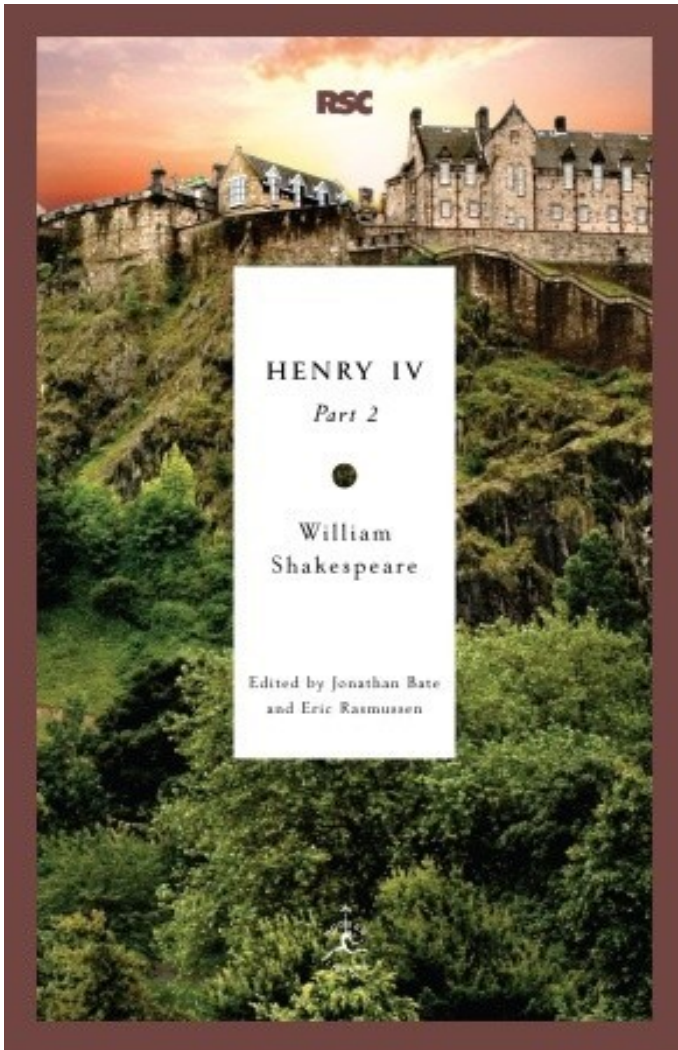

William Shakespeare

Henry IV, Part 2 (Wars of the Roses #3)



Title: Henry IV, Part 2 (Wars of the Roses #3)

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Format: Paperback

Language: English

Pages: 256

Publisher: Modern Library, 1251183600

ISBN: 0812969251

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 7 MB

Download: allowed

Description

After defeat at the Battle of Shrewsbury the rebels regroup. But Prince Hal's reluctance to inherit the crown threatens to destroy the ailing Henry IV's dream of a lasting dynasty. Shakespeare's portrait of the prodigal son's journey from youth to maturity embraces the full panorama of society.

Under the editorial supervision of Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, two of today's most accomplished Shakespearean scholars, this Modern Library series incorporates definitive texts and authoritative notes from **William Shakespeare: Complete Works**. Each play includes an Introduction as well as an overview of Shakespeare's theatrical career; commentary on past and current productions based on interviews with leading directors, actors, and designers; scene-by-scene analysis; key facts about the work; a chronology of Shakespeare's life and times; and black-and-white illustrations.

Ideal for students, theater professionals, and general readers, these modern and accessible editions from the Royal Shakespeare Company set a new standard in Shakespearean literature for the twenty-first century.

Insightful reviews

Leila: I absolutely loved this play! I really feel like the first few acts are more about Falstaff than anybody else, which was very interesting. It also allowed me to see into Falstaff and get a better idea of who he was. I also really love him now! So the first part of the play was very happy, I felt. Act's 4 and 5 are beautiful in terms of character development for Henry V. You get to see him really mature within these acts (and, really, the whole play), from an immature prince to a proud king. I loved the transition and could see it in front of my eyes. Act 4 Scene 3 was beautiful for King Henry IV. I mean wow. You get to see so many sides of him, he suddenly becomes such a mercurial character and is not only playing a strong king, but a vulnerable, or angry or happy father to Prince Hal and it's so beautiful to see all these sides so suddenly. I really enjoyed reading the play and encourage others to as well.

João Fernandes: The first half of this book might as well be called "**Falstaff, Part II**". Not as endearing as *Henry IV, Part I*, but definitely has a great conclusion with the two Harrys reconciling. Great character development for Hal and Henry both. Can't wait to read *Henry V* and the Battle of Agincourt!

Matthew: Of the four plays that make up Shakespeare's second history cycle, *Henry IV Part 2* is the one that has most difficulty in existing as a stand-alone play. The very title informs the reader/audience that they have missed out something if they failed to at least read the first part. Similarly, the action of the play follows directly on from the earlier play, with the divisions and inter-relationships already in place.

This is one reason (though not the only one) why the play is the least satisfactory of the four plays. It serves as a necessary bridge and a clear place in the tetralogy, however. The rebels

quote Richard II's words from the first play. We see Northumberland hearing the news of his son's death (which happened at the end of Part 1) and his son's widow chide him for his failure. At the end of the play, the dying king advises his son too busy giddy minds with foreign quarrels, whilst the king's brother anticipates a war in France, the subject of the next play.

However, the play is mostly Falstaff's play, rather than the King's or even Hal's. The scenes with the low characters take up more lines than the scenes with the main plot. The titular character does not even appear until the third act and only appears in three scenes in total, dying before the final act.

Hal also fails to make an early appearance, and it is well into the second act before we see him. He appears in just five scenes in the play. By contrast, Falstaff appears in eight scenes, and of some length. Indeed, the interaction between Hal and Falstaff is limited to only two scenes, so the relationship between main plot and subplot is much more limited. For people who are not greatly enthusiastic about Falstaff and his cronies, the swaggering Pistol or Falstaff's unpleasant dalliance with Doll Tearsheet, this also makes the play less satisfactory.

So what happens in this play? The King may have defeated Hotspur's forces, but the remaining enemies once more try to form an alliance against the King. However, they lack the presence of a charismatic leader like Hotspur, and Northumberland lets them down once again. They are duped by Prince John into agreeing to peace terms, and promptly arrested for their crimes.

The news of the defeat of his enemies comes too late for the King, however. His health broken, Henry retires to his chamber dying. He is reconciled with his repentant son, who promises to be a better king, and who starts well with a reformation of his character.

The subplot has very little focus, but merely shows Falstaff carousing a good deal, making half-hearted attempts to join in the fighting and duping his hostess and later Justice Shallow, who he uses for money. He still has hopes that he will be a court favourite when Hal becomes king. However, these are cruelly dashed in the last act when the new King publicly casts him off, and the play ends with him and his friend being taken to the Fleet before being exiled from the King's company.

The play then has the lack of dramatic focus that made the first play more interesting. We have already seen rebels taking on, and being defeated by the King's forces in the last play. However, whereas last time this was achieved in honourable battle, this time it is achieved through a barely-honourable peace agreement. We have already seen Hal redeem himself from his dissolute companions in Part 1, but then he did it through battle, not through pious statements to his father and courtiers.

So the play therefore re-treads old ground, but with less dramatic spark. This seems appropriate for the subject matter, however. The play shows a country that is weary with war, and in which there is far less honour and fair play. Hence the war ends in a rather ugly trick, after which Prince John harries the disbanded soldiers and executes a number of people.

Even the Falstaff's personality seems to have a similar degeneracy. He is seen to be much

more exploitative and dissolute, and we are therefore prepared for his final rejection. Indeed, the one earlier scene in which he is with Hal is another re-tread, as we see him once more lie to Hal and then be caught out. However, there is an increased bitterness in this scene, since Hal overhears Falstaff insulting him. This comes soon after Hal hears that Poins is hoping to marry off his sister to Hal. The exploitative nature of Hal's dissolute friends is becoming ever more clear to him.

Viewed in this way, the rejection scene at the end of the play that has horrified so many people is inevitable and right. A good king cannot have advisers or favourites like Falstaff around him, and Henry V needs to be tough, and show his followers that things have changed. Indeed, for all the poignancy that people draw out of the play, there are surprisingly few private affectionate comments about Hal made by Falstaff. Much of this is an interpretation that we cannot help putting on their relationship.

Overall, the play is greatly flawed and occasionally drags. However, there is still plenty of interest, and the play shows Shakespeare's gift for variety and imaginative interpretation of his original sources.

Brian Barbour: this is often one in every of my favorites of Shakespeare's works for the easy incontrovertible fact that we get to work out Hal come to the move roads of his life. Henry V does a very good activity exhibiting us what sort of guy he turns into as soon as he makes the choice to desert his wild methods and settle for his position within the Monarchy of England.

Dave: SUMMARY: After defeat on the conflict of Shrewsbury the rebels regroup. yet Prince Hal's reluctance to inherit the crown threatens to ruin the ill Henry IV's dream of an enduring dynasty. Shakespeare's portrait of the prodigal son's trip from formative years to adulthood embraces the entire landscape of society. less than the editorial supervision of Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, of ultra-modern such a lot finished Shakespearean scholars, this contemporary Library sequence contains definitive texts and authoritative notes from William Shakespeare: entire Works. Each play comprises an advent in addition to an summary of Shakespeare's theatrical career; statement on prior and present productions in line with interviews with prime directors, actors, and designers; scene-by-scene analysis; key evidence concerning the work; a chronology of Shakespeare's existence and times; and black-and-white illustrations. perfect for students, theater professionals, and normal readers, those sleek and obtainable variations from the Royal Shakespeare corporation set a brand new normal in Shakespearean literature for the twenty-first century.

Richard Leis: i am merely 4 performs into William Shakespeare's oeuvre, yet of these, 3 are masterpieces and the fourth just a little much less so simply because i discovered it the main tricky to comprehend, as a result of its cultural differences.² Henry IV is likely one of the masterpieces. The play is complicated and compelling. at the start it learn to me like a retread of half 1, just a little bit greater in scope, like a sequel to a summer season motion picture blockbuster. One signature of an excellent sequel is that it places the unique in a brand new light. holding in brain that this is often particularly Play #3 of a moment tetralogy of performs in accordance with the background of successive Kings in England's history, 2 Henry IV as a sequel elevates the already awesome 1 Henry IV. i discovered myself recalling the half 1

frequently, but in addition seeing them in a special light. personality arcs tackle new scope and invite new insights whilst contemplating the 2 performs together. Part 2 itself quick turned anything targeted with plot twists and heartfelt drama that left me surprised, emotional, and pondering. i'll hold this spoiler-free, yet will say that Prince Hal and his relationships along with his numerous fathers that used to be for me the main compelling point of this play. One degree of the way nice this play reads: it stored me studying regardless of exhaustion and deadlines. I raced throughout the ultimate fifty pages because the drama reached its excellent conclusions. The variation I learn had exhaustive footnotes, that could decelerate the reading. They have been very useful, however, they usually offer a glimpse on the pedantic global of academia interested in Shakespeare and the ancient and literary contexts of his work. I additionally had a chance to pattern the various creation that discusses those in detail. i used to be specially desirous about the liberties Shakespeare took in his play with recorded history. Shakespeare's performs call for greater than only one analyzing and that i certainly desire to revisits those performs at a extra leisurely speed with extra realization to the academia written approximately them. On their own, in school or out, Shakespeare's play are phenomenal. 2 Henry IV can be my favourite so far.

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