

2 Henry IV

4.3

Enter King Henry [in his bed], attended by the Earl of Warwick, Thomas Duke of Clarence, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, [and others]

KING HENRY

Now, lords, if God doth give successful end
To this debate that bleedeth at our doors,
We will our youth lead on to higher fields,
And draw no swords but what are sanctified.
Our navy is addressed, our power collected, 5
Our substitutes in absence well invested,
And everything lies level to our wish;
Only we want a little personal strength,
And pause us till these rebels now afoot
Come underneath the yoke of government. 10

WARWICK

Both which we doubt not but your majesty
Shall soon enjoy.

KING HENRY Humphrey, my son of Gloucester,
Where is the Prince your brother?

GLOUCESTER

I think he's gone to hunt, my lord, at Windsor.

KING HENRY

And how accompanied?

GLOUCESTER I do not know, my lord. 15

KING HENRY

Is not his brother Thomas of Clarence with him?

GLOUCESTER

No, my good lord, he is in presence here.

CLARENCE What would my lord and father?

KING HENRY

Nothing but well to thee, Thomas of Clarence.
How chance thou art not with the Prince thy brother? 20
He loves thee, and thou dost neglect him, Thomas.
Thou hast a better place in his affection
Than all thy brothers. Cherish it, my boy,
And noble offices thou mayst effect
Of mediation, after I am dead, 25

Between his greatness and thy other brethren.
 Therefore omit him not, blunt not his love,
 Nor lose the good advantage of his grace
 By seeming cold or careless of his will;
 For he is gracious, if he be observed; 30
 He hath a tear for pity, and a hand
 Open as day for melting charity.
 Yet notwithstanding, being incensed, he is flint,
 As humorous as winter, and as sudden
 As flaws congealed in the spring of day. 35
 His temper therefore must be well observed.
 Chide him for faults, and do it reverently,
 When you perceive his blood inclined to mirth;
 But being moody, give him line and scope
 Till that his passions, like a whale on ground, 40
 Confound themselves with working. Learn this,
 Thomas,
 And thou shalt prove a shelter to thy friends,
 A hoop of gold to bind thy brothers in,
 That the united vessel of their blood,
 Mingled with venom of suggestion±± 45
 As force perforce the age will pour it in±±
 Shall never leak, though it do work as strong
 As aconitum or rash gunpowder.

CLARENCE

I shall observe him with all care and love.

KING HENRY

Why art thou not at Windsor with him, Thomas? 50

CLARENCE

He is not there today; he dines in London.

KING HENRY

And how accompanied? Canst thou tell that?

CLARENCE

With Pains and other his continual followers.

KING HENRY

Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds,
 And he, the noble image of my youth, 55
 Is overspread with them; therefore my grief
 Stretches itself beyond the hour of death.
 The blood weeps from my heart when I do shape
 In forms imaginary th'unguided days

And rotten times that you shall look upon 60
When I am sleeping with my ancestors;
For when his headstrong riot hath no curb,
When rage and hot blood are his counsellors,
When means and lavish manners meet together,
O, with what wings shall his affections fly 65
Towards fronting peril and opposed decay?

WARWICK

My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite.
The Prince but studies his companions,
Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language,
'Tis needful that the most immodest word 70
Be looked upon and learnt, which once attained,
Your highness knows, comes to no further use
But to be known and hated; so, like gross terms,
The Prince will in the perfectness of time
Cast off his followers, and their memory 75
Shall as a pattern or a measure live
By which his grace must mete the lives of other,
Turning past evils to advantages.

KING HENRY

'Tis seldom when the bee doth leave her comb
In the dead carrion.

Enter the Earl of Westmorland

Who's here? Westmorland?

80

WESTMORLAND

Health to my sovereign, and new happiness
Added to that that I am to deliver!
Prince John your son doth kiss your grace's hand.
Mowbray, the Bishop Scrope, Hastings, and all
Are brought to the correction of your law. 85
There is not now a rebel's sword unsheathed,
But peace puts forth her olive everywhere.
The manner how this action hath been borne
Here at more leisure may your highness read,
With every course in his particular. 90

He gives the King papers

KING HENRY

O Westmorland, thou art a summer bird

Which ever in the haunch of winter sings
The lifting up of day.

Enter Harcourt

Look, here's more news.

HARCOURT

From enemies heaven keep your majesty;
And when they stand against you, may they fall 95
As those that I am come to tell you of!
The Earl Northumberland and the Lord Bardolph,
With a great power of English and of Scots,
Are by the sheriff of Yorkshire overthrown.
The manner and true order of the fight 100
This packet, please it you, contains at large.

He gives the King papers

KING HENRY

And wherefore should these good news make me sick?
Will fortune never come with both hands full,
But write her fair words still in foulest letters?
She either gives a stomach and no food±± 105
Such are the poor in health±±or else a feast,
And takes away the stomach±±such are the rich,
That have abundance and enjoy it not.
I should rejoice now at this happy news,
And now my sight fails, and my brain is giddy. 110
O me! Come near me now; I am much ill.

He swoons

GLOUCESTER

Comfort, your majesty!

CLARENCE

O my royal father!

WESTMORLAND

My sovereign lord, cheer up yourself, look up.

WARWICK

Be patient, princes; you do know these fits
Are with his highness very ordinary. 115
Stand from him, give him air; he'll straight be well.

CLARENCE

No, no, he cannot long hold out these pangs.
Th'incessant care and labour of his mind
Hath wrought the mure that should confine it in
So thin that life looks through and will break out. 120

GLOUCESTER

The people fear me, for they do observe
Unfathered heirs and loathly births of nature.
The seasons change their manners, as the year
Had found some months asleep and leaped them over.

CLARENCE

The river hath thrice flowed, no ebb between, 125
And the old folk, time's doting chronicles,
Say it did so a little time before
That our great grandsire Edward sicked and died.

WARWICK

Speak lower, princes, for the King recovers.

GLOUCESTER

This apoplexy will certain be his end. 130

KING HENRY

I pray you take me up and bear me hence
Into some other chamber; softly, pray.
[The King is carried over the stage in his bed]
Let there be no noise made, my gentle friends,
Unless some dull and favourable hand
Will whisper music to my weary spirit. 135

WARWICK

Call for the music in the other room.
[Exit one or more. Still music within]

KING HENRY

Set me the crown upon my pillow here.
*[Clarence] takes the crown [from the King's head],
and sets it on his pillow*

CLARENCE

His eye is hollow, and he changes much.
[A noise within]

WARWICK

Less noise, less noise!
Enter Prince Harry

PRINCE HARRY Who saw the Duke of Clarence?

CLARENCE

I am here, brother, full of heaviness. 140

PRINCE HARRY

How now, rain within doors, and none abroad?
How doth the King?

GLOUCESTER Exceeding ill.

PRINCE HARRY

Heard he the good news yet? Tell it him.

GLOUCESTER

He altered much upon the hearing it.

PRINCE HARRY If he be sick with joy, he'll recover without 145
physic.

WARWICK

Not so much noise, my lords! Sweet prince, speak low.

The King your father is disposed to sleep.

CLARENCE

Let us withdraw into the other room.

WARWICK

Will't please your grace to go along with us? 150

PRINCE HARRY

No, I will sit and watch here by the King.

Exeunt all but the King and Prince Harry

Why doth the crown lie there upon his pillow,
Being so troublesome a bedfellow?

O polished perturbation, golden care,
That keep'st the ports of slumber open wide 155

To many a watchful night!±±Sleep with it now;

Yet not so sound, and half so deeply sweet,

As he whose brow with homely biggen bound

Snores out the watch of night. O majesty,

When thou dost pinch thy bearer, thou dost sit 160

Like a rich armour worn in heat of day,

That scald'st with safety.±±By his gates of breath

There lies a downy feather which stirs not.

Did he suspire, that light and weightless down

Perforce must move.±±My gracious lord, my father!±± 165

This sleep is sound indeed. This is a sleep

That from this golden rigol hath divorced

So many English kings.±±Thy due from me

Is tears and heavy sorrows of the blood,

Which nature, love, and filial tenderness 170

Shall, O dear father, pay thee plenteously.

My due from thee is this imperial crown,

Which, as immediate from thy place and blood,

Derives itself to me.

He puts the crown on his head

Lo where it sits,

Which God shall guard; and put the world's whole
strength 175

Into one giant arm, it shall not force
This lineal honour from me. This from thee
Will I to mine leave, as 'tis left to me.

Exit

[Music ceases.] The King awakes

KING HENRY

Warwick, Gloucester, Clarence!

*Enter the Earl of Warwick, and the Dukes of
Gloucester and Clarence*

CLARENCE

Doth the King call?

WARWICK

What would your majesty? How fares your grace? 180

KING HENRY

Why did you leave me here alone, my lords?

CLARENCE

We left the Prince my brother here, my liege,
Who undertook to sit and watch by you.

KING HENRY

The Prince of Wales? Where is he? Let me see him.

WARWICK

This door is open; he is gone this way. 185

GLOUCESTER

He came not through the chamber where we stayed.

KING HENRY

Where is the crown? Who took it from my pillow?

WARWICK

When we withdrew, my liege, we left it here.

KING HENRY

The Prince hath ta'en it hence. Go seek him out.
Is he so hasty that he doth suppose 190
My sleep my death?

Find him, my lord of Warwick; chide him hither.

Exit Warwick

This part of his conjoins with my disease,
And helps to end me. See, sons, what things you are,
How quickly nature falls into revolt 195

When gold becomes her object!
For this the foolish over-careful fathers
Have broke their sleep with thoughts, their brains with

care,
Their bones with industry; for this they have
EngrosseÁd and piled up the cankered heaps 200
Of strange-achieveÁd gold; for this they have
Been thoughtful to invest their sons with arts
And martial exercises; when, like the bee
Culling from every flower the virtuous sweets,
Our thighs packed with wax, our mouths with honey, 205
We bring it to the hive; and, like the bees,
Are murdered for our pains. This bitter taste
Yields his engrossments to the ending father.

Enter the Earl of Warwick

Now where is he that will not stay so long
Till his friend sickness have determined me? 210

WARWICK

My lord, I found the Prince in the next room,
Washing with kindly tears his gentle cheeks
With such a deep demeanour, in great sorrow,
That tyranny, which never quaffed but blood,
Would, by beholding him, have washed his knife 215
With gentle eye-drops. He is coming hither.

KING HENRY

But wherefore did he take away the crown?

Enter Prince Harry with the crown

Lo where he comes.±±Come hither to me, Harry.
(To the others) Depart the chamber; leave us here
alone.

Exeunt all but the King and Prince Harry

PRINCE HARRY

I never thought to hear you speak again. 220

KING HENRY

Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought.
I stay too long by thee, I weary thee.
Dost thou so hunger for mine empty chair
That thou wilt needs invest thee with my honours
Before thy hour be ripe? O foolish youth, 225
Thou seek'st the greatness that will overwhelm thee!
Stay but a little, for my cloud of dignity
Is held from falling with so weak a wind
That it will quickly drop. My day is dim.

Thou hast stol'n that which after some few hours 230
 Were thine without offence, and at my death
 Thou hast sealed up my expectation.
 Thy life did manifest thou loved'st me not,
 And thou wilt have me die assured of it.
 Thou hid'st a thousand daggers in thy thoughts, 235
 Whom thou hast whetted on thy stony heart
 To stab at half an hour of my life.
 What, canst thou not forbear me half an hour?
 Then get thee gone and dig my grave thyself,
 And bid the merry bells ring to thine ear 240
 That thou art crowne'd, not that I am dead.
 Let all the tears that should bedew my hearse
 Be drops of balm to sanctify thy head.
 Only compound me with forgotten dust.
 Give that which gave thee life unto the worms. 245
 Pluck down my officers, break my decrees;
 For now a time is come to mock at form^{±±}
 Harry the Fifth is crowned. Up, vanity!
 Down, royal state! All you sage counsellors, hence!
 And to the English court assemble now 250
 From every region, apes of idleness!
 Now, neighbour confines, purge you of your scum!
 Have you a ruffian that will swear, drink, dance,
 Revel the night, rob, murder, and commit
 The oldest sins the newest kind of ways? 255
 Be happy; he will trouble you no more.
 England shall double gild his treble guilt,
 England shall give him office, honour, might;
 For the fifth Harry from curbed licence plucks
 The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog 260
 Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent.
 O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows!
 When that my care could not withhold thy riots,
 What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?
 O, thou wilt be a wilderness again, 265
 Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants.

PRINCE HARRY

O pardon me, my liege! But for my tears,
 The moist impediments unto my speech,

I had forestalled this dear and deep rebuke
Ere you with grief had spoke and I had heard 270
The course of it so far. There is your crown;

[He returns the crown and kneels]

And He that wears the crown immortally
Long guard it yours! If I affect it more
Than as your honour and as your renown,
Let me no more from this obedience rise, 275

Which my most true and inward duteous spirit
Teacheth this prostrate and exterior bending.
God witness with me, when I here came in
And found no course of breath within your majesty,
How cold it struck my heart. If I do feign, 280

O, let me in my present wildness die,
And never live to show th'incredulous world
The noble change that I have purposeÁd.
Coming to look on you, thinking you dead,
And dead almost, my liege, to think you were, 285

I spake unto this crown as having sense,
And thus upbraided it: `The care on thee depending
Hath fed upon the body of my father;
Therefore thou best of gold art worst of gold.

Other, less fine in carat, is more precious, 290
Preserving life in medicine potable;
But thou, most fine, most honoured, most renowned,
Hast eat thy bearer up.' Thus, my royal liege,

Accusing it, I put it on my head,
To try with it, as with an enemy 295
That had before my face murdered my father,
The quarrel of a true inheritor.

But if it did infect my blood with joy
Or swell my thoughts to any strain of pride,
If any rebel or vain spirit of mine 300

Did with the least affection of a welcome
Give entertainment to the might of it,
Let God for ever keep it from my head,
And make me as the poorest vassal is,
That doth with awe and terror kneel to it. 305

KING HENRY O my son,
God put it in thy mind to take it hence,

That thou mightst win the more thy father's love,
Pleading so wisely in excuse of it!

Come hither, Harry; sit thou by my bed, 310
And hear, I think, the very latest counsel
That ever I shall breathe.

*Prince Harry [rises from kneeling and] sits by
the bed*

God knows, my

son,

By what bypaths and indirect crook'd ways
I met this crown; and I myself know well
How troublesome it sat upon my head. 315

To thee it shall descend with better quiet,
Better opinion, better confirmation;
For all the soil of the achievement goes
With me into the earth. It seemed in me
But as an honour snatched with boist'rous hand; 320

And I had many living to upbraid
My gain of it by their assistances,
Which daily grew to quarrel and to bloodshed,
Wounding suppose—Ad peace. All these bold fears
Thou seest with peril I have answered; 325

For all my reign hath been but as a scene
Acting that argument. And now my death
Changes the mood, for what in me was purchased
Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort,
So thou the garland wear'st successively. 330

Yet though thou stand'st more sure than I could do,
Thou art not firm enough, since griefs are green,
And all thy friends—±±which thou must make thy
friends±±

Have but their stings and teeth newly ta'en out,
By whose fell working I was first advanced, 335
And by whose power I well might lodge a fear

To be again displaced; which to avoid
I cut them off, and had a purpose now
To lead out many to the Holy Land,
Lest rest and lying still might make them look 340
Too near unto my state. Therefore, my Harry,
Be it thy course to busy giddy minds

With foreign quarrels, that action hence borne out
May waste the memory of the former days.
More would I, but my lungs are wasted so 345
That strength of speech is utterly denied me.
How I came by the crown, O God forgive,
And grant it may with thee in true peace live!

PRINCE HARRY My gracious liege,
You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me; 350
Then plain and right must my possession be,
Which I with more than with a common pain
'Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain.

*Enter Prince John of Lancaster [followed by] the
Earl of Warwick [and others]*

KING HENRY
Look, look, here comes my John of Lancaster.

PRINCE JOHN
Health, peace, and happiness to my royal father! 355

KING HENRY
Thou bring'st me happiness and peace, son John;
But health, alack, with youthful wings is flown
From this bare withered trunk. Upon thy sight
My worldly business makes a period.
Where is my lord of Warwick?

PRINCE HARRY My lord of Warwick! 360
[Warwick comes forward to the King]

KING HENRY
Doth any name particular belong
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon?

WARWICK
'Tis called Jerusalem, my noble lord.

KING HENRY
Laud be to God! Even there my life must end.
It hath been prophesied to me many years 365
I should not die but in Jerusalem,
Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land;
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie;
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die.
Exeunt, bearing the King in his bed