

The Jester: Tania Johnson

He danced, he whirled, he shook his head to set the bells atop his pointed hat jingling. He landed in front of the king and let out a long, loud, vibrating fart. The audience cheered and jeered, they laughed at him and called him a fool. Roland was proud of his job as a flatulist, his was a rare talent, the ability to entertain crowds and fart on cue. He had performed this ritual too many times to count.

One day the king called him forth. Roland was confused. What was this audience with the king for? He had not been called to entertain. He stood there trembling. Casting his mind back, had he done something wrong? He was a jester. He worked hard on his routine, he accepted the jeers and the mockery. That went with his job. Had he offended anyone? He stood there in front of his king and his king smiled down at him. The king declared that he was going to be honoured for his years of service. For the joy his entertainment had brought to the court, for his unique ability to fart on cue he was to be awarded a stately manor in Suffolk and 30 acres of land. Roland looked around the court and tried not to laugh. He was a fool but foolish?

Loosely based on the historical figure of Roland le Fartere who history records as entertaining King Henry II of England.