

# The Second part of King Henry the Fourth

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## SCENE II. London. Another street.

*Enter PRINCE HENRY and POINS*

### PRINCE HENRY

Before God, I am exceeding weary.

### POINS

Is't come to that? I had thought weariness durst not have attached one of so high blood.

### PRINCE HENRY

Faith, it does me; though it discolours the complexion of my greatness to acknowledge it. Doth it not show vilely in me to desire small beer?

### POINS

Why, a prince should not be so loosely studied as to remember so weak a composition.

### PRINCE HENRY

Belike then my appetite was not princely got; for, by my troth, I do now remember the poor creature, small beer. But, indeed, these humble considerations make me out of love with my greatness. What a disgrace is it to me to remember thy name! or to know thy face to-morrow! or to take note how many pair of silk stockings thou hast, viz. these, and those that were thy peach-coloured ones! or to bear the inventory of thy shirts, as, one for superfluity, and another for use! But that the tennis-court-keeper knows better than I; for it is a low ebb of linen with thee when thou keepest not racket there; as thou hast not done a great while, because the rest of thy low countries have made a shift to eat up thy holland: and God knows, whether those that bawl out the ruins of thy linen shall inherit his kingdom: but the midwives say the children are not in the fault; whereupon the world increases, and kindreds are mightily strengthened.

### POINS

How ill it follows, after you have laboured so hard, you should talk so idly! Tell me, how many good young princes would do so, their fathers being so sick as yours at this time is?

### PRINCE HENRY

Shall I tell thee one thing, Poins?

### POINS

Yes, faith; and let it be an excellent good thing.

### PRINCE HENRY

It shall serve among wits of no higher breeding than thine.

### POINS

Go to; I stand the push of your one thing that you will tell.

### PRINCE HENRY

Marry, I tell thee, it is not meet that I should be sad, now my father is sick: albeit I could tell thee, as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better, to call my friend, I could be sad, and sad indeed too.

**POINS**

Very hardly upon such a subject.

**PRINCE HENRY**

By this hand thou thinkest me as far in the devil's book as thou and Falstaff for obduracy and persistency: let the end try the man. But I tell thee, my heart bleeds inwardly that my father is so sick: and keeping such vile company as thou art hath in reason taken from me all ostentation of sorrow.

**POINS**

The reason?

**PRINCE HENRY**

What wouldst thou think of me, if I should weep?

**POINS**

I would think thee a most princely hypocrite.

**PRINCE HENRY**

It would be every man's thought; and thou art a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks: never a man's thought in the world keeps the road-way better than thine: every man would think me an hypocrite indeed. And what accites your most worshipful thought to think so?

**POINS**

Why, because you have been so lewd and so much engrafted to Falstaff.

**PRINCE HENRY**

And to thee.

**POINS**

By this light, I am well spoke on; I can hear it with my own ears: the worst that they can say of me is that I am a second brother and that I am a proper fellow of my hands; and those two things, I confess, I cannot help. By the mass, here comes Bardolph.

*Enter BARDOLPH and Page*

**PRINCE HENRY**

And the boy that I gave Falstaff: a' had him from me Christian; and look, if the fat villain have not transformed him ape.

**BARDOLPH**

God save your grace!

**PRINCE HENRY**

And yours, most noble Bardolph!

**BARDOLPH**

Come, you virtuous ass, you bashful fool, must you be blushing? wherefore blush you now? What a maidenly man-at-arms are you become! Is't such a matter to get a pottle-pot's maidenhead?

**Page**

A' calls me e'en now, my lord, through a red lattice, and I could discern no part of his face from the window: at last I spied his eyes, and methought he had made two holes in the ale-wife's new petticoat and so peeped through.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Has not the boy profited?

**BARDOLPH**

Away, you whoreson upright rabbit, away!

**Page**

Away, you rascally Althaea's dream, away!

**PRINCE HENRY**

Instruct us, boy; what dream, boy?

**Page**

Marry, my lord, Althaea dreamed she was delivered of a fire-brand; and therefore I call him her dream.

**PRINCE HENRY**

A crown's worth of good interpretation: there 'tis, boy.

**POINS**

O, that this good blossom could be kept from cankers! Well, there is sixpence to preserve thee.

**BARDOLPH**

An you do not make him hanged among you, the gallows shall have wrong.

**PRINCE HENRY**

And how doth thy master, Bardolph?

**BARDOLPH**

Well, my lord. He heard of your grace's coming to town: there's a letter for you.

**POINS**

Delivered with good respect. And how doth the martlemas, your master?

**BARDOLPH**

In bodily health, sir.

**POINS**

Marry, the immortal part needs a physician; but that moves not him: though that be sick, it dies not.

**PRINCE HENRY**

I do allow this wen to be as familiar with me as my dog; and he holds his place; for look you how he writes.

**POINS**

[Reads] 'John Falstaff, knight,'--every man must know that, as oft as he has occasion to name himself: even like those that are kin to the king; for they never prick their finger but they say, 'There's some of the king's blood spilt.' 'How comes that?' says he, that takes upon him not to conceive. The answer is as ready as a borrower's cap, 'I am the king's poor cousin, sir.'

**PRINCE HENRY**

Nay, they will be kin to us, or they will fetch it from Japhet. But to the letter.

**POINS**

[Reads] 'Sir John Falstaff, knight, to the son of the king, nearest his father, Harry Prince of Wales, greeting.' Why, this is a certificate.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Peace!

**POINS**

[Reads] 'I will imitate the honourable Romans in brevity:' he sure means brevity in breath, short-winded. 'I commend me to thee, I commend thee, and I leave thee. Be not too familiar with Poins; for he misuses thy favours so much, that he swears thou art to marry his sister Nell. Repent at idle times as thou mayest; and so, farewell. Thine, by yea and no, which is as much as to say, as thou usest him, JACK FALSTAFF with my familiars, JOHN with my brothers and sisters, and SIR JOHN with all Europe.'  
My lord, I'll steep this letter in sack and make him eat it.

**PRINCE HENRY**

That's to make him eat twenty of his words. But do you use me thus, Ned? must I marry your sister?

**POINS**

God send the wench no worse fortune! But I never said so.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Well, thus we play the fools with the time, and the spirits of the wise sit in the clouds and mock us. Is your master here in London?

**BARDOLPH**

Yea, my lord.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Where sups he? doth the old boar feed in the old frank?

**BARDOLPH**

At the old place, my lord, in Eastcheap.

**PRINCE HENRY**

What company?

**Page**

Ephesians, my lord, of the old church.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Sup any women with him?

**Page**

None, my lord, but old Mistress Quickly and Mistress Doll Tearsheet.

**PRINCE HENRY**

What pagan may that be?

**Page**

A proper gentlewoman, sir, and a kinswoman of my master's.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Even such kin as the parish heifers are to the town bull. Shall we steal upon them, Ned, at supper?

**POINS**

I am your shadow, my lord; I'll follow you.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Sirrah, you boy, and Bardolph, no word to your master that I am yet come to town: there's for your silence.

**BARDOLPH**

I have no tongue, sir.

**Page**

And for mine, sir, I will govern it.

**PRINCE HENRY**

Fare you well; go.

*Exeunt BARDOLPH and Page*

This Doll Tearsheet should be some road.

**POINS**

I warrant you, as common as the way between Saint Alban's and London.

**PRINCE HENRY**

How might we see Falstaff bestow himself to-night in his true colours, and not ourselves be seen?

**POINS**

Put on two leathern jerkins and aprons, and wait upon him at his table as drawers.

**PRINCE HENRY**

From a God to a bull? a heavy decension! it was Jove's case. From a prince to a prentice? a low transformation! that shall be mine; for in every thing the purpose must weigh with the folly. Follow me, Ned.

*Exeunt*