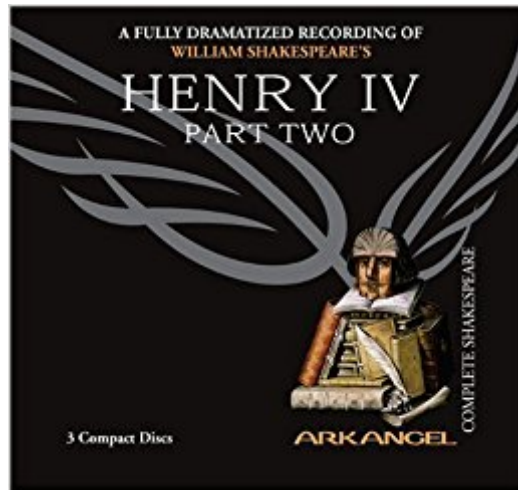




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Henry IV , Part Two (Arkangel Complete Shakespeare)



Synopsis

[Full-Cast Audio Theater Dramatization. Hal is played by Jamie Glover and King Henry by Julian Glover. Richard Griffiths is Falstaff.] In Henry IV: Part Two Prince Hal parts from his past to fulfill his royal destiny in this essential conclusion to Henry IV, Part 1. Rebellion still simmers in England and King Henry's health is failing. Prince Hal has proved his courage but the king still fears that his son's pleasure-loving nature will bring the realm to ruin. Meanwhile, Falstaff and his ribald companions waste the nights in revelry, anticipating the moment when Hal will ascend the throne. Falstaff is in Gloucestershire when news arrives that the king has died. Has the dissolute old knight's hour come at last?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Praise for "William Shakespeare: Complete Works: ""A feast of literary and historical information."

--The Wall Street Journal" --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616), English poet and dramatist of the Elizabethan and early Jacobean period, is the most widely known author in all of English literature and often considered the greatest. He was an active member of a theater company for at least twenty years, during which time he wrote many great plays. Plays were not prized as literature at the time, and Shakespeare was not widely read until the middle of the eighteenth century, when a great upsurge of interest in his works began that continues today.

This rating is because the insert, while labeled as being for Henry IV, part 2, is actually the plot for Henry IV, part 1. So far the recording itself is fine.

Arkangel has great production values. A joy to listen to time after time.

Shakespeare!

The second part of Henry IV resolves the problems of King Henry and Prince Hal and makes Prince Hal confront the choice he must make in following a more regal tone or being friends with Falstaff and his crew. I think many of us can identify with having to distance ourselves from a person who constantly get us into trouble and that is the Prince's dilemma. King Henry is dying and Prince Hal is proving himself as one of the greatest soldiers England has ever known. His father has a wonderful talk with him about how the taint of the crown that was on the King's shoulders will not be on Hal's because he rightfully inherits and has proven his mettle. Falstaff spends most of the play waiting for his time in the sun when his best friend becomes the King of England. He is drinking more than ever and bragging to everyone that will listen that he will soon be riding high because of his friendship. Prince Hal becomes a King and begins to act, as a royal prince should. He welcomes his father's allies and distances himself from his own. Jamie Glover again plays Prince Hal and Julian Glover plays King Henry IV. I enjoyed this play as much as the first one and especially liked the maturity Prince Hal grows into in this play.

In Henry the Fourth part 1 we find Prince Hal, King Henry IV's heir, consorting with Falstaff and other brigands. All the while Henry Percy, known as Hotspur, is leading a rebellion. Prince Hal rises to the occasion, redeems himself on the battlefield, kills Hotspur but lets his friend Falstaff take the credit. But the rebellion isn't put down... This is a sequel, plain and simple. The plot is virtually the same as that of Henry IV part 1: the errant son isn't living up to his father's expectations and to his responsibilities as heir to the throne. He consorts with friends of dubious character, but then in time he fights to put down the rebellion against his father. Shakespeare does take us to King Henry IV's death and shows us Prince Hal become King Henry V, thus concluding the story. But the sequel feels unnecessary, after all if Prince Hal redeemed himself in part 1, where is the dramatic motive to have him do so again in part 2? But this is a Shakespeare sequel. The end in part 1 was good natured and Falstaff remained friends with the prince. The prince and the king have reconciled, but

the king's advisers still suspect the prince. The Lord High Justice in particular, being fond of law and order, is not too happy at the thought of serving a king with a possibly criminal past. All ends well though. The Lord High Justice is of course nervous upon Henry V's accession, but the king wisely keeps him in his position. Having served his father so well, to the point of courting his own displeasure and risking his life in order to uphold the law, Henry V predicts he will serve his new king with the same integrity. And then for good measure, Henry V finally and fully repudiates Falstaff and his band. "I know thee not old man" answers Henry V to a stunned Falstaff who had expected Hal's rise to make his fortune. But no, he is cast aside along with Prince Hal's youth. Vincent Poirier, TokyoNote: wouldn't let me review the Pelican edition of HIVp2 because I already reviewed that edition of HIVp1. Apparently, it considers the two parts of this play to be a set. Oh well. VP

As with the first part of 'Henry IV' Arkangel does an excellent job in portraying the different levels of 15th century society. While Part Two is generally not as dramatically coherent as Part One, this particular production is handled as well as the first one. Geoffrey Bayldon is delightful as justice Shallow, while Pistol ("the foul-mouth'dst rogue in England") is played by Edward de Souza as a bulging-eyed, spluttering madman, who rolls his 'r's like a highland Scot. Evie Mathieson brings a seductive sleaziness to the part of Doll Tearsheet, giving hilarious weight to the prince's line about "Saturn and Venus this year in conjunction."

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