

Henry V

4.2

Enter the Dukes of [Bourbon] and OrleÂans, and Lord Rambures

ORLEÂANS

The sun doth gild our armour. Up, my lords!

[BOURBON] *Monte cheval!* My horse! *Varlet, lacquais!* Ha!

ORLEÂANS O brave spirit!

[BOURBON] *Via les eaux et terre!*

ORLEÂANS *Rien plus? L'air et feu!* 5

[BOURBON] *Cieux, cousin OrleÂans!*

Enter the Constable

Now, my Lord Constable!

CONSTABLE

Hark how our steeds for present service neigh.

[BOURBON]

Mount them and make incision in their hides,
That their hot blood may spin in English eyes 10
And dout them with superfluous courage. Ha!

RAMBURES

What, will you have them weep our horses' blood?
How shall we then behold their natural tears?

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

The English are embattled, you French peers.

CONSTABLE

To horse, you gallant princes, straight to horse! 15
Do but behold yon poor and starveÂd band,
And your fair show shall suck away their souls,
Leaving them but the shells and husks of men.
There is not work enough for all our hands,
Scarce blood enough in all their sickly veins 20
To give each naked curtal-axe a stain
That our French gallants shall today draw out
And sheathe for lack of sport. Let us but blow on
them,

The vapour of our valour will o'erturn them.

'Tis positive 'gainst all exceptions, lords, 25

That our superfluous lackeys and our peasants,

Who in unnecessary action swarm
About our squares of battle, were enough
To purge this field of such a hilding foe,
Though we upon this mountain's basis by 30
Took stand for idle speculation,
But that our honours must not. What's to say?
A very little little let us do
And all is done. Then let the trumpets sound
The tucket sonance and the note to mount, 35
For our approach shall so much dare the field
That England shall couch down in fear and yield.

Enter Lord Grandpre

GRANDPRE

Why do you stay so long, my lords of France?
Yon island carrions, desperate of their bones,
Ill-favouredly become the morning field. 40
Their ragged curtains poorly are let loose
And our air shakes them passing scornfully.
Big Mars seems bankrupt in their beggared host
And faintly through a rusty beaver peeps.
The horsemen sit like fixe candlesticks 45
With torchstaves in their hands, and their poor jades
Lob down their heads, drooping the hides and hips,
The gum down-roping from their pale dead eyes,
And in their palled dull mouths the gimmaled bit
Lies foul with chewed grass, still and motionless. 50
And their executors, the knavish crows,
Fly o'er them all impatient for their hour.
Description cannot suit itself in words
To demonstrate the life of such a battle
In life so lifeless as it shows itself. 55

CONSTABLE

They have said their prayers, and they stay for death.

[BOURBON]

Shall we go send them dinners and fresh suits
And give their fasting horses provender,
And after fight with them?

CONSTABLE

I stay but for my guidon. To the field! 60
I will the banner from a trumpet take

And use it for my haste. Come, come away!
The sun is high, and we outwear the day.
Exeunt