

ACT IV

SCENE I. The rebel camp near Shrewsbury.

Enter HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, and DOUGLAS

HOTSPUR

Well said, my noble Scot: if speaking truth
In this fine age were not thought flattery,
Such attribution should the Douglas have,
As not a soldier of this season's stamp
Should go so general current through the world.
By God, I cannot flatter; I do defy
The tongues of soothers; but a braver place
In my heart's love hath no man than yourself:
Nay, task me to my word; approve me, lord.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

Thou art the king of honour:
No man so potent breathes upon the ground
But I will beard him.

HOTSPUR

Do so, and 'tis well.

Enter a Messenger with letters

What letters hast thou there?--I can but thank you.

Messenger

These letters come from your father.

HOTSPUR

Letters from him! why comes he not himself?

Messenger

He cannot come, my lord; he is grievous sick.

HOTSPUR

'Zounds! how has he the leisure to be sick
In such a rustling time? Who leads his power?
Under whose government come they along?

Messenger

His letters bear his mind, not I, my lord.

EARL OF WORCESTER

I prithee, tell me, doth he keep his bed?

Messenger

He did, my lord, four days ere I set forth;
And at the time of my departure thence
He was much fear'd by his physicians.

EARL OF WORCESTER

I would the state of time had first been whole
Ere he by sickness had been visited:
His health was never better worth than now.

HOTSPUR

Sick now! droop now! this sickness doth infect
The very life-blood of our enterprise;
'Tis catching hither, even to our camp.
He writes me here, that inward sickness--
And that his friends by deputation could not
So soon be drawn, nor did he think it meet
To lay so dangerous and dear a trust
On any soul removed but on his own.
Yet doth he give us bold advertisement,
That with our small conjunction we should on,
To see how fortune is disposed to us;
For, as he writes, there is no quailing now.
Because the king is certainly possess'd
Of all our purposes. What say you to it?

EARL OF WORCESTER

Your father's sickness is a maim to us.

HOTSPUR

A perilous gash, a very limb lopp'd off:
And yet, in faith, it is not; his present want
Seems more than we shall find it: were it good
To set the exact wealth of all our states
All at one cast? to set so rich a main
On the nice hazard of one doubtful hour?
It were not good; for therein should we read
The very bottom and the soul of hope,
The very list, the very utmost bound
Of all our fortunes.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

'Faith, and so we should;
Where now remains a sweet reversion:
We may boldly spend upon the hope of what

Is to come in:

A comfort of retirement lives in this.

HOTSPUR

A rendezvous, a home to fly unto.

If that the devil and mischance look big

Upon the maidenhead of our affairs.

EARL OF WORCESTER

But yet I would your father had been here.

The quality and hair of our attempt

Brooks no division: it will be thought

By some, that know not why he is away,

That wisdom, loyalty and mere dislike

Of our proceedings kept the earl from hence:

And think how such an apprehension

May turn the tide of fearful faction

And breed a kind of question in our cause;

For well you know we of the offering side

Must keep aloof from strict arbitrement,

And stop all sight-holes, every loop from whence

The eye of reason may pry in upon us:

This absence of your father's draws a curtain,

That shows the ignorant a kind of fear

Before not dreamt of.

HOTSPUR

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 a kingdom, with his help

We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down.

Yet all goes well, yet all our joints are whole.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

As heart can think: there is not such a word

Spoke of in Scotland as this term of fear.

Enter SIR RICHARD VERNON

HOTSPUR

My cousin Vernon, welcome, by my soul.

VERNON

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

HOTSPUR

No harm: what more?

VERNON

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

HOTSPUR

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

VERNON

All furnish'd, all in arms;
All plumed like estridges that with the wind
Baited 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 vaulted 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.

HOTSPUR

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 to Harry shall, hot horse to horse,
Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corse.
O that Glendower were come!

VERNON

There is more news:
I learn'd in Worcester, as I rode along,
He cannot draw his power this fourteen days.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

That's the worst tidings that I hear of yet.

WORCESTER

Ay, by my faith, that bears a frosty sound.

HOTSPUR

What may the king's whole battle reach unto?

VERNON

To thirty thousand.

HOTSPUR

Forty let it be:
My father and Glendower being both away,
The powers of us may serve so great a day
Come, let us take a muster speedily:
Doomsday is near; die all, die merrily.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

Talk not of dying: I am out of fear
Of death or death's hand for this one-half year.

Exeunt

SCENE II. A public road near Coventry.

Enter FALSTAFF and BARDOLPH

FALSTAFF

Bardolph, get thee before to Coventry; fill me a
bottle of sack: our soldiers shall march through;
we'll to Sutton Co'fil' tonight.

BARDOLPH

Will you give me money, captain?

FALSTAFF

Lay out, lay out.

BARDOLPH

This bottle makes an angel.

FALSTAFF

An if it do, take it for thy labour; and if it make twenty, take them all; I'll answer the coinage. Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at town's end.

BARDOLPH

I will, captain: farewell.

Exit

FALSTAFF

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 me none but good house-holders, yeoman's sons; inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns; such a commodity of warm slaves, as had as lieve 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 pressed me none but such toasts-and-butter, with hearts in their bellies 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 gibbets and pressed 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 tacked together and thrown over the shoulders like an 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 the PRINCE and WESTMORELAND

PRINCE HENRY

How now, blown Jack! how now, quilt!

FALSTAFF

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.

WESTMORELAND

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 night.

FALSTAFF

Tut, never fear me: I am as vigilant as a cat to steal cream.

PRINCE HENRY

I think, to steal cream indeed, for thy theft hath already made thee butter. But tell me, Jack, whose fellows are these that come after?

FALSTAFF

Mine, Hal, mine.

PRINCE HENRY

I did never see such pitiful rascals.

FALSTAFF

Tut, tut; good enough to toss; food for powder, food

for powder; they'll fill a pit as well as better:
tush, man, mortal men, mortal men.

WESTMORELAND

Ay, but, Sir John, methinks they are exceeding poor
and bare, too beggarly.

FALSTAFF

'Faith, for their poverty, I know not where they had
that; and for their bareness, I am sure they never
learned that of me.

PRINCE HENRY

No I'll be sworn; unless you call three fingers on
the ribs bare. But, sirrah, make haste: Percy is
already in the field.

FALSTAFF

What, is the king encamped?

WESTMORELAND

He is, Sir John: I fear we shall stay too long.

FALSTAFF

Well,
To the latter end of a fray and the beginning of a feast
Fits a dull fighter and a keen guest.

Exeunt

SCENE III. The rebel camp near Shrewsbury.

Enter HOTSPUR, WORCESTER, DOUGLAS, and VERNON

HOTSPUR

We'll fight with him to-night.

EARL OF WORCESTER

It may not be.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

You give him then the advantage.

VERNON

Not a whit.

HOTSPUR

Why say you so? looks he not for supply?

VERNON

So do we.

HOTSPUR

His is certain, ours is doubtful.

EARL OF WORCESTER

Good cousin, be advised; stir not tonight.

VERNON

Do not, my lord.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

You do not counsel well:

You speak it out of fear and cold heart.

VERNON

Do me no slander, Douglas: by my life,

And I dare well maintain it with my life,

If well-respected honour bid me on,

I hold as little counsel with weak fear

As you, my lord, or any Scot that this day lives:

Let it be seen to-morrow in the battle

Which of us fears.

EARL OF DOUGLAS

Yea, or to-night.

VERNON

Content.

HOTSPUR

To-night, say I.

VERNON

Come, come it nay not be. I wonder much,

Being men of such great leading as you are,

That you foresee not what impediments

Drag back our expedition: certain horse

Of my cousin Vernon's are not yet come up:

Your uncle Worcester's horse came but today;

And now their pride and mettle is asleep,

Their courage with hard labour tame and dull,

That not a horse is half the half of himself.

HOTSPUR

So are the horses of the enemy
In general, journey-bated and brought low:
The better part of ours are full of rest.

EARL OF WORCESTER

The number of the king exceedeth ours:
For God's sake. cousin, stay till all come in.

The trumpet sounds a parley

Enter SIR WALTER BLUNT

SIR WALTER BLUNT

I come with gracious offers from the king,
if you vouchsafe me hearing and respect.

HOTSPUR

Welcome, Sir Walter Blunt; and would to God
You were of our determination!
Some of us love you well; and even those some
Envy your great deservings and good name,
Because you are not of our quality,
But stand against us like an enemy.

SIR WALTER BLUNT

And God defend but still I should stand so,
So long as out of limit and true rule
You stand against anointed majesty.
But to my charge. The king hath sent to know
The nature of your griefs, and whereupon
You conjure from the breast of civil peace
Such bold hostility, teaching his duteous land
Audacious cruelty. If that the king
Have any way your good deserts forgot,
Which he confesseth to be manifold,
He bids you name your griefs; and with all speed
You shall have your desires with interest
And pardon absolute for yourself and these
Herein misled by your suggestion.

HOTSPUR

The king is kind; and well we know the king
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay.
My father and my uncle and myself

Did give him that same royalty he wears;
And when he was not six and twenty strong,
Sick in the world's regard, wretched and low,
A poor unminded outlaw sneaking home,
My father gave him welcome to the shore;
And when he heard him swear and vow to God
He came but to be Duke of Lancaster,
To sue his livery and beg his peace,
With tears of innocency and terms of zeal,
My father, in kind heart and pity moved,
Swore him assistance and perform'd it too.
Now when the lords and barons of the realm
Perceived Northumberland did lean to him,
The more and less came in with cap and knee;
Met him in boroughs, cities, villages,
Attended him on bridges, stood in lanes,
Laid gifts before him, proffer'd him their oaths,
Gave him their heirs, as pages follow'd him
Even at the heels in golden multitudes.
He presently, as greatness knows itself,
Steps me a little higher than his vow
Made to my father, while his blood was poor,
Upon the naked shore at Ravenspurgh;
And now, forsooth, takes on him to reform
Some certain edicts and some strait decrees
That lie too heavy on the commonwealth,
Cries out upon abuses, seems to weep
Over his country's wrongs; and by this face,
This seeming brow of justice, did he win
The hearts of all that he did angle for;
Proceeded further; cut me off the heads
Of all the favourites that the absent king
In deputation left behind him here,
When he was personal in the Irish war.

SIR WALTER BLUNT

Tut, I came not to hear this.

HOTSPUR

Then to the point.

In short time after, he deposed the king;
Soon after that, deprived him of his life;
And in the neck of that, task'd the whole state:
To make that worse, suffer'd his kinsman March,
Who is, if every owner were well placed,
Indeed his king, to be engaged in Wales,

There without ransom to lie forfeited;
Disgraced me in my happy victories,
Sought to entrap me by intelligence;
Rated mine uncle from the council-board;
In rage dismiss'd my father from the court;
Broke oath on oath, committed wrong on wrong,
And in conclusion drove us to seek out
This head of safety; and withal to pry
Into his title, the which we find
Too indirect for long continuance.

SIR WALTER BLUNT

Shall I return this answer to the king?

HOTSPUR

Not so, Sir Walter: we'll withdraw awhile.
Go to the king; and let there be impawn'd
Some surety for a safe return again,
And in the morning early shall my uncle
Bring him our purposes: and so farewell.

SIR WALTER BLUNT

I would you would accept of grace and love.

HOTSPUR

And may be so we shall.

SIR WALTER BLUNT

Pray God you do.

Exeunt

SCENE IV. York. The ARCHBISHOP'S palace.

Enter the ARCHBISHOP OF YORK and SIR MICHAEL

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

Hie, good Sir Michael; bear this sealed brief
With winged haste to the lord marshal;
This to my cousin Scroop, and all the rest
To whom they are directed. If you knew
How much they do to import, you would make haste.

SIR MICHAEL

My good lord,
I guess their tenor.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

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-ruled by prophecies,
I fear the power of Percy is too weak
To wage an instant trial with the king.

SIR MICHAEL

Why, my good lord, you need not fear;
There is Douglas and Lord Mortimer.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

No, Mortimer is not there.

SIR MICHAEL

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

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

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 warlike Blunt;
And moe corrivals and dear men
Of estimation and command in arms.

SIR MICHAEL

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

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

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