



HENRY IV

LUIGI PIRANDELLO

Henry IV

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Henry IV

Luigi Pirandello

CHARACTERS.



"HENRY IV."

THE MARCHIONESS MATILDA SPINA.

HER DAUGHTER FRIDA.

THE YOUNG MARQUIS CHARLES DI NOLLI.

BARON TITO BELCREDI.

DOCTOR DIONYSIUS GENONI.

THE FOUR PRIVATE COUNSELLORS:

(The names in brackets are nicknames).

HAROLD (FRANK),

LANDOLPH (LOLO),

ORDULPH (MOMO),

BERTHOLD (FINO).

JOHN, THE OLD WAITER.

THE TWO VALETS IN COSTUME.

A SOLITARY VILLA IN ITALY IN OUR OWN TIME.

ACT I



Salon in the villa, furnished and decorated so as to look exactly like the throne room of Henry IV. in the royal residence at Goslar. Among the antique decorations there are two modern life-size portraits in oil painting. They are placed against the back wall, and mounted in a wooden stand that runs the whole length of the wall. (It is wide and protrudes, so that it is like a large bench). One of the paintings is on the right; the other on the left of the throne, which is in the middle of the wall and divides the stand.

The Imperial chair and Baldachin.

The two portraits represent a lady and a gentleman, both young, dressed up in carnival costumes: one as "Henry IV.," the other as the "Marchioness Matilda of Tuscany." Exits to Right and Left.

(When the curtain goes up, the two valets jump down, as if surprised, from the stand on which they have been lying, and go and take their positions, as rigid as statues, on either side below the throne with their halberds in their hands. Soon after, from the second exit, right, enter Harold, Landolph, Ordulph and Berthold, young men employed by the Marquis Charles Di Nolli to play the part of "Secret Counsellors" at the court of "Henry IV." They are, therefore, dressed like German knights of the XIth century. Berthold, nicknamed Fino, is just entering on his duties for the first time. His companions are telling him what he has to do and amusing themselves at his expense. The scene is to be played rapidly and vivaciously).

LANDOLPH (to Berthold as if explaining). And this is the throne room.

HAROLD. At Goslar.

ORDULPH. Or at the castle in the Hartz, if you prefer.

HAROLD. Or at Wurms.

LANDOLPH. According as to what's doing, it jumps about with us, now here, now there.

ORDULPH. In Saxony.

HAROLD. In Lombardy.

LANDOLPH. On the Rhine.

ONE OF THE VALETS (without moving, just opening his lips). I say...

HAROLD (turning round). What is it?

FIRST VALET (like a statue). Is he coming in or not? (He alludes to Henry IV.)

ORDULPH. No, no, he's asleep. You needn't worry.

SECOND VALET (releasing his pose, taking a long breath and going to lie down again on the stand). You might have told us at once.

FIRST VALET (going over to Harold). Have you got a match, please?

LANDOLPH. What? You can't smoke a pipe here, you know.

FIRST VALET (while Harold offers him a light). No; a cigarette. (Lights his cigarette and lies down again on the stand).

BERTHOLD (who has been looking on in amazement, walking round the room, regarding the costumes of the others). I say...this room... these costumes...Which Henry IV. is it? I don't quite get it. Is he Henry IV. of France or not? (At this Landolph, Harold, and Ordulph, burst out laughing).

LANDOLPH (still laughing; and pointing to Berthold as if inviting the others to make fun of him). Henry of France he says: ha! ha! ORDULPH. He thought it was the king of France!

HAROLD. Henry IV. of Germany, my boy: the Salian