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978-1-108-00581-4 - The Second Part of the History of Henry IV, Volume 9

William Shakespeare

Excerpt

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## THE SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV

*Warkworth. Before the gate of Northumberland's castle*

*Induction* 'Enter RUMOUR, painted full of tongues'

*Rumour.* Open your ears; for which of you will stop  
The vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?  
I from the orient to the drooping west,  
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold  
The acts commencéd on this ball of earth.  
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,  
The which in every language I pronounce,  
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.  
I speak of peace while covert enmity  
Under the smile of safety wounds the world: 10  
And who but Rumour, who but only I,  
Make fearful musters and prepared defence,  
Whiles the big year, swoln with some other grief,  
Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,  
And no such matter? Rumour is a pipe  
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures,  
And of so easy and so plain a stop  
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,  
The still-discordant wav'ring multitude,  
Can play upon it....But what need I thus 20  
My well-known body to anatomize  
Among my household? Why is Rumour here?  
I run before King Harry's victory,  
Who in a bloody field by Shrewsbury  
Hath beaten down young Hotspur and his troops,  
Quenching the flame of bold rebellion,  
Even with the rebels' blood. But what mean I

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## 6 THE SECOND PART OF IND. 28

To speak so true at first? my office is  
 To noise abroad that Harry Monmouth fell  
 30 Under the wrath of noble Hotspur's sword,  
 And that the king before the Douglas' rage  
 Stooped his anointed head as low as death.  
 This have I rumoured through the peasant towns  
 Between that royal field of Shrewsbury  
 And this worm-eaten hold of ragged stone,  
 Where Hotspur's father, old Northumberland,  
 Lies crafty-sick. The posts come tiring on,  
 And not a man of them brings other news  
 Than they have learned of me. From Rumour's tongues  
 40 They bring smooth comforts false, worse than true  
 wrongs. [he goes

[I. I.] 'Enter the LORD BARDOLPH'

*L. Bardolph* [calls]. Who keeps the gate here, ho?  
[A Porter appears on the wall above the gate  
Where is the earl?

*Porter*. What shall I say you are?

*L. Bardolph*. Tell thou the earl  
 That the Lord Bardolph doth attend him here.

*Porter*. His lordship is walked forth into the orchard,  
 Please it your honour knock but at the gate,  
 And he himself will answer.

*NORTHUMBERLAND comes forth, hobbling upon  
 a crutch and with his head muffled*

*L. Bardolph*. Here comes the earl.

*Northumberland*. What news, Lord Bardolph? every  
 minute now  
 Should be the father of some stratagem.

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I. I. 9

KING HENRY IV

7

The times are wild, contention like a horse,  
Full of high feeding, madly hath broke loose, 10  
And bears down all before him.

*L. Bardolph.* Noble earl,

I bring you certain news from Shrewsbury.

*Northumberland.* Good, an God will!

*L. Bardolph.* As good as heart can wish:

The king is almost wounded to the death,  
And in the fortune of my lord your son  
Prince Harry slain outright, and both the Blunts  
Killed by the hand of Douglas, young Prince John  
And Westmoreland and Stafford fled the field,  
And Harry Monmouth's brawn, the hulk Sir John,  
Is prisoner to your son: O, such a day, 20  
So fought, so followed, and so fairly won,  
Came not till now to dignify the times,  
Since Caesar's fortunes!

*Northumberland.* How is this derived?

Saw you the field? came you from Shrewsbury?

*L. Bardolph.* I spake with one, my lord, that came  
from thence,

A gentleman well bred and of good name,  
That freely rend'red me these news for true.

*TRAVERS approaches*

*Northumberland.* Here comes my servant Travers,  
whom I sent

On Tuesday last to listen after news.

*L. Bardolph.* My lord, I over-rode him on the way, 30  
And he is furnished with no certainties  
More than he haply may retail from me.

*Northumberland.* Now, Travers, what good tidings  
comes with you?

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## 8 THE SECOND PART OF I. I. 34

*Travers.* My lord, † Sir John Umfrevile turned  
me back

With joyful tidings, and, being better horsed,  
Out-rode me. After him came spurring hard  
A gentleman, almost forspent with speed,  
That stopped by me to breathe his bloodied horse.

He asked the way to Chester, and of him  
40 I did demand what news from Shrewsbury.

He told me that rebellion had bad luck,  
And that young Harry Percy's spur was cold:  
With that he gave his able horse the head,  
And bending forward struck his arméd heels  
Against the panting sides of his poor jade  
Up to the rowel-head, and starting so  
He seemed in running to devour the way,  
Staying no longer question.

*Northumberland.* Ha? Again!

Said he young Harry Percy's spur was cold?  
50 Of Hotspur Coldspur? that rebellion  
Had met ill luck?

*L. Bardolph.* My lord, I'll tell you what—  
If my young lord your son have not the day,  
Upon mine honour, for a silken point  
I'll give my barony. Never talk of it.

*Northumberland.* Why should that gentleman that rode  
by Travers

Give then such instances of loss?

*L. Bardolph.* Who, he?

He was some hilding fellow, that had stol'n  
The horse he rode on, and upon my life  
Spoke at a venture. Look, here comes more news.

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1.1.60

## KING HENRY IV

9

*MORTON is seen drawing near*

*Northumberland.* Yea, this man's brow, like to  
a title-leaf, 60

Foretells the nature of a tragic volume.

So looks the strond whereon the imperious flood  
Hath left a witnessed usurpation....

Say, Morton, didst thou come from Shrewsbury?

*Morton.* I ran from Shrewsbury, my noble lord,  
Where hateful death put on his ugliest mask  
To fright our party.

*Northumberland.* How doth my son and brother?  
Thou tremblest, and the whiteness in thy cheek  
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand.

Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless, 70

So dull, so dead in look, so woe-begone,

Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night,  
And would have told him half his Troy was burnt:

But Priam found the fire ere he his tongue,

And I my Percy's death ere thou report'st it.

This thou wouldst say, 'Your son did thus and thus,

Your brother thus; so fought the noble Douglas'—

Stopping my greedy ear with their bold deeds,

But in the end, to stop my ear indeed,

Thou hast a sigh to blow away this praise, 80

Ending with 'Brother, son, and all are dead.'

*Morton.* Douglas is living, and your brother yet,  
But for my lord your son...

*Northumberland.* Why, he is dead.

See what a ready tongue suspicion hath!

He that but fears the thing he would not know,

Hath by instinct knowledge from others' eyes

That what he feared is chanced... Yet speak, Morton.

Tell thou an earl his divination lies,

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## 10 THE SECOND PART OF I. I. 89

- And I will take it as a sweet disgrace,  
 90 And make thee rich for doing me such wrong.  
*Morton.* You are too great to be by me gainsaid,  
 Your spirit is too true, your fears too certain.  
*Northumberland.* Yet, for all this, say not that  
 Percy's dead.  
 I see a strange confession in thine eye,  
 Thou shak'st thy head, and hold'st it fear or sin  
 To speak a truth: if he be slain, say so.  
 The tongue offends not that reports his death,  
 And he doth sin that doth belie the dead,  
 Not he which says the dead is not alive.  
 100 Yet the first bringer of unwelcome news  
 Hath but a losing office, and his tongue  
 Sounds ever after as a sullen bell,  
 Remembered tolling a departing friend.  
*L. Bardolph.* I cannot think, my lord, your son is dead.  
*Morton.* I am sorry I should force you to believe  
 That which I would to God I had not seen,  
 But these mine eyes saw him in bloody state,  
 Rend'ring faint quittance, wearied and out-breathed,  
 To Harry Monmouth, whose swift wrath beat down  
 110 The never-daunted Percy to the earth,  
 From whence with life he never more sprung up.  
 In few, his death, whose spirit lent a fire  
 Even to the dullest peasant in his camp,  
 Being bruited once, took fire and heat away  
 From the best-tempered courage in his troops.  
 For from his mettle was his party steeled,  
 Which once in him abated, all the rest  
 Turned on themselves, like dull and heavy lead.  
 And as the thing that's heavy in itself,  
 120 Upon enforcement flies with greatest speed,  
 So did our men, heavy in Hotspur's loss,

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I. I. 122

## KING HENRY IV

11

Lend to this weight such lightness with their fear,  
 That arrows fled not swifter toward their aim  
 Than did our soldiers, aiming at their safety,  
 Fly from the field: then was that noble Worcester  
 Too soon ta'en prisoner, and that furious Scot,  
 The bloody Douglas, whose well-labouring sword  
 Had three times slain th' appearance of the king,  
 'Gan vail his stomach and did grace the shame  
 Of those that turned their backs, and in his flight, 130  
 Stumbling in fear, was took: the sum of all  
 Is that the king hath won, and hath sent out  
 A speedy power to encounter you, my lord,  
 Under the conduct of young Lancaster  
 And Westmoreland...This is the news at full.

*Northumberland.* For this I shall have time enough  
 to mourn.

In poison there is physic; and these news,  
 Having been well, that would have made me sick,  
 Being sick, have (in some measure) made me well:  
 And as the wretch whose fever-weak'ned joints, 140  
 Like strengthless hinges, buckle under life,  
 Impatient of his fit, breaks like a fire  
 Out of his keeper's arms; even so my limbs,  
 Weakened with grief, being now enraged with grief,  
 Are thrice themselves: hence therefore, thou nice crutch!  
 A scaly gauntlet now with joints of steel  
 Must glove this hand, and hence, thou sickly coif!  
 Thou art a guard too wanton for the head  
 Which princes, fleshed with conquest, aim to hit:  
 Now bind my brows with iron, and approach 150  
 The ragged'st hour that Time and Spite dare bring  
 To frown upon th'enraged Northumberland!  
 Let heaven kiss earth! now let not Nature's hand  
 Keep the wild flood confined! let Order die!

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## 12 THE SECOND PART OF I. I. 155

And let this world no longer be a stage  
 To feed contention in a ling'ring act;  
 But let one spirit of the first-born Cain  
 Reign in all bosoms, that, each heart being set  
 On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,  
 160 And darkness be the burier of the dead!

*L. Bardolph.* This strained passion doth you wrong,  
 my lord.

*Morton.* Sweet earl, divorce not wisdom from your  
 honour.

The lives of all your loving complices  
 Lean on your health, the which, if you give o'er  
 To stormy passion, must perforce decay.  
 You cast th'event of war, my noble lord,  
 And summed the account of chance, before you said  
 'Let us make head': it was your presumise,  
 That, in the dole of blows, your son might drop:  
 170 You knew he walked o'er perils, on an edge,  
 More likely to fall in than to get o'er:  
 You were advised his flesh was capable  
 Of wounds and scars, and that his forward spirit  
 Would lift him where most trade of danger ranged.  
 Yet did you say 'Go forth'; and none of this,  
 Though strongly apprehended, could restrain  
 The stiff-borne action: what hath then befall'n,  
 Or what hath this bold enterprise brought forth,  
 More than that being which was like to be?

180 *L. Bardolph.* We all that are engagéd to this loss  
 Knew that we ventured on such dangerous seas  
 That if we wrought out life 'twas ten to one,  
 And yet we ventured for the gain proposed,  
 Choked the respect of likely peril feared,  
 And, since we are o'erset, venture again...  
 Come, we will all put forth body and goods.



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1.1.187

## KING HENRY IV

13

*Morton.* 'Tis more than time: and, my most noble lord,  
 I hear for certain, and dare speak the truth,  
 The gentle Archbishop of York is up  
 With well-appointed powers; he is a man 190  
 Who with a double surety binds his followers.  
 My lord your son had only but the corpse,  
 But shadows and the shows of men, to fight:  
 For that same word, rebellion, did divide  
 The action of their bodies from their souls,  
 And they did fight with queasiness, constrained,  
 As men drink potions, that their weapons only  
 Seemed on our side; but, for their spirits and souls,  
 This word, rebellion, it had froze them up,  
 As fish are in a pond. But now the bishop 200  
 Turns insurrection to religion:  
 Supposed sincere and holy in his thoughts,  
 He's followed both with body and with mind;  
 And doth enlarge his rising with the blood  
 Of fair King Richard, scraped from Pomfret stones;  
 Derives from heaven his quarrel and his cause;  
 Tells them he doth bestride a bleeding land,  
 Gasping for life under great Bolingbroke;  
 And more and less do flock to follow him.

*Northumberland.* I knew of this before: but, to 210  
 speak truth,  
 This present grief had wiped it from my mind.  
 Go in with me, and counsel every man  
 The aptest way for safety and revenge.  
 Get posts and letters, and make friends with speed;  
 Never so few, and never yet more need. [they go

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## THE SECOND PART OF 1.2.1

[1.2.] *A street in London**Enter SIR JOHN FALSTAFF, hobbling with a stick; 'his PAGE, bearing his sword and buckler', following**Falstaff.* Sirrah, you giant, what says the doctor to my water?*Page.* He said, sir, the water itself was a good healthy water, but for the party that owed it, he might have more diseases than he knew for.

*Falstaff.* Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me: the brain of this foolish-compounded clay-man is not able to invent any thing that intends to laughter, more than I invent or is invented on me. I am not only witty  
 10 in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men. I do here walk before thee like a sow that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one. If the prince put thee into my service for any other reason than to set me off, why then I have no judgement. Thou whoreson mandrake, thou art fitter to be worn in my cap than to wait at my heels. I was never manned with an agate till now: but I will inset you neither in gold nor silver, but in vile apparel, and send you back again to your master, for a jewel—the juvenal, the prince your master, whose chin is not yet  
 20 fledged. I will sooner have a beard grow in the palm of my hand than he shall get one off his cheek; and yet he will not stick to say his face is a face royal: God may finish it when he will, 'tis not a hair amiss yet: he may keep it still at a face-royal, for a barber shall never earn sixpence out of it; and yet he'll be crowing as if he had writ man ever since his father was a bachelor. He may keep his own grace, but he's almost out of mine, I can assure him...What said Master Dommelton about the satin for my short cloak and my slops?