.1.5–22)

Suffolk's ridiculous Holofernes-style rejection of the possibility that Water—who should "properly" have been called "Gaulter," or "Gautier" if spelled in the French manner—will bring about his prophesied "death by Water" leads him nowhere.

Shakespeare earlier planted many seeds for this morbid pun based on the auditory confusion here between "die by water," "Water Whickmore," and "Walter Whitmore." He invented the details found in the Quarto, and in the Folio he subsequently modified details of an intricate storyline leading to Suffolk's death.

The long path leading to his death begins with Suffolk's own conspiratorial prompting against the Duke of Gloucester. Suffolk encourages a necromantic encounter to be arranged by Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester. In a single line in the Quarto, Suffolk explains to Queen Margaret that he is plotting against the Duke and Duchess: "I have set lime twigs that will intangle them" (Quarto B3r, 1.3.67). Suffolk has a five-line version reporting the same conspiratorial scheme in the Folio, but here it is focused only on the Duchess:

Madame, my selfe have lym'd a Bush for her,
And plac't a Quier of such enticing Birds,
That she will light to listen to the Layes,
And never mount to trouble you againe. (TLN 474–477; 1.3.89–92)

Soon after this initial elaborated prelude, additional references to beheading found only in the Folio are spoken by other characters.[4] Shakespeare has Queen Margaret taunt the Duke of Gloucester about his supposed crimes; she says that if fully known, they "would make thee quickly hop without thy Head" (TLN 527; 1.3.132).

Another sequence of changes develops where in the Quarto the Duchess of Gloucester imagines that she will gain the eminence she feels is her due: "ere it be long, Ile go before them all, / Despight of all that seeke to crosse me thus" (B1r; 1.2.45–46).[5] In the intermediary (and bibliographically problematic) text found in the 1618 Pavier Quarto, Eleanor looks forward to taking precedence by beheading any who would stand between her and absolute rule: "Were I a man, and Protector as he is, / I'de reach to'the Crowne, or make some hop headlesse" (Quarto 3 [1618], B1r; 1.2.84). Finally, at the equivalent spot in the Folio, she has an even more elaborate vision of her role as executioner of any rivals:

Were I a Man, a Duke, and next of blood,
I would remove these tedious stumbling blockes,
And smooth my way upon their headlesse neckes.
(TLN 338–340; 1.2.63–65)

To help fulfill her aspirations, the Duchess schemes with Sir John Hume "to raise a spirite." When Hume is left alone onstage, in the Quarto text (in which the Duchess does not refer to beheading) he warns himself of the danger he faces. "But whist sir John, no more of that I trow, / For feare you lose your head before you goe" (B1v–B2r; 1.2.79–80). His rhyming mention of beheading does not appear in the Folio, however. Between the Quarto and the Folio, the hand responsible for inscribing the theme of beheading has shifted it out of Hume's role and distributed it instead to the queen and the Duchess of Gloucester.

The prophecy about the death of Suffolk "by water" (another narrative detail invented by Shakespeare) is first heard during the conjuration episode in 1.4 and its aftermath. Reading from a script of questions prepared by the Duchess of Gloucester, in the Quarto and the Folio, an assistant conjurer named Bullenbroke asks: "What fate [*fates* in Folio] awayt the Duke of Suffolke." He is answered: "By water shall he die, and take his ende" (C1r; 1.4.24–25). The conjuring is interrupted by York, Buckingham, and others. York announces that "the King shall have notice of this

thing," and Buckingham departs "to tell this newes" (C1r-C1v; 1.4.42, 47). In the scene where Buckingham reports to the king, 2.2, only in the Quarto does the king read out the prophecy we heard before, "What fate awaits the Duke of Suffolke? / By water shall he die and take his end." Suffolk in the Quarto responds with ironic disbelief: "By water must the Duke of Suffolke die? / It must be so, or else the divel doth lie" (C3v; 2.2.148–51). In the Folio, however, we hear the prophecy twice in the conjuring scene, the second time read out by the Duke of York. Not in the Folio's version of the later scene at St. Albans, 2.2, an audience watching a performance following the Folio therefore hears no reaction to the prophecy from Suffolk himself. The Quarto's strategic set-up for the "water prophecy" is perhaps more straightforward, leading from the conjuring to the scene at St. Albans where Suffolk responds to it and, finally, to its "springing" when the Captain addresses Whickmore in Suffolk's hearing. The less directly linear Folio arrangement perhaps could allow the actor playing Suffolk to react more forcefully because it is a new idea to him.

After his startled reaction to "water," in the Quarto, Suffolk appeals to the privilege of his wealth as a defense against Whickmore's vengeance killing:

Water . . . I am the man must bring thee to thy death.
Suf. I am a gentleman looke on my Ring,
Ransome me at what thou wilt, it shal be paid.

Assuming his wealth will keep him alive, Suffolk shows Whickmore his ring. The stage direction at the top of the scene indicates an entry for "the Duke of Suffolke disguised," and he is described in the dialogue of both the Quarto and the Folio as "The Duke of Suffolke, muffled up in ragges." In the Quarto, the ring belies the shabby disguise of Suffolk's costume. Despite the offer of a rich ransom, Whickmore nevertheless insists that only blood will satisfy his pride and his physical injury.

Water. I lost mine eye in boording of the ship,
And therefore ere I marchantlike sell blood for gold,
Then cast me headlong downe into the sea. (F2; 4.1.17–22)

At this point in the Quarto, one of the unnamed prisoners breaks into this grim impasse to ask pointedly about ransom for himself and his fellow:

2. Priso. But what shall our ransomes be?
Mai. A hundreth pounds a piece, either paie that or die.
2. Priso. Then save our lives, it shall be paid. (F2; 4.1.23–25)

The Second Prisoner's interjection begins with an urgent "But" and stresses "our" ransoms in contrast to the rejection of ransom by Whickmore.[6] Water Whickmore again insists that he will instead take revenge. He negates Suffolk's claim to gentle rank, addressing him with the demeaning cognomen "sirrha": "Come sirrha, thy life shall be the ransome / I will have." Suffolk tries another gambit: he reveals his princely status, again confident that it will protect him. He proudly demands that he be given honorable escort to France as an ambassador of the queen. The Quarto here begins a thirty-five-line dialogue tightly focused on Suffolk and the Captain. It takes the same form as the earlier "two-hander" exchange in the Quarto, which concentrated our attention solely on Suffolk and Whickmore. The Captain takes over from Whickmore with a forceful interjection, like the earlier prisoner's "But . . ." when he broke into the squabble over the possible dishonor of ransom asking, "But what shall our ransomes be?" The Captain here breaks into the duologue and with a grim joke retorts to Suffolk's romantic-poetical demand to "waffe me":

Suf. . . . I charge thee waffe me crosse the channel safe.
Cap. Ile waffe thee to thy death, go Water take him hence,
And on our long boates side, chop off his head. (F2; 4.1.36–38)

After another twenty-one lines of insults exchanged between Suffolk and the Captain, the Captain repeats his command to take Suffolk away to death: "Away with him Water, I say, and off with his hed" (F2v; 4.1.62).

The other prisoner, who has not yet spoken in the Quarto version of the scene, momentarily interrupts the movement offstage toward execution. He prudently advises Suffolk to appeal for his life to be spared. Suffolk refuses, bragging of his macho courage with suicidal disdain for his captors:

1.Priso. Good my Lord, intreat him mildly for your life.
Suffolke. First let this necke stoupe to the axes edge,
Before this knee do bow to any.

After Suffolk finishes, Water impatiently demands immediate satisfaction from his fellow sailors. Before exiting with his executioner, however, Suffolk pronounces his own sententious epitaph:

Water. Come, come, why do we let him speake,
I long to have his head for raunsome of mine eye.
Suffolk. A Swordar and bandito slave,
Murthered sweete Tully.

Brutus bastard-hand stabde Julius Caesar,
And Suffolke dies by Pyrates on the seas.
Exet Suffolke, and Water. (F2v; 4.1.71–74)

For the final speech in the Quarto version of this scene, even while Suffolk and Water are disappearing offstage, the Captain repeats his order for Suffolk's decapitation. Finally, using the same straightforward vocal mannerisms of command heard at the scene's opening, the Captain turns to the remaining sailors and prisoners. He frees one of the other prisoners specifically to ensure that Suffolk's head will be sent to the queen, and he beckons the remaining characters to leave with him:

Exet Suffolke, and Water.
Cap. Off with his head, and send it to the Queene,
And ransomelesse this prisoner shall go free,
To see it safe delivered unto her
Come lets goe. *Exet omnes.*

In the Quarto, the grim episode of rough martial justice and vengeance ends here, as it began, with an orderly set of actions carried out by a group following the commands of a purposeful leader. It will be followed by the first scene showing the uprising of Jack Cade, which, in stark contrast, begins with a tone of comic *insouciance*:

Enter two of the Rebels with long staves. {Q has ROM. Advice?}
George. Come away Nick, and put a long staffe in thy pike and
provide thyself, for I can tell thee, they have been up this two daies.
Nicke. Then they had more need to go to bed now.
But sirrha George whats the matter? (F3; 4.2.0.s.d.–4)

From the imagined seaside space of rough retributive justice, the scene change moves us to the bloody carnival of the rising of Jack Cade.

In many fine theatrical details, the Folio's version of Suffolk's death departs from the actions and sounds scripted in the Quarto. Careful authorial revisions (not to be mistaken for accidental omissions, compositorial additions, or memorial reconstructions) underlie the distinct order of events, their thematic and political development, and an indicated and implied sound score. From the outset, where the entrance of the crew and prisoners from the sounds of the sea battle in the Quarto was clear, business-like, and direct, the Folio equivalent instead has its leader—here designated a Lieutenant in the written stage directions and speech prefixes but addressed solely as "Captain" in spoken dialogue—spin out seven lines of dark, meditative revery:

Lieu. The gaudy blabbing and remorsefull day,
Is crept into the bosome of the Sea:
And now loud houling Wolves arouse the Jades
That dragge the Tragicke melancholy night;
Who with their drowsie, slow, and flagging wings
Cleape dead-mens graves, and from their misty Jawes,
Breath foule contagious darknesse in the ayre
(TLN 2170–2176; 4.1.1–7)

At the outset of the scene, we in the audience are left to speculate about the connection between the procession of players, the Lieutenant's observations and the sound effects that precede them: "*Alarum. Fight at Sea. Ordnance goes off. / Enter Lieutenant, Suffolke, and others.*" Only after he notes the ambient "foul contagious darknesse" does the Lieutenant turn to the business at hand. He summons the prisoners to a kind of mortal marketplace where now, in the Folio, the sole agenda is either settling the prisoners' ransom or carrying out their execution, rather than, as in the Quarto, laying out their goods, sinking their ship, and only then dealing with ransom:

Therefore bring forth the Souldiers of our prize.
For whilst our Pinnace Anchors in the Downes,
Here shall they make their ransome on the sand,
Or with their blood staine this discoloured shore.
Maister, this Prisoner freely give I thee,
And thou that art his Mate, make boote of this:
The other Walter Whitmore is thy share.
1.Gent. What is my ransome Master, let me know.
(TLN 2177–2184; 4.1.8–15)

Following the logic of stage representation, we may assume that Suffolk has been placed somewhere distant on stage so that credibly (and in direct contrast to the equivalent moment in Quarto) he won't jump when overhearing the Lieutenant pronounce Walter's name. That reaction comes seventeen lines later in the Folio. In place of the series of mostly two-character exchanges opening the action in the Quarto, the Folio's first eight speeches involve all six of the characters who have entered, a happy instance of the player-playwright giving even minor parts lively actions to play. The Lieutenant in the Folio takes a more active role setting ransoms than his Quarto equivalent. Rather than leaving the Master, the Master's Mate, and Walter Whitmore to work out all the details of the ransom, in separate speeches found only in the Folio, the Lieutenant prods the two nameless gentlemen when they seem to hesitate. Then he urges Whitmore to forego vengeance

and take a payment instead. In the Folio, nine speeches and twenty-eight lines are spent establishing the scene of darkness and mortal danger for the prisoners before the Duke of Suffolk becomes the center of attention. (Indeed, in either version, because he is completely or at least partly disguised in rags, we may not even recognize Suffolk until he first reacts to the ominous name of "Water/Walter.")

1.Gent. What is my ransome, Master, let me know.
Ma. A thousand Crownes, or else lay down your head
Mate. **And so much shall you give, or off goes yours.**
Lieu. **What thinke you much to pay 2000. Crownes,**
And beare the name and port of Gentlemen?
Cut both the Villaines throats, for dy you shall:
The lives of those which we have lost in fight
Be counter-poys'd with such a pettie summe
(TLN 2184–2191; 4.1.15–22; boldface lines have no Q equivalent)

Because the gentlemen do not answer the direct demands of the Master and his Mate, their implicit hesitation seems to prompt the Lieutenant's interjection, "What thinke you much to pay 2000 Crownes / And beare the name and port of Gentlemen?" If so enacted, their momentary delay forms a very Shakespearean *aposiopesis*, a grammatically incomplete or interrupted sentence beginning "The lives of those . . ." and ending inconclusively with "a pettie summe" followed by a comma. If, indeed, it is the case that the two gentlemen had introduced a conversational pause to consider their ransom, then perhaps now they speak up more quickly, impolitely breaking up the Lieutenant's ongoing utterance when he reaches "a pettie summe,"

The lives of those which we have lost in fight
Be counter-poys'd with such a pettie summe,
1. Gent. Ile give it sir, and therefore spare my life.
2. Gent. And so will I, and write home for it straight.

What might be called "mortal urgency," not waiting for the "normal" slight delay between conversational speakers taking turns, would drive such a quick-time interruption of the Lieutenant's sentence.

Also different from the "two-hander" sequencing in the Quarto, in the following passage, which in the Quarto involves only Whitmore and Suffolk, the Folio's Lieutenant becomes a third voice, making a triangular rather than a binary exchange:

Whit. I lost mine eye in laying the prize aboord,
And therefore to revenge it, shalt thou dye,
And so should these, if I might have my will.
Lieu. **Be not so rash, take ransome, let him live.**
Suf. Look on my George, I am a Gentleman,
Rate me at what thou wilt, thou shalt be payed.
Whit. And so am I: my name is Walter Whitmore.
How now? Why starts thou? What doth death affright?
Suf. Thy name affrights me. (TLN 2194–2202; 4.1.25–33; boldface has no Q equivalent)

In Shakespeare's multiple-text plays, we see that he frequently transforms a two-person dialogue in an earlier version by adding voices in a later text, as, for example, may be seen in *King Lear* at TLN 176, 1.1.156, when "Alb." and "Cor." interject "Deare Sir forbeare" in the Folio, breaking into what is a long duologue between Lear and Kent in the Quarto. The Folio text of *2 Henry VI* shows here the same kind of two-into-three-person variant. Shakespeare seems to be playing with the possibilities of speech-rhythms, speech-intervals, and the variety of speakers in a passage of dialogue.

Here in the Folio text of *2 Henry VI*, we also have a reconceived non-verbal action called for in the Quarto. As in the Quarto, Suffolk must "start," but he jumps almost immediately when he hears Whitmore pronounce his given name. The word still prompts Suffolk's lurching response, but it is Walter himself who announces his own name as a rhetorical counter-weight to Suffolk's claim, "I am a Gentleman."

The Folio next has a longer two-person exchange solely between Whitmore and Suffolk. Changing one speech from the Captain to Whitmore and giving Whitmore more lines to express his genealogical as well as his martial pride, the Folio moves toward a treatment of this small episode as a conflict between a middling gentleman and the aristocrat. Shakespeare creates for Walter Whitmore in the Folio a more elaborate history of honorable behavior:

Suf. . . . Yet let not this make thee be bloody-minded,
Thy name is Gaultier, being rightly sounded.
Whit. Gaultier or Walter, which it is I care not,
Never yet did base dishonour blurre our name,
But with our sword we wip'd away the blot.
Therefor, when Merchan-like I sell revenge,
Broke be my sword, my Armes torne and defac'd,[7]
And I proclaim'e a Coward through the world.

Suf. Stay Whitmore, for thy Prisoner is a Prince,
The Duke of Suffolke, William de la Pole.
Whit. The Duke of Suffolke, muffled up in ragges?
Suf. I, but these ragges are no part of the Duke.
Jove sometime went disguisde, and why not I?
Lieu. But Jove was never slaine as thou shalt be.
(4.1.36–49; TLN 2205–2218; line in italics interpolated from Q.[8])

The changes here re-shape the soundscape of the scene, first expanding the Lieutenant's solo voice at the opening, then moving into multiple voices, then to dialogues, and again reintroducing multiple voices. Unless the utility and distinctive patterns of both versions are recognized, the divergent texts can appear to be accidental assemblages of a lost original.

Shakespeare also has adjusted the costume for Suffolk, making it more elaborate in the Folio. To show his affluence and to overcome the initial impression of poverty generated by his disguise of being dressed in rags, Suffolk in the Quarto displayed a ring large enough to be impressively valuable and large enough as well to be visible in the playhouse. The ring stands in for Suffolk's rich costume, which he had likely been wearing since the opening scene twenty-two hundred lines earlier. If he has on a full suit of rags, he may indeed be led to his death in an ignominious beggar's costume. But in the Folio, with complex consequences for the scenography of the final moments of this scene, Suffolk proudly shows off his "George," a more expansive badge of the Order of the Garter. This may have been an enameled decoration like a brooch, or, if the acting company had acquired such an item in its store of costumes, it may have been an embroidered fabric emblem sewn onto Suffolk's costume and worn from the first scene in the play. Unlike an easily displayed ring, any such badge would be part of his initial noble garb. That set of garments would be uncovered here by tossing aside the disguising rags Suffolk wears at the beginning of this scene. Doffing a ragged, homespun cloak to reveal noble finery would make a grand theatrical gesture. If, indeed, Suffolk will go to his death wearing his noble habiliments rather than rags, we will see that the final moments in the scene incorporate a purely theatrical delay to preserve the illusion of Suffolk's final appearance on stage when brought on as a corpse.

Heated exchanges between the Lieutenant and Suffolk ensue, roughly seventy lines in the Folio, only thirty in the Quarto. Approaching the scene's end, in response to the interjected advice of his fellow captive to "speak him fair" in order to save his life (similar to but not identical with the Quarto's equivalent), Suffolk instead issues a suicidal challenge to his

captors, considering that he is the captive of an angry band of warriors who clearly spelled out every detail of his own wicked machinations. The Lieutenant takes up Suffolk's dare:

Suf. . . . True Nobility, is exempt from feare:
More can I beare, then you dare execute.
Lieu. Hale him away, and let him talke no more:
Come Souldiers, shew what cruelty ye can.
Suf. That this my death may never be forgot.
(TLN 2297–2301; 4.1.131–35)

Here the Folio has another auditory variant of odd, barely noticeable, or not-notated pauses, interruptions, and continuations of speeches found as variants. For it to make sense as it appears, Suffolk's speech beginning "That this my death" must energetically break through the Lieutenant's gag order, "let him talke no more." In my imagining of the scene here, the actor playing Suffolk begins quickly with what should be spoken as a bold and rhythmically unbroken continuation of the Lieutenant's command, "shew what cruelty ye can." The audience's perception of the two speeches would merge into one syntactic unit, effectively making Suffolk project or attach his words onto the Lieutenant's. It should be heard as: "shew what cruelty ye can . . . [so] That this my death may never be forgot," meant by Suffolk to be heard as a single utterance divided between two voices. Listening, we would recognize that as a vaulting of one energetic speech launched from the tail end of a previous speech by another character. Such "spring-boarding" is part of Shakespeare's (and our own) linguistic toolkit.[9]

Suffolk then continues, as in the Quarto, to pronounce his own sententious eulogy:

Great men oft dye by vilde Bezonians.
A Roman Sworder, and Bandetto slave
Murder'd sweet Tully. Brutus Bastard hand
Stab'd Julius Casar. Savage Islanders
Pompey the Great, and Suffolke dyes by Pyrats.
Exit Water with Suffolke. (TLN 2302–2307; 4.1.135–39)

Rather than calling after Suffolk and Walter as he does in the Quarto, in the Folio the Lieutenant instead addresses the other sailors and the remaining prisoners. As at the Folio entrance to this scene where he waxed poetical before settling down to business, he adopts a high rhetorical style soon to be

heard from Jack Cade in the scenes following: "It is our pleasure," he says regally, to free one prisoner. But that prisoner is not charged to carry Suffolk back to the court. When the Lieutenant and his cohort then exit to their boat, the imagined place of Suffolk's execution, the released gentleman stays in our view while the others go off.

Lieu. And as for these whose ransome we have set,
It is our pleasure one of them depart:
Therefore come you with us, and let him go.
Exit Lieutenant, and the rest.
Manet the first Gent.

And here is what I propose is Shakespeare's acoustic *coup-du-théâtre*. Consider what the First Gentleman and the audience hear in the interim between "*Exit Lieutenant, and the rest*" and "*Enter Walter*":

Manet the first Gent. *Enter Walter with the body.*
Wal. There let his head, and liveless bodie lye,
Untill the Queene his Mistris bury it. *Exit Walter.*

In the fiction of the narrative, while the First Gentleman stands alone on stage, the Duke of Suffolk is beheaded just out of sight of the audience. In a fully realized production, I propose that we and the Gentleman, together, should hear the heavy thuds of sword or ax. In response to the Lieutenant's prompt for cruelty, we could hear derisive cheering by the sailors or outcries from Suffolk *in extremis*. I suggest we should hear the slaughter, as we would have when cattle were butchered at our local early modern abattoir. (In a letter from the Paston collection closely contemporary with Suffolk's execution but almost certainly unknown to Shakespeare, we learn that a coarse sailor who killed Suffolk needed five or more chops with a rusty sword to complete the deed. At the execution of the Earl of Essex in 1601, three separate blows were needed to sever his head.) While we listen to the offstage sounds, the solitary figure on stage draws our eyes. He stands in for us. We watch him hearing what we hear.

As a practical problem in stagecraft, the property "body" representing Suffolk had to be brought on wearing the same clothing as the just exited Duke. If Suffolk had gone out dressed in rags, then an identically ragged body-dummy could have been made ready off stage beforehand. But if Suffolk shed his disguise when he earlier displayed his "George"—and if the badge of that office had been sewn onto his costume and was visible from his entry at the opening of the entire play—then the "turn-around time" for

the re-entry of his departed remains would have had to have been significantly longer. The clothing for a noble character like Suffolk would have been purchased from a real nobleman's household, and it would have been unique in design and color. Time would have been needed to strip it from the living actor and then to dress the headless dummy about to be brought back on stage with the very same costume. At the same moment, the property severed head could be "dressed" in the actor's beard and hat. The three lines of the Lieutenant's final speech between Suffolk's exit and the return of his clothed head and body-simulacrum seem far from adequate. I propose that while we watch the newly enfranchised First Gentleman standing alone on stage with no task for him to accomplish—nor words to speak—the intervening time needed for shifting Suffolk's costume may have been filled in with the sounds of head-chopping. What better fun for the offstage actors than making murderous noises with an ax or blocks of wood? They could perhaps enact death groans imitated from public executions they may have heard. But with or without vocal noises from off stage, in any case the Folio's First Gentleman serves as a silent focal point, like blind Gloucester in *King Lear*, unmoving while we hear off stage "*Alarum and Retreat within*" (*King Lear*, Folio, TLN 2936).

Shakespeare is not finished yet. Walter Whitmore, who initially entered the scene bloodied by the loss of an eye, now re-enters at the end of the scene even more bloodied by executing Suffolk and by carrying in his freshly hacked pieces. He dumps the severed head and body, and he addresses perhaps the audience at large or perhaps the First Gentleman. He challenges them that they should leave it: "There let his head, and lifelesse bodie lye, / Untill the Queene his Mistris bury it" (TLN 2313–2314; 4.1.142–43). Like the two servants who haul away Cornwall's slain servant in the *King Lear* Quarto, 3.7, we hear a gloomy prediction of further violence from the First Gentleman, equally a witness to a sanguine atrocity:

1. Gent. O barbarous and bloudy spectacle,
His body will I beare unto the King:
If he revenge it not, yet will his Friends,
So will the Queene, that living, held him deere.
(TLN 2315–2318; 4.1.145–48)

The Gentleman directly disobeys Whitmore's command. As the final action and the final sound of the scene, the Gentleman probably carries Suffolk's property head while he drags the body-dummy across the stage floor through one of the upstage doors.

We are left with this Gentleman's "third voice" only in the Folio version. I would argue that he—rather than the high-sounding nobles or the indignant uprising commoners—stands in for Shakespeare's "real" sympathy in the play. He is the civil soul who hauls off the dead, personally imparting grace, especially where it is not necessarily deserved. The Quarto version works more directly, violence leads to violence, and the evil nobleman gets his due. The Folio far more reflectively follows violence with an enactment of restorative goodness, and we contemplate the traumatic effect of taking bloody vengeance.

Earlier, in 3.2 of *2 Henry VI*, Suffolk also exited in mortal danger, and there also the Quarto and Folio texts have distinct versions that differ much like these. In the presence of King Henry, Queen Margaret, and other nobles, Suffolk and the Earl of Warwick exchange threats. Then they exit together to fight off stage. They return almost immediately, swords drawn, accompanied by offstage voices of "all the Commons":

War. . . . Pernicious blood-sucker of sleeping men.
Suffol. Thou shouldst be waking whilst I shead thy blood,
If from this presence thou dare go with me.
War. Away even now, or I will drag thee hence.
Warwicke puls him out.
Exet Warwicke and *Suffolke*, and then all the Commons
Within, cries, downe with Suffolke, downe with Suffolk.
And then enter again, the Duke of Suffolke and Warwicke,
With their weapons drawne.
King. Why how now Lords?
Suf. The Traitorous Warwicke with the men of Berry,
Set all upon me mightie soveraigne!
The Commons againe cries, downe with Suffolke, downe
With Suffolke. And then enter from them, the Earle of Salbury.
Salb. My Lord, the Commons sends you word by me
(E3v–E4; 3.2.109–16)

Each action in the Quarto follows quickly on a single linear narrative; each new move prompts a single response. The audience shifts its focus quickly from the onstage movement to the offstage sounds and then back as characters cross the stage thresholds. We learn of the events with no time taken for elaborating their meanings. The Folio's equivalent here, however, gives the king two extended speeches to comment on the action in relation to his own status as sacred sovereign. Further complicating the scene in the Folio, when Salisbury enters, he speaks first to the offstage crowd before he

turns to address the king. The offstage sounds weave themselves more intricately into the onstage action:

Warw. . . . Pernicious blood-sucker of sleeping men.
Suff. Thou shalt be waking, while I shed thy blood,
If from this presence thou dar'st goe with me.
Warw. Away even now, or I will drag thee hence;
Unworthy though thou art, Ile cope with thee,
And doe some service to Duke Humfreyes Ghost.
Exeunt.
King. **What stronger Brest-plate then a heart untainted?**
Thrice is he arm'd, that hath his Quarrell just;
And he but naked, though lockt up in Steele,
Whose Conscience with Injustice is corrupted.
A noyse within.
Queene. **What noyse is this?** (TLN 1931–1943; 3.2.226–37; boldface material only in F)

Each of the main characters' speeches underscores their morality or lack thereof. Warwick references his moral service to the dead Duke of Gloucester, whose body is still present "dead in his bed" on stage. The king exclaims about strength conferred by honesty, and the queen pulls attention away from evaluation back to the everyday practicalities of noise. When Warwick and Suffolk return after the brief interval of five lines, the king again raises the moral level of the moment by referring to the sanctity of his royal person, which should disallow unsheathed swords near him.

Enter Suffolke and Warwicke, with their Weapons drawn.
King. Why how now Lords?
Your wrathfull Weapons drawne,
Here in our presence? Dare you be so bold?
Why what tumultuous clamor have we here?
Suff. The trayt'rous Warwick, with the men of Bury,
Set all upon me, mightie Soveraigne.
Enter Salisbury.
Salisb. **Sirs stand apart, the King shall know your minde.**
Dread Lord (TLN 1944–1955; 3.2.238–45; boldface material only in F)

In the Folio, Salisbury speaks back toward the offstage clamorous "men of Bury" before he turns to address the king directly. The Quarto equivalent, however, lacks this theatrically varied and morally charged cross-portal interwoven conversation of imagined offstage and onstage events.

Like the multiple references to beheading found only in the Folio, these manipulations of the soundscape in 3.2 also prepare the audience for Suffolk's exit near the end of 4.1. The reworked offstage sounds in 3.2 model in the Folio text my hypothesized interpolation of the sounds of Suffolk's execution from off stage, the subsequent re-entry of Walter Whitmore with Suffolk's divided body, and, finally, the exit of the First Gentleman hauling him away in 4.1.

Immediately following the exit from 4.1, Shakespeare begins the ghastly and more consistently comic violence of Cade's rebellion. The first true rebels we see in the Folio, however, initially seem milder than their Quarto equivalents who had entered with long staves.

Enter Bevis, and John Holland.
Bevis. Come and get thee a sword, though made of a
Lath, they have bene up these two days.

John Holland in the Folio lacks even a pretend-sword, while Bevis's line "Come and get thee a sword" indicates that he enters with more than one of the toy-like weapons. He offers one to his friend. Because we have just seen the butchered Duke of Suffolk brought on and hauled off, the visual and audible milieu Holland and Bevis enter is imaginatively darker and actually more bloody. They carry their comical swords of lath in the aftermath of a slaughter.

At the end of Cade's rebellion that begins in 4.2, Jack Cade himself is killed by another "middle voice," Alexander Iden. At least in the Quarto, Iden first appears to be outside of the manifold conflicts raging elsewhere in the play. Solely in the Folio text of 4.10, Iden first kills and then also mutilates Cade's body while on stage, "as I thrust thy body in with my sword" (TLN 2983).[10] The execution of Suffolk and the killing of Jack Cade in the Quarto both seem like quasi-judicial acts. In the Folio, the killings of both men seem more like ritual desecrations: seeing Suffolk's dismembered parts and watching Cade's superfluous postmortem stabbing takes us from applauding a kind of rough justice brought to evildoers in the Quarto to becoming uneasy witnesses of feral vengeance in the Folio.

I have elsewhere argued that Shakespeare revised his multiple-text plays, first composing the shorter versions found in the earliest printed texts and then revising those into fuller, more polished, and theatrically more effective versions in the later printed texts. I do not claim that there are no errors of transmission in the different versions: some words are garbled in both versions, a few speech prefixes are tangled or tied to the wrong speeches, a few

lines are dropped. But I do believe that many of the major textual alternatives represent authorial revisions. Read theatrically as alternative plans for complex and unpredictably vigorous speech, the variants appear as drafts and revisions, thought through by a consummate theatrical writer.

It has been fashionable for decades to ascribe most textual variants in Shakespeare's multiple-text plays to clumsy shortening or to accidental errors committed by performers or other agents of transmission. Scholarly editions of *2 Henry VI* repeat unverifiable litanies of "memorial reconstruction" by actors or by members of the audience busily taking down dialogue during performance, "unauthorized revision" to shorten playing time, heavy-handed censorship to remove offensive material, intervention by or extensive collaboration with other playwrights, or heavy revision of a script during a non-existent but imaginatively proposed extended period of company rehearsals prior to the first performances.[11] Rather than take notice of theatrically rich alternatives in the early versions, and rather than explicating alternative theatrical actions in the Quarto and the Folio, editors have instead rather consistently operated as if they imagined that Shakespeare himself could have been responsible for only a single version of each play he worked on.

If instead we try to understand Shakespeare's dramatic tools—his rhetoric of stage movement, characterization, diction, and sound—before we ascribe to other agents and accidents those variant passages that we don't initially understand, we will discover that he left us *two* gifts in the form of 4.1 of *2 Henry VI*, one in its Quarto formulation and a second in the Folio text. Ironically, the more intense auditory gift of the Folio is only there if (with the audiences of *Peter Pan*) we believe in the power of theatrical illusion: an offstage thud of an ax, a scream of mortal wounding from the actor playing Suffolk while he strips off his costume in the tiring house, the addition of the *grand guignol* entry of a well-crafted dummy and realistic head borne in by its half-blind and newly bloodied, vengeful, and gentlemanly executioner, and a gloomy exit by a fortunate, released prisoner hauling off the remains of a nasty nobleman who, moments earlier, had spurned the prisoner's potentially life-saving advice. These very Shakespearean "cheap theatrics," which are found only in the Folio version, should open auditory, moral, political, and sacred potentialities of the narrative Shakespeare chose first to dramatize in the Quarto and later to augment in the Folio. I believe the scripts examined action-by-action reveal that the Quarto text of this scene reports an early stage of Shakespeare's process, and the Folio version reports his promised fulfillment. Now it remains for scholars to recognize the intensity of that grim moment, for editors to invent ways to annotate it, and for acting companies and classroom exercises to play it.

Notes

1. The currently conventional approach to textual variants in Q and F severely limits discussion of patterned variants by concentrating on isolated fragments of supposed "memorial error," ignoring systematic variation of the kind generated by revising authors. See, for example, Peter Alexander, *Shakespeare's Henry VI and Richard III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929), 51–89, and Roger Warren, "Textual Introduction," in *William Shakespeare, Henry VI Part Two*, ed. Roger Warren (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 75–100. Their case depends entirely on the unproven claim that the *only* possible source for one error in a long genealogical list had to have been an actor's faulty memory. Beginning there, they ascribe all other textual variants to similarly unlikely origins. Furthermore, despite the closer proximity of the Quarto to the chronicle sources, they claim that the text underlying the Quarto post-dates that underlying the Folio. They offer no evidence, only a declaration that the long-held belief is true. For an extensive critique of Alexander and a different approach to textual variants, see Steven Urkowitz, "'If I Mistake in Those Foundations Which I Build Upon': Peter Alexander's Textual Analysis of *Henry VI Parts 2 and 3*," *English Literary Renaissance* 18 (1988): 230–56, and "Texts with Two Faces: Noticing Theatrical Revision in *Henry VI, Parts 2 & 3*," in *"Henry VI": Critical Essays*, edited by Thomas Pendleton (New York: Routledge, 2001), 27–37. Current textual studies proposing possible sources for textual variants most often replicate Alexander's myopic concentration on miniscule errors rather than addressing massive and masterfully drawn theatrical differences in the texts. They are not relevant to my analysis here. Important critical studies of corporal violence between social classes in *2 Henry VI*, however, take little notice of the differences between ways these acts are presented in radically different formulations in the Quarto and Folio. See Stephen Greenblatt, "Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion," *Representations* 1 (1983): 1–29; Margaret E. Owens, "The Many-Headed Monster in *Henry VI, Part 2*," *Criticism* 38 (1996): 367–82; Thomas Cartelli, "Suffolk and the Pirates: Disordered Relations in Shakespeare's *2 Henry VI*," in *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works, Vol. 2: The Histories*, edited by Richard Dutton and Jean Howard (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 325–43; Chris Fitter, "Emergent Shakespeare and the Politics of Protest: *2 Henry VI* in Historical Contexts," *ELH* 72 (2005): 129–58; Maya Mathur, "An Attack of the Clowns: Comedy, Vagrancy, and the Elizabethan History Play," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 7 (2007): 33–54; and Hannah Simpson, "Destabilising Decapitation in *King Henry VI*," *Exchanges: The Warwick Research Journal* 4 (2016): 45–60.

2. Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (1548); reprinted as *Hall's Chronicle* (London: J. Johnson, 1809), 219; Warren, 301.

3. See Francis Ann Shirley, *Shakespeare's Use of Off-Stage Sounds* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 60–62; William Montgomery, "The Original Staging of *The First Part of the Contention* (1594), *Shakespeare Survey 41* (1988): 13–22, esp. 22.

4. See Michael J. Hirrell, "Severed Heads on the Elizabethan Stage," *OUPblog: Oxford University Press's Academic Insights for the Thinking World*, March 15, 2015. https://blog.oup.com/2015/03/severed-heads-elizabethan-plays/.

5. Q3 is one of the Pavier Quartos issued in 1619. Though closely following Q1 and Q2, this text corrects the error in the York genealogy. More interesting, though, the form of the Duchess's decapitation fantasy mediates "authorially" between Q1 and F. Thus it closely resembles many of what I call "three-way-variants" at identical locations in the three earliest *Hamlet* texts. See Steven Urkowitz, "Back to Basics: Thinking about the *Hamlet* First Quarto," in *The HAMLET First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, edited by Thomas Clayton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 257–91, esp. 283–87.

6. Shakespeare regularly employs similar eruptions of urgent interjections that redirect attention from one subject to another. The new speaker "takes the stage" by drawing the conversation in a new direction. The grammatical cues and miscues offer an audible counterpoint or syncopation to the more orderly and simpler give-and-take of conversational turn-taking. See Peter Groves, "'Unheedy Haste': Interruptions, Overlaps, and Shakespeare's Directing Hand," *Voice and Speech Review* 9 (2015): 139–48.

7. This column of text in the Folio shows several other compositorial errors as well as compositorial strategies to compress copy to fit into available space. As ever, it continues to be important that we stay aware of the frequently peculiar variants introduced by the printing process.

8. The boldface line in this passage is absent from the Folio; editors have always inserted it, copied from the equivalent position in the Quarto. They explain, reasonably, that it had been inadvertently left out and is necessary for the reference to Jove in the Lieutenant's speech following.

9. Editions derived from the *New Oxford Complete Works of Shakespeare* choose to "rationalize" and rhetorically flatten this perfectly viable arrangement in the Folio. See Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, with John Jowett and William Montgomery, *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 187, note to 4.1.20; see also Warren, 227, note to 4.1.20–23.

10. See Thomas Cartelli, "Jack Cade in the Garden: Class Consciousness and Class Conflict in *2 Henry VI*," in *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England*, edited by Richard Burt and John M. Archer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 48–67.

11. The adumbration of unlikely agents and accidents can be usefully sampled in Warren, 85–89.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

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"Fearful and confused cries"

Birdsong, Sympathy, and the Fear of Sound in *Titus Andronicus*

Clio Doyle

In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Philomela's tongue, detached by the villainous Tereus, "lies trembling and murmurs to the black earth," "*ipsa [lingua] iacet terraeque tremens inmurmurat atrae*."[1] This tongue, removed but still moving, demonstrates the suddenness and brutality of Tereus's attack. But the tongue's murmur also hints at a mode of discourse or a conversation that continues despite this violence, even because of it. In the very act of trying to silence Philomela, Tereus creates more avenues for sound. Arthur Golding's translation of Ovid elaborates on the strangeness of this tongue speaking for and by itself. Golding writes,

> The stumpe whereon it [the tongue] hung
> Did patter still. The tip fell downe and quivering on the ground
> As though that it had murmured it made a certaine sound.[2]

This "certaine sound" arises from a new conjunction between tongue and earth, as if the ground has finally found a tongue with which to murmur, or the tongue a ground with which to speak.[3] Between the pattering stump and murmuring tip of Philomela's tongue, her voice is broken in two, doubled, carried away. Philomela's story dramatizes the failure of persuasion, her cut tongue powerless to save itself by speaking. Separated from her and turned to an odd murmur, her words keep going. The scenario of a woman's tongue being cut out by her rapists reappears in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, but