

Summary: Set during England's 14th century invasion of France, Welsh minstrel Dafydd ap Gwilym accompanies his patron Edward the Black Prince into France. He becomes embroiled in conspiracies while employing the services of the enigmatic mercenary Radu the Black of Transylvania who hunts a mysterious adversary known only as the Nachtzeherer.

Thomas de Beauchamp, The Earl of Warwick, struggled to have his words heard over the rising tumult.

Rein (homophone) allies?
"Reign in, damn you! Fall back and regroup at the line! Are you so simple and starved of senses?" The Irish and Welsh surged forward, heedless of their commander's words.

Behind him, Sir Richard Talbot laughed out loud. "Look at them Warwick, just look at them! Fucking Irish!"

Earl Warwick did look and realized the matter was beyond him now. They want of meat, wine and chattels. They see poorly defended houses and abandoned stalls. The Abbey doors will be boarded up and the nobles will be well protected, but the common folks are lambs fit for slaughter. Oh may God have mercy upon them!

Warwick watched as some Irish Gallowglass, easily recognizable by their colorful Gaelic garb worn over supple aketons, crashed through a hastily erected barricade of carts. Wooden logs and crates salvaged from the Odon River docks by desperate townsfolk were split apart by the Irish assault as though they were haystacks. They had been a laughably poor defense. The Gallowglass hacked and chopped through them unmindful of the damage this did to their own blades. No knight would have so dulled his sword, Warwick thought scornfully.

Who is thinking this?

The sun was beating down mercilessly, but the breeze borne off the Odon river was the hot breath of Hell itself. The stink of blood, shit and death hit the two English knights like a hammer each time the wind rose.

Where?

Scouts came and went delivering Warwick's orders and relaying them, ineffectually, to the disorganized horde below. The preparation of an entire night had been tossed aside in a matter of minutes and now chaos reigned in Caen.

x 2

reign (homophone)

“By Saint Georges’s Spurs, my Lord, have you ever seen the like? God, was my sword not glutted with enough of this Irish blood when they sprang upon us when we were at Dornock?” Talbot, his expensive half-plate armor clanking with each movement, reigned his horse close to Warwick’s own steed and looked down to the battling men, mostly Welsh and Irish regulars. His disgust for what he deemed the ‘lesser peoples’ was well known to Warwick.

reign (homophone)

strong verb show disdain

superfluous

Warwick grunted. His own preeminent distaste for the Irish was borne of memories of their hit and run tactics during the Scottish Campaigns, the battle of Dornock amongst them. By God that had been a nightmare! Now a few of the northern clans, O’Neill and McMahon amongst them, had sworn to fight for King Edward...as long as it suited them. They had all the obedience of rabid dogs. And they are not the worst of the lot.

Who is thinking this?

“Here comes Northampton,” Talbot smirked, pointing at a horse approaching up the hill at a cantor. “Undoubtedly to suggest the gallows idea again after seeing this rubbish. Quick, look suitably put out.”

cantor (homophone)

Warwick sighed privately and kept his face impassive, not wanting Talbot to see how much he really was put out. The Earl of Northampton was dressed in his full suit of half-plate and mail armor, its filigree of gold and silver worked in stylized etchings catching the light of the sun. Several hundred florins undoubtedly squandered on designs that a well-placed mace or

to disguise

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sword blade could easily ruin, but that was just another way Northampton flaunted the wealth he enjoyed from sizable rents collected across the midlands of England. The standard of his house was born aloft by a young page wearing only Northampton regalia over a simple smock. The gangly youth riding behind his Lordy had the look of a lad well out of his element. I wonder how many pages Northampton will go through on this campaign? The Scotts murdered eight of them as I recall. The fucking fool should at least give them a helmet and some chain mesh, he can bloody afford it. He winced. I've been around Talbot too long. Christ forgive my vulgarity!

“A Gallows my Lords!” Northampton shouted up at them to be heard above the tumult. “Hang six or seven of them dead center of camp and by God you will have order then! Aye, that's how we do it on my Irish lands!”

Talbot looked over his shoulder at Warwick and rolled his eyes. Warwick ignored him and responded kindly.

“Aye William, but surely not dead center? The flies, man!”

“Ha! Flies won't be a bother with this lot. Their hides already have maggots crawling around inside of them. Lice bitten curs! Good day to you, Sir Talbot.” Northampton nodded in greeting to the favored knight.

“My Lord Earl,” Talbot said bowing slightly in his saddle. “The Count seems to have left his door open and thrown the Frenchy masses to the Wolves of Summer. His Majesty will get his wish and there shall be no siege methinks.”

“That French peacock Compte d'Eu is probably holed up with the rest of them on the island. Undoubtedly with the rest of the noble fleur de lis.” Talbot added with a sneer, Talbot shared his King's distaste for the French enthusiastically.

“Agreed.” Warwick had already discerned that was what was happening from reports he had already received from his forward scouting parties. The Count or Compte d’Eu and the rest of the Caenish nobility had seen to their own protection well enough. Trusting to its newer, stronger walls, the Inner City, built upon the bank of the River Orne, was highly defensible as compared to the outer, older city with its crumbling walls and much larger areas to cover.

Warwick supposed he may have done the same in Count Eu’s position, but not without a fight! He had been expecting archers on the walls, pikeman lined up behind rough stockades and captains giving orders to repel and to hold. To find a pitiable defense of a few determined peasants desperate to protect their homes and businesses with nary a high-born gentleman to lead them was...unthinkable.

Those peasants now floated belly up or face down in the river below. They had died screaming for Christ’s mercy. Spurred onward by easy loot and mayhem, England’s armies were becoming uncontrollable.

Who is this?
reigning in?
I am in danger of agreeing with Northampton for once. These Irish and Welsh need reigning in. Speaking of which...

“I say William...” Warwick turned his horse towards Northampton who was looking with distaste into the corpse-choked river below. “That Welsh minstrel who accompanies the Prince. Was he not with you earlier? He mentioned something about composing a song about the battle?”

“Ah, that Gwilym fellow, aye. He was with me this morning. I was recounting my family history so that he might be persuaded to compose a song about my lineage. I thought it unseemly at first that the Prince should keep a Welsh born minstrel in his retinue, but at least he

WILIE

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is of noble stock himself. As least as far as that goes in Wales, eh Thomas? Ha! I could not say where he has gotten to.”

“Indeed. No matter.” Warwick spurred his horse about and trotted back down the hill with Talbot and Northampton keeping slightly behind. Warwick debated whether he should enter the city or not. He would have to send terms of surrender across the Orne to the new city as soon as the Abbey fell. Perhaps in that instance a little mayhem could be of benefit? A good leader had to know how to turn an incident into an advantage and Warwick had risen far by knowing how to examine a problem from all sides and implement satisfactory solutions. The King would see things his way.

“Wait, who the devil is that?” Talbot suddenly exclaimed.

Northampton and Warwick turned to regard where Talbot was pointing. A large group of men could be seen running pellmell into the city via a large gap in the stone wall that sappers had successfully breached hours before. Warwick was certain he had placed men there to guard it, but only against people from escaping, not entering. He squinted and recognized the standard the riders were flying and he scowled.

“The worst of the lot. Damnation! Talbot get your men in order. I am entering the city. William, there may be something to a gallows after all!”

Talbot was still squinting against the sun’s glare trying to make out the standard. It was a yellow background with a black bird of some sort clasping a red colored sword. “I don’t recognize that house?”

“Fucking mercenaries!” Warwick swore aloud in response as he spurred his horse to a gallop.

Too MANY NAMES!
CALL EACH MAN BY ONE NAME
WHERE ARE WE? WHY ARE WE HERE? WHERE CASTLE?
WHO HAS ALLEGIANCE TO WHOM?
CONFUSING!

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TROUBLE WITH HOMOPHONES: REIGN REIN
CANTOR CANTER
THIS HAS POTENTIAL TO TELL A RICH HISTORICAL TALE.

Jenni's Comments

Summary: Set during England's 14th century invasion of France, Welsh minstrel Dafydd ap Gwilym accompanies his patron Edward the Black Prince into France. He becomes embroiled in conspiracies while employing the services of the enigmatic mercenary Radu the Black of Transylvania who hunts a mysterious adversary known only as the Nachtzeherer.

Where are they?
France?

Thomas de Beauchamp, The Earl of Warwick, struggled to have his words heard over the rising tumult. ^{of his men.}

"Reign in, damn you! Fall back and regroup at the line! Are you so simple and starved of senses?" ^A The Irish and Welsh surged forward, heedless of their commander's words.

← Behind him, Sir Richard Talbot laughed out loud. "Look at them Warwick, just look at them! Fucking Irish!"

Earl Warwick did look, ~~and realized~~ ^T the matter was beyond him now. They want of meat, wine and chattels. They see poorly defended houses and abandoned stalls. The Abbey doors will be boarded up, and the nobles will be well protected, but the common folks are lambs fit for slaughter, may God have mercy upon them!

Are these Warwick's thoughts or is this the narrator?

← ~~Warwick watched as~~ [?] some Irish Gallowglass, easily recognizable by their colorful Gaelic garb worn over supple aketons, crashed through a hastily erected barricade of carts. Wooden logs and crates, salvaged from the Odon River docks by desperate townsfolk, were split apart by the Irish assault as though they were haystacks. They had been a laughably poor defense. The Gallowglass hacked and chopped through them unmindful of the damage this did to their own blades. No knight would have so dulled his sword, Warwick thought scornfully.

↑
English

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↳ The sun was beating down mercilessly, but the breeze borne off the Odon river was the hot breath of Hell itself. The stink of blood, shit and death hit the two English knights like a hammer each time the wind rose.

is Warwick a knight also?

↳ Scouts came and went delivering Warwick's orders and relaying them, ineffectually, to the disorganized horde below. The preparation of an entire night had been tossed aside in a matter of minutes and now chaos reigned in Caen.

prep for what?

“By Saint Georges’s Spurs my Lord, have you ever seen the like? God, was my sword not glutted with enough of this Irish blood when they sprang upon us when we were at Dornock?” Talbot, his expensive half-plate armor clanking with each movement, reined his horse close to Warwick’s own steed and looked down to the battling men, mostly Welsh and Irish regulars. His disgust for what he deemed the ‘lesser peoples’ was well known to Warwick.

not clear who is speaking

↳ Warwick grunted. His own preeminent distaste for the Irish was borne of memories of their hit-and-run tactics during the Scottish Campaigns, the battle of Dornock amongst them. By God, that had been a nightmare! Now a few of the northern clans, O’Neill and McMahan amongst them, had sworn to fight for King Edward...as long as it suited them. They had all the obedience of rabid dogs. And they are not the worst of the lot.

hyphen

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man on horseback

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I don't understand this sentence

Why did you switch to 1st person from third person POV?

third person

"A Gallows my Lords!" Northampton shouted up at them to be heard above the tumult. "Hang six or seven of them dead center of camp and by God you will have order then! Aye, that's how we do it on my Irish lands!"

Talbot looked over his shoulder at Warwick and rolled his eyes. Warwick ignored him and responded kindly.

"Aye, William, but surely not dead center? The flies, man!"

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"My Lord Earl," Talbot said bowing slightly in his saddle. "The Count seems to have left his door open and thrown the Frenchy masses to the Wolves of Summer. His Majesty will get his wish and there shall be no siege methinks." ^{no siege where?}

"That French peacock Compte d'Eu is probably holed up with the rest of them on the island. Undoubtedly with the rest of the noble fleur-de-lis," Talbot added with a sneer. Talbot shared his ^k King's distaste for the French enthusiastically.

which is what?

who?

hyphens

“Agreed.” Warwick had already discerned ~~that was what was happening~~ ^{this} from reports he had already received from his forward scouting parties. The Count or Comte d’Eu and the rest of the Caenish nobility had seen to their own protection well enough. Trusting to its newer, stronger walls, the Inner City, built upon the bank of the River Orne, was highly ^{defensible?} defensible as compared to the outer, older city with its crumbling walls and much larger areas to cover.

← Warwick supposed he may have done the same in Count Eu’s position, but not without a fight! ^{who?} He had been expecting archers on the walls, pikeman lined up behind rough stockades and captains giving orders to repel and to hold. To find a pitiable defense of a few determined peasants desperate to protect their homes and businesses with nary a high-born gentleman to lead them was...unthinkable.

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proper name? if not, no caps.

I'm lost. Are you talking about the peasants that the Irish & Welsh are killing now? Or some other peasants with the Covid -

If this is Warwick thinking to himself then put it in italics so it's clear. Otherwise the POV shift gets confusing.

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is of noble stock himself. At least as far as that goes in Wales, eh, Thomas? Ha! I could not say where he has gotten to.”

I had to go back to look to see who Thomas was. refer to him as Warwick for 4 pages. You mention Thomas once.

“Indeed. No matter.” Warwick spurred his horse about and trotted back down the hill with Talbot and Northampton keeping slightly behind. Warwick debated whether he should enter the city or not. He would have to send terms of surrender across the Orne to the new city as soon as the Abbey fell. Perhaps in that instance a little mayhem could be of benefit? A good leader had to know how to turn an incident into an advantage and Warwick had risen far by knowing how to examine a problem from all sides and implement satisfactory solutions. The King would see things his way.

the outer city?

the inner city?

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Northampton and Warwick turned to regard where Talbot was pointing. A large group of men could be seen riding pellmell into the city via a large gap in the stone wall that sappers had successfully breached hours before. Warwick was certain he had placed men there to guard it, but only against people from escaping, not entering. He squinted and recognized the standard the riders were flying and he scowled.

passive voice

“The worst of the lot. Damnation! Talbot get your men in order. I am entering the city. William, there may be something to a gallows after all!”

is the standard a flag?

Talbot was still squinting against the sun’s glare trying to make out the standard. It was a yellow background with a black bird of some sort clasping a red colored sword. “I don’t recognize that house?”

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who is William? is it Northampton?

DAVE

It's clear you have an immense amount of knowledge of the period and the people you're writing about. BUT, your readers don't have that breadth of knowledge. You have to walk us through, literally, take our hand and explain who or what is going on. After the first reading I'm not sure who the good guys are or what the dispute is or which moral side I should root for. Very confusing. I'll read it again and see if that helps.

Second reading went a little better. I, sort of, understood what was going on, but it only highlighted the confusions of name, place, and time. You have to help us to understand this complicated story.

Remember, I'm reading the story from this point. I have to assume that this is the beginning of the story. If it isn't, there might be less confusion, but you have to think about the reader and how the reader has to navigate through this bit of history.

Good luck with this very aggressive story.

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“Reign in, damn you! Fall back and regroup at the line! Are you so simple and starved of senses?” The Irish and Welsh surged forward, heedless of their commander's words.

Behind him, Sir Richard Talbot laughed out loud. “Look at them Warwick, just look at them! Fucking Irish!”

Earl Warwick did look and realized the matter was beyond him now. *They (He thought/said, “They) want of meat, wine and chattels. They see poorly defended houses and abandoned stalls. The Abbey doors will be boarded up and the nobles will be well protected, but the common folks are lambs fit for slaughter, may God have mercy upon them!” (If Earl Warwick is saying or thinking these lines, you have to identify it as such.*

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Warwick watched as some Irish Gallowglass *(have you identified what Irish Gallowglass are?)*, *(Warriors/soldiers/riders? Whatever)* easily recognizable by their colorful Gaelic garb worn over supple aketons, crashed through a hastily erected barricade of carts. *(Good guys? Justified with their actions?)* Wooden logs and crates salvaged from the Odon River docks by desperate townsfolk were split apart by the Irish assault as though they were haystacks. They had been a laughably poor defense. The Gallowglass hacked and chopped through them unmindful of the damage this did to their own blades. No knight would have so dulled his sword, Warwick thought scornfully.

The sun was beating down mercilessly, but the breeze borne off the Odon river was the hot breath of Hell itself. The stink of blood, shit and death hit the two English knights like a hammer each time the wind rose.

Scouts came and went delivering Warwick's orders and relaying them, ineffectually, to the disorganized horde below. The preparation of an entire night had been tossed aside in a matter of minutes and now chaos reigned in Caen. *(What were they supposed to do. Have we been introduced to the plans and are now witnessing the failure of those plans?)*

“By Saint Georges’s Spurs my Lord, have you ever seen the like? God, was my sword not glutted with enough of this Irish blood when they sprang upon us when we were at Dornock?” *(I thought the Irish were a part of the attack. Why are they attacking?)* Talbot, his expensive half-plate armor clanking with each movement, reigned his horse close to Warwick’s own steed and looked down to the battling men, mostly Welsh and Irish regulars. His disgust for what he deemed the ‘lesser peoples’ was well known to Warwick.

Warwick grunted. His own preeminent distaste for the Irish was borne of memories of their hit and run tactics during the Scottish Campaigns, the battle of Dornock

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amongst them. By God that had been a nightmare! Now a few of the northern clans, O'Neill and McMahon amongst them, had sworn to fight for King Edward...as long as it suited them. They had all the obedience of rabid dogs. And they are not the worst of the lot.

“Here comes Northampton,” Talbot smirked, pointing at a horse approaching up the hill at a cantor. “Undoubtedly to suggest the gallows idea again after seeing this rubbish. Quick, look suitably put out.”

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You change from third person to first. Very confusing. Please re-read the previous paragraph and keep in mind who is speaking and tag them.

“A Gallows my Lords!” Northampton shouted up at them to be heard above the tumult. “Hang six or seven of them dead center of camp and by God you will have order then! Aye, that's how we do it on my Irish lands!” *(This is good. I understand what the problem is. I feel*

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that most of what went on from the description of the chaos until here is unnecessary or out of place. Has the gallows suggestion been mentioned before?)

Talbot looked over his shoulder at Warwick and rolled his eyes. Warwick ignored him and responded kindly.

“Aye William, but surely not dead center? The flies man!”

“Ha! Flies won’t be a bother with this lot. Their hides already have maggots crawling around inside of them. Lice bitten curs! Good day to you Sir Talbot.” Northampton nodded in greeting to the favored knight.

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“That French peacock Compte d’Eu is probably holed up with the rest of them on the island. Undoubtedly with the rest of the noble fleur de lis.” Talbot added with a sneer. Talbot shared his King’s distaste for the French enthusiastically. *(They’re attacking a French village?)*

“Agreed.” Warwick had already discerned that was what was happening from reports he had already received from his forward scouting parties. *(He heard that* The Count or Compte d’Eu and the rest of the Caenish nobility had seen to their own protection well enough. Trusting to its newer, stronger walls, the Inner City, built upon the bank of the River Orne, was highly defensible as compared to the outer, older city with its crumbling walls and much larger areas to cover.

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I am in danger of agreeing with Northampton for once. These Irish and Welsh need reigning in. Speaking of which...

(All through the previous page, you've jumped from topic to topic and from character to character. I can't follow the thrust of the plot. What is at stake here? Make it clear who the good guys are – who the bad guys are – what the goal is. At this point I have no idea what is going on or why. Sorry.)

"I say William..." Warwick turned his horse towards Northampton who was looking with distaste into the corpse-choked river below. "That Welsh minstrel who accompanies the Prince. Was he not with you earlier? He mentioned something about composing a song about the battle?"

"Ah, that Gwilym fellow, aye. He was with me this morning. I was recounting my family history so that he might be persuaded to compose a song about my lineage. I thought it unseemly at first that the Prince should keep a Welsh born minstrel in his retinue, but at least he is of noble stock himself. As least as far as that goes in Wales, eh Thomas? Ha! I could not say where he has gotten to." *(Now you're talking about composing a song?)*

"Indeed. No matter." Warwick spurred his horse about and trotted back down the hill with Talbot and Northampton keeping slightly behind. Warwick debated whether he should enter the city or not. He would have to send terms of surrender across the Orne to the new city as

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“The worst of the lot. Damnation! Talbot get your men in order. I am entering the city. William, there may be something to a gallows after all!”

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“Fucking mercenaries!” Warwick swore aloud in response as he spurred his horse to a gallop.

This scene is a complete confusion to read. Think about the reader who has to be led through this maze of names and places. Rather than Talbot and William entering a defeated city, there are mercenaries have entered by a collapsed wall. Are they upstaging the attacking guys and are going to take the spoils or are they to reinforce the defenders.

Have pity and patience.

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Ed

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who is fighting whom? where? when?

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← Behind him, Sir Richard Talbot laughed out loud. "Look at them Warwick, just look at them! Fucking Irish!"

an Earl is referred to as "Lord X"

Earl Warwick did look and realized the matter was beyond him now. They want ^{of} meat, wine and chattels. They see poorly defended houses and abandoned stalls. The Abbey doors will be boarded up and the nobles will be well protected, but the common folks are lambs fit for slaughter, may God have mercy upon them! ^{italics?}

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- I don't know who is fighting who, where, or why.
- Are these supposed to be good guys? Am I supposed to care about them?
- do they do anything else besides ^{haughtily} ^{over the unfortunates?} ^{haughtily} over the unfortunates?

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Warwick sighed privately and kept his face impassive, not wanting Talbot to see how much he really was put out. The Earl of Northampton was dressed in his full suit of half-plate and mail armor, its filigree of gold and silver worked in stylized etchings catching the light of the sun. Several hundred florins undoubtedly squandered on designs that a well-placed mace or

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sword blade could easily ruin, but that was just another way Northampton flaunted the wealth he enjoyed from sizable rents collected across the midlands of England. The standard of his house was ~~born~~ aloft by a young page wearing ~~only~~ Northampton regalia over a simple smock. The gangly youth riding behind his Lord [?] had the look of a lad well out of his element. [I wonder how many pages Northampton will go through on this campaign? The Scots murdered eight of them as I recall. The fucking fool should at least give them a helmet and some chain mesh, he can bloody afford it. He winced. I've been around Talbot too long. Christ forgive my vulgarity!] *italics?*

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"Aye William, but surely not dead center? The flies ~~man~~!"

← "Ha! Flies won't be a bother with this lot. Their hides already have maggots crawling around inside of them. Lice-bitten curs! Good day to you Sir Talbot." Northampton nodded in greeting to the favored knight.

"My Lord Earl," Talbot said bowing slightly in his saddle. "The Count seems to have left his door open and thrown the Frenchy masses to the Wolves of Summer. His Majesty will get his wish and there shall be no siege methinks."

← "That French peacock Compte d'Eu is probably holed up with the rest of them on the island. Undoubtedly with the rest of the noble fleur de lis." Talbot added with a sneer. Talbot shared his King's distaste for the French enthusiastically.

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“Agreed.” Warwick had already discerned ^{that} that was what was happening from reports he had already received from his forward scouting parties. The Count of Compte d’Eu and the rest of the Caenish nobility had seen to their own protection well enough. Trusting to its newer, stronger walls, the Inner City, built upon the bank of the River Orne, was highly defensible as compared to the outer, older city with its crumbling walls and much larger areas to cover.

← Warwick supposed he ^{might} ^{what?} might have done the same in Count Eu’s position, but not without a fight! He had been expecting archers on the walls, pikemen lined up behind rough stockades and captains giving orders to repel and to hold. To find a pitiable defense of a few determined peasants desperate to protect their homes and businesses with nary a high-born gentleman to lead them was unthinkable.

← Those peasants now floated belly up or face down in the river below. They had died screaming for Christ’s mercy. Spurred onward by easy loot and mayhem, England’s armies were becoming uncontrollable.

^{whose thoughts?} I am in danger of agreeing with Northampton for once. These Irish and Welsh ^{talents?} need reigning in. Speaking of which...

“I say William...” Warwick turned his horse towards Northampton, who was looking with distaste into the corpse-choked river below. “That Welsh minstrel who accompanies the Prince. Was he not with you earlier? He mentioned something about composing a song about the battle?”

← “Ah, that Gwilym fellow, aye. He was with me this morning. I was recounting my family history so that he might be persuaded to compose a song about my lineage. I thought it unseemly at first that the Prince should keep a Welsh-born minstrel in his retinue, but at least he

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is of noble stock himself. As least as far as that goes in Wales, eh Thomas? Ha! I could not say where he has gotten to.”

← “Indeed. No matter.” Warwick spurred his horse about and trotted back down the hill with Talbot and Northampton keeping slightly behind. Warwick debated whether he should enter the city or not. He would have to send terms of surrender across the Orne to the new city as soon as the Abbey fell. Perhaps in that instance a little mayhem could be of benefit? A good leader had to know how to turn an incident into an advantage and Warwick had risen far by knowing how to examine a problem from all sides and implement satisfactory solutions. The King would see things his way.

“Wait, who the devil is that?” Talbot suddenly exclaimed.

← Northampton and Warwick turned to regard where Talbot was pointing. A large group of men could be seen running pellmell into the city via a large gap in the stone wall that sappers had successfully breached hours before. Warwick was certain he had placed men there to guard it, but only against people from escaping, not entering. He squinted and recognized the standard the riders were flying and he scowled.

“The worst of the lot. Damnation! Talbot get your men in order. I am entering the city. William, there may be something to a gallows after all!”

Talbot was still squinting against the sun’s glare trying to make out the standard. It was a yellow background with a black bird of some sort clasping a red colored sword. “I don’t recognize that house?”

← “Fucking mercenaries!” Warwick swore aloud in response as he spurred his horse to a gallop.

Susan

Massachusetts writer

Episode 36 – Historical Fiction

Summary: Set during England's 14th century invasion of France, Welsh minstrel Dafydd ap Gwilym accompanies his patron Edward the Black Prince into France. He becomes embroiled in conspiracies while employing the services of the enigmatic mercenary Radu the Black of Transylvania, who hunts a mysterious adversary known only as the Nachtzeherer.

Comment [s1]: There are a lot of names here - a bit hard to track.

Thomas de Beauchamp, The Earl of Warwick, struggled to have his words heard over the rising tumult.

"Reign in, damn you!" he called. "Fall back and regroup at the line! Are you so simple and starved of senses?" The Irish and Welsh surged forward, heedless of their commander's words.

Comment [s2]: Needed? I would think he'd shout quick, short commands.

Behind him, Sir Richard Talbot laughed out loud. "Look at them Warwick, just look at them! Fucking Irish!"

Earl Warwick did look, and realized the matter was beyond him now. ~~They~~ His soldiers saw poorly defended houses and abandoned stalls. They want of desired meat, wine and chattels. ~~They see poorly defended houses and abandoned stalls.~~ They'll board up the Abbey doors will be boarded up and the nobles will be well-protect the nobles protected, but they'll destroy the common folk, who they perceive as are lambs fit for slaughter, may God have mercy upon them!

- set the scene first - or at least do it soon. I need to picture the battle scene in my head.

Warwick watched as some Irish Gallowglass, easily recognizable by their colorful Gaelic garb worn over supple aketons, crashed through a hastily erected barricade of carts. Wooden logs and crates salvaged from the Odon River docks by desperate townsfolk were split apart by the Irish assault as though they were haystacks. They had been a laughably poor

→ at beginning of every paragraph

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defense. The Gallowglass hacked and chopped through ~~them~~ logs and crates that had been salvaged from the Odon River docks by desperate townsfolk, unmindful of the damage this ~~did~~ done to their own blades.

Comment [s3]: obvious

No knight would have so dulled his sword, Warwick thought scornfully.

— The sun was beating down mercilessly, but the breeze borne off the Odon ~~river~~ River was the hot breath of Hell itself. The stink of blood, shit and death hit the two English knights like a hammer each time the wind rose.

— Scouts came and went, delivering Warwick's orders and relaying them, ineffectually, to the disorganized horde below. The preparation of an entire night had been tossed aside in a matter of minutes, and now chaos reined in Caen.

Comment [s4]: Where are they in relation to the fighting soldiers?

“By Saint Georges’s Spurs, my Lord, have you ever seen the like?” Talbot asked. “God, was my sword not glutted with enough of this Irish blood when they sprang upon us ~~when we were~~ at Dornock?” Talbot, his expensive half-plate armor clanking with each movement, reigned his horse close to Warwick’s own steed and looked down to the battling men, mostly Welsh and Irish regulars. His disgust for what he deemed the ‘lesser peoples’ was well known to Warwick.

Comment [s5]: Again, I’m having a hard time picturing this. Where are they? What are their surroundings like?

— Warwick grunted. His own preeminent distaste for the Irish was borne of memories of their ~~hit hit and and~~ hit-and-run tactics during the Scottish Campaigns, the battle of Dornock amongst them. By God, that had been a nightmare! Now a few of the northern clans, O’Neill and McMahon amongst them, had sworn to fight for King Edward...as long as it suited them. They had all the obedience of rabid dogs. And they ~~are weren't~~ weren't the worst of the lot.

Comment [s6]: watch paragraph indents-should be .5" throughout

“Here comes Northampton,” Talbot smirked, pointing at a horse approaching up the hill at a cantor. “Undoubtedly to suggest the gallows idea again after seeing this rubbish. Quick, look suitably put out.”

Comment [s7]: At this point, there are a lot of names thrown around; it’s confusing in an opening chapter to introduce so many names, clans, situations, etc.

✓ funny

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Comment [s8]: good

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↳ Sounds like he's saying goodbye

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“My Lord Earl,” Talbot said, bowing slightly in his saddle. “The Count seems to have left his door open and thrown the Frenchy masses to the Wolves of Summer. His Majesty will get his wish, and there shall be no siege methinks.”

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) lots of thinking in the middle of a fight scene

— Those peasants now floated belly up or face down in the river below. They had died screaming for Christ’s mercy. Spurred onward by easy loot and mayhem, England’s armies were becoming uncontrollable.

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