

William Shakespeare
King Henry the Fourth.
The First part

Dramatis Personae

King Henry The Fourth.

Henry, Prince of Wales, & **John of Lancaster**,
Sons to the King.

Earl of Westmoreland.

Sir Walter Blunt.

Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester.

Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland.

Henry Percy, surnamed Hotspur, his son.

Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.

Richard Scroop, Archbishop of York.

Archibald, Earl of Douglas.

Owen Glendower.

Sir Richard Vernon.

Sir John Falstaff.

Sir Michael, a Friend to the Archbishop of York.

Poins.

Gadshill.

Peto.

Bardolph.

Lady Percy, Wife to Hotspur, and Sister to
Mortimer.

Lady Mortimer, Daughter to Glendower, and Wife to Mortimer.

Mistress Quickly, Hostess of the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap.

Lords, Officers, Sheriff, Vintner, Chamberlain, Drawers, two Carriers, Travellers, and Attendants.

SCENE.-*England.*

Act I

Scene I

London. The palace.

Enter King Henry, Lord John of Lancaster, the Earl of Westmoreland, Sir Walter Blunt, and others.

King Henry IV

So shaken as we are, so wan with care,
Find we a time for frightened peace to pant,
And breathe short-winded accents of new broils
To be commenced in strands afar remote.
No more the thirsty entrance of this soil
Shall daub her lips with her own children's blood;
Nor more shall trenching war channel her fields,
Nor bruise her flowerets with the armed hoofs
Of hostile paces: those opposed eyes,

Which, like the meteors of a troubled heaven,
All of one nature, of one substance bred,
Did lately meet in the intestine shock
And furious close of civil butchery
Shall now, in mutual well-beseeming ranks,
March all one way and be no more opposed
Against acquaintance, kindred and allies:
The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife,
No more shall cut his master. Therefore, friends,
As far as to the sepulchre of Christ,
Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross
We are impressed and engaged to fight,
Forthwith a power of English shall we levy;
Whose arms were moulded in their mothers'
womb
To chase these pagans in those holy fields
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd
For our advantage on the bitter cross.
But this our purpose now is twelve month old,
And bootless 'tis to tell you we will go:
Therefore we meet not now. Then let me hear
Of you, my gentle cousin Westmoreland,
What yesternight our council did decree
In forwarding this dear expedience.

Westmoreland

My liege, this haste was hot in question,

And many limits of the charge set down
But yesternight: when all athwart there came
A post from Wales loaden with heavy news;
Whose worst was, that the noble Mortimer,
Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight
Against the irregular and wild Glendower,
Was by the rude hands of that Welshman taken,
A thousand of his people butchered;
Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse,
Such beastly shameless transformation,
By those Welshwomen done as may not be
Without much shame retold or spoken of.

King Henry IV

It seems then that the tidings of this broil
Brake off our business for the Holy Land.

Westmoreland

This match'd with other did, my gracious lord;
For more uneven and unwelcome news
Came from the north and thus it did import:
On Holy-rood day, the gallant Hotspur there,
Young Harry Percy and brave Archibald,
That ever-valiant and approved Scot,
At Holmedon met,
Where they did spend a sad and bloody hour,
As by discharge of their artillery,
And shape of likelihood, the news was told;

For he that brought them, in the very heat
And pride of their contention did take horse,
Uncertain of the issue any way.

King Henry IV

Here is a dear, a true industrious friend,
Sir Walter Blunt, new lighted from his horse.
Stain'd with the variation of each soil
Betwixt that Holmedon and this seat of ours;
And he hath brought us smooth and welcome
news.

The Earl of Douglas is discomfited:
Ten thousand bold Scots, two and twenty knights,
Balk'd in their own blood did Sir Walter see
On Holmedon's plains. Of prisoners, Hotspur
took

Mordake the Earl of Fife, and eldest son
To beaten Douglas; and the Earl of Athol,
Of Murray, Angus, and Menteith:
And is not this an honourable spoil?
A gallant prize? ha, cousin, is it not?

Westmoreland

In faith,
It is a conquest for a prince to boast of.

King Henry IV

Yea, there thou makest me sad and makest me sin

In envy that my Lord Northumberland
Should be the father to so blest a son,
A son who is the theme of honour's tongue;
Amongst a grove, the very straightest plant;
Who is sweet Fortune's minion and her pride:
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,
See riot and dishonour stain the brow
Of my young Harry. O that it could be proved
That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged
In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,
And call'd mine Percy, his Plantagenet!
Then would I have his Harry, and he mine.
But let him from my thoughts. What think you,

COZ,

Of this young Percy's pride? the prisoners,
Which he in this adventure hath surprised,
To his own use he keeps; and sends me word,
I shall have none but Mordake Earl of Fife.

Westmoreland

This is his uncle's teaching; this is Worcester,
Malevolent to you in all aspects;
Which makes him prune himself, and bristle up
The crest of youth against your dignity.

King Henry IV

But I have sent for him to answer this;
And for this cause awhile we must neglect

Our holy purpose to Jerusalem.
Cousin, on Wednesday next our council we
Will hold at Windsor; so inform the lords:
But come yourself with speed to us again;
For more is to be said and to be done
Than out of anger can be uttered.

Westmoreland

I will, my liege.

Exeunt.

Scene II

London. An apartment of the Prince's.
Enter the Prince of Wales and Falstaff.

Falstaff

Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

Prince Henry

Thou art so fat-witted, with drinking of old sack
and unbuttoning thee after supper and sleeping
upon
benches after noon, that thou hast forgotten to
demand that truly which thou wouldst truly know.
What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the

day? Unless hours were cups of sack and minutes
capons and clocks the tongues of bawds and dials
the
signs of leaping-houses and the blessed sun
himself
a fair hot wench in flame-coloured taffeta, I see
no
reason why thou shouldst be so superfluous to
demand
the time of the day.

Falstaff

Indeed, you come near me now, Hal; for we that
take
purses go by the moon and the seven stars, and
not
by Phoebus, he, 'that wandering knight so fair.'

And,

I prithee, sweet wag, when thou art king, as, God
save thy grace, — majesty I should say, for grace
thou wilt have none, —

Prince Henry

What, none?

Falstaff

No, by my troth, not so much as will serve to
prologue to an egg and butter.

Prince Henry

Well, how then? come, roundly, roundly.

Falstaff

Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let
not
us that are squires of the night's body be called
thieves of the day's beauty: let us be Diana's
foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the
moon; and let men say we be men of good
government,
being governed, as the sea is, by our noble and
chaste mistress the moon, under whose
countenance we steal.

Prince Henry

Thou sayest well, and it holds well too; for the
fortune of us that are the moon's men doth ebb
and
flow like the sea, being governed, as the sea is,
by the moon. As, for proof, now: a purse of gold
most resolutely snatched on Monday night and
most
dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning; got with
swearing 'Lay by' and spent with crying 'Bring
in;'
now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder
and by and by in as high a flow as the ridge of the

gallows.

Falstaff

By the Lord, thou sayest true, lad. And is not my
hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench?

Prince Henry

As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle.
And
is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance?

Falstaff

How now, how now, mad wag! what, in thy quips
and
thy quiddities? what a plague have I to do with a
buff jerkin?

Prince Henry

Why, what a pox have I to do with my hostess of
the tavern?

Falstaff

Well, thou hast called her to a reckoning many a
time and oft.

Prince Henry

Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?

Falstaff

No; I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there.

Prince Henry

Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would
stretch;
and where it would not, I have used my credit.

Falstaff

Yea, and so used it that were it not here apparent
that thou art heir apparent-But, I prithee, sweet
wag, shall there be gallows standing in England
when
thou art king? and resolution thus fobbed as it is
with the rusty curb of old father antic the law? Do
not thou, when thou art king, hang a thief.

Prince Henry

No; thou shalt.

Falstaff

Shall I? O rare! By the Lord, I'll be a brave judge.

Prince Henry

Thou judgest false already: I mean, thou shalt
have
the hanging of the thieves and so become a rare
hangman.

Falstaff

Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps with
my
humour as well as waiting in the court, I can tell
you.

Prince Henry

For obtaining of suits?

Falstaff

Yea, for obtaining of suits, whereof the hangman
hath no lean wardrobe. 'Sblood, I am as
melancholy
as a gib cat or a lugged bear.

Prince Henry

Or an old lion, or a lover's lute.

Falstaff

Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

Prince Henry

What sayest thou to a hare, or the melancholy of
Moor-ditch?

Falstaff

Thou hast the most unsavoury similes and art
indeed

the most comparative, rascalliest, sweet young
prince. But, Hal, I prithee, trouble me no more
with vanity. I would to God thou and I knew
where a
commodity of good names were to be bought. An
old
lord of the council rated me the other day in the
street about you, sir, but I marked him not; and
yet
he talked very wisely, but I regarded him not; and
yet he talked wisely, and in the street too.

Prince Henry

Thou didst well; for wisdom cries out in the
streets, and no man regards it.

Falstaff

O, thou hast damnable iteration and art indeed
able
to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm
upon
me, Hal; God forgive thee for it! Before I knew
thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man
should speak truly, little better than one of the
wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give
it over: by the Lord, and I do not, I am a villain:
I'll be damned for never a king's son in
Christendom.

Prince Henry

Where shall we take a purse tomorrow, Jack?

Falstaff

'Zounds, where thou wilt, lad; I'll make one; an I do not, call me villain and baffle me.

Prince Henry

I see a good amendment of life in thee; from
praying
to purse-taking.

Falstaff

Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal; 'tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.

Enter Poins.

Poins! Now shall we know if Gadshill have set a match. O, if men were to be saved by merit, what hole in hell were hot enough for him? This is the most omnipotent villain that ever cried 'Stand' to a true man.

Prince Henry

Good morrow, Ned.

Poins

Good morrow, sweet Hal. What says Monsieur
Remorse?
what says Sir John Sack and Sugar? Jack! how
agrees the devil and thee about thy soul, that thou
soldest him on Good-Friday last for a cup of
Madeira
and a cold capon's leg?

Prince Henry

Sir John stands to his word, the devil shall have
his bargain; for he was never yet a breaker of
proverbs: he will give the devil his due.

Poins

Then art thou damned for keeping thy word with
the devil.

Prince Henry

Else he had been damned for cozening the devil.

Poins

But, my lads, my lads, to-morrow morning, by
four
o'clock, early at Gadshill! there are pilgrims
going
to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders
riding to London with fat purses: I have vizards

for you all; you have horses for yourselves:
Gadshill lies to-night in Rochester: I have
bespoke
supper to-morrow night in Eastcheap: we may do
it
as secure as sleep. If you will go, I will stuff
your purses full of crowns; if you will not, tarry
at home and be hanged.

Falstaff

Hear ye, Yedward; if I tarry at home and go not,
I'll hang you for going.

Poins

You will, chops?

Falstaff

Hal, wilt thou make one?

Prince Henry

Who, I rob? I a thief? not I, by my faith.

Falstaff

There's neither honesty, manhood, nor good
fellowship in thee, nor thou camest not of the
blood
royal, if thou darest not stand for ten shillings.

Prince Henry

Well then, once in my days I'll be a madcap.

Falstaff

Why, that's well said.

Prince Henry

Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

Falstaff

By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art
king.

Prince Henry

I care not.

Poins

Sir John, I prithee, leave the prince and me alone:
I will lay him down such reasons for this
adventure
that he shall go.

Falstaff

Well, God give thee the spirit of persuasion and
him
the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may
move and what he hears may be believed, that the
true prince may, for recreation sake, prove a false

thief; for the poor abuses of the time want
countenance. Farewell: you shall find me in
Eastcheap.

Prince Henry

Farewell, thou latter spring! farewell, All-hallow'n
summer!

Exit Falstaff.

Poins

Now, my good sweet honey lord, ride with us
to-morrow: I have a jest to execute that I cannot
manage alone. Falstaff, Bardolph, Peto and
Gadshill
shall rob those men that we have already waylaid:
yourself and I will not be there; and when they
have the booty, if you and I do not rob them, cut
this head off from my shoulders.

Prince Henry

How shall we part with them in setting forth?

Poins

Why, we will set forth before or after them, and
appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at
our pleasure to fail, and then will they adventure
upon the exploit themselves; which they shall have

no sooner achieved, but we'll set upon them.

Prince Henry

Yea, but 'tis like that they will know us by our horses, by our habits and by every other appointment, to be ourselves.

Poins

Tut! our horses they shall not see: I'll tie them in the wood; our vizards we will change after we leave them: and, sirrah, I have cases of buckram for the nonce, to immask our noted outward
garments.

Prince Henry

Yea, but I doubt they will be too hard for us.

Poins

Well, for two of them, I know them to be as true-bred cowards as ever turned back; and for the
third, if he fight longer than he sees reason, I'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be, the incomprehensible lies that this same fat rogue
will
tell us when we meet at supper: how thirsty, at least, he fought with; what wards, what blows,
what

extremities he endured; and in the reproof of this lies the jest.

Prince Henry

Well, I'll go with thee: provide us all things necessary and meet me to-morrow night in
Eastcheap;
there I'll sup. Farewell.

Poins

Farewell, my lord.

Exit Poins.

Prince Henry

I know you all, and will awhile uphold
The unyoked humour of your idleness:
Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work;
But when they seldom come, they wish'd for
come,

And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
So, when this loose behavior I throw off
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
And like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
I'll so offend, to make offence a skill;
Redeeming time when men think least I will.

Exit.

Scene III

London. The palace.

*Enter the King, Northumberland, Worcester,
Hotspur, Sir Walter Blunt, with others.*

King Henry IV

My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
Unapt to stir at these indignities,
And you have found me; for accordingly
You tread upon my patience: but be sure
I will from henceforth rather be myself,
Mighty and to be fear'd, than my condition;
Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young

down,
And therefore lost that title of respect
Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

Earl of Worcester

Our house, my sovereign liege, little deserves
The scourge of greatness to be used on it;
And that same greatness too which our own
hands
Have help to make so portly.

Northumberland

My lord. —

King Henry IV

Worcester, get thee gone; for I do see
Danger and disobedience in thine eye:
O, sir, your presence is too bold and peremptory,
And majesty might never yet endure
The moody frontier of a servant brow.
You have good leave to leave us: when we need
Your use and counsel, we shall send for you.

Exit Worcester.

You were about to speak.

To North.

Northumberland

Yea, my good lord.

Those prisoners in your highness' name
demanded,

Which Harry Percy here at Holmedon took,
Were, as he says, not with such strength denied
As is deliver'd to your majesty:

Either envy, therefore, or misprison
Is guilty of this fault and not my son.

Hotspur

My liege, I did deny no prisoners.

But I remember, when the fight was done,
When I was dry with rage and extreme toil,
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,
Came there a certain lord, neat, and trimly
dress'd,

Fresh as a bridegroom; and his chin new reap'd
Show'd like a stubble-land at harvest-home;
He was perfumed like a milliner;
And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
A pouncet-box, which ever and anon
He gave his nose and took't away again;
Who therewith angry, when it next came there,
Took it in snuff; and still he smiled and talk'd,
And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,
He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corse

Betwixt the wind and his nobility.
With many holiday and lady terms
He question'd me; amongst the rest, demanded
My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.
I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,
To be so pester'd with a popinjay,
Out of my grief and my impatience,
Answer'd neglectingly I know not what,
He should or he should not; for he made me mad
To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman
Of guns and drums and wounds, — God save the
mark! —

And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth
Was parmaceti for an inward bruise;
And that it was great pity, so it was,
This villanous salt-petre should be digg'd
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroy'd
So cowardly; and but for these vile guns,
He would himself have been a soldier.
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,
I answer'd indirectly, as I said;
And I beseech you, let not his report
Come current for an accusation
Betwixt my love and your high majesty.

Sir Walter Blunt

The circumstance consider'd, good my lord,
Whate'er Lord Harry Percy then had said
To such a person and in such a place,
At such a time, with all the rest retold,
May reasonably die and never rise
To do him wrong or any way impeach
What then he said, so he unsay it now.

King Henry IV

Why, yet he doth deny his prisoners,
But with proviso and exception,
That we at our own charge shall ransom straight
His brother-in-law, the foolish Mortimer;
Who, on my soul, hath wilfully betray'd
The lives of those that he did lead to fight
Against that great magician, damn'd Glendower,
Whose daughter, as we hear, the Earl of March
Hath lately married. Shall our coffers, then,
Be emptied to redeem a traitor home?
Shall we but treason? and indent with fears,
When they have lost and forfeited themselves?
No, on the barren mountains let him starve;
For I shall never hold that man my friend
Whose tongue shall ask me for one penny cost
To ransom home revolted Mortimer.

Hotspur

Revolted Mortimer!

He never did fall off, my sovereign liege,
But by the chance of war; to prove that true
Needs no more but one tongue for all those
wounds,

Those mouthed wounds, which valiantly he took
When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,
In single opposition, hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In changing hardiment with great Glendower:
Three times they breathed and three times did
they drink,

Upon agreement, of swift Severn's flood;
Who then, affrighted with their bloody looks,
Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds,
And hid his crisp head in the hollow bank,
Bloodstained with these valiant combatants.
Never did base and rotten policy
Colour her working with such deadly wounds;
Nor could the noble Mortimer
Receive so many, and all willingly:
Then let not him be slander'd with revolt.

King Henry IV

Thou dost belie him, Percy, thou dost belie him;
He never did encounter with Glendower:
I tell thee,

He durst as well have met the devil alone
As Owen Glendower for an enemy.
Art thou not ashamed? But, sirrah, henceforth
Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer:
Send me your prisoners with the speediest means,
Or you shall hear in such a kind from me
As will displease you. My Lord Northumberland,
We licence your departure with your son.
Send us your prisoners, or you will hear of it.

Exeunt King Henry, Blunt, and train.

Hotspur

An if the devil come and roar for them,
I will not send them: I will after straight
And tell him so; for I will ease my heart,
Albeit I make a hazard of my head.

Northumberland

What, drunk with choler? stay and pause awhile:
Here comes your uncle.

Re-enter Worcester.

Hotspur

Speak of Mortimer!
'Zounds, I will speak of him; and let my soul
Want mercy, if I do not join with him:

Yea, on his part I'll empty all these veins,
And shed my dear blood drop by drop in the dust,
But I will lift the down-trod Mortimer
As high in the air as this unthankful king,
As this ingrate and canker'd Bolingbroke.

Northumberland

Brother, the king hath made your nephew mad.

Earl of Worcester

Who struck this heat up after I was gone?

Hotspur

He will, forsooth, have all my prisoners;
And when I urged the ransom once again
Of my wife's brother, then his cheek look'd pale,
And on my face he turn'd an eye of death,
Trembling even at the name of Mortimer.

Earl of Worcester

I cannot blame him: was not he proclaim'd
By Richard that dead is the next of blood?

Northumberland

He was; I heard the proclamation:
And then it was when the unhappy king,
— Whose wrongs in us God pardon! — did set
forth

Upon his Irish expedition;
From whence he intercepted did return
To be deposed and shortly murdered.

Earl of Worcester

And for whose death we in the world's wide
mouth
Live scandalized and foully spoken of.

Hotspur

But soft, I pray you; did King Richard then
Proclaim my brother Edmund Mortimer
Heir to the crown?

Northumberland

He did; myself did hear it.

Hotspur

Nay, then I cannot blame his cousin king,
That wished him on the barren mountains starve.
But shall it be that you, that set the crown
Upon the head of this forgetful man
And for his sake wear the detested blot
Of murderous subornation, shall it be,
That you a world of curses undergo,
Being the agents, or base second means,
The cords, the ladder, or the hangman rather?
O, pardon me that I descend so low,

To show the line and the predicament
Wherein you range under this subtle king;
Shall it for shame be spoken in these days,
Or fill up chronicles in time to come,
That men of your nobility and power
Did gage them both in an unjust behalf,
As both of you—God pardon it! — have done,
To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
An plant this thorn, this canker, Bolingbroke?
And shall it in more shame be further spoken,
That you are fool'd, discarded and shook off
By him for whom these shames ye underwent?
No; yet time serves wherein you may redeem
Your banish'd honours and restore yourselves
Into the good thoughts of the world again,
Revenge the jeering and disdain'd contempt
Of this proud king, who studies day and night
To answer all the debt he owes to you
Even with the bloody payment of your deaths:
Therefore, I say —

Earl of Worcester

Peace, cousin, say no more:
And now I will unclasp a secret book,
And to your quick-conceiving discontents
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As full of peril and adventurous spirit
As to o'er-walk a current roaring loud

On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.

Hotspur

If he fall in, good night! or sink or swim:
Send danger from the east unto the west,
So honour cross it from the north to south,
And let them grapple: O, the blood more stirs
To rouse a lion than to start a hare!

Northumberland

Imagination of some great exploit
Drives him beyond the bounds of patience.

Hotspur

By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced
moon,
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks;
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear
Without corrival, all her dignities:
But out upon this half-faced fellowship!

Earl of Worcester

He apprehends a world of figures here,
But not the form of what he should attend.
Good cousin, give me audience for a while.

Hotspur

I cry you mercy.

Earl of Worcester

Those same noble Scots
That are your prisoners, —

Hotspur

I'll keep them all;
By God, he shall not have a Scot of them;
No, if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not:
I'll keep them, by this hand.

Earl of Worcester

You start away
And lend no ear unto my purposes.
Those prisoners you shall keep.

Hotspur

Nay, I will; that's flat:
He said he would not ransom Mortimer;
Forbad my tongue to speak of Mortimer;
But I will find him when he lies asleep,
And in his ear I'll holla 'Mortimer!'
Nay,
I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
Nothing but 'Mortimer,' and give it him
To keep his anger still in motion.

Earl of Worcester

Hear you, cousin; a word.

Hotspur

All studies here I solemnly defy,
Save how to gall and pinch this Bolingbroke:
And that same sword-and-buckler Prince of
Wales,
But that I think his father loves him not
And would be glad he met with some mischance,
I would have him poison'd with a pot of ale.

Earl of Worcester

Farewell, kinsman: I'll talk to you
When you are better temper'd to attend.

Northumberland

Why, what a wasp-stung and impatient fool
Art thou to break into this woman's mood,
Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own!

Hotspur

Why, look you, I am whipp'd and scourged with
rods,
Nettled and stung with pismires, when I hear
Of this vile politician, Bolingbroke.
In Richard's time, — what do you call the
place? —

A plague upon it, it is in Gloucestershire;
'Twas where the madcap duke his uncle kept,
His uncle York; where I first bow'd my knee
Unto this king of smiles, this Bolingbroke, —
'Sblood! —
When you and he came back from Ravenspurgh.

Northumberland

At Berkley castle.

Hotspur

You say true:
Why, what a candy deal of courtesy
This fawning greyhound then did proffer me!
Look, 'when his infant fortune came to age,'
And 'gentle Harry Percy,' and 'kind cousin,'
O, the devil take such cozeners! God forgive me!
Good uncle, tell your tale; I have done.

Earl of Worcester

Nay, if you have not, to it again;
We will stay your leisure.

Hotspur

I have done, i' faith.

Earl of Worcester

Then once more to your Scottish prisoners.

Deliver them up without their ransom straight,
And make the Douglas' son your only mean
For powers in Scotland; which, for divers reasons
Which I shall send you written, be assured,
Will easily be granted. You, my lord,

To Northumberland.

Your son in Scotland being thus employ'd,
Shall secretly into the bosom creep
Of that same noble prelate, well beloved,
The archbishop.

Hotspur

Of York, is it not?

Earl of Worcester

True; who bears hard
His brother's death at Bristol, the Lord Scroop.
I speak not this in estimation,
As what I think might be, but what I know
Is ruminated, plotted and set down,
And only stays but to behold the face
Of that occasion that shall bring it on.

Hotspur

I smell it: upon my life, it will do well.

Northumberland

Before the game is afoot, thou still let'st slip.

Hotspur

Why, it cannot choose but be a noble plot;
And then the power of Scotland and of York,
To join with Mortimer, ha?

Earl of Worcester

And so they shall.

Hotspur

In faith, it is exceedingly well aim'd.

Earl of Worcester

And 'tis no little reason bids us speed,
To save our heads by raising of a head;
For, bear ourselves as even as we can,
The king will always think him in our debt,
And think we think ourselves unsatisfied,
Till he hath found a time to pay us home:
And see already how he doth begin
To make us strangers to his looks of love.

Hotspur

He does, he does: we'll be revenged on him.

Earl of Worcester

Cousin, farewell: no further go in this
Than I by letters shall direct your course.
When time is ripe, which will be suddenly,
I'll steal to Glendower and Lord Mortimer;
Where you and Douglas and our powers at once,
As I will fashion it, shall happily meet,
To bear our fortunes in our own strong arms,
Which now we hold at much uncertainty.

Northumberland

Farewell, good brother: we shall thrive, I trust.

Hotspur

Uncle, Adieu: O, let the hours be short
Till fields and blows and groans applaud our
sport!

Exeunt.

Act II

Scene I

Rochester. An inn yard.

Enter a Carrier with a lantern in his hand.

First Carrier

Heigh-ho! an it be not four by the day, I'll be hanged: Charles' wain is over the new chimney, and yet our horse not packed. What, ostler!

Ostler [*Within*]

Anon, anon.

First Carrier

I prithee, Tom, beat Cut's saddle, put a few flocks in the point; poor jade, is wrung in the withers out of all cress.

Enter another Carrier.

Second Carrier

Peas and beans are as dank here as a dog, and that is the next way to give poor jades the bots: this house is turned upside down since Robin Ostler died.

First Carrier

Poor fellow, never joyed since the price of oats
rose; it was the death of him.

Second Carrier

I think this be the most villanous house in all
London road for fleas: I am stung like a tench.

First Carrier

Like a tench! by the mass, there is ne'er a king
christen could be better bit than I have been since
the first cock.

Second Carrier

Why, they will allow us ne'er a jordan, and then
we
leak in your chimney; and your chamber-lie
breeds
fleas like a loach.

First Carrier

What, ostler! come away and be hanged!

Second Carrier

I have a gammon of bacon and two razors of
ginger,
to be delivered as far as Charing-cross.

First Carrier

God's body! the turkeys in my pannier are quite starved. What, ostler! A plague on thee! hast thou never an eye in thy head? canst not hear? An 'twere not as good deed as drink, to break the pate on thee, I am a very villain. Come, and be hanged! hast thou no faith in thee?

Enter Gadshill.

Gadshill

Good morrow, carriers. What's o'clock?

First Carrier

I think it be two o'clock.

Gadshill

I pray thee lend me thy lantern, to see my gelding in the stable.

First Carrier

Nay, by God, soft; I know a trick worth two of that, i' faith.

Gadshill

I pray thee, lend me thine.