

by William Shakespeare

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

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

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

PRINCE. No; thou shalt.

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

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

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

PRINCE. For obtaining of suits?

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

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

FAL. Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

PRINCE. What say'st thou to a hare, or the melancholy of Moor-ditch?

FAL. Thou hast the most unsavoury similes, and art, indeed, the most comparative, rascaliest, sweet young prince,—But, Hal, I pr'ythee 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 mark'd him not; and yet he talk'd very wisely,—but I regarded him not; and yet he talk'd wisely, and in the street too.

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

You were about to speak.

NORTH. 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 misprision Is guilty of this fault, and not my son.

HOT. 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, 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 corpse 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, Out of my grief and my impatience To be so pester'd with a popinjay, Answer'd neglectingly, I know not what,— He should, or he should not; but 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 villainous 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 answered indirectly, as I said; And I beseech you, let not his report Come current for an accusation Betwixt my love and your high Majesty.

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

KING. 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,

Mortimer As high i' the air as this unthankful King, As this ingrate and canker'd Bolingbroke.

NORTH.

[To Worcester.]

Brother, the King hath made your nephew mad.

WOR. Who struck this heat up after I was gone?

HOT. 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.

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

NORTH. 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.

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

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

NORTH. He did; myself did hear it.

HOT. Nay, then I cannot blame his cousin King, That wish'd 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,

VINT. What, stand'st thou still, and hear'st such a calling? Look to the guests within. [Exit Francis.]—My lord, old Sir John, with half-a-dozen more, are at the door: shall I let them in?

PRINCE. Let them alone awhile, and then open the door.

[Exit Vintner.]

Pointz!

[Re-enter Pointz.]

POINTZ. Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE. Sirrah, Falstaff and the rest of the thieves are at the door: shall we be merry?

POINTZ. As merry as crickets, my lad. But hark ye; what cunning match have you made with this jest of the drawer? Come, what's the issue?

PRINCE. I am now of all humours that have showed themselves humours since the old days of good King Adam to the present age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight.—What's o'clock, Francis?

FRAN. [Within.] Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE. That ever this fellow should have fewer words than a parrot, and yet the son of a woman! His industry is up-stairs and down-stairs; his eloquence the parcel of a reckoning. I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the North; he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife, Fie upon this quiet life! I want work. O my sweet Harry, says she, how many hast thou kill'd to-day? Give my roan horse a drench, says he; and answers, Some fourteen, an hour after,—a trifle, a trifle. I pr'ythee, call in Falstaff: I'll play Percy, and that damn'd brawn shall play Dame Mortimer his wife. Rivo! says the drunkard. Call in ribs, call in tallow.

[Enter Falstaff, Gadshill, Bardolph, and Peto; followed by Francis with wine.]

POINTZ. Welcome, Jack: where hast thou been?

PRINCE. Hot livers and cold purses.

BARD. Cholera, my lord, if rightly taken.

PRINCE. No, if rightly taken, halter.—Here comes lean Jack, here comes bare-bone.—

[Enter Falstaff.]

How now, my sweet creature of bombast! How long is't ago, Jack, since thou saw'st thine own knee?

FAL. My own knee! when I was about thy years, Hal, I was not an eagle's talon in the waist; I could have crept into any alderman's thumb-ring: a plague of sighing and grief! it blows a man up like a bladder. There's villainous news abroad: here was Sir John Bracy from your father; you must go to the Court in the morning. That same mad fellow of the North, Fen, and he of Wales, that gave Amaimon the bastinado, and swore the Devil his true legeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook,—what a plague call you him?

POINTEZ, O' Cendower.

FAL. Owen, Owen,—the same; and his son-in-law Mortimer; and old Northumberland; and that sprightly Scot of Scots, Douglas, that runs o' horseback up a hill perpendicular,—

PRINCE. He that rides at high speed and with his pistol kills a sparrow flying.

FAL. You have hit it.

PRINCE. So did he never the sparrow.

FAL. Well, that rascal hath good metal in him; he will not run.

PRINCE. Why, what a rascal art thou, then, to praise him so for running!

FAL. O' horseback, ye cuckoo! but a-foot he will not budge a foot.

PRINCE. Yes, Jack, upon instinct.

[Enter Sheriff and Carrier.]

Now, master sheriff, what's your will with me?

SHER. First, pardon me, my lord. A hue-and-cry Hath followed certain men unto this house.

PRINCE. What men?

SHER. One of them is well known, my gracious lord,— A gross fat man.

CAR. As fat as butter.

PRINCE. The man, I do assure you, is not here; For I myself at this time have employ'd him. And, sheriff, I will engage my word to thee, That I will, by to-morrow dinner-time, Send him to answer thee, or any man, For any thing he shall be charged withal: And so, let me entreat you leave the house.

SHER. I will, my lord. There are two gentlemen, that in this robbery lost three hundred marks.

PRINCE. It may be so; if he have robb'd these men, He shall be answerable; and so, farrowell.

SHER. Good night, my noble lord.

PRINCE. I think it is good morrow, is it not?

SHER. Indeed, my lord, I think't be two o'clock.

[Exit Sheriff and Carrier.]

PRINCE. This oily rascal is known as well as Paul's. Go, call him forth.

POINTZ. Falstaff!—fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like a horse.

PRINCE. Hark, how hard he fetches breath. Search his pockets.

[Pointz searches.]

What hast thou found?

HOT. I do not care: I'll give thrice so much land To any well-deserving friend;
But in the way of bargain, mark ye me, I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair. Are
the indentures drawn? shall we be gone? GLEND.

The Moon shines fair; you may away by night: I'll in and haste the writer, and
withal Break with your wives of your departure hence: I am afraid my daughter
will run mad, So much she doteth on her Mortimer.

[Exit.]

MORT. Fie, cousin Percy! how you cross my father!

HOT. I cannot choose: sometimes he angers me With telling me of the moldwarp
and the ant, Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies, And of a dragon and a
finless fish, A clip-wing'd griffin and a moulted raven, A couching lion and a
ramping cat, And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff As puts me from my
faith. I tell you what, He held me last night at the least nine hours In reckoning
up the several devils' names That were his lacqueys: I loved him, and well, But
mark'd him not a word. O, he's as tedious As a red horse, a railing wife; Worse
than a smoky house: I had rather live With cheese and garlic in a windmill, far,
Than feed on cates and have him talk to me In any summer-house in
Christendom.

MORT. In faith, he is a worthy gentleman; Exceedingly well-read, and profited
In strange concealments; valiant as a lion, And wondrous affable, and as
bountiful As mines of India. Shall I tell you, cousin? He holds your temper in a
high respect, And curbs himself even of his natural scope When you do cross his
humour; faith, he does: I warrant you, that man is not alive Might so have
tempted him as you have done, Without the taste of danger and reproof: But do
not use it oft, let me entreat you.

WOR. In faith, my lord, you are too wilful-blunt; And since your coming hither
have done enough To put him quite beside his patience. You must needs learn,
lord, to amend this fault: Though sometimes it show greatness, courage, blood—
And that's the dearest grace it renders you,— Yet oftentimes it doth present
harsh rage, Defect of manners, want of government, Pride, haughtiness, opinion,
and disdain; The least of which haunting a nobleman Loseth men's hearts, and
leaves behind a stain Upon the beauty of all parts besides, Beguiling them of

Come, Kate, I'll have your song too.

LADY P. Not mine, in good sooth.

HOT. Not yours, in good sooth! 'Heart! you swear like a comfit-maker's wife. Not mine, in good sooth; and, As true as I live; and, As God shall mend me; and, As sure as day; And givest such sarcenet surety for thy oaths, As if thou ne'er walk'dst further than Finsbury. Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art, A good mouth-filling oath; and leave in sooth, And such protest of pepper-gingerbread, To velvet-guards and Sunday-citizens. Come, sing.

LADY P. I will not sing.

HOT. 'Tis the next way to turn tailor, or be redbreast-teacher. An the indentures be drawn, I'll away within these two hours; and so, come in when ye will.

[Exit.]

GLEND. Come, come, Lord Mortimer; you are as slow As hot Lord Percy is on fire to go. By this our book's drawn; we'll put seal, and then To horse immediately.

MORT. With all my heart.

[Exeunt.]

Scene II. London. A Room in the Palace.

[Enter King Henry, Prince Henry, and Lords.]

KING. Lords, give us leave; the Prince of Wales and I Must have some private conference: but be near at hand, For we shall presently have need of you.

[Exeunt Lords.]

BARD. Indeed, Sir John, you said so.

FAL. Yea, if he said my ring was copper.

PRINCE. I say 'tis copper: darest thou be as good as thy word now?

FAL. Why, Hal, thou know'st, as thou art but man, I dare; but as thou art prince, I fear thee as I fear the roaring of the lion's whelp.

PRINCE. And why not as the lion?

FAL. The King himself is to be feared as the lion: dost thou think I'll fear thee as I fear thy father? nay, an I do, I pray God my girdle break.

PRINCE. Sirrah, there's no room for faith, truth, nor honesty in this bosom of thine; it is all fill'd up with midriff. Charge an honest woman with picking thy pocket! why, thou whoreson, impudent, emboss'd rascal, if there were anything in thy pocket but tavern-reckonings, and one poor pennyworth of sugar-candy to make thee long-winded,—if thy pocket were fill'd with any other injuries but these, I am a villain: and yet you will stand to it; you will not pocket-up wrong. Art thou not ashamed!

FAL. Dost thou hear, Hal? thou know'st, in the state of innocency Adam fell; and what should poor Jack Falstaff do in the days of villainy? Thou see'st I have more flesh than another man; and therefore more frailty. You confess, then, you pick'd my pocket?

PRINCE.

It appears so by the story.

FAL. Hostess, I forgive thee: go, make ready breakfast; love thy husband, look to thy servants, cherish thy guests: thou shalt find me tractable to any honest reason; thou see'st I am pacified.—Still? Nay, pr'ythee, be gone.

[Exit Hostess.]

Now, Hal, to the news at Court: for the robbery, lad, how is that answered?

PRINCE. O, my sweet beef, I must still be good angel to thee: the money is paid

HOT. Nay, you strain too far. I, rather, of his absence make this use: It lends a lustre and more great opinion, A larger dare to our great enterprise, Than if the earl were here; for men must think, If we, without his help, can make a head To push against the kingdom, with his help We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down. Yet all goes well, yet all our joints are whole.

DOUG. As heart can think: there is not such a word Spoke in Scotland as this term of fear.

[Enter Sir Richard Vernon.]

HOT. My cousin Vernon! welcome, by my soul.

VER. Pray God my news be worth a welcome, lord. The Earl of Westmoreland, seven thousand strong, Is marching hitherwards; with him Prince John.

HOT. No harm: what more?

VER. And further, I have learn'd The King himself in person is set forth, Or hitherwards intended speedily, With strong and mighty preparation.

HOT. He shall be welcome too. Where is his son, The nimble-footed madcap Prince of Wales, And his companions, that daff the world aside, And bid it pass?

VER. All furnish'd, all in arms; All plumed like estridges that with the wind Bate it; like eagles having lately bathed; Glittering in golden coats, like images; As full of spirit as the month of May And gorgeous as the Sun at midsummer; Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls. I saw young Harry—with his beaver on, His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly arm'd— Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury, And vault it with such ease into his seat, As if an angel dropp'd down from the clouds, To turn and wind a fiery Pegasus, And witch the world with noble horsemanship.

HOT. No more, no more: worse than the Sun in March, This praise doth nourish agues. Let them come; They come like sacrifices in their trim, And to the fire-eyed maid of smoky war, All hot and bleeding, will we offer them: The mailed Mars shall on his altar sit Up to the ears in blood. I am on fire To hear this rich reprisal is so nigh, And yet not ours.—Come, let me taste my horse, Who is to bear me, like a thunderbolt, Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales: Harry and Harry shall, hot horse to horse, Meet, and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.

[Exit.]

FAL. If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the King's press damnably. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press'd me none but good householders, yeomen's sons; inquired me out contracted bachelors, such as had been ask'd twice on the banns; such a commodity of warm slaves as had as lief hear the Devil as a drum; such as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl or a hurt wild-duck. I press'd me none but such toasts-and-butter, with hearts in their bodies no bigger than pins'-heads, and they have bought out their services; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores; and such as, indeed, were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving-men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen; the cankers of a calm world and a long peace; ten times more dishonourable ragged than an old faced ancient: and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered Prodigals, lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A mad fellow met me on the way, and told me I had unloaded all the gibbet, and press'd the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat: nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on; for, indeed, I had the most of them out of prison. There's but a shirt and a half in all my company; and the half-shirt is two napkins tack'd together and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host at Saint Alban's, or the red-nose innkeeper of Daventry. But that's all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge.

[Enter Prince Henry and Westmoreland.]

PRINCE. How now, blown Jack! how now, quilt!

FAL. What, Hal! how now, mad wag! what a devil dost thou in Warwickshire?— My good Lord of Westmoreland, I cry you mercy: I thought your honour had already been at Shrewsbury.

WEST. Faith, Sir John, 'tis more than time that I were there, and you too; but my powers are there already. The King, I can tell you, looks for us all: we must away all, to-night.

SIR M. My good lord, I guess their tenour.

ARCH. Like enough you do. To-morrow, good Sir Michael, is a day Wherein the fortune of ten thousand men Must bide the touch; for, sir, at Shrewsbury, As I am truly given to understand, The King, with mighty and quick-raised power, Meets with Lord Harry: and, I fear, Sir Michael, What with the sickness of Northumberland, Whose power was in the first proportion, And what with Owen Glendower's absence thence, Who with them was a rated sinew too, And comes not in, o'er-rul'd by prophecies,— I fear the power of Percy is too weak To wage an instant trial with the King.

SIR M. Why, my good lord, you need not fear; There's Douglas and Lord Mortimer.

ARCH. No, Mortimer's not there.

SIR M. But there is Mordake, Vernon, Lord Harry Percy, And there is my Lord of Worcester; and a head Of gallant warriors, noble gentlemen.

ARCH. And so there is: but yet the King hath drawn The special head of all the land together; The Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster, The noble Westmoreland, and a valiant Blunt; And many more corrivals and dear men Of estimation and commandment.

SIR M. Doubt not, my lord, they shall be well opposed.

ARCH. I hope no less, yet needful 'tis to fear; And, to prevent the worst, Sir Michael, speed: For if Lord Percy thrive not, ere the King Dismiss his power, he means to visit us, For he hath heard of our confederacy; And 'tis but wisdom to make strong against him: Therefore make haste. I must go write again To other friends; and so, farewell, Sir Michael.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V.

Scene I. The King's Camp near Shrewsbury.

BLUNT. I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot; And thou shalt find a king that will revenge Lord Stafford's death.

[They fight, and Blunt is slain. Enter Hotspur.]

HOT. O Douglas, hadst thou fought at Holmedon thus, I never had triumphed o'er a Scot.

DOUG. All's done, all's won; here breathless lies the King.

HOT. Where?

DOUG. Here.

HOT. This, Douglas? no; I know this face full well: A gallant knight he was, his name was Blunt; Semblably furnish'd like the King himself.

DOUG. A fool go with thy soul, where'er it goes! A borrow'd title hast thou bought too dear: Why didst thou tell me that thou wert a king?

HOT. The King hath many mourning in his coats.

DOUG. Now, by my sword, I will kill all his coats; I'll murder all his wardrobe piece by piece, Until I meet the King.

HOT. Up, and away! Our soldiers stand full fairly for the day.

[Exeunt.]

[Alarums. Enter Falstaff.]

FAL. Though I could 'scape shot-free at London, I fear the shot here; here's no scoring but upon the pate.—Soft! who are you? Sir Walter Blunt: there's honour for you! here's no vanity! I am as hot as molten lead, and as heavy too: God keep lead out of me! I need no more weight than mine own bowels. I have led my ragamuffins where they are peppered: there's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive; and they are for the town's end, to beg during life. But who comes here?

[Enter Prince Henry.]

WOR. What I have done my safety urged me to; And I embrace this fortune patiently, Since not to be avoided it fails on me.

KING. Bear Worcester to the death, and Vernon too: Other offenders we will pause upon.—

[Exeunt Worcester and Vernon, guarded.]

How goes the field?

PRINCE. The noble Scot, Lord Douglas, when he saw The fortune of the day quite turn'd from him, The noble Percy slain, and all his men Upon the foot of fear, fled with the rest; And, falling from a hill, he was so bruised That the pursuers took him. At my tent The Douglas is: and I beseech your Grace I may dispose of him.

KING. With all my heart.

PRINCE. Then, brother John of Lancaster, to you This honourable bounty shall belong: Go to the Douglas, and deliver him Up to his pleasure, ransomless and free: His valour, shown upon our crests to-day, Hath taught us how to cherish such high deeds: Even in the bosom of our adversaries.

KING. Then this remains, that we divide our power.— You, son John, and my cousin Westmoreland, Towards York shall bend you with your dearest speed, To meet Northumberland and the prelate Scroop, Who, as we hear, are busily in arms: Myself,—and you, son Harry,—will towards Wales, To fight with Glendower and the Earl of March. Rebellion in this land shall lose his sway, Meeting the check of such another day; And since this business so fair is done, Let us not leave till all our own be won.

[Exeunt.]

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