

## 2 Henry IV

### 4.1

*Enter [in arms] the Archbishop of York, Thomas Mowbray, Lord Hastings, and [Coleville], within the Forest of Gaultres*

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK** What is this forest called?

**HASTINGS**

'Tis Gaultres Forest, an't shall please your grace.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

Here stand, my lords, and send discoverers forth  
To know the numbers of our enemies.

**HASTINGS**

We have sent forth already.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK** 'Tis well done. 5

My friends and brethren in these great affairs,  
I must acquaint you that I have received  
New-dated letters from Northumberland,  
Their cold intent, tenor, and substance, thus:  
Here doth he wish his person, with such powers 10  
As might hold sortance with his quality,  
The which he could not levy; whereupon  
He is retired to ripe his growing fortunes  
To Scotland, and concludes in hearty prayers  
That your attempts may overlive the hazard 15  
And fearful meeting of their opposite.

**MOWBRAY**

Thus do the hopes we have in him touch ground  
And dash themselves to pieces.

*Enter a Messenger*

**HASTINGS** Now, what news?

**MESSINGER**

West of this forest, scarcely off a mile,  
In goodly form comes on the enemy; 20  
And, by the ground they hide, I judge their number  
Upon or near the rate of thirty thousand.

**MOWBRAY**

The just proportion that we gave them out.  
Let us sway on, and face them in the field.

*Enter the Earl of Westmorland*

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

What well-appointed leader fronts us here? 25

**MOWBRAY**

I think it is my lord of Westmorland.

**WESTMORLAND**

Health and fair greeting from our general,  
The Prince, Lord John and Duke of Lancaster.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

Say on, my lord of Westmorland, in peace,  
What doth concern your coming.

**WESTMORLAND**

Then, my lord, 30

Unto your grace do I in chief address  
The substance of my speech. If that rebellion  
Came like itself, in base and abject routs,  
Led on by bloody youth, guarded with rags,  
And countenanced by boys and beggary; 35  
I say, if damned commotion so appeared  
In his true native and most proper shape,  
You, reverend father, and these noble lords  
Had not been here to dress the ugly form  
Of base and bloody insurrection 40  
With your fair honours. You, Lord Archbishop,  
Whose see is by a civil peace maintained,  
Whose beard the silver hand of peace hath touched,  
Whose learning and good letters peace hath tutored,  
Whose white investments figure innocence, 45  
The dove and very blesseÁd spirit of peace,  
Wherefore do you so ill translate yourself  
Out of the speech of peace that bears such grace  
Into the harsh and boist'rous tongue of war,  
Turning your books to graves, your ink to blood, 50  
Your pens to lances, and your tongue divine  
To a loud trumpet and a point of war?

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

Wherefore do I this? So the question stands.  
Briefly, to this end: we are all diseased,  
And with our surfeiting and wanton hours 55  
Have brought ourselves into a burning fever,  
And we must bleed for it±±of which disease  
Our late King Richard, being infected, died.

But, my most noble lord of Westmorland,  
I take not on me here as a physician, 60  
Nor do I as an enemy to peace  
Troop in the throngs of military men;  
But rather show a while like fearful war  
To diet rank minds, sick of happiness,  
And purge th'obstructions which begin to stop 65  
Our very veins of life. Hear me more plainly.  
I have in equal balance justly weighed  
What wrongs our arms may do, what wrongs we suffer,  
And find our griefs heavier than our offences.  
We see which way the stream of time doth run, 70  
And are enforced from our most quiet shore  
By the rough torrent of occasion;  
And have the summary of all our griefs,  
When time shall serve, to show in articles,  
Which long ere this we offered to the King, 75  
And might by no suit gain our audience.  
When we are wronged, and would unfold our griefs,  
We are denied access unto his person  
Even by those men that most have done us wrong.  
The dangers of the days but newly gone, 80  
Whose memory is written on the earth  
With yet appearing blood, and the examples  
Of every minute's instance, present now,  
Hath put us in these ill-beseeming arms,  
Not to break peace, or any branch of it, 85  
But to establish here a peace indeed,  
Concurring both in name and quality.

**WESTMORLAND**

Whenever yet was your appeal denied?  
Wherein have you been galled by the King?  
What peer hath been suborned to grate on you, 90  
That you should seal this lawless bloody book  
Of forged rebellion with a seal divine?

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

My brother general, the commonwealth  
I make my quarrel in particular.

**WESTMORLAND**

There is no need of any such redress; 95

Or if there were, it not belongs to you.

**MOWBRAY**

Why not to him in part, and to us all  
That feel the bruises of the days before,  
And suffer the condition of these times  
To lay a heavy and unequal hand 100  
Upon our honours?

**WESTMORLAND** O my good Lord Mowbray,  
Construe the times to their necessities,  
And you shall say indeed it is the time,  
And not the King, that doth you injuries.  
Yet for your part, it not appears to me, 105  
Either from the King or in the present time,  
That you should have an inch of any ground  
To build a grief on. Were you not restored  
To all the Duke of Norfolk's signories,  
Your noble and right well-remembered father's? 110

**MOWBRAY**

What thing in honour had my father lost  
That need to be revived and breathed in me?  
The King that loved him, as the state stood then,  
Was force perforce compelled to banish him;  
And then that Henry Bolingbroke and he, 115  
Being mounted and both rouse'd in their seats,  
Their neighing coursers daring of the spur,  
Their arm'd staves in charge, their beavers down,  
Their eyes of fire sparkling through sights of steel,  
And the loud trumpet blowing them together, 120  
Then, then, when there was nothing could have stayed  
My father from the breast of Bolingbroke±±  
O, when the King did throw his warder down,  
His own life hung upon the staff he threw;  
Then threw he down himself and all their lives 125  
That by indictment and by dint of sword  
Have since miscarried under Bolingbroke.

**WESTMORLAND**

You speak, Lord Mowbray, now you know not what.  
The Earl of Hereford was reputed then  
In England the most valiant gentleman. 130  
Who knows on whom fortune would then have

smiled?

But if your father had been victor there,  
He ne'er had borne it out of Coventry;  
For all the country in a general voice  
Cried hate upon him, and all their prayers and love 135  
Were set on Hereford, whom they doted on  
And blessed and graced, indeed, more than the King.  
But this is mere digression from my purpose.  
Here come I from our princely general  
To know your griefs, to tell you from his grace 140  
That he will give you audience; and wherein  
It shall appear that your demands are just,  
You shall enjoy them, everything set off  
That might so much as think you enemies.

**MOWBRAY**

But he hath forced us to compel this offer, 145  
And it proceeds from policy, not love.

**WESTMORLAND**

Mowbray, you overween to take it so.  
This offer comes from mercy, not from fear;  
For lo, within a ken our army lies,  
Upon mine honour, all too confident 150  
To give admittance to a thought of fear.  
Our battle is more full of names than yours,  
Our men more perfect in the use of arms,  
Our armour all as strong, our cause the best.  
Then reason will our hearts should be as good. 155  
Say you not then our offer is compelled.

**MOWBRAY**

Well, by my will we shall admit no parley.

**WESTMORLAND**

That argues but the shame of your offence.  
A rotten case abides no handling.

**HASTINGS**

Hath the Prince John a full commission, 160  
In very ample virtue of his father,  
To hear and absolutely to determine  
Of what conditions we shall stand upon?

**WESTMORLAND**

That is intended in the general's name.  
I muse you make so slight a question. 165

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

Then take, my lord of Westmorland, this schedule;  
For this contains our general grievances.  
Each several article herein redressed,  
All members of our cause, both here and hence,  
That are ensinewed to this action 170  
Acquitted by a true substantial form,  
And present execution of our wills  
To us and to our purposes consigned,  
We come within our awe-full banks again,  
And knit our powers to the arm of peace. 175

**WESTMORLAND** (*taking the schedule*)

This will I show the general. Please you, lords,  
In sight of both our battles we may meet,  
And either end in peace±±which God so frame±±  
Or to the place of diff'rence call the swords  
Which must decide it.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK** My lord, we will do so. 180  
*Exit Westmorland*

**MOWBRAY**

There is a thing within my bosom tells me  
That no conditions of our peace can stand.

**HASTINGS**

Fear you not that. If we can make our peace  
Upon such large terms and so absolute  
As our conditions shall consist upon, 185  
Our peace shall stand as firm as rocky mountains.

**MOWBRAY**

Yea, but our valuation shall be such  
That every slight and false-deriveÁd cause,  
Yea, every idle, nice, and wanton reason,  
Shall to the King taste of this action, 190  
That, were our royal faiths martyrs in love,  
We shall be winnowed with so rough a wind  
That even our corn shall seem as light as chaff,  
And good from bad find no partition.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

No, no, my lord; note this. The King is weary 195  
Of dainty and such picking grievances,  
For he hath found to end one doubt by death

Revives two greater in the heirs of life;  
And therefore will he wipe his tables clean,  
And keep no tell-tale to his memory 200  
That may repeat and history his loss  
To new remembrance; for full well he knows  
He cannot so precisely weed this land  
As his misdoubts present occasion.  
His foes are so enrooted with his friends 205  
That, plucking to unfix an enemy,  
He doth unfasten so and shake a friend;  
So that this land, like an offensive wife  
That hath enraged him on to offer strokes,  
As he is striking, holds his infant up, 210  
And hangs resolved correction in the arm  
That was upreared to execution.

**HASTINGS**

Besides, the King hath wasted all his rods  
On late offenders, that he now doth lack  
The very instruments of chastisement; 215  
So that his power, like to a fangless lion,  
May offer, but not hold.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK** 'Tis very true.

And therefore be assured, my good Lord Marshal,  
If we do now make our atonement well,  
Our peace will, like a broken limb united, 220  
Grow stronger for the breaking.

**MOWBRAY**

Be it so.

*Enter Westmorland*

Here is returned my lord of Westmorland.

**WESTMORLAND**

The Prince is here at hand. Pleaseth your lordship  
To meet his grace just distance 'tween our armies?

**MOWBRAY**

Your grace of York, in God's name then set forward. 225

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

Before, and greet his grace!±±My lord, we come.

*[They march over the stage.]*

*Enter Prince John [with one or more soldiers  
carrying wine]*

**PRINCE JOHN**

You are well encountered here, my cousin Mowbray.  
 Good day to you, gentle lord Archbishop;  
 And so to you, Lord Hastings, and to all.  
 My lord of York, it better showed with you 230  
 When that your flock, assembled by the bell,  
 Encircled you to hear with reverence  
 Your exposition on the holy text,  
 Than now to see you here an iron man,  
 Cheering a rout of rebels with your drum, 235  
 Turning the word to sword, and life to death.  
 That man that sits within a monarch's heart  
 And ripens in the sunshine of his favour,  
 Would he abuse the countenance of the King,  
 Alack, what mischiefs might he set abroad 240  
 In shadow of such greatness! With you, Lord Bishop,  
 It is even so. Who hath not heard it spoken  
 How deep you were within the books of God±±  
 To us, the speaker in his parliament,  
 To us, th'imagined voice of God himself, 245  
 The very opener and intelligencer  
 Between the grace, the sanctities of heaven  
 And our dull workings? O, who shall believe  
 But you misuse the reverence of your place,  
 Employ the countenance and grace of heav'n 250  
 As a false favourite doth his prince's name  
 In deeds dishonourable? You have ta'en up,  
 Under the counterfeited zeal of God,  
 The subjects of his substitute, my father;  
 And, both against the peace of heaven and him, 255  
 Have here upswarm'd them.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**                      Good my lord of Lancaster,  
 I am not here against your father's peace;  
 But, as I told my lord of Westmorland,  
 The time misordered doth, in common sense,  
 Crowd us and crush us to this monstrous form, 260  
 To hold our safety up. I sent your grace  
 The parcels and particulars of our grief,  
 The which hath been with scorn shoved from the  
    court,  
 Whereon this Hydra son of war is born;



Whose dangerous eyes may well be charmed asleep  
With grant of our most just and right desires,  
And true obedience, of this madness cured,  
Stoop tamely to the foot of majesty.

265

**MOWBRAY**

If not, we ready are to try our fortunes  
To the last man.

**HASTINGS** And though we here fall down, 270

We have supplies to second our attempt.  
If they miscarry, theirs shall second them;  
And so success of mischief shall be born,  
And heir from heir shall hold this quarrel up,  
Whiles England shall have generation.

275

**PRINCE JOHN**

You are too shallow, Hastings, much too shallow,  
To sound the bottom of the after-times.

**WESTMORLAND**

Pleaseth your grace to answer them directly  
How far forth you do like their articles?

**PRINCE JOHN**

I like them all, and do allow them well, 280  
And swear here, by the honour of my blood,  
My father's purposes have been mistook,  
And some about him have too lavishly  
Wrested his meaning and authority.

*(To the Archbishop)*

My lord, these griefs shall be with speed redressed; 285  
Upon my soul they shall. If this may please you,  
Discharge your powers unto their several counties,  
As we will ours; and here between the armies  
Let's drink together friendly and embrace,  
That all their eyes may bear those tokens home  
Of our restoreÁd love and amity.

290

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

I take your princely word for these redresses.

**[PRINCE JOHN]**

I give it you, and will maintain my word;  
And thereupon I drink unto your grace.

*He drinks*

**[HASTINGS]** *[to Coleville]*

Go, captain, and deliver to the army

295

This news of peace. Let them have pay, and part.  
I know it will well please them. Hie thee, captain.

*Exit [Coleville]*

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

To you, my noble lord of Westmorland!

*He drinks*

**WESTMORLAND** *(drinking)*

I pledge your grace. An if you knew what pains  
I have bestowed to breed this present peace, 300  
You would drink freely; but my love to ye  
Shall show itself more openly hereafter.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

I do not doubt you.

**WESTMORLAND** I am glad of it.

*(Drinking)* Health to my lord and gentle cousin  
Mowbray!

**MOWBRAY**

You wish me health in very happy season, 305  
For I am on the sudden something ill.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

Against ill chances men are ever merry;  
But heaviness foreruns the good event.

**WESTMORLAND**

Therefore be merry, coz, since sudden sorrow  
Serves to say thus: some good thing comes tomorrow. 310

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

Believe me, I am passing light in spirit.

**MOWBRAY**

So much the worse, if your own rule be true.  
*Shout within*

**PRINCE JOHN**

The word of peace is rendered. Hark how they shout.

**MOWBRAY**

This had been cheerful after victory.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**

A peace is of the nature of a conquest, 315  
For then both parties nobly are subdued,  
And neither party loser.

**PRINCE JOHN** *(to Westmorland)* Go, my lord,  
And let our army be discharge'd too.

*Exit Westmorland*

(To the Archbishop) And, good my lord, so please you,  
 let our trains  
 March by us, that we may peruse the men 320  
 We should have coped withal.

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK** Go, good Lord Hastings,  
 And ere they be dismissed, let them march by.  
*Exit Hastings*

**PRINCE JOHN**  
 I trust, lords, we shall lie tonight together.  
*Enter the Earl of Westmorland, [with captains]*  
 Now, cousin, wherefore stands our army still?

**WESTMORLAND**  
 The leaders, having charge from you to stand, 325  
 Will not go off until they hear you speak.

**PRINCE JOHN**  
 They know their duties.  
*Enter Lord Hastings*

**HASTINGS** [to the Archbishop] Our army is dispersed.  
 Like youthful steers unyoked, they take their courses,  
 East, west, north, south; or, like a school broke up,  
 Each hurries toward his home and sporting place. 330

**WESTMORLAND**  
 Good tidings, my lord Hastings, for the which  
 I do arrest thee, traitor, of high treason;  
 And you, Lord Archbishop, and you, Lord Mowbray,  
 Of capital treason I attach you both.  
*[The captains guard Hastings, the Archbishop, and Mowbray]*

**MOWBRAY**  
 Is this proceeding just and honourable? 335

**WESTMORLAND** Is your assembly so?

**ARCHBISHOP OF YORK** Will you thus break your faith?

**PRINCE JOHN** I pawned thee none.  
 I promised you redress of these same grievances  
 Whereof you did complain; which, by mine honour, 340  
 I will perform with a most Christian care.  
 But for you rebels, look to taste the due  
 Meet for rebellion and such acts as yours.  
 Most shallowly did you these arms commence,  
 Fondly brought here, and foolishly sent hence.±± 345

Strike up our drums, pursue the scattered stray.  
God, and not we, hath safely fought today.  
Some guard these traitors to the block of death,  
Treason's true bed and yielder up of breath.

*Exeunt*