

2 Henry IV

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*Enter Mistress Quickly (the hostess of a tavern),
and an officer, Fang [followed at a distance by]
another officer, Snare*

MISTRESS QUICKLY Master Fang, have you entered the
action?

FANG It is entered.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Where's your yeoman? Is't a lusty
yeoman? Will a stand to't? 5

FANG Sirrah!±±Where's Snare?

MISTRESS QUICKLY O Lord, ay, good Master Snare.

SNARE [coming forward] Here, here.

FANG Snare, we must arrest Sir John Falstaff.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Yea, good Master Snare, I have entered 10
him and all.

SNARE It may chance cost some of us our lives, for he
will stab.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Alas the day, take heed of him; he
stabbed me in mine own house, most beastly, in good 15
faith. A cares not what mischief he does; if his weapon
be out, he will foin like any devil, he will spare neither
man, woman, nor child.

FANG If I can close with him, I care not for his thrust.

MISTRESS QUICKLY No, nor I neither. I'll be at your elbow. 20

FANG An I but fist him once, an a come but within my
vice±±

MISTRESS QUICKLY I am undone by his going, I warrant
you; he's an infinitive thing upon my score. Good
Master Fang, hold him sure. Good Master Snare, let 25
him not scape. A comes continuantly to Pie Corner±±
saving your manhoods±±to buy a saddle, and he is
indited to dinner to the Lubber's Head in Lombard
Street, to Master Smooth's the silkman. I pray you,
since my exion is entered, and my case so openly 30
known to the world, let him be brought in to his
answer. A hundred mark is a long one for a poor lone
woman to bear; and I have borne, and borne, and

borne, and have been fobbed off, and fobbed off, and fobbed off, from this day to that day, that it is a shame 35 to be thought on. There is no honesty in such dealing, unless a woman should be made an ass and a beast, to bear every knave's wrong.

Enter Sir John Falstaff, Bardolph, and the Page
Yonder he comes, and that arrant malmsey-nose knave Bardolph with him. Do your offices, do your offices, 40 Master Fang and Master Snare; do me, do me, do me your offices.

SIR JOHN How now, whose mare's dead? What's the matter?

FANG Sir John, I arrest you at the suit of Mistress Quickly. 45

SIR JOHN *[drawing]* Away, varlets! Draw, Bardolph! Cut me off the villain's head! Throw the quean in the channel!

[Bardolph draws]

MISTRESS QUICKLY Throw me in the channel? I'll throw thee in the channel! 50

A brawl

Wilt thou, wilt thou, thou bastardly rogue? Murder, murder! Ah, thou honeysuckle villain, wilt thou kill God's officers, and the King's? Ah, thou honeyseed rogue! Thou art a honeyseed, a man-queller, and a woman-queller. 55

SIR JOHN Keep them off, Bardolph!

FANG A rescue, a rescue!

MISTRESS QUICKLY Good people, bring a rescue or two. Thou wot, wot thou? Thou wot, wot'a? Do, do, thou rogue, do, thou hempseed! 60

PAGE Away, you scullion, you rampallian, you fustilarian! I'll tickle your catastrophe!

Enter the Lord Chief Justice and his men

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE

What is the matter? Keep the peace here, ho!

Brawl ends. [Fang] seizes Sir John

MISTRESS QUICKLY Good my lord, be good to me; I beseech you, stand to me. 65

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE

How now, Sir John? What, are you brawling here?

Doth this become your place, your time and business?
You should have been well on your way to York.

[*To Fang*] Stand from him, fellow. Wherefore hang'st
thou upon him?

MISTRESS QUICKLY O my most worshipful lord, an't please 70
your grace, I am a poor widow of Eastcheap, and he
is arrested at my suit.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE For what sum?

MISTRESS QUICKLY It is more than for some, my lord, it is
for all, all I have. He hath eaten me out of house and 75
home. He hath put all my substance into that fat belly
of his; (*to Sir John*) but I will have some of it out again,
or I will ride thee a-nights like the mare.

SIR JOHN I think I am as like to ride the mare, if I have
any vantage of ground to get up. 80

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE How comes this, Sir John? Fie, what
man of good temper would endure this tempest of
exclamation? Are you not ashamed, to enforce a poor
widow to so rough a course to come by her own?

SIR JOHN (*to the Hostess*) What is the gross sum that I owe 85
thee?

MISTRESS QUICKLY Marry, if thou wert an honest man,
thyself, and the money too. Thou didst swear to me
upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin
chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, upon 90
Wednesday in Wheeson week, when the Prince broke
thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of
Windsor±±thou didst swear to me then, as I was
washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my
lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not goodwife 95
Keech the butcher's wife come in then, and call me
`Gossip Quickly'±±coming in to borrow a mess of
vinegar, telling us she had a good dish of prawns,
whereby thou didst desire to eat some, whereby I told
thee they were ill for a green wound? And didst thou 100
not, when she was gone downstairs, desire me to be
no more so familiarity with such poor people, saying
that ere long they should call me `madam'? And didst
thou not kiss me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings?
I put thee now to thy book-oath; deny it if thou canst. 105

[She weeps]

SIR JOHN My lord, this is a poor mad soul, and she says
up and down the town that her eldest son is like you.
She hath been in good case, and the truth is, poverty
hath distracted her. But for these foolish officers, I
beseech you I may have redress against them. 110

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE Sir John, Sir John, I am well acquainted
with your manner of wrenching the true cause the
false way. It is not a confident brow, nor the throng
of words that come with such more than impudent
sauciness from you, can thrust me from a level 115
consideration. You have, as it appears to me, practised
upon the easy-yielding spirit of this woman, and made
her serve your uses both in purse and in person.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Yea, in truth, my lord.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE Pray thee, peace. *(To Sir John)* Pay her 120
the debt you owe her, and unpay the villainy you have
done with her. The one you may do with sterling
money, and the other with current repentance.

SIR JOHN My lord, I will not undergo this sneap without
reply. You call honourable boldness 'impudent 125
sauciness'; if a man will make curtsy and say nothing,
he is virtuous. No, my lord, my humble duty
remembered, I will not be your suitor. I say to you I
do desire deliverance from these officers, being upon
hasty employment in the King's affairs. 130

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE You speak as having power to do
wrong; but answer in th'effect of your reputation, and
satisfy the poor woman.

SIR JOHN *(drawing apart)* Come hither, hostess.
She goes to him.

Enter Master Gower, a messenger

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE Now, Master Gower, what news? 135
GOWER

The King, my lord, and Harry Prince of Wales
Are near at hand; the rest the paper tells.

*[Lord Chief Justice reads the paper, and converses
apart with Gower]*

SIR JOHN As I am a gentleman!

MISTRESS QUICKLY Faith, you said so before.

SIR JOHN As I am a gentleman! Come, no more words of 140
it.

MISTRESS QUICKLY By this heavenly ground I tread on, I
must be fain to pawn both my plate and the tapestry
of my dining-chambers.

SIR JOHN Glasses, glasses, is the only drinking; and for 145
thy walls, a pretty slight drollery, or the story of the
Prodigal, or the German hunting in waterwork, is
worth a thousand of these bed-hangers and these fly-
bitten tapestries. Let it be ten pound if thou canst.
Come, an 'twere not for thy humours, there's not a 150
better wench in England. Go, wash thy face, and draw
the action. Come, thou must not be in this humour
with me. Dost not know me? Come, I know thou wast
set on to this.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Pray thee, Sir John, let it be but twenty 155
nobles. I'faith, I am loath to pawn my plate, so God
save me, la!

SIR JOHN Let it alone; I'll make other shift. You'll be a
fool still.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Well, you shall have it, though I pawn 160
my gown. I hope you'll come to supper. You'll pay me
altogether?

SIR JOHN Will I live? *[To Bardolph and the Page]* Go with
her, with her. Hook on, hook on!

MISTRESS QUICKLY Will you have Doll Tearsheet meet you 165
at supper?

SIR JOHN No more words; let's have her.
*Exeunt Mistress Quickly, Bardolph,
the Page, Fang and Snare*

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE *(to Gower)* I have heard better news.

SIR JOHN What's the news, my good lord?

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE *(to Gower)* Where lay the King tonight? 170

GOWER At Basingstoke, my lord.

SIR JOHN *(to Lord Chief Justice)* I hope, my lord, all's well.
What is the news, my lord?

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE *(to Gower)* Come all his forces back?

GOWER
No; fifteen hundred foot, five hundred horse, 175
Are marched up to my lord of Lancaster

Against Northumberland and the Archbishop.

SIR JOHN *(to Lord Chief Justice)*

Comes the King back from Wales, my noble lord?

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE *(to Gower)*

You shall have letters of me presently.

Come, go along with me, good Master Gower. 180

They are going

SIR JOHN My lord!

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE What's the matter?

SIR JOHN Master Gower, shall I entreat you with me to dinner?

GOWER I must wait upon my good lord here, I thank you, 185
good Sir John.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE Sir John, you loiter here too long,
being you are to take soldiers up in counties as you
go.

SIR JOHN Will you sup with me, Master Gower? 190

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE What foolish master taught you these
manners, Sir John?

SIR JOHN Master Gower, if they become me not, he was
a fool that taught them me. *(To Lord Chief Justice)* This
is the right fencing grace, my lord±±tap for tap, and so 195
part fair.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE Now the Lord lighten thee; thou art
a great fool.

*Exeunt [Lord Chief Justice and Gower at one
door, Sir John at another]*