

HENRY IV, PART 2*A line-by-line translation***Prologue****Shakespeare***Enter RUMOR all painted with tongues***RUMOR**

Open your ears, for which of you will stop
The vent of hearing when loud Rumor speaks?
I, from the orient to the drooping west,
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold
5 The acts commenced on this ball of earth.
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,
The which in every language I pronounce,
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.
I speak of peace while covert enmity
10 Under the smile of safety wounds the world.
And who but Rumor, who but only I,
Make fearful musters and prepared defense,
Whiles the big year, swell'n with some other grief,
Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,
15 And no such matter? Rumor is a pipe
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures,
And of so easy and so plain a stop
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,
The still-discordant wav'ring multitude,
20 Can play upon it. But what need I thus
My well-known body to anatomize
Among my household? Why is Rumor here?
I run before King Harry's victory,
Who in a bloody field by Shrewsbury
25 Hath beaten down young Hotspur and his troops,
Quenching the flame of bold rebellion
Even with the rebels' blood. But what mean I
To speak so true at first? My office is
To noise abroad that Harry Monmouth fell
30 Under the wrath of noble Hotspur's sword,
And that the King before the Douglas' rage
Stooped his anointed head as low as death.
This have I rumored through the peasant towns
Between that royal field of Shrewsbury
35 And this worm-eaten hold of ragged stone,
Where Hotspur's father, old Northumberland,
Lies crafty-sick. The posts come tiring on,
And not a man of them brings other news
Than they have learnt of me. From Rumor's tongues
40 They bring smooth comforts false, worse than true
wrongs.

*Exit***Shakescleare Translation***RUMOR* enters, wearing an outfit covered in tongues.

 *Rumor was personified as a figure covered with tongues and eyes.*

RUMOR

Open your ears! For which of you would even be able to block your ears when loud Rumor is speaking? I make the wind like my horse, carrying me from the east, to where the sun sets in the west, as I continue to narrate about the things happening in this world. My tongue always tells lies, and I tell lies in any language, filling up men's ears with these untruths. I say that everything is peaceful when in fact hidden anger lies behind kind smiles, ready to bring harm to the world. And who is there but Rumor—who is there but me—who can make men raise armies in fear and prepare defenses, ready to fight in some war, when in fact the world is troubled by other problems that year? Rumor is like a pipe. The only types of breath that can blow into it are suspicion, jealousy, and speculation. It's such an easy pipe to play that even the common people can play it—that stupid monster with so many heads, that is always noisy and always uncertain. But why am I telling you, my audience, about my role and purpose of lying and making things up? You already know that, you're watching a play. Why is Rumor here? I come to tell you about the King's victory, how he defeated young Hotspur and his troops in a bloody battle near Shrewsbury, and now has put out the fire of rebellion with the rebels' own blood. But why am I telling you the truth already? I am supposed to be spreading the rumor that Prince Hal was killed by the angry, noble Hotspur. I am also meant to relate that the King has been killed by Douglas, in his rage. I have already spread this rumor through the rustic towns between Shrewsbury and here--this dirty, old, stone castle, where Hotspur's father, old Northumberland, is pretending to be ill. The messengers will keep arriving, and they all bring with them the news that they have heard from me. It is from my tongues that they will announce false reports to comfort them, which are far worse than honest reports of grief and sadness.

*RUMOR exits.***Act 1, Scene 1****Shakespeare***Enter LORD BARDOLPH***LORD BARDOLPH**

Who keeps the gate here, ho?

Shakescleare Translation*LORD BARDOLPH* enters.**LORD BARDOLPH**

Excuse me, who is the porter around here?

 *Porters served as gatekeepers or doormen during Shakespeare's time.*

Enter the PORTER

Where is the Earl?

PORTER

What shall I say you are?

LORD BARDOLPH

Tell thou the Earl

5 That the Lord Bardolph doth attend him here.

PORTERHis lordship is walked forth into the orchard.
Please it your Honor knock but at the gate
And he himself will answer.*NORTHUMBERLAND Enter***LORD BARDOLPH**

Here comes the Earl.

*Exit PORTER***NORTHUMBERLAND**10 What news, Lord Bardolph? Every minute now
Should be the father of some stratagem.
The times are wild. Contention, like a horse
Full of high feeding, madly hath broke loose
And bears down all before him.**LORD BARDOLPH**15 Noble Earl,
I bring you certain news from Shrewsbury.**NORTHUMBERLAND**

Good, an God will!

LORD BARDOLPHAs good as heart can wish.
The King is almost wounded to the death,
20 And, in the fortune of my lord your son,
Prince Harry slain outright; and both the Blunts
Killed by the hand of Douglas; young Prince John
And Westmoreland and Stafford fled the field;
And Harry Monmouth's brawn, the hulk Sir John,
25 Is prisoner to your son. O, such a day,
So fought, so followed, and so fairly won,
Came not till now to dignify the times
Since Caesar's fortunes.**NORTHUMBERLAND**How is this derived?
30 Saw you the field? Came you from Shrewsbury?**LORD BARDOLPH**I speake with one, my lord, that came from thence,
A gentleman well bred and of good name,
That freely rendered me these news for true.**NORTHUMBERLAND**Here comes my servant Travers, who I sent
On Tuesday last to listen after news.*Enter TRAVERS***LORD BARDOLPH**My lord, I overrode him on the way;
And he is furnished with no certainties
More than he haply may retail from me.**NORTHUMBERLAND**

Now, Travers, what good tidings comes with you?

*The PORTER enters.**[To the PORTER] Where is the Earl of Northumberland?***PORTER**

Who shall I say that you are?

LORD BARDOLPH

Tell the Earl that Lord Bardolph is here to see him.

PORTERHis Lordship is currently walking in the garden. If you want
to, knock on the gate of the garden and he will greet you
himself.*The EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND enters.***LORD BARDOLPH**

Here's the Earl now.

*The PORTER exits.***NORTHUMBERLAND**What news do you have for me, Lord Bardolph? There
seems to be a new military strategy every minute. These are
violent times. This war is like a horse which has been
overfed and then breaks out in rage and tramples on
everything in its way.**LORD BARDOLPH**

Noble Earl, I have news for you from Shrewsbury.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Good news, I hope.

LORD BARDOLPHIt's the best that we could have hoped for. The King has
been wounded and is at risk of dying. And because of your
son's good fortunes, Prince Harry has been killed. Douglas
has killed both of the Lords Blunt. And young Prince John,
Westmoreland, and Stafford have fled the battle. Your son
has even captured Harry's fat swine of a friend, that huge
Sir John Falstaff. Oh, there hasn't been a battle fought or
won quite as well as this since the triumphs of Julius
Caesar! That is how honorable this moment is!**NORTHUMBERLAND**How do you know this? Did you see it happen? Have you
just come from Shrewsbury?**LORD BARDOLPH**I spoke with someone who came from the battle. He was a
gentleman with a strong upbringing and a good reputation,
and he told me all of these things truthfully.**NORTHUMBERLAND**Here comes my servant Travers. I sent him last Tuesday to
find out the latest news.*TRAVERS enters.***LORD BARDOLPH**My lord, I rode past him on my way here. He doesn't know
anything other than what I told him.**NORTHUMBERLAND**

Now, Travers, what good news do you have for me?

TRAVERS

40 My lord, Sir John Umfreyle turned me back
With joyful tidings and, being better horsed,
Outrode me. After him came spurring hard
A gentleman, almost forspent with speed,
That stopp'd by me to breathe his bloodied horse.
45 He asked the way to Chester, and of him
I did demand what news from Shrewsbury.
He told me that rebellion had bad luck
And that young Harry Percy's spur was cold.
With that he gave his able horse the head
50 And, bending forward, struck his arm'd heels
Against the panting sides of his poor jade
Up to the rowel-head, and starting so
He seemed in running to devour the way,
Staying no longer question.

NORTHUMBERLAND

55 Ha? Again:
Said he young Harry Percy's spur was cold?
Of Hotspur, Coldspur? That rebellion
Had met ill luck?

LORD BARDOLPH

My lord, I'll tell you what:
60 If my young lord your son have not the day,
Upon mine honor, for a silken point
I'll give my barony. Never talk of it.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Why should that gentleman that rode by Travers
Give then such instances of loss?

LORD BARDOLPH

65 Who, he?
He was some hilding fellow that had stolen
The horse he rode on and, upon my life,
Spoke at a venture. Look, here comes more news.

Enter MORTON

NORTHUMBERLAND

Yea, this man's brow, like to a title leaf,
70 Foretells the nature of a tragic volume.
So looks the strand whereon the imperious flood
Hath left a witness'd usurpation.—
Say, Morton, didst thou come from Shrewsbury?

MORTON

I ran from Shrewsbury, my noble lord,
75 Where hateful death put on his ugliest mask
To fright our party.

NORTHUMBERLAND

How doth my son and brother?
Thou tremblest, and the whiteness in thy cheek
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand.
80 Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,
So dull, so dead in look, so woebegone,
Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night,
And would have told him half his Troy was burnt;
But Priam found the fire ere he his tongue,
85 And I my Percy's death ere thou report'st it.
This thou wouldest say, "Your son did thus and thus;
Your brother thus; so fought the noble Douglas"—
Stopping my greedy ear with their bold deeds.
But in the end, to stop my ear indeed,
90 Thou hast a sigh to blow away this praise,
Ending with "Brother, son, and all are dead."

MORTON

Douglas is living, and your brother yet,
But for my lord your son—

TRAVERS

Sir, Lord Bardolph 2 sent me back here, having told me his happy news. As his horse is better than mine, he overtook me. After he had ridden off, another gentleman came along, riding very fast. He was going so quickly that he was exhausted and had to stop by me to give his bleeding horse a rest for a while. He asked me how to get to Chester and I forced him to tell me if there was any news from Shrewsbury. He told me that the rebellion had been defeated and the spur 3 of young Harry Percy was now cold. Having said that, he got back on his horse, leaned forward, and dug his heels so hard into the sides of the poor old animal that he and the horse almost couldn't be seen anymore. He rode off as if he was trying to swallow the ground in front of him, and wasn't prepared to answer any more of my questions.

NORTHUMBERLAND

What? Repeat that. Did he say that Harry Percy's spur was cold? That Hotspur 4 is now Coldspur? That the rebellion had been defeated?

LORD BARDOLPH

My lord, I'll tell you what: if your son hasn't been successful today, I swear that I will give up everything I have, in exchange for a piece of lace 5. Don't even think about such an outcome.

NORTHUMBERLAND

But why would this gentleman ride by Travers and make up such horrible things?

LORD BARDOLPH

What, him? He was probably some worthless idiot that had stolen the horse he was riding. I bet that he made it all up. Look, here comes someone with more news.

MORTON enters.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Yes, this man's face is like the title page of a book, preparing to tell a tragic story. His face has been left marked with sadness, just like the shore after a terrible flood.

[To MORTON] Have you just come from Shrewsbury, Morton?

MORTON

I ran here from Shrewsbury, my noble lord. Death had arrived in its horrible mask and was frightening our men.

NORTHUMBERLAND

How are my son and my brother? You are trembling and your white face gives away your news--you don't even need to say a word. You remind me of the faint, passive, dull, dead-looking and sad man, who, after the Battle of Troy, went into King Priam's bedroom to tell him that half of his city had been burned down. But Priam found the fire before he was told about it, and I know about my Percy's death before you even report it. You will say something like, "Your son did this and this; your brother did this; the noble Douglas fought like this," and you'll fill up my greedy ears with stories about their brave actions. But in the end, the only way to fill up my ears completely, is to blow away all of this praise with a sigh and finally tell me, "Your brother, your son, everyone is dead."

MORTON

Douglas is still living and so is your brother for now. But, my lord, your son--

. 2 The first edition of the play reads "Sir John Umfreyle," and this line is omitted in the First Folio. Many editors believe that this is a textual error, or refers to a part of the text that was cut after the first performance to save on the number of actors needed.

. 3 A spur is a device with a small spike or a spiked wheel, worn on a rider's heel and used for urging a horse to move forward.

. 4 We recall from Henry IV Part 1 that Henry Percy's nickname is Hotspur.

. 5 A "silken point" was a cord or a lace for tying up items of clothing.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Why, he is dead.
 See what a ready tongue suspicion hath!
 He that but fears the thing he would not know
 Hath, by instinct, knowledge from others' eyes
 That what he feared is chancèd. Yet speak, Morton.
 Tell thou an earl his divination lies,
 And I will take it as a sweet disgrace
 And make thee rich for doing me such wrong.

MORTON

You are too great to be by me gainsaid,
 Your spirit is too true, your fears too certain.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Yet, for all this, say not that Percy's dead.
 I see a strange confession in thine eye.
 Thou shak'st thy head and hold'st it fear or sin
 To speak a truth. If he be slain, say so.
 The tongue offends not that reports his death;
 And he doth sin that doth belie the dead,
 Not he which says the dead is not alive.
 Yet the first bringer of unwelcome news
 Hath but a losing office, and his tongue
 Sounds ever after as a sullen bell
 Remembered tolling a departing friend.

LORD BARDOLPH

I cannot think, my lord, your son is dead.

MORTON

I am sorry I should force you to believe
 That which I would to God I had not seen,
 But these mine eyes saw him in bloody state,
 Rend'ring faint quittance, wearied and outbreathed,
 To Harry Monmouth; whose swift wrath beat down
 The never-daunted Percy to the earth,
 From whence with life he never more sprung up.
 In few, his death, whose spirit lent a fire
 Even to the dullest peasant in his camp,
 Being bruited once, took fire and heat away
 From the best tempered courage in his troops;
 For from his metal was his party steeled,
 Which, once in him abated, all the rest
 Turned on themselves, like dull and heavy lead.
 And as the thing that's heavy in itself
 Upon enforcement flies with greatest speed,
 So did our men, heavy in Hotspur's loss,
 Lend to this weight such lightness with their fear
 That arrows fled not swifter toward their aim
 Than did our soldiers, aiming at their safety,
 Fly from the field. Then was the noble Worcester
 Too soon ta'en prisoner; and that furious Scot,
 The bloody Douglas, whose well-laboring sword
 Had three times slain th'appearance of the King,
 Gan vail his stomach and did grace the shame
 Of those that turned their backs and in his flight,
 Stumbling in fear, was took. The sum of all
 Is that the King hath won and hath sent out
 A speedy power to encounter you, my lord,
 Under the conduct of young Lancaster
 And Westmoreland. This is the news at full.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Why, he is dead. My suspicions were so quick to say so!
 Even when a man fears something that he doesn't want to
 know, his instinct and the look in other people's eyes tell
 him that the thing has happened. But speak to me, Morton,
 and even though I'm an earl⁶, don't be afraid to tell me
 that my predictions are wrong. I would take it as a welcome
 disgrace, and would give you riches for lying to me about it.

⁶ An "earl" is a British nobleman. Northumberland urges his servant Morton not to be afraid to speak his mind, despite the difference in their social ranks.

MORTON

You are far too great a man to be lied to; your intuition is
 correct; your fears are right.

NORTHUMBERLAND

But in spite of all this, please don't say that Percy's dead. I
 can see some reluctant confession in your eyes. You shake
 your head and seem afraid to tell the truth in case it is
 sinful. If he is dead, just tell me. The man who must report a
 death can't offend anyone by doing his duty. It is the man
 who lies about death who sins, not the man who must say
 that a dead man is not alive. It is a losing battle, having to
 be the first person to announce terrible news. His words will
 always sound like a mourning bell, ringing out to remember
 a lost friend.

LORD BARDOLPH

I don't want to believe that your son is dead, my lord.

MORTON

I am sorry that I have to force you to believe this, when I
 would have prayed to God to have never seen it myself. But
 I saw his bloody body with my own eyes. He could only
 manage a weak exchange of blows, he was so tired and out
 of breath. Harry Monmouth⁷ struck down the unmovable
 Percy to the ground with his sudden fury, and Percy never
 got up again. To say this in just a few words: his courage had
 inspired us all, even the dullest peasant in the army. As
 soon as the news had been reported, it took the drive and
 the spirit out of even the bravest of our troops. For Percy's
 sword gave his army an edge, which, once blunted by his
 death, they became like a piece of dull and heavy lead, and
 couldn't fight anymore. And just as something heavy picks
 up speed when propelled forward, our men too—weighed
 down by their grief for Hotspur—started moving quickly.
 They went as quickly as arrows flying toward their target—
 but heading for safety, not for the battle. Your brother, the
 noble Worcester, was quickly taken captive. Then that angry
 Scotsman, the bloody Douglas, who had already killed
 three men dressed up to look like the King, lost his courage
 too. He joined the men who were running away. But, as he
 fled, he stumbled and was captured. The conclusion of all
 of that is that the King has won the battle. And, my lord, he
 has sent out a fast moving army to confront you, led by the
 young Lancaster and Westmoreland. That is everything that
 I have to tell you.

⁷ We remember from Henry IV Part 1 that Prince Hal is sometimes called Monmouth, after the place he was born in Wales.

NORTHUMBERLAND

For this I shall have time enough to mourn.
 In poison there is physic, and these news,
 Having been well, that would have made me sick,
 150 Being sick, have in some measure made me well.
 And as the wretch whose fever-weakened joints,
 Like strengthless hinges, buckle under life,
 Impatient of his fit, breaks like a fire
 Out of his keeper's arms, even so my limbs,
 155 Weakened with grief, being now enraged with grief,
 Are thrice themselves. Hence therefore, thou nice
 crutch.
 A scaly gauntlet now with joints of steel
 Must glove this hand. And hence, thou sickly coif.
 160 Thou art a guard too wanton for the head
 Which princes, fleshed with conquest, aim to hit.
 Now bind my brows with iron, and approach
 The ragged' st hour that time and spite dare bring
 To frown upon th'enraged Northumberland.
 165 Let heaven kiss earth! Now let not Nature's hand
 Keep the wild flood confined. Let order die,
 And let this world no longer be a stage
 To feed contention in a lingering act;
 But let one spirit of the firstborn Cain
 170 Reign in all bosoms, that, each heart being set
 On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,
 And darkness be the burier of the dead.

LORD BARDOLPH

This strainèd passion doth you wrong, my lord.

MORTON

Sweet Earl, divorce not wisdom from your honor.
 175 The lives of all your loving complices
 Lean on your health, the which, if you give o'er
 To stormy passion, must perforce decay.
 You cast th' event of war, my noble lord,
 And summed the account of chance before you said
 180 "Let us make head." It was your presurmise
 That, in the dole of blows your son might drop.
 You knew he walked o'er perils on an edge,
 More likely to fall in than to get o'er.
 You were advised his flesh was capable
 185 Of wounds and scars, and that his forward spirit
 Would lift him where most trade of danger ranged.
 Yet did you say "Go forth," and none of this,
 Though strongly apprehended, could restrain
 The stiff-borne action. What hath then befall'n,
 190 Or what did this bold enterprise brought forth,
 More than that being which was like to be?

LORD BARDOLPH

We all that are engagèd to this loss
 Knew that we ventured on such dangerous seas
 That if we wrought out life, 'twas ten to one;
 195 And yet we ventured, for the gain proposed
 Choked the respect of likely peril feared;
 And since we are o'erset, venture again.
 Come, we will all put forth, body and goods.

NORTHUMBERLAND

There will be time to mourn for this. Sometimes you can find healing in poison. If I had been well, this news would have made me sick. As I am sick, this news has in some way made me well. I am like a diseased man--whose joints are so weakened by fever that they are like useless hinges--that buckles under his own weight and then, in a fit of impatience, bursts like a flame out of his nurse's arms. That's what my limbs are like now. Once they were weakened with grief, but now they are enraged with it, and feel three times more powerful than they were before. Get away from me, you ridiculous crutch! Now armor will be the only thing to cover this hand. And get rid of this nightcap! It's far too feminine a hat for the head of someone who's about to be the target of princes, fresh from their victory. Cover my face in iron, and let the rough hour come when time and hatred will bring the worst things to attack me in my anger. Let the skies fall to the ground! Now let the oceans flood the shores. To hell with order! Let the world stop being a stage that lets this argument carry on and on. Let the spirit of Cain  live inside all of us. If every heart is set on murder, then this terrible scene might finally end, and darkness will cover up the dead bodies left behind.

 In the Bible, Cain was Adam and Eve's firstborn son, who murdered his brother Abel.

LORD BARDOLPH

This intense passion isn't good for you, my lord,

MORTON

Kind Earl, don't let your wronged sense of honor make you forget your wisdom. The lives of all your young allies are depending on you and your health. Don't let yourself be taken in by these violent passions--it will only make your illness worse. You thought about the outcome of the war before you said, "Let's raise an army." You predicted that when the fighting started, your son might die. You knew that he was doing something dangerous, walking on the edge of a cliff, more likely to fall over it than make it through. You knew that he might be wounded and scarred, and that his fearless spirit would take him into the most dangerous situations. But you still said, "Go ahead." Even though you knew all of these things, none of them sufficed to stop the decided course of action. So everything that has happened, all the results of this brave mission--were they not just what we expected to happen anyway?

LORD BARDOLPH

Everyone who feels the pain of this loss knew that we were setting sail into dangerous waters. We knew that the odds were against us--it was ten to one that we would even survive. But we went ahead with the mission anyway, because the potential of winning meant more to us than the fear of losing. And even though we lost this time, we will try again. Come on, we will all do this, and we will put our bodies and everything we have on the line.

MORTON

'Tis more than time.—And, my most noble lord,
200 I hear for certain, and do speak the truth:
The gentle Archbishop of York is up
With well-appointed powers. He is a man
Who with a double surety binds his followers.
My lord your son had only but the corpse,
205 But shadows and the shows of men, to fight;
For that same word "rebellion" did divide
The action of their bodies from their souls,
And they did fight with queasiness, constrained,
As men drink potions, that their weapons only
210 Seemed on our side. But, for their spirits and souls,
This word "rebellion," it had froze them up
As fish are in a pond. But now the Bishop
Turns insurrection to religion.
Supposed sincere and holy in his thoughts,
215 He's followed both with body and with mind,
And doth enlarge his rising with the blood
Of fair King Richard, scraped from Pомfret stones;
Derives from heaven his quarrel and his cause;
Tells them he doth bestride a bleeding land,
220 Gasping for life under great Bolingbroke;
And more and less do flock to follow him.

NORTHUMBERLAND

I knew of this before, but, to speak truth,
This present grief had wiped it from my mind.
Go in with me and counsel every man
225 The aptest way for safety and revenge.
Get posts and letters, and make friends with speed.
Never so few, and never yet more need.

*Exeunt***MORTON**

It is the right time for that. Also, my noble lord, I have heard for certain—and this is the truth—that the Archbishop of York has raised a strong army. He keeps his followers by using both his earthly and his spiritual powers. My lord, your son was only able to have authority over their bodies—they were just like the shadows of men, forced to fight. It was because that word, "rebellion," separated their actions from their hearts. They fought like they were sick and weak, almost like they were ill enough to be taking medicine. It was only their weapons which made them seem like they were on our side. The word "rebellion" had frozen their spirits and their souls, like fish trapped in an icy pond. But now the Archbishop makes the rebellion about religion. Because everyone thinks he is a good and holy man, they follow him with both their bodies and their minds. He enhances his case by preaching about the blood of good King Richard, spilled on the stones of Pомfret Castle 9. He says that this argument and this rebellion comes from heaven; he tells them that they are in a bleeding region, one that is gasping for breath under the rule of the great Bolingbroke 10, and men from everywhere come to join him.

9 Pontefract Castle, also known as Pомfret, was the site where King Richard II was murdered. King Henry IV took Richard's throne.

10 King Henry IV was also known as Bolingbroke, in reference to the name of the castle where he was born.

NORTHUMBERLAND

I already knew this. But, if I'm being honest, right now my grief had made me forget about it. Come inside with me and we can discuss the best way to stay safe and get our revenge. Send out messengers with letters—we must make new allies quickly. Our numbers have never been this small, and yet, our need for men has never been greater.

They all exit.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter Sir John FALSTAFF, with his PAGE bearing his sword and buckler

FALSTAFF

Sirrah, you giant, what says the doctor to my water?

PAGE

He said, sir, the water itself was a good healthy water, but,
for the party that owed it, he might have more diseases
5 than he knew for.

FALSTAFF

Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me. The brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to invent anything that tends to laughter more than I invent, or is invented on me. I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men. I do here walk before thee like a sow that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one. If the Prince put thee into my service for any other reason than to set me off, why then I have no judgment. Thou whoreson mandrake, thou art fitter to be worn in my cap than to wait at my heels. I was never manned with an agate till now, but I will inset you neither in gold nor silver, but in vile apparel, and send you back again to your master for a jewel. The

Shakescleare Translation

Sir John FALSTAFF enters, with his PAGE following behind, carrying his sword and his shield.

FALSTAFF

Sir 1, you giant, what did the doctor say about my urine?

1 In the original text, Falstaff uses the term "sirrah," a familiar derivation of "sir" used to address men of lower social rank.

PAGE

Sir, he said that the urine itself was healthy urine, but as for the person who made the urine, he probably has more diseases than the doctor can even tell.

FALSTAFF

All sorts of men seem to feel proud when they take a stab at me. The brain of this stupid man—made out of clay—or any man for that matter, isn't able to come up with anything that makes people laugh as much as I do. I am not only extremely witty myself, but I am also the reason why other men are witty. I walk here before you like a sow that has killed all of her babies, except for you. If the Prince sent you to work for me for any other reason than to make me angry, well then I'm an idiot. You tiny 2, little, son-of-a-bitch, you look like you'd be more suitable for me to wear in my hat than to be a servant at my feet. I have never been waited on by a boy who was as tiny as the stone in a ring. But don't worry, I'm not going to set you in a gold or a silver ring. I'll wrap you up in vile clothes instead and send you back to your master again, to be his jewel instead. That young man,

2 In the original text, Falstaff compares his page to a "mandrake," a plant whose root resembled the human form, and was thought to make screeching sounds when pulled from the earth.

juenal, the Prince your master, whose chin is not yet fledge—I will sooner have a beard grow in the palm of my hand than he shall get one off his cheek, and yet he will not stick to say his face is a face royal. God may finish it when He will. 'Tis not a hair amiss yet. He may keep it still at a face royal, for a barber shall never earn sixpence out of it, and yet he'll be crowing as if he had writ man ever since his father was a 25 bachelor. He may keep his own grace, but he's almost out of mine, I can assure him. What said Master Dommelton about the satin for my short cloak and my slops?

PAGE

He said, sir, you should procure him better assurance than
35 Bardolph. He would not take his band and yours. He liked not the security.

FALSTAFF

Let him be damned like the glutton! Pray God his tongue be hotter! A whoreson Achitophel, a rascally 40 ye-forsooth knave, to bear a gentleman in hand and then stand upon security! The whoreson smoothy-pates do now wear nothing but high shoes and bunches of keys at their girdles; and if a man is through with them in honest taking up, then they must stand upon security. I had as lief they would put ratsbane in my mouth as offer to stop it with "security." I looked he should have sent me two-and-twenty yards of satin, as I am a true knight, and he sends me "security." Well, he may sleep in 45 security, for he hath the horn of abundance, and the lightness of his wife shines through it, and yet cannot he see though he have his own lantern to light him. Where's Bardolph?

PAGE

He's gone into Smithfield to buy your Worship a horse.

FALSTAFF

50 I bought him in Paul's, and he'll buy me a horse in Smithfield. An I could get me but a wife in the stews, I were manned, horsed, and wived.

Enter the Lord CHIEF JUSTICE and SERVANT

PAGE

Sir, here comes the nobleman that committed the Prince for striking him about Bardolph.

FALSTAFF

Wait close. I will not see him.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What's he that goes there?

SERVANT

Falstaff, an 't please your Lordship.

CHIEF JUSTICE

He that was in question for the robbery?

SERVANT

65 He, my lord; but he hath since done good service at Shrewsbury, and, as I hear, is now going with some charge to the Lord John of Lancaster.

the Prince, your master, who can't even grow hair on his face yet. I'm more likely to grow a beard in the palm of my hand than he is to grow one on his face. But that doesn't stop him from saying that his face is a royal one. Well, I guess God will give him a beard when he wants to—there's no sign of one yet. It will be able to remain a royal ³ face, as he will never need to spend sixpence at the barbers. But still he claims that he's been a grown man ever since his father was young. He can keep his position. I have no love for him now, that for certain. What did Maister Dommelton say about the satin to make my short jacket and my loose trousers?

PAGE

Sir, he said that he needs a better assurance that you will pay for it—more than just saying that Bardolph will take care of it. He didn't accept Bardolph's promise and he won't accept yours either. He didn't trust it.

FALSTAFF

Damn him to hell then, just like Dives ⁴! I hope to God that he burns even hotter! He's a son of a whore, a traitor ⁵! He's a complete liar: he'll encourage a gentleman to be hopeful and then later insist that he needs proof that I will pay. These horrid tradesmen—who now have short hair, heeled shoes, and important tokens around their waists—will agree with you on an honest bargain, and then turn around and say that they need proof you will pay. I would rather put rat poison in my mouth than agree to this "proof of payment." He was supposed to send me twenty-two yards of satin, as I am an honest knight-- and instead he just demands "proof of payment!" Well, he can at least sleep well in the knowledge that he has a horn ⁶ of plenty--his wife is cheating on him, and he is a cuckold, and yet he refuses to acknowledge it. Where's Bardolph?

PAGE

He's gone to Smithfield ⁷ to buy you a horse, sir.

FALSTAFF

You know, I bought Bardolph in Saint Paul's ⁸. Now he's going to buy me a horse in Smithfield. If he could just find me a wife in the brothels, I would have the best man, horse, and wife around.

The Lord CHIEF JUSTICE and the SERVANT enter.

PAGE

Sir, this is the nobleman who put the Prince in prison for hitting him when they were arguing about Bardolph.

FALSTAFF

Let's hide, I don't want to talk to him.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Who are you?

SERVANT

Falstaff, if it pleases your Lordship.

CHIEF JUSTICE

The same Falstaff who was a suspect in that robbery?

SERVANT

Yes, him, my lord. But since then, he has acted bravely at the Battle of Shrewsbury, and is now supposed to be taking some men to fight alongside Lord John of Lancaster.

³ A royal was also a coin, worth ten shillings. Falstaff puns on how much the royal (as in regal) Henry will need to pay his barber.

⁴ The glutton to whom Falstaff refers in the original text is Dives, the rich man who failed to give charity to the beggar Lazarus in the Bible.

⁵ In the original text, Falstaff refers to Achitophel, the treacherous counselor who deserted David for Absalom in the Bible.

⁶ Falstaff refers both to the "horn of abundance" (meant to represent riches), and to the tailor's status as a cuckold—a man whose wife cheats on him, purported to grown horns as a result.

⁷ Animals were sold at Smithfield, an area north of the infamous Newgate Prison in London.

⁸ Saint Paul's was a popular place for business and acquiring servants in London in the early modern era.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What, to York? Call him back again.

SERVANT

Sir John Falstaff!

FALSTAFF

70 Boy, tell him I am deaf.

PAGE

You must speak louder. My master is deaf.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I am sure he is, to the hearing of any thing good.—Go pluck him by the elbow. I must speak with him.

SERVANT

Sir John!

FALSTAFF

75 What, a young knave and begging? Is there not wars? Is there not employment? Doth not the King lack subjects? Do not the rebels need soldiers? Though it be a shame to be on any side but one, it is worse shame to beg than to be on the worst side, were it worse than the name of rebellion can tell how to make it.

SERVANT

You mistake me, sir.

FALSTAFF

Why sir, did I say you were an honest man? Setting my knighthood and my soldiership aside, I had lied in my throat if I had said so.

SERVANT

85 I pray you, sir, then set your knighthood and our soldiership aside, and give me leave to tell you, you lie in your throat if you say I am any other than an honest man.

FALSTAFF

90 I give thee leave to tell me so? I lay aside that which grows to me? If thou gett'st any leave of me, hang me; if thou tak'st leave, thou wert better be hanged. You hunt counter. Hence! Avant!

SERVANT

Sir, my lord would speak with you.

CHIEF JUSTICE

95 Sir John Falstaff, a word with you.

FALSTAFF

My good lord. God give your Lordship good time of the day. I am glad to see your Lordship abroad. I heard say 100 your Lordship was sick: I hope your Lordship goes abroad by advice. Your Lordship, though not clean past your youth, have yet some smack of an age in you, some relish of the saltiness of time in you, and I most humbly beseech your Lordship to have a reverent care of your health.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir John, I sent for you before your expedition to 105 Shrewsbury.

FALSTAFF

An 't please your Lordship, I hear his Majesty is returned

CHIEF JUSTICE

What? He's off to York? Tell him to come back here.

SERVANT

Sir John Falstaff!

FALSTAFF

Boy, tell him that I am deaf.

PAGE

Sorry, you need to speak louder. My master is deaf.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I'm sure he is--at least when anything good is being said. Then go and grab him by the arm. I need to speak to him.

SERVANT

Sir John!

FALSTAFF

What? A young rascal and a beggar at that? Are there not wars happening? Aren't there things to do? Doesn't the King need more subjects? Don't the rebels need more soldiers? Even though it's shameful to be on any side other than the King's, it's even more shameful to be a beggar than it is to be a soldier on the wrong side. It makes the word "rebellion" seem even worse than it already is.

SERVANT

You've got me all wrong, sir.

FALSTAFF

Why sir, have I said that you are an honest man? Because, ignoring the fact that I'm a knight and a soldier, I would be a liar if I had said that.

SERVANT

Then I'm asking you, sir, to ignore the fact that you're a knight and a soldier, and let me tell you that you're lying if you say that I am anything other than an honest man.

FALSTAFF

Do I have to let you tell me that? I am expected to ignore the things which define me as a person. If I let you do this, then hang me. If you allow yourself to do this, then you should be hanged too. You've got the wrong man. Therefore, get going! Out of my sight!

SERVANT

Sir, my lord wants to speak to you.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir John Falstaff, a word please.

FALSTAFF

My good lord. I hope God gives your Lordship a good day. It's good to see your Lordship out and about. I heard some people saying that you have been sick. I hope that it's all right that you're out and about. Your Lordship--although you're not entirely past your youth--you have a bit of age creeping up on you, some signs of maturity. And I must humbly encourage your Lordship to make sure that you're taking care of your health.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir John, I sent for you before you went off to fight at Shrewsbury.

FALSTAFF

If it pleases your Lordship, I have heard that the King is back from Wales and everything didn't go quite as planned.

with some discomfort from Wales.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I talk not of his Majesty. You would not come when I
110 sent
for you.

FALSTAFF

And I hear, moreover, his Highness is fallen into this
same
whoreson apoplexy.

CHIEF JUSTICE

115 Well, God mend him. I pray you let me speak with you.

FALSTAFF

This apoplexy, as I take it, is a kind of lethargy , an
't please
your Lordship, a kind of sleeping in the blood, a
120 whoreson
tingling.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What tell you me of it? Be it as it is.

FALSTAFF

It hath its original from much grief, from study, and
perturbation of the brain. I have read the cause of his
effects in Galen. It is a kind of deafness.

CHIEF JUSTICE

125 I think you are fallen into the disease, for you hear
not what I say to you.

FALSTAFF

Very well, my lord, very well. Rather, an 't please
you, it is
the disease of not listening, the malady of not
130 marking, that I am troubled withal.

CHIEF JUSTICE

To punish you by the heels would amend the attention of
your ears, and I care not if I do become your
physician.

FALSTAFF

135 I am as poor as Job, my lord, but not so patient. Your
Lordship may minister the potion of imprisonment to me
in respect of poverty, but how should I be your patient
to follow your prescriptions, the wise may make some
dram of a scruple, or indeed a scruple itself.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I sent for you, when there were matters against you for
140 your life, to come speak with me.

FALSTAFF

As I was then advised by my learned counsel in the laws
of
this land-service, I did not come.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, the truth is, Sir John, you live in great infamy.

FALSTAFF

145 He that buckles him in my belt cannot live in less.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I am not here to talk about the King. Why didn't you come
when I sent for you?

FALSTAFF

I have also heard that his Highness has got the same awful
paralysis.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, I hope that he recovers soon. Now please, I need to
speak to you.

FALSTAFF

If I've heard correctly, this paralysis is a kind of lethargy. If it
pleases your Lordship to know more, it's a kind of
sleepiness in the blood, an awful tingling feeling.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Why are you telling me all about it? Leave it alone.

FALSTAFF

It comes from too much sadness, from mental
concentration, and from disturbances in the brain. I have
read about the causes of this disease in the writings of
Galen ⁹. It's a kind of deafness.

⁹ Here, Falstaff refers to a famous ancient Greek physician, Galen. Galen's medical writings were used often in Shakespeare's time.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well then I think that you must have this disease too, since
you don't seem to be able to hear a word I'm saying to you.

FALSTAFF

It's possible, my lord, it's possible. But instead, if it pleases
you, I think that I have the disease of not listening, the
sickness of not paying attention--that is what I have.

CHIEF JUSTICE

The only way to fix that problem would be to put you in
prison, and I can't say that I'd mind being your doctor.

FALSTAFF

My lord, I am as poor as Job ¹⁰, but not as patient. Because
I am so poor, your Lordship would be able to imprison me.
But if I have to go to prison as you command, then people
might have doubts or questions about it.

¹⁰ In the Bible, Job was forced to patiently endure a series of hardships, which God used to test his faith.

CHIEF JUSTICE

When I sent for you, there were charges against you which
could have had you killed.

FALSTAFF

I was advised that because of the rules of military service
and the fact that I was on duty, I should not go to you.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, the truth is that you have a huge reputation for doing
dishonorable things, Sir John.

FALSTAFF

Anyone who wears a belt as huge ¹¹ as mine couldn't be
thought of as anything less.

¹¹ We recall Falstaff's large size--the object of many puns and jokes--from Henry IV Part 1.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Your means are very slender, and your waste is great.

FALSTAFF

I would it were otherwise. I would my means were greater and my waist slender.

CHIEF JUSTICE

150 You have misled the youthful Prince.

FALSTAFF

The young Prince hath misled me. I am the fellow with the great belly, and he my dog.

CHIEF JUSTICE

155 Well, I am loath to gall a new-healed wound. Your day's service at Shrewsbury hath a little gilded over your night's exploit on Gad's Hill. You may thank th' unquiet time for your quiet o'erposting that action.

FALSTAFF

160 My lord!

CHIEF JUSTICE

But since all is well, keep it so. Wake not a sleeping wolf.

FALSTAFF

To wake a wolf is as bad as to smell a fox.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What, you are as a candle, the better part burnt out.

FALSTAFF

165 A wassail candle, my lord, all tallow. If I did say of wax, my growth would approve the truth.

CHIEF JUSTICE

There is not a white hair on your face but should have his effect of gravity.

170

FALSTAFF

His effect of gravy, gravy, gravy.

CHIEF JUSTICE

You follow the young Prince up and down like his ill angel.

FALSTAFF

175 Not so, my lord. Your ill angel is light, but I hope he that looks upon me will take me without weighing. And yet in some respects I grant I cannot go. I cannot tell. Virtue is of so little regard in these costermongers' times that true valor is turned bear-herd; pregnancy is made a tapster, and hath his quick wit wasted in giving reckonings. All the other gifts appurtenant to man, as the malice of this age shapes them, are not worth a gooseberry. You that are old consider not the capacities of us that are young. You do measure the heat of our livers with the bitterness of your galls, and we that are in the vaward of our youth, I must confess, are wags too.

CHIEF JUSTICE

You don't have very much, but you waste what you do have.

FALSTAFF

I wish it were different. I wish I had more and my waist was smaller.

CHIEF JUSTICE

You have misled the young Prince.

FALSTAFF

No, the young Prince has misled me. I'm just a man with a huge belly and he's the dog who leads me.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, I don't want to open up a wound that has just healed. The good deeds you did at the Battle of Shrewsbury have partly made up for the robbery you committed at Gad's Hill. You can thank the rebellion for helping your offense be forgotten.

FALSTAFF

My lord!

CHIEF JUSTICE

Now that everything is all right, let's make sure things stay like that. We don't need to wake a sleeping wolf.

FALSTAFF

It's as bad to wake a wolf as it is to smell a fox.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What? By this stage you seem like a candle--the best bit is burned out already.

FALSTAFF

Then I'm a large, fat candle, made of animal fat, my lord. It would make more sense if you said I was a wax candle, as my *waxing* here has proved.

CHIEF JUSTICE

The white hairs on your face should be enough to tell me you're a man of gravity.

FALSTAFF

No, I'm more a man of gravy, gravy, gravy.

CHIEF JUSTICE

You follow the young Prince wherever he goes, like some kind of evil spirit.

FALSTAFF

That's not true, my lord. An evil spirit is light on its feet, and I'm sure that anyone who looks at me can tell that I'm too heavy. But I guess in some ways maybe you're right. I don't know what to think. Virtue counts for so little these days that true honor isn't even noticed--everyone is just thought of as a bear-leader. Being intelligent is only really useful for a bartender, and his intelligence is wasted because all he does is add up various bills. Even all the other good qualities of men aren't worth anything in these awful times. You old men don't think much of us younger people [2]. You measure the heat of our passions against our melancholy and sadness. And I have to say that those of us who are at the forefront of youth, we're high-spirited as well as youthful.

[2] Again, as we recall from Henry IV Part 1, Falstaff likes to think of himself as young, but is in fact much older than his companions. The theme of aging and death will be explored later in this play.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth, that
190 are
written down old with all the characters of age? Have
you
not a moist eye, a dry hand, a yellow cheek, a white
beard, a decreasing leg, an increasing belly? Is not
195 your voice broken, your wind short, your chin double,
your wit single, and every part about you blasted with
antiquity? And will you yet call yourself young? Fie,
fie, fie, Sir John

FALSTAFF

My lord, I was born about three of the clock in the
200 afternoon, with a white head and something a round
belly. For my voice, I have lost it with halloing and
singing of anthems. To approve my youth further, I will
not. The truth is, I am only old in judgment and
understanding. And he that will caper with me for a
205 thousand marks, let him lend me the money, and have at
him! For the box of the ear that the Prince gave you, he
gave it like a rude prince, and you took it like a
sensible lord. I have checked him for it, and the young
lion repents. Marry, not in ashes and sackcloth, but in
210 new silk and old sack.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, God send the Prince a better companion.

FALSTAFF

God send the companion a better prince. I cannot rid my
hands of him.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, the King hath severed you and Prince Harry. I
215 hear you are going with Lord John of Lancaster against
the
Archbishop and the Earl of Northumberland.

FALSTAFF

Yea, I thank your pretty sweet wit for it. But look you
pray,
220 all you that kiss my Lady Peace at home, that our
armies join not in a hot day, for, by the Lord, I take
but two shirts out with me, and I mean not to sweat
extraordinarily. If it be a hot day and I brandish
anything but a bottle, I would I might never spit white
225 again. There is not a dangerous action can peep out his
head but I am thrust upon it. Well, I cannot last ever.
But it was always yet the trick of our English nation,
if they have a good thing, to make it too common. If ye
will needs say I am an old man, you should give me rest.
230 I would to God my name were not so terrible to the
enemy as it is. I were better to be eaten to death with
a rust than to be scoured to nothing with perpetual
motion.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, be honest, be honest; and God bless your
235 expedition!

FALSTAFF

Will your Lordship lend me a thousand pound to furnish
me
forth?

CHIEF JUSTICE

Not a penny, not a penny. You are too impatient to bear
240 crosses. Fare you well. Commend me to my cousin
Westmoreland.

Exeunt CHIEF JUSTICE and SERVANT

CHIEF JUSTICE

Do you include yourself on the list of the young, even
though you have age written all over you? Don't you have
red and watery eyes? Wrinkled old hands? Jaundice? A
white beard? A damaged leg? An ever-growing stomach?
Isn't your voice hoarse? Aren't you short of breath? Your
double chin is even bigger now? Your last bit of wit is gone,
and all of you is ruined by age? And you still call yourself
young? Oh, for shame, Sir John!

FALSTAFF

My lord, I was born at about three o'clock in the afternoon,
with a white head and a slightly round belly. As for my
voice, I lost it by shouting and singing loud songs. I don't
feel the need to prove my youth anymore to you. The truth
is, I'm only old when it comes to my good judgement and
my knowledge. If anyone wants to challenge me to a
dancing competition for a thousand marks ¹³, then hand
over the money and let's go! As for the slap against your
head that the Prince gave you, he gave it like a rude prince,
and you took it like a sensible lord. I have told him off for it,
and the young lion is sorry. Indeed ¹⁴, he might not be
wearing the normal sackcloth and ashes, ¹⁵ but he is
making up for it in silk clothes and by drinking old wine.

¹³ Marks were a unit of currency.

¹⁴ In the original text, Falstaff uses the mild oath "marry"--derived from the Virgin Mary's name.

¹⁵ In the Bible, people wore sackcloths and poured ashes over their heads to demonstrate their grief or repentance.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I hope that God sends the Prince a better friend!

FALSTAFF

I hope that the friend gets sent a better prince. I can't get rid
of this one.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, the King has made sure that you and Prince Harry are
separated. Apparently you are going with Lord John of
Lancaster to fight against the Archbishop of York and the
Earl of Northumberland.

FALSTAFF

Yes, and thanks for bringing that up. But make sure you
pray for peace and that our armies don't have to fight each
other on a hot day. For, by the Lord, I'm only taking two
shirts with me-- so I don't want to be sweating a lot in them!
If it's a hot day, the only thing I should be doing is holding
out a bottle and drinking. If I do anything else, then I will
never drink white wine again. I seem to be sent off on every
dangerous mission. Well, I guess I can't live forever. That's
always the trick of English people--if they have something
good, they just keep using it. If you want to say that I'm an
old man, then let me rest and not go to these wars. I wish to
God that the enemy weren't so afraid of my name. I'd rather
be left to rust than exhausted by all of this action.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, stay true, stay true. God bless your mission!

FALSTAFF

Will your Lordship lend me a thousand pounds so I can get
ready for the battle?

CHIEF JUSTICE

I'm not going to lend you a penny. You're too eager for
trouble. Goodbye to you now. Send my regards to
Westmoreland.

The CHIEF JUSTICE and the SERVANT exit.

FALSTAFF

If I do, fillip me with a three-man beetle. A man can no more separate age and covetousness than he can part young limbs and lechery; but the gout galls the one, and the pox pinches the other, and so both the degrees prevent my curses. —Boy!

245

PAGE

Sir.

FALSTAFF

What money is in my purse?

PAGE

Seven groats and two pence.

FALSTAFF

I can get no remedy against this consumption of the purse. Borrowing only lingers and lingers it out, but the disease is incurable. Go bear this letter to my Lord of Lancaster, this to the Prince, this to the Earl of Westmoreland; and this to old Mistress Ursula, whom I have weekly sworn to marry since I perceived the first white hair on my chin. About it. You know where to find me.

250

255

Exit PAGE

A pox of this gout! Or, a gout of this pox, for the one or the other plays the rogue with my great toe. 'Tis no matter if I do halt. I have the wars for my color, and my pension shall seem the more reasonable. A good wit will make use of anything. I will turn diseases to commodity.

260

265

*Exit***FALSTAFF**

If I do, smack me with a sledgehammer. A man is just as able to separate age from greed as he is to separate youth from lust. Gout affects the first, and syphilis gets the other. So there's no point in cursing either the old or the young, because they both have their own curses!

*[To his PAGE] Boy!***PAGE**

Sir.

FALSTAFF

How much money do I have in my purse?

PAGESeven groats ¹⁶ and two pence.

¹⁶ A groat was a coin worth four pence.

FALSTAFF

There's nothing I can do to make the state of my purse any better. Borrowing money only delays the inevitable, but there is no cure for this disease. Go and take this letter to the Lord of Lancaster; this one to the Prince; and this one to the Earl of Westmoreland. Also, take this one to old Mistress Ursula, as I have been promising to marry her every week since I got my first grey hair. Off you go. You know where to find me.

The PAGE exits.

Oh damn this gout! Or maybe damn this syphilis. For one or the other is wreaking havoc on my big toe. Well, I guess it doesn't matter if I have to limp. I can blame it on the wars, and that will make my pension seem all the more justified. A clever mind can turn any problem into a good thing. I can even turn diseases to my advantage.

He exits.

Act 1, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter the ARCHBISHOP of York, Thomas MOWBRAY the Earl Marshal, Lord HASTINGS, and LORD BARDOLPH

ARCHBISHOP

Thus have you heard our cause and known our means, And, my most noble friends, I pray you all Speak plainly your opinions of our hopes. And first, Lord Marshal, what say you to it?

MOWBRAY

I well allow the occasion of our arms, But gladly would be better satisfied How in our means we should advance ourselves To look with forehead bold and big enough Upon the power and puissance of the King.

HASTINGS

Our present musters grow upon the file To five-and-twenty thousand men of choice, And our supplies live largely in the hope Of great Northumberland, whose bosom burns

Shakescleare Translation

The ARCHBISHOP of York, Thomas MOWBRAY (the Earl of Marshal), Lord HASTINGS, and LORD BARDOLPH ¹ enter.

¹ Lord Bardolph is one of the rebels, not to be confused with Hal's friend and drinking companion, Bardolph.

ARCHBISHOP

So now you have heard why we're fighting and what kind of support we have, my noble friends. I want you to tell me truthfully if you think we have a chance. Firstly you, Marshal Mowbray: what do you think?

MOWBRAY

I agree with why we are fighting, but I would feel happier if I knew how we were going to be strong enough to fight with so few resources against the King's powerful forces.

HASTINGS

Our present army now stands at twenty-five thousand good men, and we are hoping for reinforcements from the great Northumberland, whose heart is burning with the grief of his loss.

With an incensed fire of injuries.

LORD BARDOLPH

15 The question then, Lord Hastings, standeth thus:
Whether our present five-and-twenty thousand
May hold up head without Northumberland.

HASTINGS

With him we may.

LORD BARDOLPH

Yea, marry, there's the point.
20 But if without him we be thought too feeble,
My judgment is we should not step too far
Till we had his assistance by the hand.
For in a theme so bloody-faced as this,
Conjecture, expectation, and surmise
25 Of aids uncertain should not be admitted.

ARCHBISHOP

'Tis very true, Lord Bardolph; for indeed
It was young Hotspur's cause at Shrewsbury.

LORD BARDOLPH

It was, my lord; who lined himself with hope,
Eating the air on promise of supply,
30 Flatt'ring himself in project of a power
Much smaller than the smallest of his thoughts,
And so, with great imagination
Proper to madmen, led his powers to death
And, winking, leapt into destruction.

HASTINGS

35 But, by your leave, it never yet did hurt
To lay down likelihods and forms of hope.

LORD BARDOLPH

Yes, if this present quality of war—
Indeed the instant action, a cause on foot—
Lives so in hope, as in an early spring
40 We see the appearing buds, which to prove fruit
Hope gives not so much warrant as despair
That frosts will bite them. When we mean to build,
We first survey the plot, then draw the model,
And when we see the figure of the house,
45 Then must we rate the cost of the erection,
Which if we find outweighs ability,
What do we then but draw anew the model
In fewer offices, or at last desist
To build at all? Much more in this great work,
50 Which is almost to pluck a kingdom down
And set another up, should we survey
The plot of situation and the model,
Consent upon a sure foundation,
Question surveyors, know our own estate,
55 How able such a work to undergo,
To weigh against his opposite. Or else
We fortify in paper and in figures,
Using the names of men instead of men,
Like one that draws the model of a house
60 Beyond his power to build it, who, half through,
Gives o'er and leaves his part-created cost
A naked subject to the weeping clouds
And waste for churlish winter's tyranny.

HASTINGS

Grant that our hopes, yet likely of fair birth,
Should be stillborn and that we now possessed
The utmost man of expectation,
I think we are a body strong enough,
Even as we are, to equal with the King.

LORD BARDOLPH

Then the question is, Lord Hastings, would we be able
to win this fight solely with our own twenty-five thousand
men, without Northumberland's help?

HASTINGS

With his help, we could win.

LORD BARDOLPH

That's precisely my point. If we think that we are too weak
to fight without him, then I think that we should hold off on
doing anything until we know that he is definitely coming.
In a battle as bloody as this one will be, we cannot allow for
uncertainty. There can't be any guessing, hoping, or
speculating when it comes to our support—we need to
know for certain.

ARCHBISHOP

That's right, Lord Bardolph. That was young Hotspur's
mistake at Shrewsbury.

LORD BARDOLPH

It certainly was, my lord. He went into that battle with just
his hope, and believed the empty words of the men who
promised to send reinforcements. He let himself get carried
away--expecting a huge army to turn up to help--when in
fact, the help that came proved to be smaller than even the
smallest of his thoughts. It was with this vivid imagination--
which only madmen should have--that he led his soldiers to
their deaths, and shutting his eyes, leapt into his own
destruction.

HASTINGS

But, forgive me, it's doesn't hurt to think about possible
outcomes of the battle and hopeful strategies that we could
use.

LORD BARDOLPH

Yes it does. The current situation is that our troops are
already on the move. But if we put all of our hopes in them,
that is like seeing the first buds of spring and expecting
that these will bear fruit--when in reality, they are more
likely to be killed by frost. When we decide to build
something, first we look at the land and then we draw up
the plans. When we know what the house will look like, we
work out how much it is going to cost. If we find that the
cost is more than we can afford, we change the plans so
that the house has fewer rooms, or we decide to cancel the
building project completely. Since we are trying to take
down a kingdom and start a whole new one, our mission is
so great that we must really think about the land and the
plans. We need to know that we have a strong foundation.
We need to have the right men for the task. We need to
know what we can afford, and how prepared we are to face
the unfortunate events that might occur. Or else this just
seems like a game, in which we list on paper the numbers
and names of men, rather than recognize the actual living
people behind those figures and names. It would be like
someone who draws up the plans for a house that they
know they will never be able to finish building; like
someone who abandons the task halfway through, leaving
this half-built house to be ruined by rain and the ravages of
winter.

HASTINGS

Even if everything that we're hoping for falls through and
the men that we have now are all that we're going to have, I
still think that our army is strong enough as we are to be a
match for the King.

LORD BARDOLPH

What, is the King but five-and twenty-thousand?

HASTINGS

To us no more, nay, not so much, Lord Bardolph,
For his divisions, as the times do brawl,
Are in three heads: one power against the French,
And one against Glendower; perforce a third
Must take up us. So is the unfirm King
In three divided, and his coffers sound
With hollow poverty and emptiness.

ARCHBISHOP

That he should draw his several strengths together
And come against us in full puissance
Need not be dreaded.

HASTINGS

If he should do so,
He leaves his back unarmed, the French and Welsh
Baying him at the heels. Never fear that.

LORD BARDOLPH

Who is it like should lead his forces hither?

HASTINGS

The Duke of Lancaster and Westmoreland;
Against the Welsh, himself and Harry Monmouth;
But who is substituted against the French
I have no certain notice.

ARCHBISHOP

Let us on,
And publish the occasion of our arms.
The commonwealth is sick of their own choice.
Their over-greedy love hath surfeited.
An habitation giddy and unsure
Hath he that buildeth on the vulgar heart.
O thou fond many, with what loud applause
Didst thou beat heaven with blessing Bolingbroke
Before he was what thou wouldest have him be.
And being now trimmed in thine own desires,
Thou, beastly feeder, art so full of him
That thou provok'st thyself to cast him up.
So, so, thou common dog, didst thou disgorse
Thy glutton bosom of the royal Richard,
And now thou wouldest eat thy dead vomit up
And howl'st to find it. What trust is in these times?
They that, when Richard lived, would have him die
Are now become enamored on his grave.
Thou, that threw'st dust upon his goodly head
When through proud London he came sighing on
After th' admired heels of Bolingbroke,
Criest now "O earth, yield us that King again,
And take thou this!" O thoughts of men accursed!
Past and to come seems best; things present, worst.

MOWBRAY

Shall we go draw our numbers and set on?

HASTINGS

We are time's subjects, and time bids begone.

Exeunt

LORD BARDOLPH

What? Does the King only have twenty-five thousand men
as well?

HASTINGS

The King has assigned no more men to fight us than we
currently have--and maybe even less, Lord Bardolph. These
are violent times, and the King is currently fighting three
battles. One army is fighting against the French, and one
against Glendower ². Therefore a third army must fight
against us. The weak King is now split into three, and his
bank account is drained to point of poverty.

² We remember the Welsh
nobleman Owen Glendower, rumored
to be a wizard, as one of the rebels
from Henry IV Part 1.

ARCHBISHOP

We also don't need to be worried about him bringing all of
his troops back together to fight against us with his full
power.

HASTINGS

If he did that, he'd be vulnerable from all other sides, with
the French and the Welsh hot on his heels. So don't worry
about that happening.

LORD BARDOLPH

Who will be leading his troops to fight against us?

HASTINGS

The Duke of Lancaster and Westmoreland. He has gone to
fight against the Welsh with his son, Prince Hal. And I'm not
sure who is now leading the army against the French.

ARCHBISHOP

Let's continue with our plan then. We will announce the
reasons why we are fighting. People in this country are sick
of the monarch that they themselves chose. They were
eager in their love for him, but now they have had too much
of it. He built his kingdom on the love of the people, and
this made it wobbly and uncertain. Oh, you foolish people!
Your applause for Bolingbroke shook the sky, before you
even knew if he'd be the type of leader you hoped he would
be. Now you are all decked out in what you wanted, you
horrible gluttons--you've ingested so much of the King that
you wish you could throw him up ³. You disgusting dogs,
this was just how you gorged yourselves on the last king,
Richard, and then got rid of him by puking him all up. And
now you would howl for that vomit and eat it up out of
nostalgia for those days. In these times who can be trusted?
Nowadays, the people who wanted Richard dead in the first
place, are now in love with his dead body. The people who
threw dust and rubbish at his good head when he walked
through London in disgrace--people who supported the
beloved Bolingbroke--now cry, "Oh, earth, give us back
King Richard again, and you can have King Henry back!"
Oh, men's thoughts are damned! They only think good
about things of the past and the future; anything that
happens now is hated.

³ Shakespeare compares the
people's loyalty to the King to a
glutton's relationship with food: their
blind devotion becomes so all-
consuming that eventually they must
expel their leader, just as a glutton
binges and purges excessive amounts
of food.

MOWBRAY

Shall we go to round up our troops and set off?

HASTINGS

Time is our leader, and Time tells us to get going.

They all exit.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Shakescleare Translation

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY, with two officers; FANG with her and SNARE following

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Master Fang, have you entered the action?

FANG

It is entered.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Where's your yeoman? Is 't a lusty yeoman? Will a' stand to 't?

FANG

5 Sirrah! Where's Snare?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

O Lord, ay, good Master Snare.

SNARE

Here, here.

FANG

Snare, we must arrest Sir John Falstaff.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Yea, good Master Snare, I have entered him and all.

SNARE

10 It may chance cost some of us our lives, for he will stab.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Alas the day, take heed of him. He stabbed me in mine own house, and that most beastly, in good faith. He cares not what mischief he does. If his weapon be out, he will foin like any devil. He will spare neither man, woman, nor child.

FANG

If I can close with him, I care not for his thrust.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

20 No, nor I neither. I'll be at your elbow.

FANG

An I but fist him once, an he come but within my vue—

MISTRESS QUICKLY

I am undone by his going. I warrant you, he's an infinitive thing upon my score. Good Master Fang, hold him sure. 25 Good Master Snare, let him not 'scape. He comes continually to Pie Corner, saving your manhoods, to buy a saddle, and he is indited to dinner to the Lubber's Head in 30 Lumbert Street, to Master Smooth's the silkman. I pray you, since my exion is entered, and my case so openly known to the world, let him be brought in to his answer. A hundred 35 mark is a long one for a poor lone woman to bear, and I have borne, and borne, and borne, and have been fubbed off, and fubbed off, and fubbed off from this day to that day, that it

MISTRESS QUICKLY enters with two officers: FANG is with her and SNARE is following behind them.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Master Fang, have you filed my complaint?

FANG

It has been filed.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Where's your second-in-command? Is he a fit second in command? Will he be up to the task?

FANG

Sir! Where's Snare?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Oh God, yes, good Master Snare!

SNARE

I'm here, I'm here.

FANG

Snare, we have to arrest Sir John Falstaff.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Yes, good Master Snare, I have filed an official complaint against him and everything.

SNARE

Doing that might cost some of us our lives—he'll try and stab us.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Oh dear, watch out for that! He's stabbed me in my own house ¹, and it was horrible, it really was. He doesn't care what kind of trouble he gets into. If his weapon is out, he will thrust it at anyone around, like some kind of devil. No man, woman, or child is safe from him.

¹ Mistress Quickly makes a sexual pun on Falstaff's "stabbing her with a sword"--referring to his genitalia.

FANG

As long as I can get close enough to him, I won't worry about his thrusting ².

² Fang continues Mistress Quickly's sexual innuendos here.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

No, and I won't either, as I will be right next to you.

FANG

If I could just hit him once, if he just comes within my sight--

MISTRESS QUICKLY

I am ruined because he's gone off to the wars without paying his bill. I am telling you, the amount he owes me is infinite. Good Master Fang, make sure you keep hold of him. Good Master Snare, don't let him escape. Any moment now, he is going to come to Pie Corner ³, sorry for talking about it, to buy a saddle ⁴. He is then always invited to lunch at the Lubber's Head in Lumbert Street, with Master Smooth, the silk-salesman. Please make him pay for what he has done. My case has been made at court, and now everyone knows how easily he had me—had me fooled, I mean. A hundred marks is a lot for one poor, lonely woman to take, and I have taken it again and again and again. I have been part of an uneven exchange over and over again, day after day--so many times that I don't even want to think about it. It's an awful way to do your business, unless you think that a woman should just be like an ass or some wild beast, that any idiot can do bad things to. Look, here he comes and he's with that deviant, red-nosed ⁵ rascal Bardolph. Do your jobs, do your jobs. Do this for me, Master Fang and Master Snare, and get him.

³ Pie Corner was a London street corner named for its bakeries, but was also associated with horses and prostitution.

⁴ Mistress Quickly uses the word "saddle" as a reference to female genitalia. She implies that Falstaff will come to look for a prostitute.

⁵ In the original text, "malmsey" was a strong red wine. Mistress Quickly implies that Bardolph is a drunkard.

is a shame to be thought on. There is no honesty in
such
dealing, unless a woman should be made an ass and a
beast
45 to bear every knave's wrong. Yonder he comes, and that
errant malmsey-nose knave, Bardolph, with him. Do your
offices, do your offices, Master Fang and Master Snare,
do
50 me, do me, do me your offices.

Enter FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, and PAGE

FALSTAFF

How now! Whose mare's dead? What's the matter?

FANG

Sir John, I arrest you at the suit of Mistress Quickly.

FALSTAFF

Away, varlets!—Draw, Bardolph. Cut me off the villain's
head. Throw the quean in the channel.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

55 Throw me in the channel? I'll throw thee in the
channel. Wilt
thou, wilt thou, thou bastardly rogue? —Murder, murder! —
Ah, thou honeysuckle villain, wilt thou kill God's
officers
60 and the King's? Ah, thou honeyseed rogue, thou art a
honeyseed, a man-queller, and a woman-queller.

FALSTAFF

Keep them off, Bardolph.

FANG

A rescue, a rescue!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Good people, bring a rescue or two. — *[to FALSTAFF]* Thou
65 wot, wot thou? Thou wot, wot ta? Do, do, thou rogue.
Do,
thou hempseed.

FALSTAFF

Away, you scullion, you rampallion, you fustilarian!
I'll
70 tickle your catastrophe.

Enter the Lord CHIEF JUSTICE and his men

CHIEF JUSTICE

What is the matter? Keep the peace here, ho!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Good my lord, be good to me. I beseech you stand to me.

CHIEF JUSTICE

How now, Sir John? What, are you brawling here?
Doth this become your place, your time, and business?
75 You should have been well on your way to York. —
[to FANG] Stand from him, fellow: wherefore hang'st
thou
upon him?

FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, and PAGE enter.

FALSTAFF

What's all this?! Whose horse is dead? What's all the fuss
about?

FANG

Sir John, I arrest you for the case brought against you by
Mistress Quickly.

FALSTAFF

Go away, you rascals!

[To BARDOLPH] Draw your sword, Bardolph. Cut off this
villain's head. Throw this whore in the gutter.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Throw me in the gutter? I'll throw you in the gutter. You will,
will you, you monstrous villain?

[To FANG and SNARE] Murder, murder!

[To FALSTAFF] Oh, you honeysuckle ⁶ villain, are you
going to kill God's officers, and the King's? Oh, you
honeyseed rogue, you are just that--a honeyseed, a man
killer, and a woman killer.

⁶ Mistress Quickly mistakenly says "honeysuckle" and "honeyseed" here instead of "homicidal" and "homicide."

FALSTAFF

Keep them away from me, Bardolph.

FANG

An escape, an escape!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

People, bring him an escape ⁷ or two!

[To FALSTAFF] You will, will you? You will, will you? Do it
then, do it then, you villain. Do it, you hempseed ⁸.

⁷ Mistress Quickly mistakenly thinks that Fang is asking for an escape--some help--instead of reporting Falstaff's escaping him.

⁸ Mistress Quickly makes another attempt here at the word "homicide," mistaking it for "hempseed."

FALSTAFF

Get away from me, you lackey, you ruffian, you fat old
thing! I'll smack your butt!

The Lord CHIEF JUSTICE and his men enter.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What is the matter? Let's have some order here, come on!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

My good lord, be good to me. Please stand up for me.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What's going on, Sir John? Why are you fighting? Is this
appropriate for a man in your position, at your age, and
with your duties? You should already be well on your way to
York.

[To FANG] Get away from him, you! Why are you holding
onto him like that?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

O my most worshipful lord, an 't please your Grace, I
am a
poor widow of Eastcheap, and he is arrested at my suit.

CHIEF JUSTICE

For what sum?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

It is more than for some, my lord; it is for all I
have. He hath
eaten me out of house and home. He hath put all my
substance
into that fat belly of his. [to FALSTAFF] But I will
have some of
it out again, or I will ride thee o' nights like the
mare.

FALSTAFF

I think I am as like to ride the mare if I have any
vantage of
ground to get up.

CHIEF JUSTICE

How comes this, Sir John? Fie, what man of good temper
would endure this tempest of exclamation? Are you not
ashamed to enforce a poor widow to so rough a course to
come by her own?

FALSTAFF

[to MISTRESS QUICKLY] What is the gross sum that I owe
thee?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

100 Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and the
money
too. Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet,
sitting
in my Dolphin chamber at the round table by a sea-coal
fire,
upon Wednesday in Wheeson week, when the Prince broke
thy head for liking his father to a singing-man
Windsor,
thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy
wound, to
marry me and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny
it? Did not goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in
then
and call me Gossip Quickly, coming in to borrow a mess
115 of
vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns,
whereby
thou didst desire to eat some, whereby I told thee they
were
ill for a green wound? And didst thou not, when she was
gone downstairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity
with such poor people, saying that ere long they should
call me madam? And didst thou not kiss me and bid me
fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy
120 book-oath. Deny it if thou canst.

FALSTAFF

My lord, this is a poor mad soul, and she says up and
down
the town that her eldest son is like you. She hath been
in good
case, and the truth is, poverty hath distracted her.
But, for
these foolish officers, I beseech you I may have
redress
against them.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Oh, my magnificent lord, I beg your pardon; I'm just a poor
widow from Eastcheap, and he has been arrested because
I've made a case against him.

CHIEF JUSTICE

What sum does he owe you?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

It's more than *some*, my lord--it's everything I have! He's
eaten me out of house and home. He's put everything I
have into that fat belly of his.

[To FALSTAFF] But I'll get some of it back again, or I will ride
you hard in your sleep like a horse, as if you're in some kind
of *nightmare*.⁹

⁹ The original text says "mare," a sexual pun suggesting Mistress Quickly will ride him like a horse, in a nightmarish way.

FALSTAFF

I think it's likely that I will ride you, if I manage to get on top
of you.

CHIEF JUSTICE

How has this happened, Sir John? For shame! What kind of
man with a good character would put up with this angry
whirlwind of abuse? Aren't you ashamed that a poor widow
has been made to do all of this, just to get what is rightfully
hers?

FALSTAFF

[To MISTRESS QUICKLY] What is the total amount that I owe
you?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Indeed, if you were an honest man, you would give me both
the money and yourself along with it. You swore to me over
a gold-plated wine glass, when we were sitting in the
Dolphin chamber¹⁰ in my inn, at the round table by the
fire, on the Wednesday seven weeks after Easter, when the
Prince had hit you on the head for saying that his father was
just a singer from Windsor, a pretender to the throne--do
you remember? You swore to me, as I was cleaning your
wounds, that you would marry me and make me a real lady
and your wife. Can you deny that? Didn't Mrs. Lard, the
butcher's wife, come in right at that moment--calling me
her friend and neighbor and asking to borrow a little bit of
vinegar? Didn't she tell us that she had some good shrimp,
which you of course wanted to try, and I told you that it was
not good to eat them with an unhealed wound? And when
she had gone back downstairs, didn't you tell me to stop
being so friendly with people of such a low class--telling me
that before long they would be calling me madam, because
we would be married and I would be a lady? And didn't you
kiss me and ask me to lend you thirty shillings? Now put
your hand on the Bible and deny it, if you can.

¹⁰ The Dolphin is a room in Mistress Quickly's inn. The rooms were often given fancy names so patrons could tell them apart.

FALSTAFF

My lord, this is a poor insane woman. She's been telling
people all over town that her eldest son looks just like you.
She used to have money, and the truth is, poverty has made
her lose her mind. But as for these stupid officers, I would
like to make my own case against them.

CHIEF JUSTICE

135 Sir John, Sir John, I am well acquainted with your manner
of wrenching the true cause the false way. It is not a
confident brow, nor the throng of words that come with such
140 more than impudent sauciness from you, can thrust me from
a level consideration. You have, as it appears to me,
practiced upon the easy-yielding spirit of this woman,
and
145 made her serve your uses both in purse and in person.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Yea, in truth, my lord.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Pray thee, peace. — [*to FALSTAFF*] Pay her the debt you owe
her, and unpay the villany you have done her. The one
150 you may do with sterling money, and the other with current
repentance.

FALSTAFF

My lord, I will not undergo this sneap without reply.
You call
155 honorable boldness “impudent sauciness.” If a man will make curtsy and say nothing, he is virtuous. No, my lord, my
humble duty remembered, I will not be your suitor. I say to
160 you, I do desire deliverance from these officers, being upon
hasty employment in the King's affairs.

CHIEF JUSTICE

You speak as having power to do wrong; but answer in th'
165 effect of your reputation, and satisfy this poor woman.

FALSTAFF

Come hither, hostess.

FALSTAFF takes MISTRESS QUICKLY aside

Enter GOWER

CHIEF JUSTICE

Now, Master Gower, what news?

GOWER

The King, my lord, and Harry Prince of Wales
Are near at hand. The rest the paper tells.

FALSTAFF

170 As I am a gentleman!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Faith, you said so before.

FALSTAFF

As I am a gentleman. Come. No more words of it.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

By this heavenly ground I tread on, I must be fain to pawn
175 both my plate and the tapestry of my dining chambers.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir John, Sir John, I know only too well how you can manipulate the truth and twist it into lies. But don't worry, I'm not going to be swayed by your confident manner, or the stream of words that always comes with your rude and disrespectful behavior—I will consider this fairly. From what I can tell, you have abused the kindness of this woman, and made her take care of you with her money—and in other ways.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Yes, he has, my lord.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Be quiet, please.

[To FALSTAFF] Pay back your debt to her, and make up for the wrongs you have done to her. You can do the first thing by giving her actual money, and you can do the second thing by asking for her forgiveness.

FALSTAFF

My lord, I won't just take this insult without replying. You call my honorable actions rude and disrespectful. Is a man only virtuous if he bows and says nothing? No, my lord, with all due respect, I'm not going to be completely silent. I am telling you that I need these officers to release me, as I have work that I need to do for the King as soon as possible.

CHIEF JUSTICE

You talk like you're allowed to do whatever you want, regardless of the law. But act in a way that is fitting for your rank, and make it up to this poor woman.

FALSTAFF

Come here, hostess.

FALSTAFF takes MISTRESS QUICKLY aside.

GOWER enters.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Now, Master Gower, what is the news?

GOWER

My lord, the King and Harry Prince of Wales are almost here. This letter will tell you everything else.

FALSTAFF

On my honor!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Really?! Because you've said that before.

FALSTAFF

On my honor as a gentleman! Come on, let's stop talking about it.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

I swear on the heavenly ground that I walk on, that I will have to pawn my best silverware and the tapestries in my dining room.

FALSTAFF

Glasses, glasses, is the only drinking. And for thy walls, a pretty slight drollery, or the story of the Prodigal or the
 180 German hunting in waterwork is worth a thousand of these bed-hangers and these fly-bitten tapestries. Let it be ten pound, if thou canst. Come, an 'twere not for thy humors,
 185 there's not a better wench in England. Go wash thy face, and draw the action. Come, thou must not be in this humor with me. Dost not know me? Come, come, I know thou wast set on to this.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Pray thee, Sir John, let it be but twenty nobles. I' faith, I am loath to pawn my plate, so God save me, Ia.

FALSTAFF

195 Let it alone. I'll make other shift. You'll be a fool still.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Well, you shall have it, though I pawn my gown. I hope you'll come to supper. You'll pay me all together?

FALSTAFF

Will I live? [to BARDOLPH] Go with her, with her. Hook on, hook on.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Will you have Doll Tearsheet meet you at supper?

FALSTAFF

No more words. Let's have her.

Exeunt MISTRESS QUICKLY, FANG, SNARE, BARDOLPH, and the PAGE

CHIEF JUSTICE

I have heard better news.

FALSTAFF

What's the news, my good lord?

CHIEF JUSTICE

205 Where lay the King last night?

GOWER

At Basingstoke, my lord.

FALSTAFF

I hope, my lord, all's well. What is the news, my lord?

CHIEF JUSTICE

Come all his forces back?

GOWER

No; fifteen hundred foot, five hundred horse
 210 Are marched up to my Lord of Lancaster
 Against Northumberland and the Archbishop.

FALSTAFF

Don't worry about that. People just need glasses, glasses for drinking. And as for your walls, you can have a pretty light-hearted painting, or something showing the Prodigal son.¹¹ Don't you think that one of those German hunting scenes--the ones painted on the walls to imitate a tapestry--is worth a thousand of those horrible bed curtains, and fly-bitten tapestries? Let me borrow ten pounds, please? Come on, if it weren't for your mood swings, I would say that you are the best woman in England. Go on, go and wash away your tears, and then get rid of this case against me. Come on, don't be so moody with me. Don't you know me? Come on, come on, I know you were convinced to do this.

¹¹ Falstaff refers to the Parable of the Prodigal Son, which Jesus told his disciples in the New Testament.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Please, Sir John, let's just call it just twenty nobles.¹² Please, I don't want to have to pawn my best silverware, so help me God.

FALSTAFF

All right, I'll leave it. I'll find some other way around it. I guess you'll always be a fool.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Well, I will lend it to you, even if I have to pawn my dresses. I hope you'll come and have dinner tonight? You can pay it all back to me then?

FALSTAFF

I swear on my life!

[To BARDOLPH] Go with her, go with her. Attach yourself to her, and don't let her out of your sight.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Would you like Doll Tearsheet to meet you for dinner?

FALSTAFF

No more talking. Let's have her.

MISTRESS QUICKLY, FANG, SNARE, BARDOLPH, and the PAGE exit.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I've heard better news.

FALSTAFF

What's the news, my good lord?

CHIEF JUSTICE

Where did the King sleep last night?

GOWER

At Basingstoke, my lord.

FALSTAFF

I hope everything is all right, my lord. What's happened, my lord?

CHIEF JUSTICE

Did all of his troops come back?

GOWER

No. Fifteen hundred foot soldiers and five hundred cavalrymen are marching up to meet the Lord of Lancaster, to fight against Northumberland and the Archbishop of York.

FALSTAFF

Comes the King back from Wales, my noble lord?

CHIEF JUSTICE

You shall have letters of me presently.
Come. Go along with me, good Master Gower.

FALSTAFF

215 My lord!

CHIEF JUSTICE

What's the matter?

FALSTAFF

Master Gower, shall I entreat you with me to dinner?

GOWER

I must wait upon my good lord here. I thank you, good
Sir
220 John.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir John, you loiter here too long, being you are to
take
soldiers up in counties as you go.

FALSTAFF

Will you sup with me, Master Gower?

CHIEF JUSTICE

225 What foolish master taught you these manners, Sir John?

FALSTAFF

Master Gower, if they become me not, he was a fool that
taught them me.—This is the right fencing grace, my
lord:
tap for tap, and so part fair.

CHIEF JUSTICE

230 Now the Lord lighten thee. Thou art a great fool.

Exeunt

FALSTAFF

Has the King come back from Wales, my noble lord?

CHIEF JUSTICE

I'll give you some letters soon. Come on, let's go, Master
Gower.

FALSTAFF

My lord!

CHIEF JUSTICE

What's the matter?

FALSTAFF

Master Gower, would you like to have lunch with me?

GOWER

I must stay with this good lord, but I thank you for the offer,
good Sir John.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sir John, you have already stayed here for too long. You
need to try to recruit soldiers, as you travel up through the
counties to the north.

FALSTAFF

Would you like to have dinner with me then, Master Gower?

CHIEF JUSTICE

What foolish teacher taught you to have these manners, Sir
John?

FALSTAFF

Master Gower, if my manners aren't suitable, then the
person who taught me them is a fool.

[To the CHIEF JUSTICE] This is how people play, my lord:
they each give as good as they have, and then they part as
equals.

CHIEF JUSTICE

May the Lord help you. You are a great fool.

They all exit.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter PRINCE HENRY and POINS

PRINCE HENRY

Before God, I am exceeding weary.

POINS

Is 't come to that? I had thought weariness durst not
have
attached one of so high blood.

PRINCE HENRY

5 Faith, it does me; though it discolors the complexion
of my
greatness to acknowledge it. Doth it not show vilely in
me
to desire small beer?

Shakescleare Translation

PRINCE HENRY and POINS enter.

PRINCE HENRY

I swear to God, I am incredibly tired.

POINS

Are you really? I didn't think people as noble as you ever got
tired.

PRINCE HENRY

Well, I am--although admitting it does make me feel less
noble. Would it be awful for me to say that I really want a
small beer?

 Hal craves a thin, diluted beer,
sometimes recommended as a
morning drink after a bad night's
sleep. Alcohol was consumed at all
times of day as water was largely
unsafe in Shakespeare's time.

POINS

10 Why, a prince should not be so loosely studied as to remember so weak a composition.

PRINCE HENRY

Belike then my appetite was not princely got, for, by my troth, I do now remember the poor creature small beer.
 15 But indeed these humble considerations make me out of love with my greatness. What a disgrace is it to me to remember thy name, or to know thy face tomorrow, or to take note how many pair of silk stockings thou hast—with these, and those that were thy peach-colored ones—or to bear the inventory
 20 of thy shirts, as, one for superfluity and another for use. But that the tennis-court keeper knows better than I, for it is a low ebb of linen with thee when thou keepest not racket there, as thou hast not done a great while, because the rest of
 25 the low countries have made a shift to eat up thy holland; and God knows whether those that bawl out the ruins of thy linen shall inherit His kingdom; but the midwives say the children
 30 are not in the fault, whereupon the world increases and kindreds are mightily strengthened.

POINS

40 How ill it follows, after you have labored so hard, you should talk so idly! Tell me, how many good young princes would do so, their fathers being so sick as yours at this time is?

PRINCE HENRY

Shall I tell thee one thing, Poins?

POINS

Yes, faith, and let it be an excellent good thing.

PRINCE HENRY

It shall serve among wits of no higher breeding than thine.

POINS

50 Go to. I stand the push of your one thing that you will tell.

PRINCE HENRY

Marry, I tell thee it is not meet that I should be sad, now my father is sick —albeit I could tell thee, as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better, to call my friend, I could be sad, and sad indeed too.

POINS

Very hardly, upon such a subject.

PRINCE HENRY

60 By this hand, thou thinkst me as far in the devil's book as thou and Falstaff for obduracy and persistency. Let the end

POINS

A prince shouldn't be so indulgent as to want something as vile as a small beer.

PRINCE HENRY

Well then my appetite is not the appetite of a prince, because all I want right now is a small beer. But you're right, these lowly thoughts do take me away from my noble position. It's a disgrace for me to know a man like you! To know your face, to know how many pairs of silk stockings you have--these ones, and those other peach-colored ones you have. To know how many shirts you have--one for wearing, and another one just in case. But then, I guess the keeper of the tennis court knows that better than I do, since you only give up your games when your supply of shirts has run out. And you haven't played for a while, because you've spent all of your money on whores instead of shirts. God knows whether your offspring--howling and dressed in clothes made out of scraps of your shirts--will ever make it to heaven. The midwives say that children don't bear the faults of their parents though, which is how the population increases and families get stronger.

POINS

After everything you have done in battle, it seems wrong for you to spend your time chatting about nothing! Tell me, how many good, young princes would do what you're doing if their fathers were as sick as yours is?

PRINCE HENRY

Shall I tell you something, Poins?

POINS

Yes, please, and let it be something worthwhile.

PRINCE HENRY

It will be good enough for people who aren't any more intelligent than you are.

POINS

Go on then. I can stand up to anything that you will say.

PRINCE HENRY

All right. I am telling you that it is not appropriate for me to be sad, now that my father is sick. But if I wanted to, I could tell you--as a man who is my friend for lack of better company--that I could be sad. I could be incredibly sad.

POINS

That would be a hard thing to do when it comes to a subject like this.

PRINCE HENRY

I swear that you think I'm as bad as you and Falstaff are--as stubborn and as persistent. That's not the case. But I am telling you the truth. My heart is secretly bleeding over the fact that my father is sick. It is just the fact that I am hanging

try the man. But I tell thee, my heart bleeds inwardly
that my
father is so sick: and keeping such vile company as
thou art
hath in reason taken from me all ostentation of sorrow.

POINS

The reason?

PRINCE HENRY

What wouldst thou think of me if I should weep?

POINS

I would think thee a most princely hypocrite.

PRINCE HENRY

It would be every man's thought, and thou art a blessed fellow to think as every man thinks. Never a man's thought
75 in the world keeps the roadway better than thine. Every man would think me an hypocrite indeed. And what accites your most worshipful thought to think so?

POINS

80 Why, because you have been so lewd and so much engraffed to Falstaff.

PRINCE HENRY

And to thee.

POINS

By this light, I am well spoke on. I can hear it with
85 my own ears. The worst that they can say of me is that I am a second brother, and that I am a proper fellow of my hands; and those
90 two things, I confess, I cannot help. By the Mass, here comes Bardolph.

Enter BARDOLPH and the PAGE

PRINCE HENRY

And the boy that I gave Falstaff. He had him from me Christian, and look if the fat villain have not
95 transformed him ape.

BARDOLPH

God save your Grace.

PRINCE HENRY

And yours, most noble Bardolph.

POINS

100 [to BARDOLPH] Come, you virtuous ass, you bashful fool, must you be blushing? Wherefore blush you now? What a maidenly man-at-arms are you become! Is 't such a matter to get a potle-pot's maidenhead?

PAGE

He calls me e'en now, my lord, through a red lattice, and I could discern no part of his face from the window. At last I

around with men like you that has stopped me from being able to show my sadness.

POINS

Why?

PRINCE HENRY

What would you think of me if I were crying?

POINS

I would think you're a royal hypocrite.

PRINCE HENRY

That would be what every man would think, and you're blessed to think the same as every man does. No one agrees with public opinions more than you do. Every man would think that I'm a hypocrite. And what makes you think that?

POINS

Because you've acted so obscenely and you're so attached to Falstaff.

PRINCE HENRY

So are you.

POINS

But indeed, people think highly of me. I've heard their praises with my own ears. The worst thing that they can say about me is that, because I'm not the oldest brother [2], I won't get any inheritance. And I'm also a good fighter. I can't help either of those things, can I? By God [3], here comes Bardolph.

BARDOLPH and PAGE enter.

PRINCE HENRY

He's the boy that I sent to work for Falstaff. I sent him away as a young, Christian boy, and now the fat villain has turned him into a fool [4].

BARDOLPH

God save your Grace [5].

PRINCE HENRY

And yours, most noble Bardolph.

POINS

[To BARDOLPH] Come on, you virtuous ass, you embarrassed fool--why are you blushing? Why are you blushing right now? What a feminine soldier you've become! Is it such a bad thing to knock of a pot of ale [6]?

PAGE

He called me just now, from behind a red window, and I could barely tell which was the window and which was his face. As last I noticed his eyes, and I thought that he must

[2] Poins references the right of primogeniture, in which the eldest brother would inherit his father's estate. Younger brothers and women were excluded.

[3] In the original text, Poins uses the oath "by the Mass," a reference to the church service.

[4] In the original text, Hal notes how Falstaff's boy is turned "ape"--either meaning that he is dressed gaudily, or "apes" Falstaff, mimicking him in style, size, or lifestyle.

[5] "Your Grace" is an honorific title similar to "your Highness" or "your Majesty."

[6] Here, Poins jokes about Bardolph's face, which is notoriously red and flushed from drinking.

spied his eyes, and methought he had made two holes in
the
110 ale-wife's new petticoat and so peeped through.

PRINCE HENRY

Has not the boy profited?

BARDOLPH

Away, you whoreson upright rabbit, away!

PAGE

Away, you rascally Althea's dream, away!

PRINCE HENRY

Instruct us, boy. What dream, boy?

PAGE

115 Marry, my lord, Althea dreamt she was delivered of a firebrand, and therefore I call him her dream.

PRINCE HENRY

A crown's worth of good interpretation. There 'tis,
boy.

POINS

120 O, that this good blossom could be kept from cankers!
Well,
there is sixpence to preserve thee.

BARDOLPH

An you do not make him hanged among you, the gallows
shall have wrong.

PRINCE HENRY

And how doth thy master, Bardolph?

BARDOLPH

125 Well, my good lord. He heard of your Grace's coming to
town. There's a letter for you.

POINS

Delivered with good respect. And how doth the Martlemas
your master?

BARDOLPH

In bodily health, sir.

POINS

130 Marry, the immortal part needs a physician, but that
moves
not him. Though that be sick, it dies not.

PRINCE HENRY

[reads to himself] I do allow this wen to be as
familiar with
135 me as my dog, and he holds his place, for look you how
be
writes. [he hands the letter to POINS]

POINS

[reads] John Falstaff, knight. Every man must know that
as
140 oft as he has occasion to name himself, even like those
that
are kin to the King, for they never prick their finger
but they
say, "There's some of the King's blood spilt." "How
comes
145 that?" says he that takes upon him not to conceive. The
answer is as ready as a borrower's cap: "I am the

have made two holes in a barmaid's skirt and looked
through it.

PRINCE HENRY

The boy must have learned a lot from Falstaff?

BARDOLPH

Get out of here, you silly, little rabbit, get out!

PAGE

You go away, you vile Althea's dream.

The Page mistakes Althea—who dreamed that she gave birth to a firebrand—for Hecuba, the ancient queen of Troy.

PRINCE HENRY

Tell us, boy. What is this dream?

PAGE

Well, my lord, Althea dreamed that she gave birth to a fiery
rod. And so I call it her dream, as he's all red in the face.

PRINCE HENRY

That joke is worth a crown ! Here it is, my boy.

A crown was a gold coin.

POINS

I hope that this precious, little flower can be kept away from
worms that will eat it and corrupt it. Well, here's sixpence to
look after you.

BARDOLPH

If all of you don't end up getting this boy hanged, the
gallows have been robbed.

PRINCE HENRY

And how is your master doing, Bardolph?

BARDOLPH

He is doing well, my good lord. He heard that your Grace
was coming to town. Here's a letter for you.

POINS

Delivered as it should be. And how is that fat beast, your
master?

BARDOLPH

His body's healthy at least.

POINS

Indeed, it's his soul that really needs a doctor's help. But
that doesn't bother him. Even if his soul might be sick, at
least he's not going to die right now.

PRINCE HENRY

[Reading to himself] God, I've allowed this great lump to be
as familiar to me as my dog, and he keeps a tight hold on
his rank. Look at how he writes. [He hands the letter to
POINS]

POINS

[Reading] "John Falstaff, knight." He makes sure that he
tells people his title whenever he can. He's just like people
who are related to the King. Anytime they prick their finger,
they say something like, "Look, some of the King's blood
has been spilled." Then someone pretends not to
understand and says, "What do you mean?" The answer is
as ready as a beggar is when he holds out his hat. The
relative replies, "I am the King's poor cousin, sir."

King's
poor cousin, sir."

PRINCE HENRY

150 Nay, they will be kin to us, or they will fetch it from Japheth. But to the letter. [takes the letter and reads] Sir John Falstaff, knight, to the son of the King nearest his father, Harry Prince of Wales, greeting.

POINS

Why, this is a certificate.

PRINCE HENRY

155 Peace! [reads] I will imitate the honorable Romans in brevity.

POINS

He sure means brevity in breath, short-winded.

PRINCE HENRY

[reads] I commend me to thee, I commend thee, and I leave thee. Be not too familiar with Poins, for he misuses thy favors so much that he swears thou art to marry his sister Nell. Repent at idle times as thou mayest, and so, farewell. Thine by yea and no, which is as much as to say, as thou uses him, Jack Falstaff with my familiars, John with my brothers and sisters, and Sir John with all Europe.

POINS

My lord, I'll steep this letter in sack and make him eat it.

PRINCE HENRY

That's to make him eat twenty of his words. But do you use
170 me thus, Ned? Must I marry your sister?

POINS

God send the wench no worse fortune! But I never said so.

PRINCE HENRY

Well, thus we play the fools with the time, and the spirits of
175 the wise sit in the clouds and mock us. [to BARDOLPH]
Is your master here in London?

BARDOLPH

Yea, my lord.

PRINCE HENRY

Where sups he? Doth the old boar feed in the old frank?

BARDOLPH

180 At the old place, my lord, in Eastcheap.

PRINCE HENRY

What company?

PAGE

Ephesians, my lord, of the old church.

PRINCE HENRY

Sup any women with him?

PRINCE HENRY

True, they all say that they're part of our family, even if they have to look all the way back to Japheth ⁹. But as for this letter. [He takes the letter and reads] "Sir John Falstaff, knight to the King's son nearest to his father, Harry Prince of Wales, sends his regards."

⁹ In the Bible, Japheth was one of Noah's sons, purported to be the ancestor of Mediterranean peoples.

POINS

Why, that sounds like contract, not a letter.

PRINCE HENRY

Quiet! [Reading] "I will be like the Romans ¹⁰ and be brief about it."

¹⁰ Hal references the ancient Roman writer Plutarch, who commented about the statesman Brutus' brief style of writing.

POINS

He must mean shortness of breath--he's probably wheezing.

PRINCE HENRY

[Reading] "I salute myself, I salute you, and I leave it. Don't get too close to Poins, as he abuses your kindness so much that he is positive that you're going to marry his sister, Nell. Repent for your sins when you have the time, and so, goodbye. Yours here and there, for which I mean, however you want him to be, I am still Jack Falstaff to my friends, John to my brothers and sisters, and Sir John to the rest of Europe."

POINS

My lord, I'll cover this letter in wine and force him to eat it.

PRINCE HENRY

That would force him to eat twenty of his words. But are you really abusing my kindness, Ned? Do I actually have to marry your sister?

POINS

It would definitely be good for her if you did. But no, I never said anything like that.

PRINCE HENRY

Look at us wasting time here, while the wise angels sit in heaven laughing at us.

[To BARDOLPH] Is your master here in London?

BARDOLPH

Yes, my lord.

PRINCE HENRY

Where is he having dinner? Is that old pig eating in his old feeding place?

BARDOLPH

At the old place in Eastcheap, my lord.

PRINCE HENRY

Who's he with?

PAGE

The same old faces.

PRINCE HENRY

Do any women eat with him?

PAGE

None, my lord, but old Mistress Quickly and Mistress Doll Tearsheet.

185

PRINCE HENRY

What pagan may that be?

PAGE

A proper gentlewoman, sir, and a kinswoman of my master's.

PRINCE HENRY

Even such kin as the parish heifers are to the town bull.—
Shall we steal upon them, Ned, at supper?

POINS

I am your shadow, my lord. I'll follow you.

PRINCE HENRY

Sirrah—you, boy—and Bardolph, no word to your master that I am yet come to town. [gives them money] There's for your silence.

BARDOLPH

I have no tongue, sir.

PAGE

And for mine, sir, I will govern it.

PRINCE HENRY

200 Fare you well. Go.

Exeunt BARDOLPH and PAGE

This Doll Tearsheet should be some road.

POINS

I warrant you, as common as the way between Saint Alban's and London.

PRINCE HENRY

How might we see Falstaff bestow himself tonight in his true colors, and not ourselves be seen?

POINS

Put on two leather jerkins and aprons, and wait upon him at his table as drawers.

PRINCE HENRY

From a god to a bull: a heavy decension. It was Jove's case.
From a prince to a 'prentice: a low transformation that shall
be mine, for in everything the purpose must weigh with the folly. Follow me, Ned.

Exeunt

PAGE

Just old Mistress Quickly and Mistress Doll Tearsheet.

PRINCE HENRY

Which whore is that?

PAGE

Sir, she's a proper lady, and related to my master.

PRINCE HENRY

The same kind of relationship that country cows have with the local bull, I'm guessing.

[To POINS] Shall we sneak up on them while they're having dinner, Ned?

POINS

I'm your shadow, my lord. I'll follow you.

PRINCE HENRY

Sir--you there, boy--and you, Bardolph: don't say anything to your master about me being in town. [He gives them money] This is for your silence.

BARDOLPH

I have no tongue to tell him anything, sir.

PAGE

I have a tongue, sir. But I'll keep it in check.

PRINCE HENRY

Goodbye to you then. Off you go.

BARDOLPH and PAGE exit.

This Doll Tearsheet must be some whore.

POINS

I bet that she's as commonly used as the road between Saint Albans and London.

PRINCE HENRY

How can we make Falstaff show his true colors tonight and not be recognized ourselves?

POINS

Let's put on two leather jackets and aprons, and wait on him, pretending to be bartenders.

PRINCE HENRY

To go from being a god to a bull is quite a step down. But Jove did it. From a Prince to a servant--that will be my transformation. The end result will make up for all of the tomfoolery. Follow me, Ned.

 In ancient Roman mythology, the king of the gods, Jove, transformed into a bull to woo the maiden Europa.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter NORTHUMBERLAND, LADY NORTHUMBERLAND, and LADY PERCY

NORTHUMBERLAND

I pray thee, loving wife and gentle daughter,
Give even way unto my rough affairs.
Put not you on the visage of the times
And be, like them, to Percy troublesome.

LADY NORTHUMBERLAND

5 I have given over. I will speak no more.
Do what you will; your wisdom be your guide.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Alas, sweet wife, my honor is at pawn,
And, but my going, nothing can redeem it.

LADY PERCY

O yet, for God's sake, go not to these wars.
10 The time was, father, that you broke your word,
When you were more endeared to it than now,
When your own Percy, when my heart's dear Harry,
Threw many a northward look to see his father
Bring up his powers; but he did long in vain.
15 Who then persuaded you to stay at home?
There were two honors lost, yours and your son's.
For yours, the God of heaven brighten it.
For his, it stuck upon him as the sun
In the gray vault of heaven, and by his light
20 Did all the chivalry of England move
To do brave acts. He was indeed the glass
Wherein the noble youth did dress themselves.
He had no legs that practiced not his gait;
And speaking thick, which nature made his blemish,
25 Became the accents of the valiant;
For those that could speak low and tardily
Would turn their own perfection to abuse
To seem like him. So that in speech, in gait,
In diet, in affections of delight,
30 In military rules, humors of blood,
He was the mark and glass, copy and book,
That fashioned others. And him—O wondrous him!
O miracle of men!—him did you leave,
Second to none, unseconded by you,
35 To look upon the hideous god of war
In disadvantage, to abide a field
Where nothing but the sound of Hotspur's name
Did seem defensible. So you left him.
Never, O never, do his ghost the wrong
40 To hold your honor more precise and nice
With others than with him. Let them alone.
The Marshal and the Archbishop are strong.
Had my sweet Harry had but half their numbers,
Today might I, hanging on Hotspur's neck,
45 Have talked of Monmouth's grave.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Beshrew your heart,
Fair daughter, you do draw my spirits from me
With new lamenting ancient oversights.
But I must go and meet with danger there,
50 Or it will seek me in another place
And find me worse provided.

LADY NORTHUMBERLAND

Oh, fly to Scotland
Till that the nobles and the armèd commons
Have of their puissance made a little taste.

Shakescleare Translation

NORTHUMBERLAND, LADY NORTHUMBERLAND, and LADY PERCY enter.

NORTHUMBERLAND

I am asking you, my loving wife and my kind daughter-in-law, to make my difficult position as easy as you can. Don't let your faces show how horrible these times are--that will only make things more troubling for me.

LADY NORTHUMBERLAND

I give up. I won't say another word. Do what you want; your wisdom can guide you now.

NORTHUMBERLAND

For goodness' sake, my sweet wife: my honor is at risk here. The only way I can redeem myself is by going to fight.

LADY PERCY

Oh, but still, don't go to these wars, for God's sake. The last time you broke your word you were far more bound to the cause than you are now. Your own son Percy--my own love, Harry--kept looking north hoping to see his father and his army arriving. But his hopes were in vain. Who was it that persuaded you to stay at home then? Two senses of honor were lost in that battle--your honor, and your son's. As for yours, God might be able to make it shine again. As for your son's, it attached itself to him--like the sun in a blue sky--and its beams motivated every soldier in England to act bravely. He was like a mirror that noble, young men used to know how to dress themselves. Everyone with legs copied how he walked; all brave men even copied his quick and hurried speech--which was considered one of his only flaws. For the men who had always spoken softly and slowly manipulated their perfect speech to sound more like him. In terms of his speech, his walk, his diet; when it came to the things which gave him pleasure, his military actions, his changing moods, he was the signpost and the mirror, the guidebook by which everyone lived. And him--oh wonderful him! What a miracle among men! And you left him! Unsupported by you, the best man there was had to face the terrible god of war with this disadvantage. The only defense he had left to fight this battle with was the reputation of his own name, Hotspur. And that is how you left him. Don't you dare wrong his name by caring more about your honor with other men than you did with him. Leave them alone. Marshal Mowbray and the Archbishop of York are strong. If only my sweet Harry had had an army even half the size of theirs, today I could have been holding my Harry and talking about Hal's death instead.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Oh, curse your feelings, my beautiful daughter-in-law. You drag me out of myself again and make me look back at the mistakes that I made. But I have to go and face danger there, or danger will just find me somewhere else and I won't be ready for it.

LADY NORTHUMBERLAND

Oh, go to Scotland then, until these noblemen and their armies have made some progress in their rebellion.

LADY PERCY

If they get ground and vantage of the King,
Then join you with them like a rib of steel
To make strength stronger; but, for all our loves,
First let them try themselves. So did your son;
He was so suffered. So came I a wid ow,
60 And never shall have length of life enough
To rain upon remembrance with mine eyes
That it may grow and sprout as high as heaven
For recordation to my noble husband.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Come, come, go in with me. 'Tis with my mind
As with the tide swelled up unto his height,
That makes a still-stand, running neither way.
Fain would I go to meet the Archbishop,
But many thousand reasons hold me back.
I will resolve for Scotland. There am I
70 Till time and vantage crave my company.

*Exeunt***LADY PERCY**

If they manage to make any progress against the King, and gain any ground, then you can join them. And just like a steel pole, you will make their armies even stronger. But, if you love us, let them try on their own first. That's how your son fought in the battle. You allowed him to do so, and that's how I became a widow. My life will never be long enough to water the plant of memory with my tears. This plant will never grow tall enough to truly honor the memory of my noble husband.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Come on now, go inside with me. My mind is currently filled with thoughts that are like a high tide at a standstill, not coming or going. I want to go and join the Archbishop--but there are thousands of reasons holding me back. I will go to Scotland. There, I can wait and see if there comes a point when my help is truly needed.

They all exit.

Act 2, Scene 4

Shakespeare*Enter two DRAWERS***FRANCIS**

What the devil hast thou brought there—applejohns? Thou knowest Sir John cannot endure an applejohn.

SECOND DRAWER

Mass, thou sayest true. The Prince once set a dish of applejohns before him and told him there were five more
5 Sir Johns and, putting off his hat, said "I will now take my leave of these six dry, round, old, withered knights." It angered him to the heart. But he hath forgot that.

FRANCIS

Why then, cover, and set them down, and see if thou canst find out Sneak's noise. Mistress Tearsheet would fain hear
15 some music.

*Enter THIRD DRAWER***THIRD DRAWER**

Dispatch: the room where they supped is too hot. They'll come in straight.

FRANCIS

Sirrah, here will be the Prince and Master Poins anon, and they will put on two of our jerkins and aprons, and Sir John must not know of it. Bardolph hath brought word.

THIRD DRAWER

By the Mass, here will be old utis. It will be an excellent stratagem.

Shakescleare Translation*Two DRAWERS enter.*¹ A "drawer" is a bartender.**FRANCIS**

What on earth have you got there--apple-johns? You know that Sir John hates apple-johns.

² Apple-johns are a type of apple which are eaten when they become shriveled and withered.**SECOND DRAWER**

God, that's true. The Prince once put a plate of apple-johns in front of him and said, "Look, here are five more Sir Johns!" Then, putting on his hat, he said, "I will now leave these six, dry, round, old, withered knights behind." That made Sir John very angry, but he has forgotten about it now.

FRANCIS

Well then, put the table cloth on and set the dishes down on top. Then go see if you can find Sneak's band of musicians. Mistress Tearsheet wants to hear some music.

*A THIRD DRAWER enters.***THIRD DRAWER**

Hurry up! The room they had their dinner in was too hot, and so they'll be here any minute now.

FRANCIS

Sir, the Prince and Master Poins will be here at some point soon. They are going to disguise themselves by putting on a couple of our jackets and aprons--but Sir John can't know anything about it. Bardolph came and told me.

THIRD DRAWER

By God, there's going to be some fun had here. What an excellent plan!

SECOND DRAWER

I'll see if I can find out Sneak.

FRANCIS and THE DRAWERS exit

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY and DOLL TEARSHEET

MISTRESS QUICKLY

I' faith, sweetheart, methinks now you are in an excellent
good temperality. Your pulsidge beats as extraordinarilay as heart would desire, and your color, I warrant you, is as red as any rose, in good truth, la . But, i' faith, you have drunk too much canaries, and that's a marvellous searching wine, and it perfumes the blood ere one can say "What's this?"

40 How do you now?

DOLL TEARSHEET

Better than I was. Hem.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Why, that's well said. A good heart's worth gold.
Lo, here comes Sir John.

Enter FALSTAFF

FALSTAFF

[sings] When Arthur first in court —Empty the jordan.
[sings] And was a worthy king — How now, Mistress Doll?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Sick of a calm, yea, good faith.

FALSTAFF

So is all her sect. An they be once in a calm, they are sick.

DOLL TEARSHEET

A pox damn you, muddy rascal. Is that all the comfort you give me?

FALSTAFF

You make fat rascals, Mistress Doll.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I make them? Gluttony and diseases make them; I make them not.

FALSTAFF

If the cook help to make the gluttony, you help to make the diseases, Doll. We catch of you, Doll, we catch of you. Grant that, my poor virtue, grant that.

DOLL TEARSHEET

60 Yea, joy, our chains and our jewels.

SECOND DRAWER

I'll go see if I can find Sneak and his band.

FRANCIS and THE DRAWERS exit.

MISTRESS QUICKLY and DOLL TEARSHEET enter.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Truthfully, sweetheart, I think you are in an excellent mood 3. Your pulse is beating as quickly as you want it to, and your cheeks are as red as any rose, honestly! But, in all seriousness, I do think you might have drunk too much of that sweet wine 4, and it is strong stuff. It will stir up your blood quicker than you can say, "What's all this?" How are you doing now, Doll?

3 In the original text, Mistress Quickly mistakes "temperality" for "temper" or "mood," and goes on to corrupt "pulse" as "pulsidge."

4 In the original text, Mistress Quickly speaks of "canaries." "Canary" was a sweet wine from Spain's Canary Islands.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I'm doing better than I was. [She hiccups]

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Well said! A good heart is worth a lot of gold. Look, here comes Sir John.

FALSTAFF enters.

FALSTAFF

[Singing] *"When King Arthur was first in court"* 5

5 Falstaff sings some lyrics from a popular ballad of the time--"Sir Lancelot du Lake."

[To one of the drawers] Empty the chamber-pot.

[Singing] *"And was a worthy king."*

[To DOLL TEARSHEET] How are you going, Mistress Doll?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

She's sick of a qualm 6, in all truth.

6 Mistress Quickly means to say "qualm," a momentary feeling of nausea. "Qualm" and "calm" would have been phonetically similar in Shakespeare's time, hence the confusion.

FALSTAFF

That's common for women of her type. As soon as they have a moment of calm, they get sick.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Damn you, you fat idiot. Is that all you can say to make me feel better?

FALSTAFF

You make rascals fat, Mistress Doll.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I make them fat? No, overeating and diseases make men fat. I have no part in it.

FALSTAFF

If the cook helps us to overeat, then you help us to catch diseases, Doll. We catch them from you, Doll, from you. At least admit to that, my poor girl.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Yes, my dear, you get from us the valuable things we've been given.

FALSTAFF

Your broaches, pearls, and ouches—for to serve bravely
is
to come halting off, you know; to come off the breach
with
65 his pike bent bravely, and to surgery bravely, to
venture upon
the charged chambers bravely—

DOLL TEARSHEET

Hang yourself, you muddy conger, hang yourself!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

By my troth, this is the old fashion. You two never
70 meet but
you fall to some discord. You are both, i' good truth,
as
rheumatic as two dry toasts. You cannot one bear with
another's confirmities. What the good-year! One must
75 bear,
and that must be you. You are the weaker vessel, as
they say,
the emptier vessel.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Can a weak empty vessel bear such a huge full hogshead?
80 There's a whole merchant's venture of Bourdeaux stuff
in
him. You have not seen a hulk better stuffed in the
hold.—
Come, I'll be friends with thee, Jack. Thou art going
85 to the wars, and whether I shall ever see thee again or
no, there is nobody cares.

Enter FIRST DRAWER

FIRST DRAWER

Sir, Ancient Pistol's below and would speak with
you.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Hang him, swaggering rascal! Let him not come hither.
90 It is
the foul-mouthed'st rogue in England.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

If he swagger, let him not come here. No, by my faith,
I must
live among my neighbors. I'll no swaggerers: I am in
95 good
name and fame with the very best. Shut the door. There
comes no swaggerers here. I have not lived all this
while to
have swaggering now. Shut the door, I pray you.

FALSTAFF

100 Dost thou hear, hostess?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Pray you pacify yourself, Sir John. There comes no
swaggerers
here.

FALSTAFF

Dost thou hear? It is mine ancient.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

105 Tilly-vally, Sir John, ne'er tell me. And your ancient
swaggerer comes not in my doors. I was before Master
Tisick, the deputy t' other day, and, as he said to
me—'twas
no longer ago than Wednesday last, i' good faith—
110 "Neighbour Quickly," says he—Master Dumb, our minister,

FALSTAFF

Your broaches, your pearls, and your gems 7. We go in
bravely, but we come out limping, you know. We leave the
ruptured place with our spears bravely bent. We seek
medical help, only to bravely re-enter the diseased
chambers again.

7 In the original text, Falstaff speaks of "ouches," meaning "gems." He appears to be commenting on venereal diseases, and goes on to detail their effects in the next few lines.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Oh, go die, you disgusting eel, go die somewhere!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

I swear, it's always like this. You two can never meet
without having some kind of argument. I swear, you're both
as hot as dry toast 8 --you can't stand each others flaws 9. What on earth is wrong with you two! But one of you has
to bear the brunt of it. And that has to be you, Doll, since
you're the weaker sex, the empty vessel as they say.

8 Mistress Quickly means "choleric" (as in heated with anger) in the original text, but instead says, "rheumatic" (as in aching).

9 Another mistake on Mistress Quickly's part—she means "infirmities" but says "confirmities."

DOLL TEARSHEET

Can this weak, empty vessel take the weight 10 of such a
huge, fat, barrel? There's an entire merchant's stock of
Bordeaux wine in him. I've never seen a ship with a bigger
load stuffed in the hold.

10 Doll takes Mistress Quickly's remarks on gender roles and turns them into a sexual pun.

*[To FALSTAFF] Come on, I'll be friends with you, Jack. You're
going off to fight in the wars, and whether or not I will ever
see you again--well, who cares, really.*

The FIRST DRAWER enters.

FIRST DRAWER

Sir, Pistol the standard-bearer is downstairs and would like
to speak to you.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I hope he dies, that rude scoundrel! Don't let him come in,
he's got the most disgusting mouth in all of England.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

If he's going to cause any problems, then don't let him
come in. No, indeed, I have to think about my neighbors.
And I don't want any trouble here. I have a good reputation
and people think highly of me. Shut the door. We won't
have any trouble here. I haven't lived this long just to be
ruined by trouble now. Shut the door, please.

FALSTAFF

Did you hear, hostess?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Please be quiet for a minute, Sir John. I'm not having any
troublemakers here.

FALSTAFF

Did you hear? It's my standard-bearer.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Oh fiddlesticks, Sir John, I don't want to know. And your
horrible standard-bearer is not coming in here. The other
day, I met with the Master Tisick, the deputy. He said to me—
this can only have been last Wednesday I think—he said,
"Neighbor Quickly." Master Dumb, the minister, was there
as well, actually. Anyway, he said, "Neighbor Quickly, only

was by then—"Neighbour Quickly," says he, "receive those
that are civil, for," said he, "you are in an ill
name." Now he
115 said so, I can tell whereupon. "For," says he, "you are an
honest woman, and well thought on. Therefore take heed
what guests you receive. Receive," says he, "no
swaggering companions." There comes none here. You would
120 bless you to hear what he said. No, I'll no swaggerers.

FALSTAFF

He's no swaggerer, hostess, a tame cheater, i' faith.
You may
stroke him as gently as a puppy greyhound. He'll not
swagger with a Barbary hen if her feathers turn back in
125 any
show of resistance.—Call him up, drawer.

Exit FIRST DRAWER

MISTRESS QUICKLY

"Cheater," call you him? I will bar no honest man my
house,
nor no cheater, but I do not love swaggering. By my
130 troth,
I am the worse when one says "swagger." Feel, masters,
how
I shake; look you, I warrant you.

DOLL TEARSHEET

So you do, hostess.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

135 Do I? Yea, in very truth, do I, an 'twere an aspen
leaf. I
cannot abide swaggerers.

Enter PISTOL, BARDOLPH, and the PAGE

PISTOL

God save you, Sir John.

FALSTAFF

Welcome, Ancient Pistol. Here, Pistol, I charge you
140 with a
cup of sack. Do you discharge upon mine hostess.

PISTOL

I will discharge upon her, Sir John, with two bullets.

FALSTAFF

She is pistol-proof. Sir, you shall not hardly offend
her.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

145 Come, I'll drink no proofs nor no bullets. I'll drink
no more
than will do me good, for no man's pleasure, I.

PISTOL

Then to you, Mistress Dorothy! I will charge you.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Charge me! I scorn you, scurvy companion. What, you
150 poor,
base, rascally, cheating lack-linen mate! Away, you
mouldy
rogue, away! I am meat for your master.

let in people who are well-behaved, since people are
starting to question your reputation." That's what he said,
and I can tell you why. "You're an honest woman, and
highly regarded," he said. "So be careful about who you let
in. Don't let in any troublemakers." So that's what I'm
doing. You would be lucky to hear what he said. No, I will
not let any troublemakers in at all.

FALSTAFF

He's not a troublemaker, hostess. He's just a harmless
cheater, honestly. You can pet him like he's some kind of
little puppy. He wouldn't even fight against a guinea fowl,
even if her feathers stood up on end in anger

[To the FIRST DRAWER] Bring him up here, bartender.

The FIRST DRAWER exits.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

A "cheater" [11] you call him? I won't stop any honest man
from coming into my bar, nor any cheater. But I hate
troublemakers. Honestly, I can't handle it when someone
says the word "trouble." Look, masters, look how I am
shaking. Look, I'm telling you.

[11] *Mistress Quickly misunderstands "cheater" as "escheator," a position in the royal treasury.*

DOLL TEARSHEET

You really are, hostess.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Am I? Yes, I am. I'm shaking like some giant leaf in the wind.
I just can't put up with troublemakers.

PISTOL, BARDOLPH, and the PAGE enter.

PISTOL

God save you, Sir John.

FALSTAFF

Welcome Pistol, my standard-bearer. Here, Pistol, I toast to
you with this glass of wine. Now, kindly do the same for our
hostess.

PISTOL

Sir John, all I will do for her is unload two big bullets [12].

[12] *Pistol's words have a sexual connotation, with "bullets" standing in for "testicles."*

FALSTAFF

She's Pistol-proof. Sir, there's not much you can do to harm
her.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Come on now, I'm not going to have any proofs, or any
bullets. I will only drink as much as I want to. No man will
make me do otherwise.

PISTOL

Then what about you, Mistress Dorothy? I'll charge you.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Charge me! I'm just going to ignore that, you vile man.
What? You're a poor, disgusting, lying, cheating, shirtless
fool! Get away from me, you moldy scoundrel, get away
from me! I'm meant for someone better than you.

PISTOL

I know you, Mistress Dorothy.

DOLL TEARSHEET

155 Away, you cutpurse rascal, you filthy bung, away! By this wine, I'll thrust my knife in your mouldy chaps an you play the saucy cuttle with me. Away, you bottle-ale rascal, you basket-hilt stale juggler, you. Since when, I pray you, sir? God's light, with two points on your shoulder? Much!

PISTOL

God let me not live, but I will murder your ruff for this.

FALSTAFF

No more, Pistol. I would not have you go off here. Discharge yourself of our company, Pistol.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

No, good Captain Pistol, not here, sweet captain.

DOLL TEARSHEET

170 Captain? Thou abominable damned cheater, art thou not ashamed to be called captain? An captains were of my mind, they would truncheon you out for taking their names upon
175 you before you have earned them. You a captain? You slave, for what? For tearing a poor whore's ruff in a bawdy house? He a captain! Hang him, rogue. He lives upon mouldy stewed prunes and dried cakes. A captain? God's light, these villains will make the word as odious as the word "occupy," which was an excellent good word before it was ill sorted. Therefore captains had need look to 't.

BARDOLPH

Pray thee go down, good ancient.

FALSTAFF

Hark thee hither, Mistress Doll.

PISTOL

185 Not I. I tell thee what, Corporal Bardolph, I could tear her. I'll be revenged of her.

PAGE

Pray thee go down.

PISTOL

190 I'll see her damned first to Pluto's damnèd lake, by this hand, to th' infernal deep with Erebus and tortures vile also. Hold hook and line, say I. Down, down, dogs! Down, Fates!
195 Have we not Hiren here?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Good Captain Peesell, be quiet. 'Tis very late, i' faith. I beseech you now, aggravate your choler.

PISTOL

These be good humors indeed. Shall pack-horses
200 And hollow pampered jades of Asia, which cannot go but thirty mile a day,

PISTOL

I know you, Mistress Dorothy.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Get away from me, you pickpocket, you villain, you horrible thief! I swear on this very wine that I will stab you in your moldy face if you keep on like this. Get away from me, you cheap rascal, you out-of-date soldier! Can I ask, since when have you been a soldier? With two armor tags on your shoulders, I bet!

PISTOL

I will strangle your neck for saying that, or at least will die trying to.

FALSTAFF

Enough, Pistol. I don't want you to go off on anyone here. Go somewhere else, Pistol.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

No, good Captain Pistol. Not here, sweet captain.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Captain? You despicable, damned cheater: aren't you ashamed to be called a captain? If captains thought of you like I do, they would beat you for taking their title without earning it. You, a captain? You rogue, a captain of what? Of ripping up a poor whore's clothes in a brothel? Is he a captain? Let him die, the villain. He lives off the moldy food that is left over in brothels. A captain? By God, men like him with make the word "captain" as hated as the word, "occupy" ¹³, a word that was a great choice, before it was tainted. Therefore, captains should be ready for that.

¹³ Doll uses "occupy" in its slang sense, as "copulate."

BARDOLPH

Please, calm down, good standard-bearer.

FALSTAFF

Listen to me, Mistress Doll.

PISTOL

I won't. I'll tell you what, Corporal Bardolph, I could tear her into pieces. I'll get my revenge.

PAGE

Please, calm down!

PISTOL

I'll see her damned first! I'll personally see her damned to the waters of hell ¹⁴, to the never-ending deep, with darkness and vile tortures. Let things go as I've planned. Down, down, dogs. Down, Fates! I have my sword here!

¹⁴ In the original text, Pistol refers to Pluto, the ancient Roman god of the underworld.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Good Captain Pistol, please be quiet. Honestly, it's very late. Please, rein in your anger.

PISTOL

These are fine goings-on indeed. Should we let old pack-horses ¹⁵ and stupid, pampered horses from Asia--who can't travel more than a few miles every day--compare with

¹⁵ A "pack-horse" refers to a horse, mule, donkey, or pony used to carry goods on its back.

205

Compare with Caesars and with cannibals, and Troyant
Greeks? Nay, rather damn them with King
Cerberus, and let the welkin roar. Shall we fall
foul
for toys?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

By my troth, captain, these are very bitter words.

BARDOLPH

Begone, good ancient. This will grow to a brawl anon.

PISTOL

Die men like dogs! Give crowns like pins! Have we not
210 Hiren here?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

O' my word, captain, there's none such here. What the
good-year, do you think I would deny her? For God's sake, be
quiet.

PISTOL

215 Then feed and be fat, my fair Calipolis. Come, give 's
some sack. *Si fortuna me tormento, sperato me contento.* Fear we
broadsides? No, let the fiend give fire. Give me some
220 sack,
and, sweetheart, lie thou there. *[lays down his sword]*
Come
we to full points here? And are etceteras nothing?

FALSTAFF

Pistol, I would be quiet.

PISTOL

225 Sweet knight, I kiss thy neat. What, we have seen the
seven stars.

DOLL TEARSHEET

For God's sake, thrust him downstairs. I cannot endure
such
230 a fustian rascal.

PISTOL

"Thrust him downstairs?" Know we not Galloway nags?

FALSTAFF

Quoit him down, Bardolph, like a shove-groat shilling.
Nay,
an he do nothing but speak nothing, he shall be nothing
here.

BARDOLPH

Come, get you downstairs.

PISTOL

What! shall we have incision? Shall we imbrue? [
snatches up his sword] Then death rock me asleep, abridge
my doleful
240 days. Why then, let grievous, ghastly, gaping wounds
untwine the Sisters Three. Come, Atropos, I say.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Here's goodly stuff toward!

men like Caesar, important generals, and mythical Greek
soldiers going off to Troy? No, I would rather damn them to
hell ¹⁶, and let the heavens roar. Shall we fight about
nothing?

¹⁶ In the original text, Pistol
mentions Cerberus—the mythological
three-headed dog who guarded the
entrance to the underworld.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Honestly, captain, those are very aggressive words.

BARDOLPH

Leave now, good standard-bearer. This will turn into a fight
before long.

PISTOL

Let men die like dogs! Give away the King's crowns like
they're nothing! Isn't this a sword, a Hiren here?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

I swear to you, captain, there is no one who goes by that
¹⁷ name here! Why on earth would I lie about it if there
was? For God's sake, be quiet.

¹⁷ Mistress Quickly misunderstands
"Hiren" as a woman's name, rather
than a sword.

PISTOL

Then keep eating and get fat, my beautiful lady. Come on,
give me some wine. *If my fortunes torment me, then hope*
contents me ¹⁸. Should we have to fear an attack? No, let
the devil start shooting. Give me some wine, and,
sweetheart, you can lie down there. *[He lays down his*
sword.] Is this where this all ends? What about the et
ceteras? ¹⁹

¹⁸ Pistol's confusing motto--a
mixture of French, Spanish, and
Italian--will be repeated in the final
scene of the play.

¹⁹ Pistol uses "et ceteras"--the Latin
for "and the rest"--as slang for female
genitalia.

FALSTAFF

Pistol, I would be quiet if I were you.

PISTOL

Sweet knight, I kiss your hand goodnight. Look, it's so late
that we can see the Big Dipper.

DOLL TEARSHEET

For God's sake, throw him down the stairs. I can't stand
anymore of this ridiculous fool.

PISTOL

"Throw him down the stairs?" Let's face it, we all know a
common whore when we see one.

FALSTAFF

Throw *him* down, Bardolph, like a coin rolling along some
game board. If all he's going to do here is say a bunch of
nonsense, then it is nonsense for him to be here at all.

BARDOLPH

Come on, get downstairs.

PISTOL

What? Is there going to be a cutting now? Will we shed
blood? *[He snatches up his sword]* Then let death rock me
to sleep; let death end my sad days! Why then, let horrible,
ghastly and gaping wounds sever the thread of my life,
made by those three sisters. Come on then, Atropos. ²⁰

²⁰ The "three sisters" are the
mythological Fates, the last of whom,
Atropos, cut the thread of a person's
life upon his or her death.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

This should be good.

FALSTAFF

Give me my rapier, boy.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I pray thee, Jack, I pray thee do not draw.

FALSTAFF

245 Get you downstairs. [*drawing and driving PISTOL out*]

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Here's a goodly tumult. I'll forswear keeping house
afore
I'll be in these tirrits and frights. So, murder, I
warrant now.

250 Alas, alas, put up your naked weapons, put up your
naked
weapons.

Exeunt PISTOL pursued by BARDOLPH

DOLL TEARSHEET

I pray thee, Jack, be quiet. The rascal's gone. Ah, you
whoreson little valiant villain, you.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

255 Are you not hurt i' the groin? Methought he made a
shrewd thrust at your belly.

Enter BARDOLPH

FALSTAFF

Have you turned him out o' doors?

BARDOLPH

Yea, sir. The rascal's drunk. You have hurt him, sir,
i' the shoulder.

FALSTAFF

260 A rascal to brave me!

DOLL TEARSHEET

Ah, you sweet little rogue, you. Alas, poor ape, how
thou
sweat'st! Come, let me wipe thy face. Come on, you
whoreson chops. Ah, rogue, i' faith, I love thee. Thou
art as
valorous as Hector of Troy, worth five of Agamemnon,
and
ten times better than the Nine Worthies. Ah, villain!

FALSTAFF

Ah, rascally slave! I will toss the rogue in a blanket.

DOLL TEARSHEET

270 Do, an thou darest for thy heart. An thou dost, I'll
canvass
thee between a pair of sheets.

Enter musicians

PAGE

The music is come, sir.

FALSTAFF

275 Let them play.—Play, sirs.—Sit on my knee, Doll. A
rascal
bragging slave! The rogue fled from me like
quicksilver.

FALSTAFF

Give me my sword, boy.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Please, Jack, please don't fight him.

FALSTAFF

Get downstairs. [*He draws his sword and chases PISTOL*]

MISTRESS QUICKLY

This is going to be quite a fight. I swear, I would rather close
my bar than have to put up with such terrors and frights. It's
murder, I'm telling you! Oh dear, oh dear! Put away your
naked weapons, put them away!

PISTOL exits, followed by BARDOLPH.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Please, Jack, calm down now. The bastard's gone. Oh, you
stupid, little, brave scoundrel, you!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Did he get you in the groin? I thought that he got a good
whack at your stomach.

BARDOLPH enters.

FALSTAFF

Have you thrown him out?

BARDOLPH

Yes, sir. The fool is drunk. You hurt his shoulder, sir.

FALSTAFF

That fool! Why would he dare to challenge me?

DOLL TEARSHEET

Oh, you sweet little rascal, you! Oh, my poor little monkey,
look how much you're sweating! Come on, let me wipe your
face clean. Come on, little chubby cheeks. Oh, you rascal,
truthfully, I love you. You're as brave as Hector of Troy,
you're worth five Agamemnons ²¹, and you're at least ten
times better than all of the Nine Worthies ²². Oh, you
villain!

²¹ *Hector and Agamemnon were heroic mythical figures from the Trojan War.*

²² *The Nine Worthies were nine historical, scriptural, and legendary personages who exemplified the ideals of chivalry in the Middle Ages.*

FALSTAFF

Oh, what a rascal and a villain! I will toss that scoundrel
around in a blanket.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Do it, if you dare to risk your life. If you do, I'll toss you
around as well, between the sheets.

Musicians enter.

PAGE

The musicians are here, sir.

FALSTAFF

Let them play.

[To the musicians] Play, sirs.

[To DOLL TEARSHEET] Doll, come and sit on my knee. What

DOLL TEARSHEET

I' faith, and thou followed'st him like a church. Thou whoreson little tidy Bartholomew boar-pig, when wilt thou leave fighting a-days and foining a-nights and begin to patch up thine old body for heaven?

Enter, behind, PRINCE HENRY and POINS, disguised as drawers

FALSTAFF

Peace, good Doll. Do not speak like a death's-head; do not bid me remember mine end.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Sirrah, what humor's the Prince of?

FALSTAFF

A good shallow young fellow, he would have made a good pantler; he would a' chipped bread well.

DOLL TEARSHEET

They say Poins has a good wit.

FALSTAFF

He a good wit? Hang him, baboon. His wit's as thick as Tewksbury mustard. There's no more conceit in him than is in a mallet.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Why does the Prince love him so then?

FALSTAFF

Because their legs are both of a bigness, and he plays at quoits well, and eats conger and fennel, and drinks off candles' ends for flap-dragons, and rides the wild mare with the boys, and jumps upon joint stools, and swears with a good grace, and wears his boots very smooth, like unto the sign of the Leg, and breeds no bate with telling of discreet stories, and such other gambol faculties he has that show a weak mind and an able body, for the which the Prince admits him; for the Prince himself is such another. The weight of a hair will turn the scales between their avoirdupois.

PRINCE HENRY

[To POINS] Would not this nave of a wheel have his ears cut off?

POINS

Let's beat him before his whore.

PRINCE HENRY

Look whe'er the withered elder hath not his poll clawed like a parrot.

a rascal, a bragging scoundrel! That villain ran away from me like quicksilver.

DOLL TEARSHEET

He did, and you followed him like a church, at your own pace. You little, wretched, fat pig! When are you going to leave your fighting days behind you and your thrusting nights, and start to prepare your body for heaven?

Behind them, PRINCE HENRY and POINS, disguised as bartenders, enter.

FALSTAFF

Be quiet, good Doll. Don't speak like some kind of reminder of death; don't make me remember my own mortality.

. 23 In the original text, Falstaff mentions a "death's-head"--the figure of a skull, used as a reminder of death.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Sir, what is the Prince like?

FALSTAFF

He's a shallow young man. He would have made a good pantry servant--he would have been good at cutting the crusts off loaves of bread.

DOLL TEARSHEET

People say that Poins is very witty.

FALSTAFF

Poins? Very witty? Let him hang; he's a baboon! His wit is about as thick as Tewkesbury mustard.24 He's about as witty as a hammer.

. 24 Mustard from Tewkesbury had a reputation for thickness.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Why does the Prince love him so much then?

FALSTAFF

Because their legs are roughly the same size, and he likes to play the game of quoits.25 He also has good digestion, and he does funny things with drinks--like drinking with a lit candle inside his glass. He plays on the see-saw with the boys, hops on top of stools, and swears well. His boots fit him very well--they are as smooth as the well-booted leg shown as a sign over a shoemaker's shop. He delights people by telling improper stories, and has all the qualities of a man with a weak mind and a healthy body. That's why the Prince likes him--because the Prince is exactly the same. There's barely a hair's difference between them.

. 25 A quoit--a ring of iron, rope, or rubber--was thrown in a game to encircle or land as near as possible to an upright peg.

PRINCE HENRY

[To POINS] Why don't we cut this fat thing's ears off?

POINS

Let's beat him in front of his whore.

PRINCE HENRY

Look at how this decrepit, old man is having his head scratched like he's some kind of parrot.

POINS

320 Is it not strange that desire should so many years
outlive
performance?

FALSTAFF

Kiss me, Doll.

PRINCE HENRY

Saturn and Venus this year in conjunction! What says
325 th'
almanac to that?

POINS

And look whether the fiery trigon, his man, be not
lisping to
his master's old tables, his notebook, his counsel
330 keeper.

FALSTAFF

[to DOLL] Thou dost give me flattering busses.

DOLL TEARSHEET

By my troth, I kiss thee with a most constant heart.

FALSTAFF

I am old, I am old.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I love thee better than I love e'er a scurvy young boy
335 of them
all.

FALSTAFF

What stuff wilt have a kirtle of? I shall receive money
o'
Thursday; shalt have a cap tomorrow. A merry song!
340 Come,
it grows late. We'll to bed. Thou 'lt forget me when I
am
gone.

DOLL TEARSHEET

By my troth, thou 'lt set me a-weeping an thou sayest
345 so.
Prove that ever I dress myself handsome till thy
return. Well,
harken a' th' end.

FALSTAFF

Some sack, Francis.

PRINCE HENRY AND POINS

350 Anon, anon, sir.

Coming forward

FALSTAFF

Ha? A bastard son of the King's?—And art not thou
Poins his brother?

PRINCE HENRY

Why, thou globe of sinful continents, what a life dost
thou
355 lead?

POINS

Isn't it strange that human desires last so much longer than
the actual ability to perform?

FALSTAFF

Kiss me, Doll.

PRINCE HENRY

I guess Saturn and Venus ²⁶ must be aligned this year!
What does the almanac have to say about that?

²⁶ Saturn was considered the planet related to old age, and Venus, the planet of love and sex.

POINS

And look how his man--that red-faced Bardolph--is
whispering love to Mistress Quickly, his master's old
companion.

FALSTAFF

[To DOLL] You flatter me with all of your kisses.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Truthfully, every kiss I give you comes from the heart.

FALSTAFF

But I'm old, I'm old.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I love you more than I could love any silly, young boy.

FALSTAFF

Out of what material shall we make you a new bodice and
skirt? I will get money on Thursday, so you can have a new
hat tomorrow.

[To the musicians] Play something happy!

[To DOLL TEARSHEET] Come on, it's getting late. Let's go to
bed. You will soon forget me when I am gone.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I swear, you'll make me cry if you keep saying things like
that. I swear that I won't wear any pretty clothes until you
come back from the wars. Just you wait and see.

FALSTAFF

Some wine, Francis.

PRINCE HENRY AND POINS

Coming, sir.

*PRINCE HENRY and POINS come forward, revealing
themselves.*

FALSTAFF

[To PRINCE HENRY] Ha? Aren't you a bastard son of the
King's?

[To POINS] And aren't you his companion, Poins?

PRINCE HENRY

Well, you're like a globe, covered in sinful areas. What kind
of life are you leading?

FALSTAFF

A better than thou. I am a gentleman. Thou art a drawer.

PRINCE HENRY

Very true, sir, and I come to draw you out by the ears.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

O, the Lord preserve thy good Grace! By my troth,
360 welcome
to London. Now the Lord bless that sweet face of thine.
O
Jesu, are you come from Wales?

FALSTAFF

Thou whoreson mad compound of majesty, *[indicating DOLL]* by this light flesh and corrupt blood, thou art welcome.

DOLL TEARSHEET

How? You fat fool, I scorn you.

POINS

My lord, he will drive you out of your revenge and turn all
370 to a merriment, if you take not the heat.

PRINCE HENRY

You whoreson candle-mine, you how vilely did you speak of
me even now before this honest, virtuous, civil
gentlewoman!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

375 God's blessing of your good heart, and so she is, by my troth.

FALSTAFF

Didst thou hear me?

PRINCE HENRY

Yea, and you knew me, as you did when you ran away by
Gad's Hill. You knew I was at your back, and spoke it
380 on
purpose to try my patience.

FALSTAFF

No, no, no; not so. I did not think thou wast within
hearing.

PRINCE HENRY

I shall drive you, then, to confess the wilfull abuse,
385 and then
I know how to handle you.

FALSTAFF

No abuse, Hal, o' mine honor, no abuse.

PRINCE HENRY

Not to dispraise me and call me pantier and
bread-chipper
390 and I know not what?

FALSTAFF

No abuse, Hal.

POINS

No abuse?

FALSTAFF

A better one than you. I'm a gentleman, you just pull on
taps for beer and wine.

PRINCE HENRY

That's true, sir, and I've come to pull you out of here by your
ears.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

[Recognizing PRINCE HENRY] Oh, God bless your good
Grace! Indeed, welcome to London. May the Lord bless that
sweet face of yours. Oh Jesus, have you come all the way
from Wales?

FALSTAFF

You son-of-a-bitch, you great lump of royalty! *[Pointing to DOLL]* I swear on this weak bit of flesh and this corrupt
body that you are welcome here.

DOLL TEARSHEET

What? You fat fool! I defy you!

POINS

My lord, if you don't show him how angry you are now, he
will find some way to turn it into some big joke. And then
you'll never get your revenge.

PRINCE HENRY

You son-of-a-bitch, you huge mound of candle wax: how
dare you say such vile things about me to this chaste,
virtuous, and honest woman?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

God bless your good heart, sir. She is all of those things, I
swear it.

FALSTAFF

Did you hear me?

PRINCE HENRY

Yes, and you knew I was there, didn't you? This is just like
the time you ran away from me at Gad's Hill ²⁷. You knew I
was behind you, and you still said those things, to test my
patience.

²⁷ Hal refers to the robbery in Henry IV Part 1 in Act 2, Scene 4.

FALSTAFF

No, no, sir, that's not true. I didn't know that you could hear
me.

PRINCE HENRY

Then I will have to force you to confess that you meant to
say such awful things--such slander about me. And then I
will know what to do with you.

FALSTAFF

It wasn't slander, Hal. On my honor, it wasn't slander.

PRINCE HENRY

You don't think it was slander to say bad things--calling me
a pantry servant, someone only fit to cut crusts off bread--
and who knows what else?

FALSTAFF

It wasn't slander, Hal.

POINS

It wasn't?

FALSTAFF

No abuse, Ned, i' th' world, honest Ned, none. I
dispraised
395 him before the wicked, that the wicked might not fall
in love
with thee; in which doing, I have done the part of a
careful
friend and a true subject, and thy father is to give me
400 thanks
for it. No abuse, Hal.—None, Ned, none. No, faith,
boys, none.

PRINCE HENRY

See now whether pure fear and entire cowardice doth not
make thee wrong this virtuous gentlewoman to close with
405 us. Is she of the wicked, is thine hostess here of the
wicked,
or is thy boy of the wicked, or honest Bardolph, whose
zeal
burns in his nose, of the wicked?

POINS

410 Answer, thou dead elm, answer.

FALSTAFF

The fiend hath pricked down Bardolph irrecoverable, and
his face is Lucifer's privy kitchen, where he doth
nothing but
roast malt-worms. For the boy, there is a good angel
415 about
him, but the devil outbids him too.

PRINCE HENRY

For the women?

FALSTAFF

For one of them, she's in hell already and burns poor
souls.
420 For the other, I owe her money, and whether she be
damned
for that I know not.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

No, I warrant you.

FALSTAFF

No, I think thou art not; I think thou art quit for
425 that. Marry,
there is another indictment upon thee for suffering
flesh to
be eaten in thy house contrary to the law, for the
which I
430 think thou wilt howl.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

All vitlars do so. What's a joint of mutton or two in a
whole
Lent?

PRINCE HENRY

You, gentlewoman.

DOLL TEARSHEET

435 What says your Grace?

FALSTAFF

His grace says that which his flesh rebels against.

Knocking within

FALSTAFF

No slander, Ned, in the world, honest Ned, none. I only said
those bad things to wicked people, so that they wouldn't
fall in love with you. In doing this, I have acted like a caring
friend and a loyal subject, and your father should thank me
for it. No slander, Hal, none.

[To POINS] Ned, none.

[To PRINCE HENRY and POINS] Honestly boys, none.

PRINCE HENRY

Now your total fear and complete cowardice have made
you wrong this honest woman, just so that we won't be
angry with you. Is she wicked? Is this hostess here wicked?
Is this boy here wicked? Or honest Bardolph, whose
commitment is so strong it burns his face. Is he wicked too?

POINS

Answer him, you rotten old thing, answer him.

FALSTAFF

The devil has put Bardolph on his list for certain, and his
face is like Lucifer's kitchen—a place where only drunks are.
As for the boy, there is definitely a good angel looking after
him, but also a devil that overpowers it.

PRINCE HENRY

What about the women?

FALSTAFF

One of them is already in hell and infects poor men. As for
the other one, I owe her money, and I don't know if she's
damned.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

I'm not, I can assure you of that.

FALSTAFF

No, I think you're not; I think you're forgiven for that.
Although there is another charge against you, for the fact
that you serve meat here, which is against the law. You will
probably pay for that.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Anyone who sells food does that. What's wrong with just a
little bit of meat during Lent?²⁸

²⁸ Lent is a Christian season of fasting and prayer. During Shakespeare's time, it was forbidden to eat meat during Lent.

PRINCE HENRY

Excuse me, gentlewoman.

DOLL TEARSHEET

What is it, your Grace?

FALSTAFF

His Grace calls her a gentlewoman, even when his body
knows she's a whore.

Knocking is heard offstage.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Who knocks so loud at door? Look to th' door there,
Francis.

Enter PETO

PRINCE HENRY

Peto, how now, what news?

PETO

440 The King your father is at Westminster,
And there are twenty weak and wearied posts
Come from the north, and as I came along
I met and overtook a dozen captains,
Bareheaded, sweating, knocking at the taverns
445 And asking everyone for Sir John Falstaff.

PRINCE HENRY

By heaven, Poins, I feel me much to blame
So idly to profane the precious time
When tempest of commotion, like the south
Borne with black vapour, doth begin to melt
450 And drop upon our bare unarmèd heads.—
Give me my sword and cloak.—Falstaff, good night.

Exeunt PRINCE HENRY, POINS, PETO and BARDOLPH

FALSTAFF

Now comes in the sweetest morsel of the night, and we
must hence and leave it unpicked.

Knocking within

More knocking at the door?

Enter BARDOLPH

455 How now, what's the matter?

BARDOLPH

You must away to court, sir, presently.
A dozen captains stay at door for you.

FALSTAFF

[to the PAGE] Pay the musicians, sirrah.—Farewell,
hostess.—Farewell, Doll. You see, my good wenches, how
460 men of merit are sought after. The undeserver may sleep
when the man of action is called on. Farewell, good
wenches. If I be not sent away post, I will see you
again ere
I go.

DOLL TEARSHEET

465 I cannot speak. If my heart be not ready to burst—well,
sweet Jack, have a care of thyself.

FALSTAFF

Farewell, farewell.

Exeunt FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, PAGE, and musicians

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Well, fare thee well. I have known thee these
twenty-nine
470 years, come peascod time, but an honester and
truer-hearted
man—well, fare thee well.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Who's knocking so loudly at my door? See who it is, Francis.

PETO enters.

PRINCE HENRY

Peto, how are you and what news do you have for me?

PETO

The King, your father, is at Westminster. Twenty tired
messengers have just arrived there from the north. And as I
was traveling I overtook at least a dozen captains, all
disheveled and worn out, knocking on the door of every
tavern to ask for Sir John Falstaff.

PRINCE HENRY

By God, Poins, I feel guilty for wasting precious time here
when a violent storm is on the horizon, ready to rain down
on our bare and unprotected heads. Give me my sword and
my coat. Falstaff, good night.

PRINCE HENRY, POINS, PETO, and BARDOLPH exit.

FALSTAFF

Now it's the best time of the night, and we have to go
before we can enjoy it.

The sound of knocking is heard offstage.

More knocking?!

BARDOLPH enters.

What's going on?

BARDOLPH

You are needed at court immediately, sir. A dozen captains
are waiting at the door for you.

FALSTAFF

[to the PAGE] Pay the musicians, sir.

[to MISTRESS QUICKLY] Goodbye, hostess.

[to DOLL TEARSHEET] Goodbye, Doll.

[to the ladies] Look how wanted important men like me
are. A person who does nothing might as well just sleep,
while men of action like me get going. Goodbye, my lovely
women. If I am not sent off to the wars right away, I will see
you again before I go.

DOLL TEARSHEET

I can't speak. My heart feels ready to burst. Well, my sweet
Jack, please take care of yourself.

FALSTAFF

Goodbye, goodbye.

FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, the PAGE, and the musicians exit.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Well, goodbye to you. I will have known you for twenty-nine
years by the time the peas grow this summer. But a more
honest and truer man—well, goodbye to you.

BARDOLPH

[within] Mistress Tearsheet!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

What's the matter?

BARDOLPH

475 [within] Bid Mistress Tearsheet come to my master.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

O, run, Doll, run, run, good Doll. Come.—She comes blubbered.—Yea! Will you come, Doll?

Exeunt

BARDOLPH

[Offstage] Mistress Tearsheet!

MISTRESS QUICKLY

What's the matter?

BARDOLPH

[Offstage] Tell Mistress Tearsheet to go to my master.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Oh run, Doll, run, run, good Doll. Come on.

[To BARDOLPH] She will have to go with her face stained with tears. But she's coming!

[To DOLL TEARSHEET] Will you come, Doll?

They exit.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter KING Henry in his nightgown, with a page

KING

Go call the Earls of Surrey and of Warwick;
But, ere they come, bid them o'erread these letters
And well consider of them. Make good speed.

Exit page

How many thousand of my poorest subjects
5 Are at this hour asleep! O sleep, O gentle sleep,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
10 Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee
And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lull'd with sound of sweetest melody?
15 O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile
In loathsome beds and leavest the kingly couch
A watch-case or a common 'larum bell?
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the shipboy's eyes, and rock his brains
20 In cradle of the rude imperious surge
And in the visitation of the winds,
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads and hanging them
With deafening clamor in the slippery clouds
25 That with the hurly death itself awakes?
Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude,
And, in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
30 Deny it to a king? Then, happy low, lie down.
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

Enter WARWICK and SURREY

WARWICK

Many good morrows to your Majesty.

KING

Is it good Morrow, lords?

Shakescleare Translation

KING Henry, in a nightgown, and a Page enter.

KING

Go and call the Earls of Surrey and Warwick. But, before they come, tell them to read over these letters and think about them carefully. Go quickly now.

The Page exits.

How many thousands of even my poorest subjects are asleep right now! Oh, sleep, oh, lovely sleep, nature's kind nurse: what have I done to frighten you away? You refuse to make my eyelids heavy anymore, and you refuse to make me giddy and forgetful. But instead, sleep, you now lie in murky slums, stretched out on some unstable bed, listening only to the buzzing of flies as you drift off. You choose that space instead of lying in the sweet-smelling bedrooms of royalty, under luxurious canopies, being lulled to sleep by the sweetest music there is? Oh, you tiresome god, why do you lie with the vile masses in their horrible beds and leave the King's bed all alone, like a sentry post or any bell tower? Will you even close up the eyes of some sailor boy, as he stands high up on the wobbly mast, and rock him to sleep in a cradle of rough, powerful seas and violent winds—winds which grab hold of the waves, and, curling them over, make them crash back down with such a deafening racket that they would wake up death itself? Oh, biased sleep, are you going to let a wet sailor boy sleep through all of that noise, but still refuse to let a king sleep—even in the calmest and most peaceful night, when he has everything he needs to go to bed? Well then, happy people, go to bed. The man who wears the crown is not sleeping very well right now.

WARWICK and SURREY enter.

WARWICK

A very good morning to you, your Majesty.

KING

Is it morning, lords?

WARWICK

'Tis one o'clock, and past.

KING

35 Why then, good morrow to you all, my lords.
Have you read o'er the letter that I sent you?

WARWICK

We have, my liege.

KING

Then you perceive the body of our kingdom
How foul it is, what rank diseases grow
40 And with what danger near the heart of it.

WARWICK

It is but as a body yet distempered,
Which to his former strength may be restored
With good advice and little medicine.
My Lord Northumberland will soon be cooled.

KING

45 O God, that one might read the book of fate
And see the revolution of the times
Make mountains level, and the continent,
Weary of solid firmness, melt itself
Into the sea, and other times to see
50 The beachy girdle of the ocean
Too wide for Neptune's hips; how chance's mocks
And changes fill the cup of alteration
With divers liquors! O, if this were seen,
The happiest youth, viewing his progress through,
55 What perils past, what crosses to ensue,
Would shut the book, and sit him down and die.
'Tis not ten years gone
Since Richard and Northumberland, great friends,
Did feast together, and in two years after
60 Were they at wars. It is but eight years since
This Percy was the man nearest my soul,
Who like a brother toiled in my affairs
And laid his love and life under my foot,
Yea, for my sake, even to the eyes of Richard
65 Gave him defiance. But which of you was by — [to WARWICK]
You, cousin Nevil, as I may remember—
When Richard, with his eye brimful of tears,
Then checked and rated by Northumberland,
Did speak these words, now proved a prophecy?
70 "Northumberland, thou ladder by the which
My cousin Bolingbroke ascends my throne"—
Though then, God knows, I had no such intent,
But that necessity so bowed the state
That I and greatness were compelled to kiss —
75 "The time shall come," thus did he follow it,
"The time will come that foul sin, gathering head,
Shall break into corruption" —so went on,
Foretelling this same time's condition
And the division of our amity.

WARWICK

80 There is a history in all men's lives
Figuring the nature of the times deceased,
The which observed, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
85 And weak beginnings lie intreasurèd.
Such things become the hatch and brood of time,
And by the necessary form of this,
King Richard might create a perfect guess
That great Northumberland, then false to him,
90 Would of that seed grow to a greater falseness,
Which should not find a ground to root upon
Unless on you.

WARWICK

'Tis at least one o'clock, probably later.

KING

Well then, good morning to both of you, my lords. Have you
read over the letters that I sent you?

WARWICK

We have, my lord.

KING

Then you realize how sick our kingdom is, and what
diseases are spreading across the land, right to the heart of
our nation.

WARWICK

The body is only mildly unwell, and can be brought back to
full strength with some good care and a little bit of
medicine. Lord Northumberland will not be a problem for
long.

KING

Oh God, if only we could read the book of fate and find out
what's going to happen! If only we could see how time can
completely transform things— making mountains change
height, and making dry land, bored of being so solid and
firm, melt into the sea. Other times, we might see that even
a beach could be too wide for Neptune ¹ to overpower.
We might see how luck can humiliate a person, and how
change can affect you in so many different ways! Oh, even if
the happiest youth could read this book of fate—if he could
look at his life and see what dangers he had already
overcome and what he still had left to deal with—he would
shut the book right then and there, and just sit down and
die. It hasn't even been ten years since Richard and
Northumberland were the greatest friends, always feasting
together. And then two years later, they were at war with
each other. It's only been eight years since Northumberland
was the person I was closest to in this world. He was like a
brother to me, supporting everything that I did, and even
committing both his love and his life to my cause. For my
sake, he even showed his resistance to Richard directly. But
which of you was there --

¹ Neptune was the ancient Roman god of the sea.

[To WARWICK] I think it was you, Warwick ², if I'm
remembering rightly. Do you remember when Richard—
with his eyes full of tears because of Northumberland's
attack—spoke these words? They almost seem like a
prophecy now: "Northumberland, you are just the ladder
which Bolingbroke has climbed on to get to the throne."
Although, God knows, I never planned on becoming king.
But the country was struggling and needed help so I was
forced to step up and become a great leader. Then he went
on to say, "The time will come when this awful sin, as it
continues to get bigger and bigger, will break out into
rebellion." He kept talking, predicting our present situation
and the loss of our allies.

² In the original text, King Henry refers to the Earl of Warwick by his family name, Neville. The Neville family will be instrumental in some of Shakespeare's later history plays.

WARWICK

There is a history book for every man's life, which reveals
what has happened to him in the past. If you read this book,
you can predict what is going to happen with more
certainty. For we know that we can find evidence in the past
for everything that is going to happen in the future. The
seeds from the past grow up to become the children of our
time. Because of this, it means that King Richard could
predict that the great Northumberland—already a traitor to
him—would continue to let his betrayal grow and grow, until
the only other person for him to betray was you.

KING

Are these things then necessities?
Then let us meet them like necessities.
95 And that same word even now cries out on us.
They say the Bishop and Northumberland
Are fifty thousand strong.

WARWICK

It cannot be, my lord.
Rumor doth double, like the voice and echo,
100 The numbers of the feared. Please it your Grace
To go to bed. Upon my soul, my lord,
The powers that you already have sent forth
Shall bring this prize in very easily.
To comfort you the more, I have received
105 A certain instance that Glendower is dead.
Your Majesty hath been this fortnight ill,
And these unseasoned hours perforce must add
Unto your sickness.

KING

I will take your counsel.
110 And were these inward wars once out of hand,
We would, dear lords, unto the Holy Land.

*Exeunt***KING**

Were all these things necessary then? Well, let's deal with them like necessities, even though the word "necessities" itself goes against us. It is rumored that the Archbishop of York and Northumberland have fifty thousand men in their army.

WARWICK

That can't be true, my lord. Rumor, like an echoing voice, always doubles the amount of troops. Please go to bed now, your Grace. I swear on my life that the army you have already sent out will win this battle very easily. To make things even better, I've heard for certain that Glendower is dead ³. Your Majesty has been ill these past two weeks, and being up at these hours is only going to make you worse.

³ The historical Glendower's actual death is reported to be around 1415 or 1416, some 6 or 7 years after this moment in the play.

KING

I will take your advice. And once we have stopped these civil wars, we will march to the Holy Land ⁴, my dear lords.

⁴ We recall that the King was planning a Crusade, as he detailed in Act 1, Scene 1 of King Henry IV Part 1.

They all exit.

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter Justice SHALLOW and Justice SILENCE, with MOULDY, SHADOW, WART, FEEBLE, BULLCALF, and a servant or two

SHALLOW

Come on, come on, come on. Give me your hand, sir, give me your hand, sir. An early stirrer, by the rood. And how doth my good cousin Silence?

SILENCE

5 Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

SHALLOW

And how doth my cousin your bedfellow? And your fairest daughter and mine, my goddaughter Ellen?

SILENCE

Alas, a black ouzel, cousin Shallow.

SHALLOW

By yea and no, sir. I dare say my cousin William is become a good scholar. He is at Oxford still, is he not?

SILENCE

Indeed, sir, to my cost.

SHALLOW

He must then to the Inns o' Court shortly. I was once of Clement's Inn, where I think they will talk of mad Shallow yet.

Shakescleare Translation

Justice SHALLOW, Justice SILENCE, MOULDY, SHADOW, WART, FEEBLE, BULLCALF, and a servant or two enter.

SHALLOW

Come on, come on, come on. Shake my hand, sir, shake my hand. You're an early riser, by the Holy Cross. How are you, Silence?

SILENCE

Good morning, good cousin Shallow.

SHALLOW

How is my cousin, your wife? And how is your beautiful daughter, my lovely goddaughter Ellen?

SILENCE

Sadly she's got dark hair ¹, Shallow!

¹ Here, Ellen is compared to a blackbird because of her dark features, which would have been considered unattractive in Shakespeare's day.

SHALLOW

You win some, you lose some, sir. Well, I bet that William has become a good scholar. He's still at Oxford, right?

SILENCE

He is, sir--and I'm still having to pay for it.

SHALLOW

He must be moving on to study law ² soon. I once studied at Clement's Inn ³, and they still talk about crazy Shallow, even today.

² After leaving Oxford or Cambridge, some of the richer students would go to London to study law at one of the Inns of Court in the early modern era.

SILENCE

You were called "Lusty Shallow" then, cousin.

SHALLOW

By the Mass, I was called anything, and I would have done
 20 anything indeed too, and roundly too. There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and black George Barnes, and Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, a Cotswold man. You had not four such swinge-bucklers in all the Inns o' Court again. And I may say to you, we knew where the bona robas
 30 were and had the best of them all at commandment. Then was Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy, and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk.

SILENCE

This Sir John, cousin, that comes hither anon about
 35 soldiers?

SHALLOW

The same Sir John, the very same. I see him break Scoggin's head at the court gate, when he was a crack not thus high; and
 40 the very same day did I fight with one Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer, behind Grey's Inn. Jesu, Jesu, the mad days that I have spent! And to see how many of my old acquaintance
 45 are dead.

SILENCE

We shall all follow, cousin.

SHALLOW

Certain, 'tis certain; very sure, very sure. Death, as the
 50 Psalmist saith, is certain to all. All shall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford Fair?

SILENCE

By my troth, cousin, I was not there.

SHALLOW

Death is certain. Is old Dooble of your town living yet?
 55

SILENCE

Dead, sir.

SHALLOW

Jesu, Jesu, dead! He drew a good bow, and dead? He shot a fine shoot. John o' Gaunt loved him well, and betted much
 60 money on his head. Dead! He would have clapped i' th' clout at twelve score, and carried you a forehand shaft a fourteen and fourteen and a half, that it would have done a man's heart good to see. How a score of ewes now?
 65

SILENCE

I thought you were called, "Lively Shallow" back then, cousin.

SHALLOW

By God, I was called anything they wanted to call me, and I would have done anything as well, without a fuss. There was me, little John Doit from Staffordshire, the dark-haired George Barnes, Francis Pickbone, and Will Squele, from the Cotswolds. Since then, in all of the Inns of Court there have been no four swashbucklers
 7 quite like us. Yet, let me tell you, we knew where to find prostitutes, and we had the best of them at our beck and call. Back then, John Falstaff--now Sir John--was just a boy and was working as a page for Thomas Mowbray, the Duke of Norfolk.

 Clement's Inn is part of the Inns of Chancery--less renowned than the Inns of Court.

 A swashbuckler is a heroic archetype in European adventure literature, identified by the use of a sword and chivalric ideals. Shallow is emphasizing their courage and bravery.

SILENCE

The same Sir John that's on his way here to recruit some soldiers?

SHALLOW

Yes, that Sir John--the very same. I saw him beat Scogan
 5 on the head at the gates of the court, when he was just a lad, only this tall. On that same day I happened to have a fight with a man called Sampson Stockfish, a fruit seller, behind Gray's Inn. Oh Jesus, Jesus, I've had some wild times! And now so many of the men I used to know are dead.

 It has been suggested that here, Shallow refers to Henry Scogan, a friend of Geoffrey Chaucer, and court-poet to Henry IV.

SILENCE

That will be us one day.

SHALLOW

You're right, I know you're right--that's for sure. As the Psalms say in the Bible, "death is certain." Everyone will die. What price are people charging for a good set of young bulls at Stamford
 6 Fair?

 Stamford is a town in Lincolnshire, known during the Medieval era for its annual fair.

SILENCE

I'm not sure, I wasn't there.

SHALLOW

Death is certain. Is Dooble, that old man from your hometown, still alive?

SILENCE

He's dead, sir.

SHALLOW

Jesus, Jesus, dead! He was such a good archer, and now he's dead? He had an excellent shot! John of Gaunt
 7 loved him, and used to bet money on his incredible aim. Dead! Oh, he would have hit the target even from two hundred forty yards away! He could shoot straight at the target from two hundred eighty yards away, maybe even two hundred ninety--it was quite something to see! How much are they charging for twenty ewes now?

 John of Gaunt, the first Duke of Lancaster, was an English nobleman and a member of the House of Plantagenet. He was King Henry's father and Prince Hal's grandfather.

SILENCE

Thereafter as they be, a score of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

SHALLOW

70 And is old Dooble dead?

SILENCE

Here come two of Sir John Falstaff's men, as I think.

Enter BARDOLPH and one with him

SHALLOW

Good morrow, honest gentlemen.

BARDOLPH

I beseech you, which is Justice Shallow?

SHALLOW

I am Robert Shallow, sir, a poor esquire of this county and
75 one of the King's justices of the peace. What is your good pleasure with me?

BARDOLPH

80 My captain, sir, commands him to you, my captain, Sir John Falstaff, a tall gentleman, by heaven, and a most gallant leader.

SHALLOW

85 He greets me well, sir. I knew him a good backsword man. How doth the good knight? May I ask how my lady his wife doth?

BARDOLPH

90 Sir, pardon. A soldier is better accommodated than with a wife.

SHALLOW

It is well said, in faith, sir, and it is well said indeed too. "Better accommodated." It is good, yea, indeed, is it. 95 Good phrases are surely, and ever were, very commendable. "Accommodated." It comes of *accusmodo*. Very good, a good phrase.

BARDOLPH

Pardon, sir; I have heard the word—"phrase" call you it? By this day, I know not the phrase, but I will maintain the word with my sword to be a soldierlike word, and a word of exceeding good command, by heaven. "Accommodated," that is when a man is, as they say, accommodated, or when a man is being whereby he may be thought to be accommodated, which is an excellent thing.

Enter FALSTAFF

SHALLOW

110 It is very just. Look, here comes good Sir John. —Give me your good hand, give me your Worship's good hand. By my troth, you like well and bear your years very well.

SILENCE

That all depends on their quality, but twenty good ewes would be worth about ten pounds.

SHALLOW

But old Dooble is dead?

SILENCE

Here come two of Sir John Falstaff's men, I think.

BARDOLPH and another man enter.

SHALLOW

Good morning, honorable gentlemen.

BARDOLPH

Please, which of you is Justice Shallow?

SHALLOW

Sir, I am Robert Shallow--a poor gentleman of this country and one of the King's justices of the peace. What can I do for you?

BARDOLPH

My captain sends you his regards, sir. My captain is Sir John Falstaff. He is a brave gentleman and an excellent leader, I can tell you that.

SHALLOW

It's good to hear from him. I knew him when he was a good fencer. How is the good knight? And if you don't mind me asking, how is his wife?

BARDOLPH

Sorry, sir. A soldier doesn't need a wife--he is already accommodated with everything he needs.

SHALLOW

Well said, indeed, sir. Well said, indeed. "Accommodated with everything he needs." That's good, indeed. That's very good. Good phrases always deserve praise. Even the word, "Accommodated." It comes from the Latin word, "accommodo." Very good, a very good phrase.

BARDOLPH

Sorry, sir. I know the word "accommodated"--but you call it a good phrase? I don't know anything about phrases. But I am certain that the word, "accommodated" is a good word--a word used by soldiers, an extremely good military term, that's certain. "Accommodated." You can say that a man is accommodated when he has been given what he needs, or when he is actually been given just what he needs  , which is an excellent thing.

 Here, Bardolph implies that being "accommodated" means being "sexually satisfied."

FALSTAFF enters.

SHALLOW

Quite right. Look, here comes good Sir John.

[To FALSTAFF] Let me shake your good hand, let me shake

Welcome,
good Sir John.

FALSTAFF

115 I am glad to see you well, good Master Robert Shallow.—
Master Sure-card, as I think?

SHALLOW

No, Sir John. It is my cousin Silence, in commission
with me.

FALSTAFF

120 Good Master Silence, it well befits you should be of
the
peace.

SILENCE

Your good Worship is welcome.

FALSTAFF

125 Fie, this is hot weather, gentlemen. Have you provided
me
here half a dozen sufficient men?

SHALLOW

Marry, have we, sir. Will you sit?

FALSTAFF

Let me see them, I beseech you.

SHALLOW

Where's the roll? Where's the roll? Where's the roll?
Let me
130 see, let me see, let me see. So, so, so, so, so. So,
so. Yea,
marry, sir. —Rafe Mouldy! —Let them appear as I call, let
them do so, let them do so. Let me see, where is
Mouldy?

MOULDY

135 Here, an it please you.

SHALLOW

What think you, Sir John? A good-limbed fellow; young,
strong, and of good friends.

FALSTAFF

Is thy name Mouldy?

MOULDY

Yea, an 't please you.

FALSTAFF

140 'Tis the more time thou wert used.

SHALLOW

Ha, ha, ha, most excellent, i' faith! Things that are
mouldy
lack use. Very singular good, in faith. Well said, Sir
John,
145 very well said.

FALSTAFF

Prick him.

MOULDY

I was pricked well enough before, an you could have let
me
alone. My old dame will be undone now for one to do her

your hand. Honestly, you look very well and like you
haven't aged a bit. Welcome, good Sir John.

FALSTAFF

I am glad to see you're well, good Master Robert Shallow.
And this must be Master Sure-card, I think?

SHALLOW

No, Sir John. This is my cousin Silence, another justice of
the peace.

FALSTAFF

Good Master Silence, your name is very apt for a justice of the [peace](#).

9 In Shakespeare's time, the word "peace" was sometimes used as an exclamation to mean "silence" or "quiet."

SILENCE

You are welcome here, your Worship.

FALSTAFF

Damn, it's hot outside, gentleman. Have you managed to
find at least six men to be soldiers for me?

SHALLOW

Indeed we have, sir. Would you like to sit down?

FALSTAFF

Let me see them, please.

SHALLOW

Where's the list? Where's the list? Where's the list? Let me
see, let me see, let me see. So, so, so, so, so, so, so, so, so,
Right, yes, indeed.

[To MOULDY] Ralph Mouldy!

[To the recruits] Come as I call your names! Do that, make
sure you do that. Let's see then, where's Mouldy?!

MOULDY

Here, sir.

SHALLOW

What do you think, Sir John? He's got a good physique. He's
young, strong, and from a good family.

FALSTAFF

Is your name Mouldy?

MOULDY

Yes, sir.

FALSTAFF

Well, then it's time you were put to good use.

SHALLOW

Ha, ha, ha, an excellent joke, indeed! Things get moldy
when they aren't used. Good one, I swear. Well said, Sir
John, very well said.

FALSTAFF

Prick [10](#) him.

10 Here, Falstaff asks Shallow to check or "prick" his name off on the list.

MOULDY

I have been pricked [11](#) enough times before, when you
could have just left me alone. My old dame will be ruined
now, without anyone to do her farming and her

11 Mouldy uses the word "pricked" to mean annoyed, as well as to mean having a penis.

husbandry and her drudgery. You need not to have pricked me. There are other men fitter to go out than I.

FALSTAFF

Go to. Peace, Mouldy. You shall go. Mouldy, it is time you were spent.

155

MOULDY

Spent?

SHALLOW

Peace, fellow, peace. Stand aside. Know you where you are? —Forth' other, Sir John. Let me see. —Simon Shadow!

FALSTAFF

Yea, marry, let me have him to sit under. He's like to be a cold soldier.

SHALLOW

Where's Shadow?

SHADOW

Here, sir.

FALSTAFF

Shadow, whose son art thou?

SHADOW

My mother's son, sir.

FALSTAFF

Thy mother's son! Like enough, and thy father's shadow. So the son of the female is the shadow of the male. It is often so, indeed, but much of the father's substance.

SHALLOW

Do you like him, Sir John?

FALSTAFF

Shadow will serve for summer. Prick him, for we have a number of shadows to fill up the muster book.

SHALLOW

Thomas Wart!

FALSTAFF

Where's he?

WART

Here, sir.

FALSTAFF

Is thy name Wart?

WART

Yea, sir.

FALSTAFF

Thou art a very ragged wart.

housework. You didn't need to prick me--there are men much fitter than I am who could have gone instead.

FALSTAFF

That's enough. Be quiet, Mouldy. You will go, Mouldy--it's time that you were used up.

MOULDY

Used up?

SHALLOW

Quiet, boy, quiet. Step aside. Don't you know where you are?

[To FALSTAFF] As for the others, Sir John, let's see who's next.

[To SHADOW] Simon Shadow!

FALSTAFF

Great, I can use him as something to sit under.¹² I'm sure he'll be a cool soldier.

¹² Falstaff--who is often warm--puns on this soldier's surname. He hopes to sit under the "shadow," or shade.

SHALLOW

Where's Shadow?

SHADOW

Here, sir.

FALSTAFF

Shadow, whose son are you?

SHADOW

I am my mother's son, sir.

FALSTAFF

Your mother's son! That makes sense, and your father's shadow.¹³ The woman's son is actually a true reflection of the male--that's often how it goes. But normally, the son doesn't have quite as much to him as the father does.

¹³ Again, Falstaff puns on the fact that the soldier's father gave him the name of Shadow, but that he is also his father's "shadow," or "look-alike."

SHALLOW

Do you approve of him, Sir John?

FALSTAFF

Shadow will be worthwhile for the summer. Prick him, we're going to need a lot of shadows.¹⁴ to fill up this list.

¹⁴ "Shadows" here were names of men who were made up by captains, so that they could claim their wages as their own profit.

SHALLOW

Thomas Wart!

FALSTAFF

Where is he?

WART

Here, sir.

FALSTAFF

Is your name Wart?

WART

Yes, sir.

FALSTAFF

You're a very rough wart.

SHALLOW

180 Shall I prick him down, Sir John?

FALSTAFF

It were superfluous, for his apparel is built upon his back,
and the whole frame stands upon pins. Prick him no more.

SHALLOW

185 Ha, ha, ha. You can do it, sir, you can do it. I commend you well.—Francis Feeble!

FEEBLE

Here, sir.

FALSTAFF

What trade art thou, Feeble?

FEEBLE

190 A woman's tailor, sir.

SHALLOW

Shall I prick him, sir?

FALSTAFF

You may, but if he had been a man's tailor, he'd ha'
pricked
you.—Wilt thou make as many holes in an enemy's battle
195 as
thou hast done in a woman's petticoat?

FEEBLE

I will do my good will, sir. You can have no more.

FALSTAFF

Well said, good woman's tailor, well said, courageous Feeble. Thou wilt be as valiant as the wrathful dove or
200 most magnanimous mouse. —Prick the woman's tailor well, Master Shallow, deep, Master Shallow.

FEEBLE

I would Wart might have gone, sir.

FALSTAFF

I would thou wert a man's tailor, that thou mightst mend him and make him fit to go. I cannot put him to a private soldier that is the leader of so many thousands. Let that suffice, most forcible Feeble.

FEEBLE

It shall suffice, sir.

FALSTAFF

I am bound to thee, reverend Feeble.—Who is next?

SHALLOW

Peter Bullcalf o' th' green.

FALSTAFF

Yea, marry, let's see Bullcalf.

BULLCALF

215 Here, sir.

SHALLOW

Shall I prick him on the list, Sir John?

FALSTAFF

That's pointless. Can't you see, his clothing has been pieced together, and his whole body is being forced to stand up on two little pins. He's had enough pricking. Don't prick him anymore.

SHALLOW

Ha, ha, ha. That's good, sir, that's good. I have nothing but praise for you.

[To FEEBLE] Francis Feeble!

FEEBLE

Here, sir.

FALSTAFF

What trade are you in, Feeble?

FEEBLE

I'm a woman's tailor, sir.

SHALLOW

Shall I prick him, sir?

FALSTAFF

You can. But, if he had been a man's tailor, he would have pricked ¹⁵ you himself already as he measured you for your clothes. Will you make as many holes in the army of the enemy as you have done in a woman's undergarments?

.15 Here, Falstaff makes a joke out of the tailor who may accidentally "prick" his customers with pins while taking measurements.

FEEBLE

I'll do what I can, sir. I can't do anymore than that.

FALSTAFF

Well said, good woman's tailor! Well said, brave Feeble! You will be as courageous as an angry dove—or the most fearless mouse. Prick the woman's tailor. Do it well, Master Shallow, do it deeply, Master Shallow.

FEEBLE

I wish Wart were going, sir.

FALSTAFF

If you were a man's tailor, you could mend his clothes and make him prepared to go. I can't enlist him as a private soldier, when he is already a leader of thousands--thousands of vermin, that is. But forget about that now, most powerful Feeble.

FEEBLE

All right, I'll leave it, sir.

FALSTAFF

I'm a fan of you, good Feeble.

[To SHALLOW] Who's next?

SHALLOW

Peter Bullcalf from the Green.

FALSTAFF

Oh, yes, let's see Bullcalf.

BULLCALF

Here, sir.

FALSTAFF

Fore God, a likely fellow. Come, prick me Bullcalf till he roar again.

BULLCALF

O Lord, good my lord captain—

FALSTAFF

220 What, dost thou roar before thou art pricked?

BULLCALF

O Lord, sir, I am a diseased man.

FALSTAFF

What disease hast thou?

BULLCALF

A whoreson cold, sir, a cough, sir, which I caught with ringing in the King's affairs upon his coronation day, 225 sir.

FALSTAFF

Come, thou shalt go to the wars in a gown. We will have away thy cold, and I will take such order that my friends shall ring for thee.—*[to SHALLOW]* Is here all?

SHALLOW

230 Here is two more called than your number. You must have but four here, sir, and so I pray you go in with me to dinner.

FALSTAFF

Come, I will go drink with you, but I cannot tarry dinner. I 235 am glad to see you, by my troth, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

O, Sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in Saint George's Field?

FALSTAFF

No more of that, good Master Shallow, no more of that.

SHALLOW

240 Ha, 'twas a merry night. And is Jane Nightwork alive?

FALSTAFF

She lives, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

She never could away with me.

FALSTAFF

Never, never; she would always say she could not abide Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

245 By the Mass, I could anger her to th' heart. She was then a bona roba. Doth she hold her own well?

FALSTAFF

Old, old, Master Shallow.

FALSTAFF

By God, he's a good man, I can tell. Come on, prick Bullcalf for me until he shouts again.

BULLCALF

Oh Lord! My good lord and captain.

FALSTAFF

What? Are you shouting before you've even been pricked 16 ?

Once more, Falstaff toys with the idea of the physical pain that results from being "pricked" with a pin, instead of being "pricked" on the list.

BULLCALF

Oh Lord, sir, I'm a very sick man.

FALSTAFF

What disease do you have?

BULLCALF

A horrible cold, sir. And a cough, sir, which I caught when I was ringing the bell for the anniversary of the King's coronation.

FALSTAFF

Come on, you will just have to go to war in a dressing gown. That will help to get rid of your cold, and I will make sure that some of my friends can ring the bell while you're away.

[to SHALLOW] Is that everyone?

SHALLOW

There's two more here than you said you needed. You can take four of them. Come on, let's go and have lunch now.

FALSTAFF

I will come and have a drink with you, but I don't have time to stay for lunch. It is good to see you, truly it is, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

Oh, Sir John, do you remember when we spent a whole night in the windmill in Saint George's Field 17 ?

Saint George's Field was an area south of the Thames, near Southwark, where Shakespeare's Globe Theatre stood.

FALSTAFF

Let's not talk about that, good Master Shallow. Let's not.

SHALLOW

Ha, it was a fun night! Is Jane Nightwork still alive?

FALSTAFF

She is, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

She could never put up with me.

FALSTAFF

Never, never. She always said that she just couldn't stand Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

By God, I could anger her to her very heart. She was one of the best whores. Does she still have it?

FALSTAFF

She's old, very old now, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

Nay, she must be old. She cannot choose but be old.
 250 Certain,
 she's old, and had Robin Nightwork by old Nightwork
 before I came to Clement's Inn.

SILENCE

That's fifty-five year ago.

SHALLOW

Ha, cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen that that this
 255 knight
 and I have seen!—Ha, Sir John, said I well?

FALSTAFF

We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

That we have, that we have, that we have. In faith, Sir
 John,
 260 we have. Our watchword was "Hem, boys." Come, let's to
 dinner; come, let's to dinner. Jesus, the days that we
 have
 seen! Come, come.

Exeunt FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, and SILENCE

BULLCALF

Good Master Corporate Bardolph, stand my friend, and
 265 here's four Harry ten-shillings in French crowns for
 you. In
 very truth, sir, I had as lief be hanged, sir, as go.
 And yet, for
 mine own part, sir, I do not care, but rather because I
 270 am
 unwilling, and, for mine own part, have a desire to
 stay with
 my friends. Else, sir, I did not care, for mine own
 part, so much.

BARDOLPH

275 Go to. Stand aside.

MOULDY

And, good Master Corporal Captain, for my old dame's
 sake, stand my friend. She has nobody to do anything
 about
 her when I am gone, and she is old and cannot help
 280 herself:
 You shall have forty, sir.

BARDOLPH

Go to. Stand aside.

FEEBLE

By my troth, I care not. A man can die but once. We owe
 God
 285 a death. I'll ne'er bear a base mind. An 't be my
 destiny, so;
 an 't be not, so. No man's too good to serve 's prince,
 and let
 it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit
 290 for the
 next.

BARDOLPH

Well said. Th' art a good fellow.

FEEBLE

Faith, I'll bear no base mind.

SHALLOW

Well, of course she's old--she can't help that. Of course
 she's old. She gave birth to Robin Nightwork, the son of old
 Nightwork, before I even went to Clement's Inn.

SILENCE

That's fifty-five years ago now.

SHALLOW

Ha, cousin Silence. If you could have seen what this knight
 and I have seen!

[To FALSTAFF] Ha, Sir John, isn't that right?

FALSTAFF

We've certainly seen the clock strike midnight a few times,
 Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

We certainly have, we certainly have. Really, Sir John, we
 have. Our motto was "Down with it, boys!" Come on, let's
 go to lunch. Jesus, the things that we've seen. Come on,
 let's go.

FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, and SILENCE exit.

BULLCALF

Good Master Corporate ¹⁸ Bardolph, be my friend. And
 here's some French crowns for you, worth four Harry ten-
 shillings ¹⁹. Truthfully, sir, I would just as happily be
 hanged than go to war. It's not that I care about my own
 safety, that doesn't matter to me. It's just that I don't want
 to go. More than anything, I want to stay here with my
 friends. Other than that, sir, I really don't care about
 myself.

¹⁸ Bullcalf's mistakes "Corporate" for "Corporal."

¹⁹ Bullcalf's French coins are worth twenty shillings or four "Harry ten-shillings," coins minted in England.

BARDOLPH

Whatever you say. Stand aside now.

MOULDY

And, good Master Corporal Captain, for my old lady's sake,
 be my friend. She has no one else to help her do anything if
 I go, and she's old and can't take care of herself. I'll give you
 forty shillings, sir.

BARDOLPH

Whatever you say. Stand aside now.

FEEBLE

Truthfully, I don't care. A man can only die once, and at
 some point we all owe God a death. I'm not going to do
 anything that's wrong. If it's my fate, then that's that. If it's
 not, then that's fine too. No man is too good to fight for his
 Prince and his country. No matter how it goes, if a person
 dies this year, then it just means their debts are paid for
 next year.

BARDOLPH

Very well said. You're a good man.

FEEBLE

I'm telling the truth. I won't do anything dishonest.

Enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, and SILENCE

FALSTAFF

Come, sir, which men shall I have?

SHALLOW

295 Four of which you please.

BARDOLPH

Sir, a word with you. *[aside to FALSTAFF]* I have three pound to free Mouldy and Bullcalf.

FALSTAFF

Go to, well.

SHALLOW

300 Come, Sir John, which four will you have?

FALSTAFF

Do you choose for me.

SHALLOW

Marry, then, Mouldy, Bullcalf, Feeble, and Shadow.

FALSTAFF

Mouldy and Bullcalf! For you, Mouldy, stay at home till you are past service. —And for your part, Bullcalf, grow till you come unto it. I will none of you.

Exeunt MOULDY and BULLCALF

SHALLOW

Sir John, Sir John, do not yourself wrong. They are your 310 likeliest men, and I would have you served with the best.

FALSTAFF

Will you tell me, Master Shallow, how to choose a man? Care I for the limb, the thews, the stature, bulk, and bigassemblance of a man? Give me the spirit, Master Shallow. Here's Wart. You see what a ragged appearance it is. He shall charge you and discharge you with the motion of an pewterer's hammer, come off and on swifter than he that gibbets on the brewer's bucket. And this same half-faced fellow, Shadow, give me this man. He presents no mark to the enemy. The foeman may with as great aim level at the edge of a penknife. And for a retreat, how swiftly will this Feeble the woman's tailor, run off! O, give me the sparesmen, and spare me the great ones. —Put me a caliver into Wart's hand, Bardolph.

BARDOLPH

Hold, Wart. Traverse. Thas, thas, thas.

FALSTAFF

Come, manage me your caliver: so, very well, go to, very good, exceeding good. O, give me always a little, lean, old, chopped, bald shot. Well said, i' faith, Wart. Th' art a good scab. Hold, there's a tester for thee.

FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, and SILENCE enter.

FALSTAFF

Come on then, sir, which men shall I have?

SHALLOW

Whichever four you want.

BARDOLPH

Sir, can I have a word?

[To FALSTAFF so that only he can hear] I've been given three pounds to free Mouldy and Bullcalf.

FALSTAFF

Right! That's fine!

SHALLOW

Come on, Sir John, which four men will you take?

FALSTAFF

Why don't you choose for me?

SHALLOW

Okay then: Mouldy, Bullcalf, Feeble and Shadow.

FALSTAFF

Mouldy and Bullcalf! You stay at home until you are too old to fight, Mouldy. And as for you, Bullcalf, you should stay at home and wait until you are old enough to fight. I don't want either of you.

MOULDY and BULLCALF exit.

SHALLOW

Sir John, Sir John, don't make a bad choice. They're the best men of the whole group, and I want to make sure you have the best!

FALSTAFF

Master Shallow, are you going to tell me how I should choose my soldiers? Do you think I only care about a man's body, power, strength, muscles, and overall appearance? Give me his spirit, Master Shallow! Look at Wart here. You can see what a tattered appearance he has. But he will load and fire with the steadiness that a *pewterer* ²⁰ has when using his hammer. He can advance and retreat as quickly as a man can refill a brewer's pail. And this little thin fellow, Shadow, let me have this man. He isn't even a proper target for the enemy. He's so thin the enemy might as well be aiming at the edge of a knife. And when it comes to retreating, this Feeble, the woman's tailor, will run away quicker than anyone else! Oh, give me the spare men and spare me the great ones!

[To BARDOLPH] Now give Wart a light musket, Bardolph.

BARDOLPH

Here it is, Wart. Now march back and forth. March, march, march.

FALSTAFF

Come on, handle your weapon. Yes, very good, very good, you're doing very well. Oh, I would always choose a little, thin, old, dried up and bald soldier. Well done, Wart. You're a good little rascal. Hang on, here's sixpence for you.

²⁰ A pewterer was a craftsman who largely made domestic utensils.

SHALLOW

He is not his craft's master. He doth not do it right.
 335 I remember at Mile End Green, when I lay at Clement's Inn—
 I was then Sir Dagonet in Arthur's show —there was a little
 340 quiver fellow, and he would manage you his piece thus. And he would about and about, and come you in, and come you in. "Rah, tah, tah," would he say. "Bounce," would he say,
 345 and away again would he go, and again would he come. I shall ne'er see such a fellow.

FALSTAFF

These fellows will do well, Master Shallow. —God keep you, Master Silence. I will not use many words with you.
 350 Fare you well, gentlemen both. I thank you. I must a dozen mile to-night. —Bardolph, give the soldiers coats.

SHALLOW

Sir John, the Lord bless you. God prosper your affairs. God send us peace. At your return, visit our house. Let 355 our old acquaintance be renewed. Peradventure I will with you to the court.

FALSTAFF

Fore God, would you would, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

Go to. I have spoke at a word. God keep you.

FALSTAFF

Fare you well, gentle gentlemen.

Exeunt SHALLOW and SILENCE

360 On, Bardolph. Lead the men away.

Exeunt BARDOLPH and the recruits

As I return, I will fetch off these justices. I do see the bottom of Justice Shallow. Lord, Lord, how subject we old men are
 365 to this vice of lying. This same starved justice hath done nothing but prate to me of the wildness of his youth and the feats he hath done about Turnbull Street, and every third word a lie, duer paid to the hearer than the Turk's tribute. I do remember him at Clement's Inn, like a man made after supper of a cheese paring. When he was naked, he was, for
 370 all the world, like a forked radish with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife. He was so forlorn that his dimensions to any thick sight were invincible. He was the
 380 very genius of famine, yet lecherous as a monkey, and the whores called him "mandrake." He came ever in the rearward of the fashion, and sung those tunes to the overscathed huswives that he heard the carmen whistle,

SHALLOW

He is not exactly an expert. He's not doing it right. I remember at Mile End Green ²¹, when I was staying at Clement's Inn, I played the fool in an archery exhibition. I remember that there was this little nimble man who used to hold his weapon just like this. He would just run around all over the place, and he'd charge over and over again. He'd say, "Rah, tah, tah," and "Bang!" Then he would run away, before charging all over again. I've never seen anyone like him.

²¹ Mile End Green was a training ground for citizens.

FALSTAFF

These men will do well, Master Shallow.

[To SILENCE] God bless you, Master Silence. There's no need for me to say many words to you ²².

[To SHALLOW and SILENCE] Goodbye to both of you. Thank you for your help. I need to travel at least twelve miles tonight.

[To BARDOLPH] Give the soldiers their uniforms and their jackets, Bardolph.

SHALLOW

Sir John, may God bless you and may he bring you good fortunes. May God also bring us peace. When you get back, come and visit us here. We can rebuild our old friendship. Maybe I will even come and see you at the royal court.

FALSTAFF

I swear before God that I hope you do, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

Get going now. I meant what I said. May God keep you safe.

FALSTAFF

Goodbye, kind gentlemen.

SHALLOW and SILENCE exit.

Walk on, Bardolph. Lead the men away.

BARDOLPH and the new recruits exit.

When I return, I will fleece these justices of the peace. I can see Justice Shallow for who he really is. Lord, Lord, we old men are so good at lying. This old justice has done nothing but chatter on to me about his wild youth and the crazy things he did near Turnbull Street ²³. Every third word he's said to me has been a lie. He can tell lies quicker than a Turk will rush off to pay the Sultan. I remember him when he was at Clement's Inn. He looked like a man that had been made out of a spare slice of cheese after dinner. When he was naked, he looked like a mandrake root, with a head that someone had taken the time to carve out with a knife. He was so thin that you had to have perfect vision to even notice him at all. He was the very embodiment of famine, but he was still as horny as a monkey ²⁴, and the whores called him "mandrake" ²⁵. He was always behind on the fashions. He would hear the cart drivers whistling tunes and then would go and sing those tunes to a deadbeat whore, pretending that they were his songs, his ditties. And now this vile, thin man has become a gentleman, and talks about John of Gaunt like they were close companions. In fact, the only place he would have seen John of Gaunt was up in Westminster, when he was competing in a jousting tournament. Even then, John of Gaunt cut Shallow's head with his sword for standing where he wasn't supposed to. I saw it all and I told John of Gaunt that he had basically

²³ Turnbull Street was an area of London known for thievery and prostitution.

²⁴ Monkeys were associated with lust in Shakespeare's day.

²⁵ In Shakespeare's time, the mandrake root was thought to stimulate sexual performance.

and swore they were his fancies or his good-nights.
And now is this Vice's dagger become a squire, and
talks as
familiarly of John o' Gaunt as if he had been sworn
brother
390 to him, and I'll be sworn he ne'er saw him but once in
the tilt-yard,
and then he burst his head for crowding among the
Marshal's men.
I saw it and told John o' Gaunt he beat his own name,
395 for you might have thrust him and all his apparel
into an eel-skin; the case of a treble hautboy
was a mansion for him, a court. And now has he land and
beefs.
Well, I'll be acquainted with him, if I return, and 't
400 shall go hard but
I'll make him a philosopher's two stones to me. If the
young
dace be a bait for the old pike, I see no reason in the
law of
405 nature but I may snap at him. Let time shape, and there
an end.

*Exit**He exits.*

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter the ARCHBISHOP of York, MOWBRAY, HASTINGS, and others

ARCHBISHOP

What is this forest called?

HASTINGS

'Tis Gaultree Forest, an 't shall please your Grace.

ARCHBISHOP

Here stand, my lords, and send discoverers forth
To know the numbers of our enemies.

HASTINGS

5 We have sent forth already.

ARCHBISHOP

'Tis well done.
My friends and brethren in these great affairs,
I must acquaint you that I have received
New-dated letters from Northumberland,
10 Their cold intent, tenor, and substance, thus:
Here doth he wish his person, with such powers
As might hold sortance with his quality,
The which he could not levy; whereupon
He is retired, to ripe his growing fortunes,
15 To Scotland, and concludes in hearty prayers
That your attempts may overlive the hazard
And fearful melting of their opposite.

MOWBRAY

Thus do the hopes we have in him touch ground
And dash themselves to pieces.

Enter a MESSENGER

HASTINGS

20 Now, what news?

beaten his own name--since Shallow was so gaunt back
then you could have fit all of him into the skin of an eel.
Back then an oboe's case would have looked like a mansion
to him--a courtroom even. And now he has land and his
own animals. Well, if I come back, I will make him be my
friend. It won't be easy, but I will make him a never-ending
source of wealth for myself. If small fish are meant to be
eaten by big fish, then I see no reason why I can't snap at
his heels. Only time will decide, and with that, I'm done.

Shakescleare Translation

The ARCHBISHOP of York, MOWBRAY, HASTINGS, and other attendants enter.

ARCHBISHOP

What is this forest called?

HASTINGS

This is Gaultree Forest, your grace.

 Gaultree Forest--an ancient royal forest--stretched north and north-west from York.

ARCHBISHOP

We will wait here, my lords, and we will send men ahead of us to find out how many enemy troops there are.

HASTINGS

We have already sent these men.

ARCHBISHOP

Well done. My friends and allies in this great mission, I must tell you about some news I've received in these recent letters from Northumberland. They have a frosty tone and the contents are as follows: he says that he would like to be here himself, with an army that matches his own reputation, but he hasn't managed to raise one. Therefore, he has decided to go to Scotland to help his own fortunes. He ends by saying that he is praying for your armies to defeat the danger and the power of the enemy.

MOWBRAY

I suppose that means any hopes we had for him might as well be thrown away and destroyed.

A MESSENGER enters.

HASTINGS

What's happening?

MESSENGER

West of this forest, scarcely off a mile,
In goodly form comes on the enemy,
And, by the ground they hide, I judge their number
Upon or near the rate of thirty thousand.

MOWBRAY

25 The just proportion that we gave them out.
Let us sway on and face them in the field.

Enter WESTMORELAND

ARCHBISHOP

What well-appointed leader fronts us here?

MOWBRAY

I think it is my Lord of Westmoreland.

WESTMORELAND

Health and fair greeting from our general,
30 The Prince Lord John and Duke of Lancaster.

ARCHBISHOP

Say on, my Lord of Westmoreland, in peace,
What doth concern your coming.

WESTMORELAND

Then, my lord,
Unto your Grace do I in chief address
35 The substance of my speech. If that rebellion
Came like itself, in base and abject routs,
Led on by bloody youth, guarded with rags,
And countenanced by boys and beggary
I say, if damn'd commotion so appeared
40 In his true, native, and most proper shape,
You, reverend father, and these noble lords
Had not been here to dress the ugly form
Of base and bloody insurrection
With your fair honors. You, Lord Archbishop,
45 Whose see is by a civil peace maintained,
Whose beard the silver hand of peace hath touched,
Whose learning and good letters peace hath tutored,
Whose white investments figure innocence,
The dove and very blessed spirit of peace,
50 Wherefore do you so ill translate yourself
Out of the speech of peace, that bears such grace,
Into the harsh and boist'rous tongue of war,
Turning your books to graves, your ink to blood,
Your pens to lances, and your tongue divine
55 To a trumpet and a point of war?

ARCHBISHOP

Wherefore do I this? So the question stands.
Briefly, to this end: we are all diseased,
And with our surfeiting and wanton hours
Have brought ourselves into a burning fever,
60 And we must bleed for it; of which disease
Our late King Richard, being infected, died.
But, my most noble Lord of Westmoreland,
I take not on me here as a physician,
Nor do I as an enemy to peace
65 Troop in the throngs of military men,
But rather show awhile like fearful war
To diet rank minds sick of happiness
And purge th' obstructions which begin to stop
Our very veins of life. Hear me more plainly.
70 I have in equal balance justly weighed
What wrongs our arms may do, what wrongs we suffer,
And find our griefs heavier than our offenses.
We see which way the stream of time doth run
And are enforced from our most quiet there
75 By the rough torrent of occasion,
And have the summary of all our griefs,
When time shall serve, to show in articles;

MESSENGER

The enemy is strong and barely a mile from here, to the west of this forest. Looking at the amount of space the troops are taking up, I would guess there were almost thirty thousand of them.

MOWBRAY

The exact number we predicted. Let's keep going and get ready to fight them.

WESTMORELAND enters.

ARCHBISHOP

What well-chosen leader is coming here to confront us?

MOWBRAY

I think it's Lord Westmoreland.

WESTMORELAND

Our general, the Prince Lord John, Duke of Lancaster, sends his greetings and hopes that you are in good health.

ARCHBISHOP

Tell us in peace, Lord Westmoreland: why have you come here?

WESTMORELAND

Well, my lord, it is to your Grace that I need to address the main part of my speech. If this rebellion looked like it normally does in its truest form; if it were run by a poor mob, led by bloody young men in rags, with boys and beggars supporting it, I am telling you that--as a holy man--you and these noble lords would not be honoring this bloody event with your presence. Lord Archbishop, you maintain peace and order in your district. Your beard has turned grey as a sign of your peaceful life. Your learning and writing have followed the teachings of peace. And your white robes make you almost like a dove--a blessed symbol of peace itself. Why have you decided to translate yourself from the graceful and soft language of peace to the harsh and violent language of war? You have turned your books into graves, your ink into blood, your pens into spears, and your holy tongue into a trumpet that calls men to arms.

ARCHBISHOP

But why do I do all of this? That's the real question. The short answer is, we're all sick. We've eaten too much and stayed up too late and now we've given ourselves a burning fever. And the only way to cure it is with the blood shed in battle. This is the same disease that Richard, our late King, was infected with and from which he later died. But, my noble Lord of Westmoreland, I'm not claiming to be any kind of doctor here who can fix these problems. Nor am I marching with our troops as an enemy of peace. I am simply showing them what terrible war is like, to stop their minds from becoming bloated with ease and luxury. Therefore, I clear out the obstructions which are blocking up our arteries and our veins--blocking up our ability to live well. Let me say that more plainly. I've carefully considered the options, weighing up how much harm our weapons could do against the harm that is already being inflicted on us. And I think that the injustices done to us are worse than any that we will commit in battle. We can see the direction that things are going in, and so we are forced to step away from our quiet lives and into a time of violence. We have written out a summary of all of our complaints, and we will publish them when the time is right. We tried to show them

Which long ere this we offered to the King
And might by no suit gain our audience.
80 When we are wronged and would unfold our griefs,
We are denied access unto his person
Even by those men that most have done us wrong.
The dangers of the days but newly gone,
Whose memory is written on the earth
85 With yet appearing blood, and the examples
Of every minute's instance, present now,
Hath put us in these ill-beseeming arms,
Not to break peace or any branch of it,
But to establish here a peace indeed,
90 Concurring both in name and quality.

WESTMORELAND

When ever yet was your appeal denied?
Wherein have you been gallèd by the King?
What peer hath been suborned to grate on you,
That you should seal this lawless bloody book
95 Of forged rebellion with a seal divine
And consecrate commotion's bitter edge?

ARCHBISHOP

My brother general, the commonwealth,
To brother born an household cruelty,
I make my quarrel in particular.

WESTMORELAND

100 There is no need of any such redress,
Or if there were, it not belongs to you.

MOWBRAY

Why not to him in part, and to us all
That feel the bruises of the days before
And suffer the condition of these times
105 To lay a heavy and unequal hand
Upon our honors?

WESTMORELAND

O, my good Lord Mowbray,
Construe the times to their necessities,
And you shall say indeed it is the time,
110 And not the King, that doth you injuries.
Yet for your part, it not appears to me
Either from the King or in the present time
That you should have an inch of any ground
To build a grief on. Were you not restored
115 To all the Duke of Norfolk's signories,
Your noble and right well remembered father's?

MOWBRAY

What thing, in honor, had my father lost,
That need to be revived and breathed in me?
The King that loved him, as the state stood then,
120 Was force perforce compelled to banish him,
And then that Harry Bolingbroke and he,
Being mounted and both rousèd in their seats,
Their neighing coursers daring of the spur,
Their armèd staves in charge, their beavers down,
125 Their eyes of fire sparkling through sights of steel
And the loud trumpet blowing them together,
Then, then, when there was nothing could have stayed
My father from the breast of Bolingbroke,
O, when the King did throw his warder down—
130 His own life hung upon the staff he threw—
Then threw he down himself and all their lives
That by indictment and by dint of sword
Have since miscarried under Bolingbroke.

WESTMORELAND

You speak, Lord Mowbray, now you know not what.
135 The Earl of Hereford was reputed then

to the King a long time ago, but we couldn't get a meeting with him. We were wronged. But when we tried to make our complaints, we were denied access to the very person who had wronged us in the first place. We are wearing this inappropriate armor right now because of the recent battle—the memory of which is still stained on the ground—and also because of the awful things happening every minute, at this current time. We are not trying to destroy peace, or even any small part of peace. Instead, we want to establish a peace that actually means something and actually works.

WESTMORELAND

When were you denied access to the King? How has the King made you so angry? What lord has been secretly sent out to harass you--so much so that you would put your divine seal of approval on a fraudulent and lawless rebellion, consecrating such a violent disturbance?

ARCHBISHOP

The main reasons I am involved in this rebellion include the injustices done to my fellow Englishmen, and my own brother Scroop's cruel murder. 2

2 It has been suggested that these obscure lines are a corrupted version of Shakespeare's original text. The Archbishop's motive--to get revenge for Scroop's murder--is often postulated.

WESTMORELAND

There's no need to claim any compensation for that. And even if there were, that need doesn't belong to you.

MOWBRAY

Why shouldn't he at least get a little back? Why shouldn't all of us be allowed to get something back—all of us who've suffered during these recent wars and whose honors are ruined by the awful things happening right now?

WESTMORELAND

Oh, my good lord Mowbray, if you can understand these times by just considering the inevitability of what has happened, you will see that it is the terrible situation that harms you--and not the King himself. But as for you individually, it seems to me that you don't have any kind of foundation to build an argument on--not against the King and not against your present situation either. Haven't you just been given all of the estates and honors of your noble and esteemed late father, the Duke of Norfolk?

MOWBRAY

But what honor did my father lose that I now need to restore and bring back? The old King, Richard, loved my father. But he was forced to banish him because of the way things were. And then, my father and Harry Bolingbroke challenged each other to a duel 3. They were both mounted on their horses and were ready to charge at each other. Their horses were neighing, ready to gallop forward, when the signal was given. Their steel-tipped spears were ready to attack. Their face-guards were on. Their eyes were burning through the slight gaps in their helmets. Then the trumpet sounded. And although nothing could have stopped my father from killing Bolingbroke, King Richard ended the fight before it began by throwing down his royal staff. When he threw down the staff, he threw down his own life—and the lives of every man that has died fighting for Bolingbroke.

3 The duel between the Duke of Norfolk and King Henry is shown in another history play, *Richard II*, during Act 1, Scene 3.

WESTMORELAND

You don't know what you're talking about, Lord Mowbray. At that time, Bolingbroke was considered the bravest

In England the most valiant gentleman.
Who knows on whom fortune would then have smiled?
But if your father had been victor there,
He ne'er had borne it out of Coventry;
140 For all the country in a general voice
Cried hate upon him; and all their prayers and love
Were set on Hereford, whom they doted on
And blessed and graced, indeed more than the King.
But this is mere digression from my purpose.
145 Here come I from our princely general
To know your griefs, to tell you from his Grace
That he will give you audience; and wherein
It shall appear that your demands are just,
You shall enjoy them, everything set off
150 That might so much as think you enemies.

MOWBRAY

But he hath forced us to compel this offer;
And it proceeds from policy, not love.

WESTMORELAND

Mowbray, you overween to take it so.
This offer comes from mercy, not from fear.
155 For, lo, within a ken our army lies,
Upon mine honor, all too confident
To give admittance to a thought of fear.
Our battle is more full of names than yours,
Our men more perfect in the use of arms,
160 Our armor all as strong, our cause the best.
Then reason will our hearts should be as good.
Say you not then our offer is compelled.

MOWBRAY

Well, by my will, we shall admit no parley.

WESTMORELAND

That argues but the shame of your offense.
165 A rotten case abides no handling.

HASTINGS

Hath the Prince John a full commission,
In very ample virtue of his father,
To hear and absolutely to determine
Of what conditions we shall stand upon?

WESTMORELAND

170 That is intended in the General's name.
I muse you make so slight a question.

ARCHBISHOP

Then take, my Lord of Westmoreland, this schedule,
For this contains our general grievances.
Each several article herein redressed,
175 All members of our cause, both here and hence,
That are insinewed to this action,
Acquitted by a true substantial form
And present execution of our wills
To us and to our purposes confined,
180 We come within our awful banks again
And knit our powers to the arm of peace.

WESTMORELAND

This will I show the General. Please you, lords,
In sight of both our battles we may meet,
And either end in peace, which God so frame,
185 Or to the place of difference call the swords
Which must decide it.

ARCHBISHOP

My lord, we will do so.

Exit WESTMORELAND

gentleman in all of England. Who knows who would have won the duel? But if your father had won in that duel, he would never have made it out of Coventry alive. For the country hated him, while they loved and prayed for Bolingbroke. They blessed him and worshipped him more than they did King Richard at the time. But I am forgetting the reason that I came here. I have been sent here by the Prince, our general, to know what your complaints are, and to tell you that his Grace is prepared to listen to them. If it seems like your demands are fair, then you will get what you want--unless it is something that would make you enemies of the Prince.

MOWBRAY

But he's only listening to us because we've forced him to.
He doesn't listen out of love. Instead, he listens because he thinks it's the right political move!

WESTMORELAND

Mowbray, you are too presumptuous in thinking that. This offer comes out of mercy, not our of fear. For, look, our army is just over there. On my honor, our army is far too confident to even entertain the idea of being afraid. Our army is full of men far more renowned than your troops. Our soldiers know how to use weapons incredibly well. Our armor is just as strong as yours, and our cause is even better. It's only right that we're just as ready as you are. So don't say that the Prince has been forced to make this offer; it's a choice.

MOWBRAY

Well, I declare that we refuse to meet with him.

WESTMORELAND

That just shows that you're ashamed of what you're doing.
Something that's rotten will crumble if it is touched.

HASTINGS

Has Prince John been given complete authority by his father to hear our demands and decide what to do from there?

WESTMORELAND

That's a given, since he is the General. I'm surprised you'd even ask such a question.

ARCHBISHOP

Well then, my Lord of Westmoreland, take this document. It contains a list of our main complaints. If every complaint we have made is addressed and everyone involved in this rebellion--both here and elsewhere--is fully pardoned, and all of our demands are met right away, then we will return to our rightful places and work together to try to come to a peaceful agreement.

WESTMORELAND

I will show this to the General. If you don't mind, let's meet again in a place where both of our armies can see us. That way, the discussions can either end in peace--which I hope is God's will--or we can go straight to the battlefield to decide the outcome.

ARCHBISHOP

My lord, we will do that.

WESTMORELAND exits.

MOWBRAY

There is a thing within my bosom tells me
That no conditions of our peace can stand.

HASTINGS

190 Fear you not that. If we can make our peace
Upon such large terms and so absolute
As our conditions shall consist upon,
Our peace shall stand as firm as rocky mountains.

MOWBRAY

195 Yea, but our valuation shall be such
That every slight and false-derived cause,
Yea, every idle, nice, and wanton reason,
Shall to the King taste of this action,
That, were our royal faiths martyrs in love,
We shall be winnowed with so rough a wind
200 That even our corn shall seem as light as chaff
And good from bad find no partition.

ARCHBISHOP

No, no, my lord. Note this: the King is weary
Of dainty and such picking grievances,
For he hath found to end one doubt by death
205 Revives two greater in the heirs of life;
And therefore will he wipe his tables clean
And keep no telltale to his memory
That may repeat and history his loss
To new remembrance. For full well he knows
210 He cannot so precisely weed this land
As his misdoubts present occasion;
His foes are so enrooted with his friends
That, plucking to unfix an enemy,
He doth unfasten so and shake a friend;
215 So that this land, like an offensive wife
That hath enraged him on to offer strokes,
As he is striking holds his infant up
And hangs resolved correction in the arm
That was upreared to execution.

HASTINGS

220 Besides, the King hath wasted all his rods
On late offenders, that he now doth lack
The very instruments of chastisement,
So that his power, like to a fangless lion,
May offer but not hold.

ARCHBISHOP

225 'Tis very true,
And therefore be assured, my good Lord Marshal,
If we do now make our atonement well,
Our peace will, like a broken limb united,
Grow stronger for the breaking.

MOWBRAY

230 Be it so.
Here is returned my Lord of Westmoreland.

Enter WESTMORELAND

WESTMORELAND

The Prince is here at hand. Pleaseth your lordship
To meet his Grace just distance 'twixt our armies.

MOWBRAY

Your Grace of York, in God's name then set forward.

ARCHBISHOP

235 Before, and greet his Grace.— [to WESTMORELAND] My lord,
we come.

MOWBRAY

Something in my heart tells me that even if we agreed to
peace, it wouldn't last.

HASTINGS

Don't worry about that. If we can come to an agreement
based on great terms and stand firm on the conditions we
have requested, then our peace will last as long as rocky
mountains.

MOWBRAY

Yes, but in the future the King will think so little of us that
every slight, false accusation—yes, every stupid,
meaningless thing—will remind him of now. Even if we
could prove our loyalty to the King by dying, he would be so
suspicious of us that even the good things we do for him
won't matter—he won't be able to separate them from the
bad things we've already done.

ARCHBISHOP

No, no, my lord. Know this. The King is tired of picking
fights over every small thing. For he has found that if he
ends one problem by killing someone, it just makes two
bigger problems for the people who are left behind.
Therefore, he wants to wipe the slate clean, and forget
about anything which might remind him of the violent past.
For he knows that he can't just get rid of every little
problem that crops up. His enemies like roots grown among
his friends, so much so that if he tried to pull up an enemy,
he'd also be pulling up and getting rid of a friend. This
country is behaving just like a disobedient wife, who, when
she is just about to be beaten by her husband, holds up
their baby in defense and makes him pause mid-action--
stopping the arm that was about to carry out the
punishment.

HASTINGS

Besides, the King has already used up all of his anger and
punishments on the recent rebellion. He has nothing left to
punish us with. He's weak, like a lion without its teeth. He
can threaten us, but he can't actually do anything.

ARCHBISHOP

That's very true. So be assured, my good Lord Marshal, that
if we can reach reconciliation, our peaceful agreement will
be like a broken limb. It will just grow stronger after it is
broken.

MOWBRAY

I hope you're right. Look, Lord Westmoreland is back.

WESTMORELAND enters.

WESTMORELAND

The Prince is close by. If you are ready, will your Lordship
come and meet his Grace at a spot halfway between our
two armies?

MOWBRAY

Your Grace, Archbishop of York: go forward and meet him in
God's name.

ARCHBISHOP

Lead on, and I will go and meet his Grace.

[To WESTMORELAND] My lord, we will come.

The ARCHBISHOP, MOWBRAY, YORK, HASTINGS and the others go forward

Enter Prince John of LANCASTER and officers with him

LANCASTER

You are well encountered here, my cousin Mowbray.—
Good day to you, gentle Lord Archbishop,—
And so to you, Lord Hastings, and to all. —
240 My Lord of York, it better shewed with you
When that your flock, assembled by the bell,
Encircled you to hear with reverence
Your exposition on the holy text
Than now to see you here, an iron man talking,
245 Cheering a rout of rebels with your drum,
Turning the word to sword, and life to death.
That man that sits within a monarch's heart
And ripens in the sunshine of his favor,
Would he abuse the countenance of the King,
250 Alack, what mischiefs might he set abroach
In shadow of such greatness! With you, Lord Bishop,
It is even so. Who hath not heard it spoken
How deep you were within the books of God,
To us the speaker in His parliament,
255 To us th' imagined voice of God himself,
The very opener and intelligencer
Between the grace, the sanctities, of heaven,
And our dull workings? O, who shall believe
But you misuse the reverence of your place,
260 Employ the countenance and grace of heaven
As a false favorite doth his prince's name,
In deeds dishonorable? You have ta'en up,
Under the counterfeited zeal of God,
The subjects of His substitute, my father,
265 And both against the peace of heaven and him
Have here up-swarmed them.

ARCHBISHOP

Good my Lord of Lancaster,
I am not here against your father's peace,
But, as I told my Lord of Westmoreland,
270 The time misordered doth, in common sense,
 Crowd us and crush us to this monstrous form
To hold our safety up. I sent your Grace
The parcels and particulars of our grief,
The which hath been with scorn shov'd from the court,
275 Whereon this Hydra son of war is born,
Whose dangerous eyes may well be charmed asleep
With grant of our most just and right desires,
And true obedience, of this madness cured,
Stoop tamely to the foot of majesty.

MOWBRAY

280 If not, we ready are to try our fortunes
To the last man.

HASTINGS

And though we here fall down,
We have supplies to second our attempt;
If they miscarry, theirs shall second them,
285 And so success of mischief shall be born,
And heir from heir shall hold this quarrel up
Whiles England shall have generation.

LANCASTER

You are too shallow, Hastings, much too shallow
To sound the bottom of the after-times.

WESTMORELAND

290 Pleaseth your Grace to answer them directly
How far forth you do like their articles.

The ARCHBISHOP, MOWBRAY, HASTINGS, and others go forward to meet the Prince.

Prince John of LANCASTER and officers enter.

LANCASTER

It's good to see you, Mowbray. Good day to you, gentle Archbishop. The same to you, Lord Hastings, and to all of you. Archbishop, I would prefer to see you with your congregation—called together by the church bell, waiting excitedly to hear your sermons—than to see you here, clothed in armor. Now you cheer on a crowd of rebels with your war drum, speaking only of violence, and turning your life into death. When a man who is loved by the King—and prospers under this love--abuses this favor and turns against him, alas! What terrible things a man like that can do, hidden in the shadow of a great man. That's how it is with you, Lord Archbishop. Who hasn't heard people say how incredible your religious knowledge is? That's why you were our representative in God's very parliament—the man we almost thought of as God's own voice. You are supposed to be the interpreter of and messenger between God's heavenly actions and our own foolish behavior. Oh, now who doesn't think that you have abused the sacred position you hold, using this pretense of religion to do awful things--just like a lying lord uses the Prince's good name? Under this fake pretense of religion, you have encouraged the subjects of God's deputy—my father the King—to rise up against the peace of heaven and the King himself.

ARCHBISHOP

My good Lord of Lancaster, I am not here as an enemy to your father or to his peace. Just as I told my Lord of Westmoreland, and as everyone can see, these disturbed times have forced us and driven us to do these monstrous deeds to keep ourselves safe. I sent your Grace the specific details of our complaints, a document which has already been ignored at court. That's why this Hydra-like  war has started. You can calm this beast by agreeing to the justified and right things that we have demanded. If that is done, then this mad disease--this war--will be cured. And then the monster will curl up at your feet, tame and contented.

 In ancient Greek mythology, the Hydra was a monster with many heads, which grew back as soon as they were cut off.

MOWBRAY

If you don't agree to our demands, then we're ready to fight until the last man is standing.

HASTINGS

And even if those of us who are here are defeated, we have reinforcements who can take over for us. If they fail, they have their own reinforcements as well. The war will go on like this, passed down from father to son, until England has a new beginning.

LANCASTER

You are not clever enough, Hastings, not clever enough to see that far into the future.

WESTMORELAND

Your Grace, why don't you tell them what you thought about their list of complaints?

LANCASTER

I like them all, and do allow them well,
And swear here by the honor of my blood,
My father's purposes have been mistook,
295 And some about him have too lavishly
Wrested his meaning and authority.
[to ARCHBISHOP] My lord, these griefs shall be with
speed redressed;
Upon my soul, they shall. If this may please you,
300 Discharge your powers unto their several counties,
As we will ours, and here, between the armies,
Let's drink together friendly and embrace,
That all their eyes may bear those tokens home
Of our restorèd love and amity.

ARCHBISHOP

305 I take your princely word for these redresses.

LANCASTER

I give it you, and will maintain my word,
And thereupon I drink unto your Grace.

HASTINGS

Go, captain, and deliver to the army
This news of peace. Let them have pay, and part.
310 I know it will well please them. Hie thee, captain.

Exit officer

ARCHBISHOP

To you, my noble Lord of Westmoreland.

WESTMORELAND

I pledge your Grace, and if you knew what pains
I have bestowed to breed this present peace,
You would drink freely. But my love to you
315 Shall show itself more openly hereafter.

ARCHBISHOP

I do not doubt you.

WESTMORELAND

I am glad of it.—
Health to my lord and gentle cousin, Mowbray.

MOWBRAY

You wish me health in very happy season,
320 For I am on the sudden something ill.

ARCHBISHOP

Against ill chances men are ever merry,
But heaviness foreruns the good event.

WESTMORELAND

Therefore be merry, coz; since sudden sorrow
Serves to say thus: "Some good thing comes tomorrow."

ARCHBISHOP

325 Believe me, I am passing light in spirit.

MOWBRAY

So much the worse if your own rule be true.

Shouts within

LANCASTER

I am happy with all of them. And I agree that they are all suitable complaints. I swear on my family's honor that my father's intentions have been misunderstood--and some of his men have acted too boldly and done things that he would never have agreed to do.

[To the ARCHBISHOP] My lord, we will put right these wrongs as quickly as we can; I promise you that. If you are happy with this, then break up your armies, and send them back to where they came from. We will do the same with ours. And here, in the spot between the two armies, let's have a drink together and embrace, knowing that these men will go home and tell others that we are friends again.

ARCHBISHOP

I will take your word, as a prince, that you will do these things.

LANCASTER

I give you my word and I will stick to it. And with that, I toast to your Grace.

HASTINGS

Go, captain, and tell the army the news of peace. Pay them what we owe them, and then let them go. I know they will be pleased with this. Off you go, captain.

The officer exits.

ARCHBISHOP

Here's to you, my noble Lord of Westmoreland.

WESTMORELAND

The same to your Grace. If you knew how much I have done to try to bring about this peaceful agreement, you'd just keep drinking. But my love for you will be more obvious from now on.

ARCHBISHOP

I don't doubt it.

WESTMORELAND

I'm glad.

[To MOWBRAY] And here's to your good health, my gentle Mowbray.

MOWBRAY

Your wish of good health comes at a very good moment, for I suddenly feel quite ill.

ARCHBISHOP

Men are always cheerful when bad situations await them, but a heavy heart is a sign that something good will happen.

WESTMORELAND

So be happy, friend. For your sudden feeling of sadness is just a sign to tell you that something good will happen tomorrow.

ARCHBISHOP

Believe me, I am feeling very light-hearted right now.

MOWBRAY

Well if the rule you just said is true, then that's not a good thing.

Shouts are heard offstage.

LANCASTER

The word of peace is rendered. Hark how they shout.

MOWBRAY

This had been cheerful after victory.

ARCHBISHOP

A peace is of the nature of a conquest,
For then both parties nobly are subdued,
And neither party loser.

LANCASTER

Go, my lord,
And let our army be dischargèd too.

Exit WESTMORELAND

And, good my lord, so please you, let our trains
March by us, that we may peruse the men
We should have coped withal.

ARCHBISHOP

Go, good Lord Hastings,
And ere they be dismissed, let them march by.

Exit HASTINGS

LANCASTER

I trust, lords, we shall lie tonight together.

Enter WESTMORELAND

Now, cousin, wherefore stands our army still?

WESTMORELAND

The leaders, having charge from you to stand,
Will not go off until they hear you speak.

LANCASTER

They know their duties.

Enter HASTINGS

HASTINGS

My lord, our army is dispersed already.
Like youthful steers unyoked, they take their courses
East, west, north, south, or, like a school broke up,
Each hurries toward his home and sporting-place.

WESTMORELAND

Good tidings, my Lord Hastings, for the which
I do arrest thee, traitor, of high treason. —
And you, Lord Archbishop, and you, Lord Mowbray,
Of capital treason I attach you both.

MOWBRAY

Is this proceeding just and honorable?

WESTMORELAND

Is your assembly so?

ARCHBISHOP

Will you thus break your faith?

LANCASTER

I pawned thee none.
I promised you redress of these same grievances
Whereof you did complain, which, by mine honor,
I will perform with a most Christian care.
But for you rebels, look to taste the due

LANCASTER

The news of peace has been delivered. Listen to how they shout.

MOWBRAY

They sound like they're cheering a victory.

ARCHBISHOP

A peaceful agreement is a kind of victory, because both sides may nobly stop fighting, but neither of them loses.

LANCASTER

Go, my lord, and let our army go as well.

WESTMORELAND exits.

Good Archbishop, let's tell both of our armies to march past us here, so that we can see the men that we would have been fighting against.

ARCHBISHOP

Go, good Lord Hastings. Tell them to march past us before they leave.

HASTINGS exits.

LANCASTER

I hope, lords, that we will spend the night here together.

WESTMORELAND enters.

Now, why is our army still standing ready?

WESTMORELAND

The leaders were ordered by you to stay exactly where they are, and they refuse to move until you give them another order.

LANCASTER

They know their duties, that's for sure.

HASTINGS enters.

HASTINGS

My lord, our army has already dispersed. They've set off east, west, north and south--just like young bulls who have been untied, or like children after school, hurrying home or to play somewhere.

WESTMORELAND

What good news, Lord Hastings. Now I have heard it, I arrest you, traitor, for high treason. As for you, Lord Archbishop, and you, Lord Mowbray, I arrest you both of capital treason.

MOWBRAY

Is this action just and honorable?

WESTMORELAND

Was your rebellion just and honorable?

ARCHBISHOP

Are you going to break the faithful promise you made us?

LANCASTER

I never promised you this. I promised you that I would make up for the complaints you had made, and satisfy your demands. And, I swear on my honor, I will do that as carefully as I can. As for you, rebels: you will have to pay the price for this rebellion, and will get what you deserve for

Meet for rebellion and such acts as yours.
Most shallowly did you these arms commence,
Fondly brought here, and foolishly sent hence. —
Strike up our drums; pursue the scattered stray.
God, and not we, hath safely fought today. —
Some guard these traitors to the block of death,
Treason's true bed and yeller-up of breath.

365

Exeunt

the awful things you have done. You started these wars about trivial things; brought your army here without thinking; and foolishly dismissed them too early. Strike up the drums! Capture the soldiers who are still running away. It is God who has fought today and God who has won. Guards, take these traitors to where they will be executed. That is where treason is meant to be, and that is where this rebellion will take its last breath.

They all exit.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Alarum. Excursions. Enter FALSTAFF and COLEVILE, meeting

FALSTAFF

What's your name, sir? Of what condition are you, and of what place, I pray?

COLEVILE

I am a knight, sir, and my name is Coleville of the Dale.

5

FALSTAFF

Well, then, Coleville is your name, a knight is your degree, and your place the Dale. Coleville shall be still your name, a traitor your degree, and the dungeon your place, a place deep enough so shall you be still Coleville of the Dale.

10

COLEVILE

Are not you Sir John Falstaff?

FALSTAFF

As good a man as he, sir, whoe'er I am. Do ye yield, sir, or shall I sweat for you? If I do sweat, they are the drops of thy lovers and they weep for thy death. Therefore rouse up fear and trembling, and do observance to my mercy.

15

COLEVILE

I think you are Sir John Falstaff, and in that thought yield me.

FALSTAFF

I have a whole school of tongues in this belly of mine, and not a tongue of them all speaks any other word but my name. An I had but a belly of any indifference, I were simply the most active fellow in Europe. My womb, my womb, my womb undoes me. Here comes our general.

20

Enter Prince John of LANCASTER, WESTMORELAND, BLUNT, and others

LANCASTER

The heat is past. Follow no further now.

A retreat is sounded.

25 Call in the powers, good cousin Westmoreland.

Exit WESTMORELAND

Shakescleare Translation

A call to arms is sounded. Soldiers cross the stage. FALSTAFF and COLEVILLE enter from opposite sides, meeting each other.

FALSTAFF

What's your name, sir? What rank are you, and where are you from?

COLEVILE

I'm a knight, sir, and my name is Coleville of the Valley.

FALSTAFF

Well then, Coleville is your name, you have the rank of knight, and you are from the Valley. Coleville will still be your name even when you are known as a traitor, and your place is in a dungeon so deep that they can still call you Coleville of the Valley.

COLEVILE

Aren't you Sir John Falstaff?

FALSTAFF

I'm as good a man as he is, whoever I am. Are you going to surrender, sir, or am I going to have to break a sweat apprehending you? Every time I sweat, the drops of sweat will be like the tears of your loved ones, weeping over your death. So it would be good if you could be scared of me, start shaking in your boots, and beg me for my mercy.

COLEVILE

I think you are Sir John Falstaff, and knowing that, I surrender.

FALSTAFF

My stomach is so big that it can speak many languages, but it only ever says my name. If I had a more ordinary belly, I would just be another healthy soldier in Europe. But it is my stomach, my stomach, my stomach which gives me away. Look, here comes the general.

Prince John of LANCASTER, WESTMORELAND, BLUNT, and others enter.

LANCASTER

The danger is over. Let's rest here for a while.

The sound for a retreat is heard.

Tell our armies to withdraw, my good Westmoreland.

WESTMORELAND exits.

Now, Falstaff, where have you been all this while?
When everything is ended, then you come.
These tardy tricks of yours will, on my life,
One time or other break some gallows' back.

FALSTAFF

30 I would be sorry, my lord, but it should be thus. I never knew
yet but rebuke and check was the reward of valor. Do you
think me a swallow, an arrow, or a bullet? Have I in my
35 poor
and old motion the expedition of thought? I have sped
hither with the very extremest inch of possibility. I have
40 foundered ninescore and odd posts, and here, travel-tainted
as I am, have in my pure and immaculate valor taken Sir John Colevile of the Dale, a most furious knight and
valorous enemy. But what of that? He saw me and yielded,
45 that I may justly say, with the hook-nosed fellow of Rome,
"There, cousin, I came, saw, and overcame."

LANCASTER

It was more of his courtesy than your deserving.

FALSTAFF

50 I know not. Here he is, and here I yield him. And I beseech
your Grace let it be booked with the rest of this day's deeds,
or, by the Lord, I will have it in a particular ballad
55 else, with
mine own picture on the top on 't, Colevile kissing my foot;
to the which course if I be enforced, if you do not all show like gilt twopences to me, and I in the clear sky
60 of fame o'ershine you as much as the full moon doth the cinders of the element (which show like pins' heads to her), believe not the word of the noble. Therefore let me have right, and let desert mount.

LANCASTER

Thine's too heavy to mount.

FALSTAFF

65 Let it shine, then.

LANCASTER

Thine's too thick to shine.

FALSTAFF

Let it do something, my good lord, that may do me good, and call it what you will.

LANCASTER

70 Is thy name Colevile?

COLEVILE

It is, my lord.

LANCASTER

A famous rebel art thou, Colevile.

FALSTAFF

And a famous true subject took him.

Now, Falstaff, where have you been all this time? Now that everything is over, you're here. At some point your lazy attitude is going to destroy some gallows  , I swear it.

 This is another joke about Falstaff's weight, suggesting that, even if he were hanged, his weight would break the gallows.

FALSTAFF

My lord, if things could have been different, then I would be sorry. I didn't know that the way we rewarded bravery was with punishment and scrutiny. Do you think that I'm as quick as a swallow, an arrow, or a bullet? Now that I am old and weak, do you think that I can move with the same speed that thoughts can? I have traveled here as quickly as I possibly could. I have worn out about one hundred eighty horses, made it here--and even though I'm exhausted--I still managed to capture Sir John Colevile of the Valley. That's how honorable and brave I am. He's a dangerous knight and a powerful enemy of ours. But what does that matter? He simply saw me and surrendered, so I feel that just like Julius Caesar  I can say that "I came, I saw, and I conquered."

 A "hook-nose" or aquiline nose was a feature attributed to Caesar in medallion portraiture. Falstaff goes on to translate Caesar's famous line, "veni, vidi, vici."

LANCASTER

That says more about his good manners than it does about your bravery.

FALSTAFF

I don't know what you mean. Look, here he is, and now I give him over to you. I just ask your Grace to make sure that this is added to the list of successes from today. If you don't, I swear to God I will have a ballad printed about it--and it will have a picture of me right at the top, with Colevile kissing my foot. If I'm forced to do that, it will make you all look like fakes  next to me. And my fame will shine brighter than yours, just like a full moon shines brighter than the stars, which end up looking like tiny dots in comparison. If it doesn't, then I must be lying. So give me what I deserve, and let my achievements build up on top of each other in a pile.

 In the original text, Falstaff references silver twopences--coins sometimes gilded and passed off as more valuable half-crowns because the two coins were the same size.

LANCASTER

That pile would be far too heavy for me to pick up.

FALSTAFF

Well, let my achievements shine then.

LANCASTER

You're too fat to shine.

FALSTAFF

Well let it do something, my good lord--anything that will make me look good. And call it whatever you want.

LANCASTER

Is your name Colevile?

COLEVILE

It is, my lord.

LANCASTER

You are a famous rebel, Colevile.

FALSTAFF

And it was a famous, loyal subject who captured him.

COLEVILE

I am, my lord, but as my betters are
 75 That led me hither. Had they been ruled by me,
 You should have won them dearer than you have.

FALSTAFF

I know not how they sold themselves, but thou, like a
 kind fellow, gavest thyself away gratis, and I thank
 thee for thee.

Enter WESTMORELAND

LANCASTER

80 Now, have you left pursuit?

WESTMORELAND

Retreat is made and execution stayed.

LANCASTER

Send Colevile with his confederates
 To York, to present execution.—
 Blunt, lead him hence, and see you guard him sure.

Exeunt BLUNT with COLEVILE

85 And now dispatch we toward the court, my lords.
 I hear the King my father is sore sick.
 Our news shall go before us to his Majesty,
 [to WESTMORELAND] Which, cousin, you shall bear to
 comfort
 90 him,
 And we with sober speed will follow you.

FALSTAFF

My lord, I beseech you give me leave to go through
 Gloucestershire, and, when you come to court, stand my
 good lord, pray, in your good report.

LANCASTER

95 Fare you well, Falstaff. I, in my condition,
 Shall better speak of you than you deserve.

Exeunt all but FALSTAFF

FALSTAFF

I would you had but the wit; 'twere better than your
 dukedom. Good faith, this same young sober-blooded boy
 doth not love me, nor a man cannot make him laugh. But
 100 that's no marvel; he drinks no wine. There's never none
 of
 these demure boys come to any proof, for thin drink
 doth so
 overcool their blood, and making many fish meals, that
 they
 105 fall into a kind of male green-sickness, and then, when
 they
 marry, they get wenches. They are generally fools and
 cowards, which some of us should be too, but for
 inflammation. A good sherris sack hath a two-fold
 110 operation in it.
 It ascends me into the brain, dries me there all the
 foolish and
 dull and crudy vapors which environ it, makes it
 apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery,
 115 and
 delectable shapes, which, delivered o'er to the voice,
 the
 tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The
 second property of your excellent sherris is the
 120 warming of
 the blood, which, before cold and settled, left the
 liver white

COLEVILE

I am, my lord. But my superior officers led me here. If I had
 been the leader, you would have lost a lot more than you
 have.

FALSTAFF

I don't know how much these men made us pay. But,
 Coleville, you gave yourself away for free like a kind man.
 And I thank you for that.

WESTMORELAND enters.

LANCASTER

Have you told the troops to retreat?

WESTMORELAND

The troops have retreated and the fighting has stopped.

LANCASTER

Send Colevile with his fellow prisoners to York, where they
 will be executed right away. Blunt, lead him there, and
 make sure you guard him carefully.

BLUNT exits, with COLEVILE.

And now, my lords, we must set off quickly for the royal
 court, as I have heard that my father is very sick. We will
 send the news ahead of us to the King so that he knows we
 have won.

[To WESTMORELAND] Will you please take this news to my
 father and comfort him? We will be with you as quickly as
 we can.

FALSTAFF

My lord, may I have your permission to travel back through
 Gloucestershire? Also, when you get back to the court,
 please stand up for me and say that I did some good work
 here.

LANCASTER

Goodbye to you, Falstaff. As a Prince, if I say good things
 about you, it is definitely more than you deserve.

Everyone except for FALSTAFF exits.

FALSTAFF

I wish you had the wit to do that—it would be better than
 everything you have already done. By Good, this young,
 sensible boy doesn't like me at all. And no one seems to be
 able to make him laugh. But is that any wonder, when he
 doesn't drink any wine? None of those reserved boys ever
 turn out well, because weak drinks and a diet of fish makes
 their blood cool. They all become green-sick ⁴, like
 unmarried girls. Then, even when they eventually do get
 married, all of their children are girls, because they're too
 weak to have boys. On the whole, they are fools and
 cowards. And we would be the same, if it weren't for the
 excitement of alcohol. A good sherry ⁵ has two main
 benefits to it. First, it goes up into the brain and it gets rid of
 all the stupid, boring, and thick thoughts which have been
 left there. It makes the brain quick, responsive, and
 creative—full of nimble, fiery, and captivating ideas. When
 these are picked up by the voice and the tongue, they grow
 up and become the things of excellent wit. Second, good
 sherry warms your blood. Before the sherry, your blood is
 cold and slow. And this makes the liver—the source of our
 passions—pale and cold as well, which is the symbol of
 weakness and cowardice. But the sherry warms the blood,
 and makes it flow all around the body, from the inner
 organs to the far extremities of a person. It brightens up the
 face, which is a signal for the rest of a man's kingdom—that
 is, the rest of the body—to do the same as well. Then the
 substances of the body and the other vital organs stand

⁴ The original text mentions "green sickness," a supposed illness in Shakespeare's time which caused weakness, common among unmarried virgins. Its cure was sex in the context of marriage.

⁵ Sherry is strong wine from the south of Spain.

and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and
 125 cowardice.
 But the sherris warms it and makes it course from the
 inwards to the parts' extremes. It illumineth the face,
 which
 as a beacon gives warning to all the rest of this
 130 little
 kingdom, man, to arm; and then the vital commoners and
 inland petty spirits muster me all to their captain,
 the heart,
 who, great and puffed up with this retinue, doth any
 135 deed of
 courage, and this valor comes of sherris. So that skill
 in the
 weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it
 a-work; and
 140 learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil till sack
 commences it and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes
 it that
 Prince Harry is valiant, for the cold blood he did
 naturally
 145 inherit of his father he hath, like lean, sterile, and
 bare land,
 manured, husbanded, and tilled with excellent endeavor
 of
 drinking good and good store of fertile sherris, that
 150 he is
 become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons,
 the
 first human principle I would teach them should be to
 forswear thin potations and to addict themselves to
 155 sack.

Enter BARDOLPH

How now, Bardolph?

BARDOLPH

The army is discharged all and gone.

FALSTAFF

Let them go. I'll through Gloucestershire, and there
 will I
 160 visit Master Robert Shallow, Esquire. I have him
 already
 temp'ring between my finger and my thumb, and shortly
 will I seal with him. Come away.

Exeunt

BARDOLPH enters.

What's going on, Bardolph?

BARDOLPH

The army has all been discharged and they are leaving.

FALSTAFF

Let them go. I'll go back through Gloucestershire, so that I
 can visit Master Robert Shallow, Esquire, on the way. I
 already have him basically under my thumb, like soft wax.
 And soon I will seal the deal with him. Come on, let's go.

They exit.

Act 4, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter KING Henry, his sons Thomas Duke of CLARENCE and Humphrey Duke of GLOUCESTER, with WARWICK and others

KING

Now, lords, if God doth give successful end
 To this debate that bleedeth at our doors,
 We will our youth lead on to higher fields
 And draw no swords but what are sanctified.
 5 Our navy is addressed, our power collected,
 Our substitutes in absence well invested,
 And everything lies level to our wish.
 Only we want a little personal strength;
 And pause us till these rebels now afoot
 10 Come underneath the yoke of government.

Shakescleare Translation

KING Henry; his sons Thomas, Duke of CLARENCE and Humphrey, Duke of GLOUCESTER; WARWICK; and others enter.

KING

Now, my lords, if God gives us victory in the violent struggle
 that bleeds at our very doorstep, we will lead our young
 men on to better fields, and only fight in holy wars. Our
 navy is ready; our army is assembled; the men who lead in
 my absence have their power; and everything is prepared
 just how we like it. The only thing that's wrong is that I'm
 feeling a bit weak. And so we will have to rest here for a
 while, until the rebels are under our control.

 **6** Falstaff alludes to the belief that buried treasure was guarded by evil spirits or dragons.

behind their captain, the heart. The heart is so inspired by this support that it can carry out any brave action it needs to. This is the courage that comes with sherry. Without any wine, no one is a skilled fighter, for wine gives them that skill. Even education is just worthless gold looked after by the devil  , until it finds some wine and then is ready to be of use. This is how Prince Harry became so brave! He took the cold blood that he inherited from his father, and, just like sterile and bare land, he worked on it, cultivated it, and took care of it by making sure he drank as much good wine as he could—until it became passionate and courageous. If I had a thousand sons, the very first thing I would teach them would be to avoid weak drinks and get themselves addicted to strong wine.

WARWICK

Both which we doubt not but your Majesty
Shall soon enjoy.

KING

Humphrey, my son of Gloucester,
Where is the Prince your brother?

GLOUCESTER

15 I think he's gone to hunt, my lord, at Windsor.

KING

And how accompanied?

GLOUCESTER

I do not know, my lord.

KING

Is not his brother Thomas of Clarence with him?

GLOUCESTER

No, my good lord, he is in presence here.

CLARENCE

20 What would my lord and father?

KING

Nothing but well to thee, Thomas of Clarence.
How chance thou art not with the Prince thy brother?
He loves thee, and thou dost neglect him, Thomas.
Thou hast a better place in his affection
25 Than all thy brothers. Cherish it, my boy,
And noble offices thou mayst effect
Of mediation, after I am dead,
Between his greatness and thy other brethren.
Therefore omit him not; blunt not his love,
30 Nor lose the good advantage of his grace
By seeming cold or careless of his will.
For he is gracious if he be observed;
He hath a tear for pity and a hand
Open as day for melting charity;
35 Yet notwithstanding, being incensed he is flint,
As humorous as winter, and as sudden
As flaws congealed in the spring of day.
His temper therefore must be well observed.
Chide him for faults, and do it reverently,
40 When thou perceive his blood inclined to mirth;
But, being moody, give him time and scope
Till that his passions, like a whale on ground,
Confound themselves with working. Learn this, Thomas,
And thou shalt prove a shelter to thy friends,
45 A hoop of gold to bind thy brothers in,
That the united vessel of their blood,
Mingled with venom of suggestion
(As, force perforce, the age will pour it in),
Shall never leak, though it do work as strong
50 As aconite or rash gunpowder.

CLARENCE

I shall observe him with all care and love.

KING

Why art thou not at Windsor with him, Thomas?

CLARENCE

He is not there today; he dines in London.

KING

And how accompanied? Canst thou tell that?

CLARENCE

55 With Poins and other his continual followers.

WARWICK

We are sure that you will feel better soon, and also that rebels will soon be defeated.

KING

Humphrey, my son of Gloucester, where is the Prince, your brother Hal?

GLOUCESTER

I think he's gone hunting at Windsor, my lord.

KING

Who's with him?

GLOUCESTER

I don't know, my lord.

KING

Isn't his brother Thomas of Clarence with him?

GLOUCESTER

No, my good lord, he's here.

CLARENCE

What would you like, my lord and father?

KING

Nothing but good things for you, Thomas of Clarence. How come you are not with your brother, the Prince? He loves you, and you are neglecting him, Thomas. He loves you more than he loves all your other brothers. Cherish that, my boy. After I'm dead, you will be in the best position to help strengthen the relationship between Hal and your other brothers. Therefore, don't neglect him. Don't ignore his love, and don't damage your relationship with him by seeming cold or uncaring. For he is very caring if he is paid due respect; he can feel pity for others, and he can be generous with charity. Yet, at the same time, when he gets angry, he is as hard as a stone, he is as volatile as winter, and can change as quickly as snowflakes at daybreak. Therefore, watch out for his temper. Tell him off when he does things wrong, but do it gently, when he seems like he's in a happy mood. When he is moody, give him time to work things out himself, so that his moods become like a beached whale, which kills itself trying to get back to the sea. Remember this, Thomas, and you will be able to protect your friends, and be a golden chain that joins all of your brothers together. Once you are all united, the poison and instigation to evil—which in this day and age is almost certain—will never get in, even though it's as strong as aconite  or gunpowder.

 Aconite is a poisonous plant of great potency.

CLARENCE

I'll watch over him with all my care and love.

KING

So why aren't you at Windsor with him, Thomas?

CLARENCE

He's not there today. He's having lunch in London.

KING

Who's he with? Do you know that?

CLARENCE

He's with Poins and all his other normal followers.

KING

Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds,
And he, the noble image of my youth,
Is overspread with them; therefore my grief
Stretches itself beyond the hour of death.
The blood weeps from my heart when I do shape,
In forms imaginary, th' unguided days
And rotten times that you shall look upon
When I am sleeping with my ancestors.
For when his headstrong riot hath no curb,
When rage and hot blood are his counsellors,
When means and lavish manners meet together,
O, with what wings shall his affections fly
Towards fronting peril and opposed decay!

60
65

WARWICK

My gracious lord, you look beyond him quite.
The Prince but studies his companions
Like a strange tongue, wherein, to gain the language,
'Tis needful that the most immodest word
Be looked upon and learned; which, once attained,
Your Highness knows, comes to no further use
But to be known and hated. So, like gross terms,
The Prince will, in the perfectness of time,
Cast off his followers, and their memory
Shall as a pattern or a measure live,
By which his Grace must mete the lives of others,
Turning past evils to advantages.

70
75
80

KING

'Tis seldom when the bee doth leave her comb
In the dead carriion.

Enter WESTMORELAND

Who's here? Westmoreland?

WESTMORELAND

Health to my sovereign, and new happiness
Added to that that I am to deliver.
Prince John your son doth kiss your Grace's hand.
Mowbray, the Bishop Scroop, Hastings, and all
Are brought to the correction of your law.
There is not now a rebel's sword unsheathed
But peace puts forth her olive everywhere.
The manner how this action hath been borne
Here at more leisure may your Highness read
With every course in his particular.

85
90
95

KING

O Westmoreland, thou art a summer bird,
Which ever in the haunch of winter sings
The lifting up of day.

Enter HARCOURT

Here comes more news.

HARCOURT

From enemies heaven keep your Majesty,
And when they stand against you, may they fall
As those that I am come to tell you of.
The Earl Northumberland and the Lord Bardolph,
With a great power of English and of Scots,
Are by the shrieve of Yorkshire overthrown.
The manner and true order of the fight
This packet, please it you, contains at large.

100
105

KING

And wherefore should these good news make me sick?
Will fortune never come with both hands full,
But write her fair words still in foulest letters?
She either gives a stomach and no food—

110

KING

Weeds always try to grow in the best soil. And he is overrun
with them, just like I was in my youth. So I guess my
sadness will have to carry on, even after my death. When I
think about the days of disorder and the rotten times which
are to come—when I will lie sleeping with my ancestors—it
makes the blood weep from my heart. For when Hal's
headstrong, wild behavior has no limits; when anger and
passion are his advisors; when he has the opportunity to do
what he wants, oh, his desires will be like a bird, flying
headfirst into danger and ruin.

WARWICK

My gracious lord, you've shouldn't judge him so harshly.
The Prince is only there to observe his companions, in the
same way as a person learns another language. For in order
to truly understand a language, you need to know even the
worst and most immodest word. You need to hear it, learn
it, so that once you know it—as your Highness is aware—you
can then make sure to avoid using it. So, when the time is
right, the Prince will get rid of his followers, just like vile
language. When he does that, they will only survive in his
memory, as a set of guidelines to judge the actions of
others, and thus turn his past bad behavior to his own
advantage.

KING

It's very rare that a bee will make a new nest in a dead
animal's carcass. Likewise, I will be very surprised if Hal
ever leaves behind his companions.

WESTMORELAND enters.

Who's there? Is that you, Westmoreland?

WESTMORELAND

I wish your Majesty good health, and even more happiness
than my happy news will bring you. Prince John, your son,
sends his love. Mowbray, the Archbishop of York, and
Hastings have all been arrested. There are no rebels left
anywhere. Peace now holds out her olive branch
everywhere. If your Highness wants to know more about
how all of this happened, you can read about it in this letter.

KING

Oh, Westmoreland, you come here like a summer bird,
ready to announce the end of winter and the start of a new
day.

HARCOURT enters.

Look, here comes more news.

HARCOURT

May heaven protect your Majesty from any enemies. And if
enemies do rise up against you, I hope that they die, just
like the men I come to tell you about. The Earl of
Northumberland and the Lord Bardolph—even with their
huge armies of Englishmen and Scotsmen—were defeated
by the sheriff of Yorkshire. This letter will tell you more
about the battle that took place.

KING

Why am I sick when I hear such happy news? Can't Fortune
let us enjoy the things we are supposed to enjoy? Why is
good news so often told with ugly words? Fortune either
gives you a hungry stomach and no food, which is the case

Such are the poor, in health—or else a feast
And takes away the stomach—such are the rich,
That have abundance and enjoy it not.
I should rejoice now at this happy news,
And now my sight fails, and my brain is giddy.
O, me! Come near me, now I am much ill.

115

GLOUCESTER

Comfort, your Majesty.

CLARENCE

O, my royal father!

WESTMORELAND

My sovereign lord, cheer up yourself, look up.

WARWICK

Be patient, princes. You do know these fits
Are with his Highness very ordinary.
Stand from him, give him air. He'll straight be well.

120

CLARENCE

No, no, he cannot long hold out these pangs.
Th' incessant care and labor of his mind
Hath wrought the mure that should confine it in
So thin that life looks through and will break out.

125

GLOUCESTER

The people fear me, for they do observe
Unfathered heirs and loathly births of nature.
The seasons change their manners, as the year
Had found some months asleep and leapt them over.

CLARENCE

130 The river hath thrice flowed, no ebb between,
And the old folk, time's doting chronicles,
Say it did so a little time before
That our great-grandsire, Edward, sicked and died.

130

WARWICK

Speak lower, princes, for the King recovers.

GLOUCESTER

135 This apoplexy will certain be his end.

KING

I pray you, take me up and bear me hence
Into some other chamber. Softly, pray.

They carry the KING to a bed.

Let there be no noise made, my gentle friends,
Unless some dull and favorable hand
140 Will whisper music to my weary spirit.

140

WARWICK

Call for the music in the other room.

KING

Set me the crown upon my pillow here.

CLARENCE

His eye is hollow, and he changes much.

WARWICK

Less noise, less noise.

Enter PRINCE HENRY

of the poor, healthy people. Or it gives you a feast and takes away your appetite, which is the case of rich people who have plenty, but can't enjoy it. I should be rejoicing at this happy news. But instead, I am struggling to see, and everything is all dizzy. Oh! Come and help me please, I'm very sick.

GLOUCESTER

Take care, your Majesty.

CLARENCE

Oh, my royal father!

WESTMORELAND

My lord, I hope that you feel better. Be brave.

WARWICK

Give him a minute, princes. You know that his Highness has fits like this all the time. Stand further away, give him some room to breathe. He'll be all right in a minute.

CLARENCE

No, no, he can't deal with these fits for much longer. The never-ending worries and cares he's been dealing with have disturbed his body so much that he's barely holding it together anymore.

GLOUCESTER

The people of this country are scaring me, because they say that they have seen children with no fathers, and horribly deformed babies. The weather and the seasons are completely out of sorts. It's almost as if the year has discovered that some months were asleep and decided to skip them completely.

CLARENCE

The river has flooded three times, with no breaks in between the floods. The older generations--who are like our very own living history books--say that the last time that this happened was when our great-grandfather, King Edward III, became ill and then died.

WARWICK

Speak quieter, princes, for the King is waking up.

GLOUCESTER

These seizures are going to kill him.

KING

Please, pick me up and take me to a bed. Quietly, please.

They carry the KING to his bed.

Don't make any noise, my dear friends, unless anyone can play some calm, whispering music for my tired spirit to hear.

WARWICK

Tell the musicians to come in from the other room.

KING

Put my crown on the pillow next to me.

CLARENCE

His eyes are lifeless, and he's not himself.

WARWICK

Quiet, quiet.

PRINCE HENRY enters.

PRINCE HENRY

145 Who saw the Duke of Clarence?

CLARENCE

I am here, brother, full of heaviness.

PRINCE HENRY

How now! Rain within doors, and none abroad?
How doth the King?

GLOUCESTER

Exceeding ill.

PRINCE HENRY

150 Heard he the good news yet? Tell it him.

GLOUCESTER

He altered much upon the hearing it.

PRINCE HENRY

If he be sick with joy, he'll recover without physic.

WARWICK

Not so much noise, my lords.—Sweet Prince, speak low.
The King your father is disposed to sleep.

CLARENCE

155 Let us withdraw into the other room.

WARWICK

Will 't please your Grace to go along with us?

PRINCE HENRY

No, I will sit and watch here by the King.

Exeunt all but PRINCE HENRY

Why doth the crown lie there upon his pillow,
Being so troublesome a bedfellow?

160 O polished perturbation, golden care,
That keep'st the ports of slumber open wide
To many a watchful night! sleep with it now;
Yet not so sound and half so deeply sweet
As he whose brow with homely bigger bound
165 Snores out the watch of night. O majesty,
When thou dost pinch thy bearer, thou dost sit
Like a rich armor worn in heat of day,
That scald'st with safety. By his gates of breath
There lies a downy feather which stirs not;
170 Did he suspire, that light and weightless down
Perforce must move. My gracious lord, my father,
This sleep is sound indeed. This is a sleep
That from this golden rigol hath divorced
So many English kings. Thy due from me
175 Is tears and heavy sorrows of the blood,
Which nature, love, and filial tenderness
Shall, O dear father, pay thee plenteously.
My due from thee is this imperial crown,
Which, as immediate as thy place and blood,
180 Derives itself to me. [*he puts the crown on his head*]
Lo,
where it sits,
Which God shall guard. And put the world's whole
strength
185 Into one giant arm, it shall not force
This lineal honor from me. This from thee
Will I to mine leave, as 'tis left to me.

Exit PRINCE HENRY

PRINCE HENRY

Where's the Duke of Clarence?

CLARENCE

I am here and full of sadness, brother.

PRINCE HENRY

What's going on? It's raining  inside, but not outside?
How is the King?

 Here, Prince Hal refers to Clarence's tears.

GLOUCESTER

Extremely sick.

PRINCE HENRY

Has he heard the good news yet? Someone should tell him.

GLOUCESTER

When he heard it, he was deeply moved.

PRINCE HENRY

If he's just sick with happiness, he should get better without needing a doctor.

WARWICK

Less noise, my lords.

[To PRINCE HENRY] Sweet Prince, speak a bit quieter. The King, your father, wants to sleep.

CLARENCE

Let's go and talk in another room.

WARWICK

Would you like to come with us?

PRINCE HENRY

No, I think I will sit here with the King.

Everyone except for PRINCE HENRY exits.

Why is the crown lying there on his pillow, when it is such a difficult bedfellow? Oh, this polished symbol of distress; a golden object of worries, that keeps the eyelids open wide, forced to face night after night without sleep! Sleep with the crown now, but you still don't sleep as soundly or as deeply as the man whose head is only covered by a coarse night-cap, as he snores the night away. Oh, you crown! When you sit on someone's head you pinch at it—you're as irritating as a grand suit or armor worn on a very hot day; you burn the person you're supposed to protect. Look, there's a feather right near my father's lips and it's not moving. If he were breathing, that feather would have to be moving. Oh my gracious lord, my father, this is definitely a deep sleep. This is the type of sleep which has taken the crown off the heads of so many English kings. Now I owe you tears, and a heavy grief. Nature, my love, and my care for you as your son will make sure that I give you plenty of tears. You have left me this crown, which I must claim, as your true heir. [*He puts the crown on his head.*] Look, here it sits on my head, and now God will protect it. Even if all the strength in the world was put into one giant arm, it would not be able to take this honor from me. I will eventually leave this to my son, as you have left it to me.

PRINCE HENRY exits.

KING

[waking] Warwick! Gloucester! Clarence!

Enter WARWICK, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and the rest

CLARENCE

Doth the King call?

WARWICK

190 What would your Majesty? How fares your Grace?

KING

Why did you leave me here alone, my lords?

CLARENCE

We left the Prince my brother here, my liege,
Who undertook to sit and watch by you.

KING

The Prince of Wales? Where is he? Let me see him.
195 He is not here.

WARWICK

This door is open. He is gone this way.

GLOUCESTER

He came not through the chamber where we stayed.

KING

Where is the crown? Who took it from my pillow?

WARWICK

When we withdrew, my liege, we left it here.

KING

200 The Prince hath ta'en it hence. Go seek him out.
Is he so hasty that he doth suppose my sleep my death?
Find him, my Lord of Warwick. Chide him hither.

Exit WARWICK

This part of his conjoins with my disease
And helps to end me. See, sons, what things you are,
205 How quickly nature falls into revolt
When gold becomes her object!
For this the foolish overcareful fathers
Have broke their sleep with thoughts,
Their brains with care, their bones with industry.
210 For this they have engrossed and piled up
The canker'd heaps of strange-achievèd gold.
For this they have been thoughtful to invest
Their sons with arts and martial exercise s—
When, like the bee, tolling from every flower
215 The virtuous sweets,
Our thighs packed with wax, our mouths with honey,
We bring it to the hive and, like the bees,
Are murdered for our pains. This bitter taste
Yield his engrossments to the ending father.

Enter WARWICK

220 Now, where is he that will not stay so long
Till his friend sickness hath determined me?

WARWICK

My lord, I found the Prince in the next room,
Washing with kindly tears his gentle cheeks,
With such a deep demeanor in great sorrow
225 That tyranny, which never quaffed but blood,
Would, by beholding him, have washed his knife
With gentle eyedrops. He is coming hither.

KING

[Waking up] Warwick! Gloucester! Clarence!

WARWICK, GLOUCESTER, CLARENCE, and other lords enter.

CLARENCE

Did you call for us?

WARWICK

What can we do for you, your Majesty? How are you feeling?

KING

Why did you leave me here alone, my lords?

CLARENCE

We left you here with the Prince, my brother, who said that
he wanted to sit with you.

KING

The Prince of Wales? Hal? Where is he? Let me see him. He's
not here.

WARWICK

This door is open. He must have gone this way.

GLOUCESTER

He didn't come through the room that we were in.

KING

Where is my crown? Who has moved it from my pillow?

WARWICK

When we left the room it was still there, my lord.

KING

Then the Prince must have taken it. Go and find him. Is he
so quick to presume that my sleep is actually my death?
Find him, my Lord of Warwick. Scold him, and bring him
back here.

WARWICK exits.

Hal's actions here join up with my illness and will help to
kill me. See, sons, look at what kind of people we are. Look
at how quickly even family loyalty can be forgotten, when
money is involved. This is what has made foolish, overly
caring fathers ruin their sleep, by thinking about it. They
have ruined their brains by caring and their bodies by
working too hard. This is what happens to men who have
built up large sums of money from strange sources. They
have used their money to give their sons good educations
and to train them in military matters. We fathers are like
bees, going to every flower to get the best honey. We only
bring it back to the hive when our thighs are full of wax and
our mouths full of honey. And in the hive, we are killed by
our offspring. This is the same for a dying father, no matter
what good he has done in his life.

WARWICK enters.

Now where is that hasty boy, who can't even wait around
for sickness--his friend--to finish me off?

WARWICK

My lord, I found the Prince in the next room, with tears
flowing down his sweet cheeks. He had such a sad look on
his face that even cruelty--which has never feasted on
anything but blood--would see him and wash his own knife
with gentle tears. The Prince is coming here right now.

KING

But wherefore did he take away the crown?

Enter PRINCE HENRY

Lo where he comes.—Come hither to me, Harry.—
230 Depart the chamber. Leave us here alone.

Exeunt all but the KING and PRINCE HENRY

PRINCE HENRY

I never thought to hear you speak again.

KING

Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought.
I stay too long by thee; I weary thee.
Dost thou so hunger for mine empty chair
235 That thou wilst needs invest thee with my honors
Before thy hour be ripe? O foolish youth,
Thou seek'st the greatness that will overwhelm thee.
Stay but a little, for my cloud of dignity
Is held from falling with so weak a wind
240 That it will quickly drop. My day is dim.
Thou hast stol'n that which after some few hours
Were thine without offense, and at my death
Thou hast sealed up my expectation.
Thy life did manifest thou loved'st me not,
245 And thou wilst have me die assured of it.
Thou hid'st a thousand daggers in thy thoughts,
Which thou hast whetted on thy stony heart
To stab at half an hour of my life.
What, canst thou not forbear me half an hour?
250 Then get thee gone and dig my grave thyself,
And bid the merry bells ring to thine ear
That thou art crownèd, not that I am dead.
Let all the tears that should bedew my hearse
Be drops of balm to sanctify thy head;
255 Only compound me with forgotten dust.
Give that which gave thee life unto the worms.
Pluck down my officers, break my decrees,
For now a time is come to mock at form.
Harry the Fifth is crowned. Up, vanity,
260 Down, royal state, all you sage counsellors, hence,
And to the English court assemble now,
From every region, apes of idleness.
Now, neighbor confines, purge you of your scum.
Have you a ruffian that will swear, drink, dance,
265 Revel the night, rob, murder, and commit
The oldest sins the newest kind of ways?
Be happy, he will trouble you no more.
England shall double gild his treble guilt.
England shall give him office, honor, might,
270 For the fifth Harry from curbed license plucks
The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog
Shall flesh his tooth on every innocent.
O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows!
When that my care could not withhold thy riots,
275 What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?
O, thou wilt be a wilderness again,
Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants.

KING

But why did he take away the crown?

PRINCE HENRY enters.

Look, here he comes.

[To PRINCE HENRY] Come here to me, Harry.

[To the others] Everyone else can go. Leave us here alone.

Everyone except for the KING and PRINCE HENRY exits.

PRINCE HENRY

I never thought that I'd hear your voice again.

KING

You thought that, Harry, because you hoped it was the case. I have stayed here too long and you're tired of me. Are you so eager to be King that you're prepared to take the honors that come with it before it's the right time? Oh, you foolish young boy: you are eager for a power which will one day overwhelm you. Just wait a little while. The little amount of dignity and power that I do have left is so weak that the slightest breeze could make it fall apart. My life is almost over. You have stolen something which is going to be yours in a few hours anyway. And even on my deathbed, you have confirmed my fears about you. For your entire life, it seemed like you didn't love me. And now I can die knowing that it's true. Your thoughts are full of a thousand daggers, which you have sharpened on your hard heart-- ready to stab me, even though I don't have much time left. Can't you give me my last half hour? Then go and dig my grave yourself, and ring the bells to mark your own coronation, rather than my death. Let any tears which would have gone on my hearse, instead be used as holy water to bless your head--just cover me in dirt instead. Give the body that gave you life to the worms. Get rid of my officers; break my laws. For now is the time to mock law and order. Now Henry the Fifth  will be crowned. Now let's all be foolish, and forget the rules of our state. All of the wise counsellors might as well get going. Now the English court can be made up of stupid apes from all parts of the country. Now, neighboring countries, give us your scum. Do you have any scoundrels who swear, drink, dance, enjoy the night, rob, murder, and commit even the oldest sins in the newest ways? Be happy, you can get rid of him. English will paint over his guilt and sin with gold. England will give him a position, honor, power, because Henry the Fifth has taken off any limitations of bad behavior. He's taken the muzzle off the wild dog and now it is free to attack any innocent person. Oh, my poor kingdom, already damaged from these civil wars! When even my work and care couldn't stop these rebellions, what's going to happen when rebellions are your master? Oh, you will become a wilderness again, and all of the wolves you used to spend time with will live with you again.

 Henry the Fifth will be Prince Hal's royal title when he becomes king.

PRINCE HENRY

O pardon me, my liege! But for my tears,
The moist impediments unto my speech,
I had forestalled this dear and deep rebuke
Ere you with grief had spoke and I had heard
The course of it so far. There is your crown,
And He that wears the crown immortally
Long guard it yours. If I affect it more
Than as your honor and as your renown,
Let me no more from this obedience rise,
Which my most inward true and dutious spirit
Teacheth this prostrate and exterior bending.
God witness with me, when I here came in
And found no course of breath within your Majesty,
How cold it struck my heart! If I do feign,
O, let me in my present wildness die
And never live to show th' incredulous world
The noble change that I have purposèd.
Coming to look on you, thinking you dead,
And dead almost, my liege, to think you were,
I spake unto this crown as having sense,
And thus upbraided it: "The care on thee depending
Hath fed upon the body of my father;
Therefore thou best of gold art worst of gold.
Other, less fine in carat, is more precious,
Preserving life in med'cine potable;
But thou, most fine, most honored, most renowned,
Hast eat thy bearer up." Thus, my most royal liege,
Accusing it, I put it on my head
To try with it, as with an enemy
That had before my face murdered my father,
The quarrel of a true inheritor.
But if it did infect my blood with joy
Or swell my thoughts to any strain of pride,
If any rebel or vain spirit of mine
Did with the least affection of a welcome
Give entertainment to the might of it,
Let God forever keep it from my head
And make me as the poorest vassal is
That doth with awe and terror kneel to it.

KING

O my son,
God put it in thy mind to take it hence
That thou mightst win the more thy father's love,
Pleading so wisely in excuse of it.
Come hither, Harry, sit thou by my bed
And hear, I think, the very latest counsel
That ever I shall breathe. God knows, my son,
By what bypaths and indirect crook'd ways
I met this crown, and I myself know well
How troublesome it sat upon my head.
To thee it shall descend with better quiet,
Better opinion, better confirmation,
For all the soil of the achievement goes
With me into the earth. It seemed in me
But as an honor snatched with boist'rous hand,
And I had many living to upbraid
My gain of it by their assistances,
Which daily grew to quarrel and to bloodshed,
Wounding supposèd peace. All these bold fears
Thou see'st with peril I have answerèd,
For all my reign hath been but as a scene
Acting that argument. And now my death
Changes the mood, for what in me was purchased
Falls upon thee in a more fairer sort.
So thou the garland wear'st successively.
Yet though thou stand'st more sure than I could do,
Thou art not firm enough, since griefs are green,
And all my friends, which thou must make thy friends,
Have but their stings and teeth newly ta'en out,
By whose fell working I was first advanced
And by whose power I well might lodge a fear
To be again displaced; which to avoid,
I cut them off and had a purpose now
To lead out many to the Holy Land,

PRINCE HENRY

I am sorry, my lord! If my tears hadn't stopped me from speaking earlier, I would have stopped this harsh criticism before you had said these things in your grief, and before I had to hear what you would say. Here is your crown. And I wish that God--who looks after the crown forever--would let you keep it for as long as possible. If I care about that crown as anything more than a representation of your honor and your reputation, then let me never get up from kneeling at your feet. My truest and most dutiful feelings make me bow down and kneel before you. With God as my witness, when I came in here before, and realized that you weren't breathing, it made my blood cold! If that's a lie, then let me die like the wild youth I have been, and never live to show the unbelieving world how much I was going to change. When I looked at you and thought you were dead--and indeed it made me almost feel dead to think that you were--I spoke to the crown as if it could talk back to me. I scolded it, saying, "The worry and pain that you've caused has destroyed my father's body. So even though you may look like the best piece of gold, you are actually the worst. Other gold, even if its quality is worse, is worth more to us because it can bring us good health when we drink it. But you--the finest, most honored, most renowned piece of gold--have destroyed the person who has worn you. Therefore, my royal father, as I told this crown what I thought, I put it on my head, to fight against it--like it was some enemy who had killed my father while I stood there and watched. That is the action of a loyal son. If it made me happy in any way, or made me arrogant, or if even the slightest part of me wanted to welcome it and the power it holds, let God keep it from me forever. I would rather be the poorest servant that bows before it in awe and fear.

A Here, Hal references a drug which was meant to contain gold, and was thought to cure diseases.

KING

Oh, my son. God encouraged you to take it from me so that you would have the chance to plead your case and make me love you even more. Come here, Harry, and sit next to me on my bed, and listen to what I think will be the last advice that I will ever give anyone. God knows, my son, the strange paths and indirect ways that got me this crown. And I know only too well how much trouble wearing it has caused for me. It will come to you in a time of greater peace, where you will have better support and more approval. For all of the questions about how I got the crown end with me. On me, this crown seemed like an honor that had been snatched with a violent hand. Many people lived to tell me how they had helped me get it. This grew every day until it turned into battles and bloodshed, destroying the supposed peace of the time. You can see the impact that fighting all of these battles has had on me, since my entire reign has been like a scene of a play--and we repeat the same plot again and again. But now my death changes all of that, for you will not inherit what I bought. So you will wear the crown like you're meant to--because of the succession. But even though your claim to the throne is much stronger than mine was, it's still not strong enough. Anger and violence are still very recent, and all of my old friends--whom you now need to befriend--have only just been overpowered. These men originally got me the crown, and I was always afraid that the same people would overthrow me. To avoid this, I defeated their rebellion and was going to lead an army to the Holy Land, in case doing nothing might make them consider my crown and the possibilities it could bring them. Therefore, my Harry, make sure that you force distracted minds to focus on fighting foreign battles 5 . Military success abroad will help people to forget about the memories of the past. I would say more to you, but my lungs are so tired that I can't speak anymore. God forgive

5 Here, King Henry foreshadows Hal's battles in France, which form a large part of the plot of this play's sequel, *Henry V*.

Lest rest and lying still might make them look
Too near unto my state. Therefore, my Harry,
Be it thy course to busy giddy minds
With foreign quarrels; that action, hence borne out,
May waste the memory of the former days.
More would I, but my lungs are wasted so
That strength of speech is utterly denied me.
How I came by the crown, O God forgive,
And grant it may with thee in true peace live.

355

PRINCE HENRY

My gracious liege,
You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me.
Then plain and right must my possession be,
Which I with more than with a common pain
'Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain.

360

*Enter Lord John of LANCASTER***KING**

Look, look, here comes my John of Lancaster.

LANCASTER

Health, peace, and happiness to my royal father.

KING

Thou bring'st me happiness and peace, son John,
But health, alack, with youthful wings is flown
From this bare withered trunk. Upon thy sight
370 My worldly business makes a period.
Where is my Lord of Warwick?

PRINCE HENRY

My Lord of Warwick.

*Enter WARWICK and others***KING**

Doth any name particular belong
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon?

WARWICK

375 'Tis called Jerusalem, my noble lord.

KING

Laud be to God! Even there my life must end.
It hath been prophesied to me many years,
I should not die but in Jerusalem,
Which vainly I supposed the Holy Land.
380 But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie.
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die.

Exeunt

me for how I got the crown, and please give it to my son and
let him live in peace with it.

PRINCE HENRY

My gracious father, you won it, wore it, kept it, and now you
give it to me. Therefore, my possession of it must be honest
and true, and I will work as much as I need to, in order to
defend this crown against anyone who tries to take it.

*Lord John of LANCASTER enters.***KING**

Look, look, here comes my son, John of Lancaster.

LANCASTER

Good health, peace, and happiness to my royal father.

KING

You bring me happiness and peace, John, my son. But
sadly, good health has flown quickly away from my tired,
old body. Now that I've seen you, there's nothing more that
I need to do. Where is my Lord of Warwick?

PRINCE HENRY

My Lord of Warwick!

*WARWICK and other lords enter.***KING**

Does the room that I collapsed in have a name?

WARWICK

It's called the Jerusalem room, my noble lord.

KING

Praise be to God! Then that's where I need to die. For years,
I've been hearing a prophecy that I am going to die in
Jerusalem--which I foolishly thought meant that I would
die in the Holy Land. But now take me to that room. That's
where I will lie down for the last time. In *that* Jerusalem,
Harry must die.

They all exit.

Act 5, Scene 1

Shakespeare*Enter SHALLOW, FALSTAFF, PAGE, and BARDOLPH***SHALLOW**

By cock and pie, sir, you shall not away tonight.—What,
Davy, I say!

FALSTAFF

You must excuse me, Master Robert Shallow.

Shakescleare Translation*SHALLOW, FALSTAFF, PAGE, and BARDOLPH enter.***SHALLOW**

By God, you're not going anywhere tonight.

[Shouting offstage] Hey, Davy, I say!

FALSTAFF

You must excuse me, Master Robert Shallow.

SHALLOW

I will not excuse you. You shall not be excused.
 5 Excuses
 shall not be admitted. There is no excuse shall serve.
 You
 shall not be excused.—Why, Davy!

Enter DAVY

DAVY

Here, sir.

SHALLOW

10 Davy, Davy, Davy, let me see, Davy, let me see,
 Davy,
 let me see. Yea, marry, William cook, bid him come
 hither.—Sir John, you shall not be excused.

DAVY

Marry, sir, thus: those precepts cannot be served. And
 15 again,
 sir, shall we sow the hade land with wheat?

SHALLOW

With red wheat, Davy. But for William cook, are there
 no
 young pigeons?

DAVY

20 Yes, sir. Here is now the smith's note for shoeing and
 plow
 irons.

SHALLOW

Let it be cast and paid.—Sir John, you shall not be
 excused.

DAVY

25 Now, sir, a new link to the bucket must needs be had.
 And,
 sir, do you mean to stop any of William's wages about
 the
 sack he lost the other day at Hinckley Fair?

SHALLOW

30 He shall answer it. Some pigeons, Davy, a couple of
 short-
 legged hens, a joint of mutton, and any pretty little
 tiny kickshaws, tell William cook.

DAVY

Doth the man of war stay all night, sir?

SHALLOW

35 Yea, Davy. I will use him well. A friend i' th' court
 is better
 than a penny in purse. Use his men well, Davy, for they
 are
 arrant knaves and will backbite.

DAVY

40 No worse than they are back-bitten, sir, for they have
 marvellous foul linen.

SHALLOW

Well-conceited, Davy. About thy business, Davy.

SHALLOW

I'm not going to excuse you. You shall not be excused.
 Excuses will not be allowed. No excuse is good enough, you
 will not be excused!

[Shouting offstage] Hey, Davy!

DAVY enters.

DAVY

Here, sir.

SHALLOW

Davy, Davy, Day, Davy, let me see, Davy. Let me see, Davy,
 let me see. Yes, all right, go and tell William the cook to
 come here.

[To FALSTAFF] Sir John, you are not excused.

DAVY

Well, sir, the thing is that those warrants can't be served.
 And, I repeat, sir, is it time to plant wheat at the side of the
fields?

 In the original text, Davy refers to "hade land"—a strip at the side of an arable field where the plough turns. This land would only be cultivated as a last resort.

SHALLOW

It's time to plant some red wheat, Davy. As for William the
 cook, are there any young pigeons?

DAVY

Yes, sir. Here is the bill from the blacksmith for the
 horseshoes and the plow irons.

SHALLOW

Add it all up and then pay it.

[To FALSTAFF] Anyway, Sir John, you will not be excused.

DAVY

Now, sir, we need to get a new rope for the bucket. Also, sir,
 are you going to make William pay for that wine he lost the
 other day at Hinckley Fair?

SHALLOW

He will pay for it. Davy, tell William the cook to prepare
 some pigeons, a couple of short-legged hens, a shoulder of
 lamb, and any pretty little fancy side dishes he wants to
 make.

DAVY

Is the soldier going to stay for the whole night, sir?

SHALLOW

Yes, Davy, and I'm going to take very good care of him.
 Having a friend in the court is more useful than having
 money in your purse. Look after his men, Davy—they're
 complete rascals and will bite at you.

DAVY

Sir, it can't be worse than they've already been bitten, for
 their clothes definitely have fleas.

SHALLOW

Very witty. Now run along, Davy, you have things to do.

DAVY

I beseech you, sir, to countenance William Visor of
Woncot
against Clement Perkes o' th' hill.

45

SHALLOW

There is many complaints, Davy, against that Visor.
That
Visor is an arrant knave, on my knowledge.

DAVY

I grant your Worship that he is a knave, sir, but yet,
God
forbid, sir, but a knave should have some countenance
at his
friend's request. An honest man, sir, is able to speak
for
himself when a knave is not. I have served your Worship
truly, sir, this eight years; an if I cannot once or
twice in a
quarter bear out a knave against an honest man, I have
a very little credit with your Worship. The knave is
mine honest friend, sir;
therefore I beseech you let him be countenanced.

55

60

SHALLOW

Go to, I say he shall have no wrong. Look about, Davy.

Exit DAVY

Where are you, Sir John? Come, come, come, off with
your
boots.—Give me your hand, Master Bardolph.

65

BARDOLPH

I am glad to see your Worship.

SHALLOW

I thank thee with all my heart, kind Master Bardolph,
to the
PAGE] and welcome, my tall fellow.—Come, Sir John.

70 I'll follow you, good Master Robert Shallow.

Exit SHALLOW

Bardolph, look to our horses.

Exeunt BARDOLPH and PAGE

If I were sawed into quantities, I should make four
dozen of
such bearded hermits' staves as Master Shallow. It is a
75 wonderful thing to see the semblable coherence of his
men's
spirits and his. They, by observing of him, do bear
themselves like foolish justices; he, by conversing
with
80 them, is turned into a justice-like servingman. Their
spirits
are so married in conjunction with the participation of
society that they flock together in consent like so
many wild
geese. If I had a suit to Master Shallow, I would humor
his
85 men with the imputation of being near their master; if
to his
men, I would curry with Master Shallow that no man
could
90

DAVY

And I beg you, sir, to rule in favor of William Visor of Woncot,
in his case against Clement Perkes of the hill.

SHALLOW

Davy, there have been many complaints made about that
Visor. He is a complete rogue, as far as I know.

DAVY

I will admit that he is a bit of a rogue, sir. But, by God, even
a rogue should be granted a favor when his friend asks for
it. Sir, an honest man is allowed to speak for himself,
whereas a rogue cannot. I have served your Worship
faithfully for eight years, sir. And if I can't convince you to
support the rogue instead of the honest man every once in
a while, then I clearly don't mean that much to you. This
rogue is my true friend, sir, so I'm asking you to help him
out here.

SHALLOW

Enough of that, I promise you he won't be wronged. Now,
off you go, Davy.

DAVY exits.

Where are you, Sir John? Come, come, come, take your
boots off.

[To BARDOLPH] Shake my hand, Master Bardolph.

BARDOLPH

I am happy to see your Worship.

SHALLOW

I thank you with all my heart, kind Master Bardolph.

[To the PAGE] Welcome to you, you tall fellow.

[To FALSTAFF] Come on, Sir John.

FALSTAFF

I'm right behind you, good Master Robert Shallow.

SHALLOW exits.

Bardolph, get the horses ready.

BARDOLPH and PAGE exit.

If I were cut into little bits, I would make four dozen
bearded sticks--and that would look just like Master
Shallow. It's lovely to see the obvious similarities between
his men's characters and his own. They've clearly been
watching him, and now they all act like foolish judges as
well. Likewise, he has been talking to them and has become
something in between a judge and a servant. Their spirits
are joined in such an intimate union that when they come
together it is like a flock of wild geese flying together. If I
needed a favor from Master Shallow, I would pretend to his
men that I was a close friend of their master. If I needed
something from his men, I would flatter Master Shallow,
telling him that he was the best master to his servants.
What is certain is that both the behavior of a wise man and
that of a stupid one can be caught from other men, in the
same way we catch diseases. Therefore, it is important to
be careful about the company you keep. I could think up
enough to say about this Shallow to keep Prince Harry
laughing for at least a year. And, a year from now, the

better command his servants. It is certain that either
wise
bearing or ignorant carriage is caught, as men take
diseases,
95 one of another. Therefore let men take heed of their
company. I will devise matter enough out of this
Shallow to keep Prince Harry in continual laughter the
wearing out of six fashions, which is four terms, or two
actions, and a' shall laugh without intervallums. O, it
100 is much that a lie with a slight oath and a jest with a
sad brow will do with a fellow that never had the ache
in his shoulders. O, you shall see him laugh till his
face be like a wet cloak ill laid up.

SHALLOW

[within] Sir John.

FALSTAFF

105 I come, Master Shallow; I come, Master Shallow.

Exit

fashions will have changed six times, two lawsuits will have been decided, and Harry will still be laughing without stopping. Oh, a lie told with some honesty and a joke that is delivered with some seriousness will be enjoyed by a lad who's young and carefree, not weighed down by anything. You will see him laugh until his face looks like a wet coat that's been hung up badly to dry--that's how wrinkled it will be.

SHALLOW

[Offstage] Sir John.

FALSTAFF

I'm coming, Master Shallow, I'm coming.

He exits.

Act 5, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter WARWICK and the Lord CHIEF JUSTICE

WARWICK

How now, my Lord Chief Justice, whither away?

CHIEF JUSTICE

How doth the King?

WARWICK

Exceeding well. His cares are now all ended.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I hope, not dead.

WARWICK

5 He's walked the way of nature,
And to our purposes he lives no more.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I would his Majesty had called me with him.
The service that I truly did his life
Hath left me open to all injuries.

WARWICK

10 Indeed, I think the young King loves you not.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I know he doth not, and do arm myself
To welcome the condition of the time,
Which cannot look more hideously upon me
Than I have drawn it in my fantasy.

Enter LANCASTER, CLARENCE, GLOUCESTER, and others

WARWICK

15 Here come the heavy issue of dead Harry.
O, that the living Harry had the temper
Of he the worst of these three gentlemen!
How many nobles then should hold their places
That must strike sail to spirits of vile sort!

Shakescleare Translation

WARWICK and the Lord CHIEF JUSTICE enter.

WARWICK

How's it going, my Lord Chief Justice? Where are you going?

CHIEF JUSTICE

How is the King?

WARWICK

Very well. All of his cares are gone.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I hope you don't mean he's dead.

WARWICK

He's followed the path nature intended. And for our
purposes, he is no longer alive.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I wish his Majesty had taken me with him. The work that I
did for him when he was alive has put me in danger now
that he's dead.

WARWICK

Indeed, especially as I don't think the young King cares for
you.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I know he doesn't, and I need to be prepared for what's
going to happen now. I'm hoping it can't be any worse than
what I've pictured in my head.

LANCASTER, CLARENCE, GLOUCESTER, and others enter.

WARWICK

Here come the sad children of the dead king. Oh, if only the
living Harry had the personality of the worst of these three
gentlemen! Then a lot of noblemen would be safe in their
positions, whereas now they will be forced to leave and let
nasty men take over their roles.

CHIEF JUSTICE

O God, I fear all will be overturned.

LANCASTER

Good morrow, cousin Warwick, good morrow.

GLOUCESTER AND CLARENCE

Good morrow, cousin.

LANCASTER

We meet like men that had forgot to speak.

WARWICK

We do remember, but our argument
Is all too heavy to admit much talk.

LANCASTER

Well, peace be with him that hath made us heavy.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Peace be with us, lest we be heavier.

GLOUCESTER

O, good my lord, you have lost a friend indeed,
And I dare swear you borrow not that face
Of seeming sorrow; it is sure your own.

LANCASTER

Though no man be assured what grace to find,
You stand in coldest expectation.
I am the sorrier; would 'twere otherwise.

CLARENCE

Well, you must now speak Sir John Falstaff fair,
Which swims against your stream of quality.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sweet princes, what I did I did in honor,
Led by th' impartial conduct of my soul;
And never shall you see that I will beg
A ragged and forestalled remission.
If truth and upright innocency fail me,
I'll to the King my master that is dead
And tell him who hath sent me after him.

WARWICK

Here comes the Prince.

Enter PRINCE HENRY (now King Henry V), attended

CHIEF JUSTICE

Good morrow, and God save your Majesty.

PRINCE HENRY

This new and gorgeous garment majesty
Sits not so easy on me as you think. —
Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear.
This is the English, not the Turkish court;
Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
But Harry Harry. Yet be sad, good brothers,
For, by my faith, it very well becomes you.
Sorrow so royally in you appears
That I will deeply put the fashion on
And wear it in my heart. Why then, be sad.
But entertain no more of it, good brothers,
Than a joint burden laid upon us all.
For me, by heaven, I bid you be assured,
I'll be your father and your brother too.
Let me but bear your love, I'll bear your cares.
Yet weep that Harry's dead, and so will I,
But Harry lives that shall convert those tears

CHIEF JUSTICE

Oh God, I am scared that everything is going to change.

LANCASTER

Good morning, Warwick, good morning.

GLOUCESTER AND CLARENCE

Good morning to you.

LANCASTER

We're all acting like men who have forgotten how to speak.

WARWICK

We remember how to speak, but the subject we have to talk about is too sad for us to want to say much about it.

LANCASTER

Well, peace be with the late king, the man who has made us sad.

CHIEF JUSTICE

And peace be with us, or we'll be even sadder.

GLOUCESTER

Oh, my good lord, you have certainly lost a friend. I am sure that the sorrow you wear on your face is not borrowed. It is truly yours.

LANCASTER

Although no man knows what is going to happen to him, you get used to expecting very little from life. I am sorry, I wish things could be different.

CLARENCE

Well, now we're even going to be expected to say nice things about Sir John Falstaff—which goes against the normal behavior of noble people.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sweet princes, everything I have done, I did honorably--motivated by impartiality and my moral nature. You will never see me horribly begging for a pardon only for the pardon to be taken away again. If truth and real innocence aren't enough to save me, then I will follow after my dead master, the late King, and tell him who has sent me.

WARWICK

Here comes the Prince.

PRINCE HENRY (now King Henry V) and attendants enter.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Good morning, and may God save your Majesty.

PRINCE HENRY

This new addition of the word "majesty" doesn't suit me as well you might think.

[To LANCASTER, CLARENCE, and GLOUCESTER] Brothers, your sadness seems to be mixed with some fear. This is the English court, not the Turkish one. I am not like Amurath, who killed all of his brothers when he succeeded the late king Amurath. I'm just a Harry, following another Harry. It's all right to be sad, my good brothers. And honestly, it suits you. You all look so grand in your sorrow that I will try and put it on as well, and will wear it in my heart. Be sad, my good brothers. But think of this sadness as a burden which we must all share. I want you to know that as far as I'm concerned, I will be both your father and your brother as well. Give me your love, and I will take care of you. For now, keep crying for the dead Harry, and I will too. But there is

By number into hours of happiness.

PRINCES

We hope no otherwise from your Majesty.

PRINCE HENRY

You all look strangely on me. *[to the CHIEF JUSTICE]*
And you
most.
You are, I think, assured I love you not.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I am assured, if I be measured rightly,
Your Majesty hath no just cause to hate me.

PRINCE HENRY

No?
How might a prince of my great hopes forget
So great indignities you laid upon me?
What, rate, rebuke, and roughly send to prison
Th' immediate heir of England? Was this easy?
May this be washed in Lethe and forgotten?

CHIEF JUSTICE

I then did use the person of your father;
The image of his power lay then in me.
And in th' administration of his law,
Whiles I was busy for the commonwealth,
Your Highness pleased to forget my place,
The majesty and power of law and justice,
The image of the King whom I presented,
And struck me in my very seat of judgment,
Whereon, as an offender to your father,
I gave bold way to my authority
And did commit you. If the deed were ill,
Be you contented, wearing now the garland,
To have a son set your decrees at nought?
To pluck down justice from your awful bench?
To trip the course of law and blunt the sword
That guards the peace and safety of your person?
Nay more, to spurn at your most royal image
And mock your workings in a second body?
Question your royal thoughts, make the case yours;
Be now the father and propose a son,
Hear your own dignity so much profaned,
See your most dreadful laws so loosely slighted,
Behold yourself so by a son disdained,
And then imagine me taking your part
And in your power soft silencing your son.
After this cold considerance, sentence me,
And, as you are a king, speak in your state
What I have done that misbecame my place,
My person, or my liege's sovereignty.

PRINCE HENRY

You are right, justice, and you weigh this well.
Therefore still bear the balance and the sword.
And I do wish your honors may increase
Till you do live to see a son of mine
Offend you and obey you as I did.
So shall I live to speak my father's words:
"Happy am I that have a man so bold
That dares do justice on my proper son;
And not less happy, having such a son
That would deliver up his greatness so
Into the hands of justice." You did commit me,
For which I do commit into your hand
Th' unstainèd sword that you have used to bear,
With this remembrance: that you use the same
With the like bold, just, and impartial spirit
As you have done 'gainst me. There is my hand.
You shall be as a father to my youth,
My voice shall sound as you do prompt mine ear,

still a living Harry who will gradually change those tears
into hours of happiness.

PRINCES

We hope for nothing more from your Majesty.

PRINCE HENRY

You are all still looking at me strangely, though.
[To the CHIEF JUSTICE] You most of all. You are convinced
that I do not love you, isn't that right?

CHIEF JUSTICE

I am certain that, if you judge me fairly, you should have no
reason to hate me.

PRINCE HENRY

No? How could a great prince forget the awful things you
did to me? What, did you think you could judge, punish, and
violently send to prison the next heir of England? Did you
find this an easy thing to do? Do you think your
wrongs can now just be washed in the Lethe  River
and forgotten?

 In Greek mythology, the Lethe
was a river in Hades, whose waters
were meant to make the dead forget
everything.

CHIEF JUSTICE

I was acting on behalf of your father, with the power and
responsibility that he had given me. And in terms of the law,
while I was busy keeping the country safe, you ignored my
rank and the authority and power of law and justice that I
had, as a representative of the King. You hit me in the head--
the very location of my judgement. And since this action
went against your father's laws, I used my power as I was
meant to and arrested you. If that was the wrong thing to
do, then are you prepared, now that you wear the crown, to
have a son who ignores all of your laws? A son who mocks
the judges that enforce these laws? A son who disrupts the
law and blunts the swords that looks after your own peace
and safety? Or even worse, mocks you and the actions
taken by the men you have chosen to work for you? Ask
yourself these questions, and put yourself in his position.
Think of yourself as a father and imagine a son who
disrespects your dignity and so easily ignores your most
important laws. Think about how it would feel to be
scorned by such a son. Then imagine that I support you,
and use your power to gently silence your son. Sentence me
only after you have considered all of this. Now that you are
King, tell me what I have done to overstep my role, my
person, or my lord's power.

PRINCE HENRY

You are right, Justice. And you have made your case very
well. Therefore, keep your role as a judge and an enforcer of
the law. I hope that your honors will increase and you will
even live to see a son of mine offend you and then obey
you--just as I have done. In that way, I will live to speak my
father's words, "I am happy to have a man who is brave
enough to even punish my own son; I am just as happy that
my son is prepared to give up his greatness in the name of
the law." You did arrest me, and for that I ask you to
continue in your role, remembering this: you must always
be as brave, just, and impartial as you have been with me.
Shake my hand. You will be like a father to me in my young
age, and I will say the things that you whisper in my ear. I
will bow to you and will be humble in my ideas, needing
your years of experience and wise ideas to help me.

[To LANCASTER, CLARENCE, and GLOUCESTER] And,
princes, I am asking you to please believe me about this. My

And I will stoop and humble my intents
To your well-practiced wise directions.—
125 And, princes all, believe me, I beseech you:
My father is gone wild into his grave,
For in his tomb lie my affections,
And with his spirit sadly I survive
130 To mock the expectation of the world,
To frustrate prophecies, and to raze out
Rotten opinion, who hath writ me down
After my seeming. The tide of blood in me
Hath proudly flowed in vanity till now.
Now doth it turn and ebb back to the sea,
135 Where it shall mingle with the state of floods
And flow henceforth in formal majesty.
Now call we our high court of parliament,
And let us choose such limbs of noble counsel
That the great body of our state may go
140 In equal rank with the best governed nation;
That war, or peace, or both at once, may be
As things acquainted and familiar to us,
In which you, father, shall have foremost hand.
Our coronation done, we will accite,
145 As I before remembered, all our state.
And, God consigning to my good intents,
No prince nor peer shall have just cause to say
God shorten Harry's happy life one day.

Exeunt

wildness is buried with my father; my passions now lie in his tomb. His sensible spirit now lies in me, and I am ready to prove the world wrong, defying their expectations of me. I am going to challenge their predictions, and will destroy the bad opinions of me held by people who judged me based on what I seemed to be like in the past. My actions, the tide of my blood--both used to flow with excess and vanity. But now it is changing its course and turning back to the sea, where it will be able to mix with the ocean's majesty. Now we must assemble parliament, and choose worthy members for this noble council who will allow our country to stand alongside even the best-governed nations. We will be acquainted and familiar with matters of war, peace, or even both at once--and you will be needed greatly for this. Once my coronation is over, we will, as I have mentioned, summon all men of rank. And, if God endorses my good intention, there will be no reason for any prince or man to say that he hopes that God will shorten Harry's happy life by even one day.

They all exit.

Act 5, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, SILENCE, DAVY, BARDOLPH, and the PAGE

SHALLOW

Nay, you shall see my orchard, where, in an arbor, we will eat a last year's pipkin of my own grafting, with a dish of 5 caraways, and so forth.—Come, cousin Silence.—And then to bed.

FALSTAFF

Fore God, you have here a goodly dwelling and a rich.

SHALLOW

Barren, barren, barren, beggars all, beggars all, Sir John.
10 Marry, good air.—Spread, Davy, spread, Davy. Well said, Davy.

FALSTAFF

This Davy serves you for good uses. He is your servingman and your husband.

SHALLOW

15 A good varlet, a good varlet, a very good varlet, Sir John. By the Mass, I have drunk too much sack at supper. A good varlet. Now sit down, now sit down.—Come, cousin.

Shakescleare Translation

FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, SILENCE, DAVY, BARDOLPH, and the PAGE enter.

SHALLOW

Now you can see my garden. We can sit in the arbor ¹ and eat last year's pipkin apples that I grafted ² myself, along with a dish of caraway ³ apples, and so on.

[To SILENCE] Come on, Silence.

[To the others] And then we'll all go to bed.

¹ An arbor is a shady garden alcove with the sides and roof formed by trees or climbing plants laid over a framework.

² Grafting is a technique that joins two plants or fruits into one, creating a hybrid.

³ "Caraway" is a word for a kind of apple popular in the county of Somerset.

FALSTAFF

By God, you've got a lovely place here--and an expensive one at that.

SHALLOW

It's worthless, worthless, worthless. We are all poor, all poor, Sir John. But at least we have fresh air.

[To DAVY] Set the table, Davy, set the table. Well done, Davy.

FALSTAFF

This Davy does so much for you. He's both your attendant and your steward.

SHALLOW

He is a good servant, a very good servant, Sir John. Oh God, I have had too much wine with dinner. A good servant. Now come on, let's sit down. Sit down now. Come on.

SILENCE

Ah, sirrah, quoth he, we shall
 20 Do nothing but eat and make good cheer,
[sings] And praise God for the merry year,
When flesh is cheap and females dear,
And lusty lads roam here and there
So merrily,
 25 *And ever among so merrily.*

FALSTAFF

There's a merry heart!—Good Master Silence, I'll give you
 a health for that anon.

SHALLOW

Give Master Bardolph some wine, Davy.

DAVY

30 Sweet sir, sit. I'll be with you anon. Most sweet sir,
 sit.
 Master page, good master page, sit. Proface. What you want
 in meat, we'll have in drink, but you must bear. The
 35 heart's all.

Exit DAVY

SHALLOW

Be merry, Master Bardolph. —And, my little soldier there,
 be merry.

SILENCE

40 *[sings]* Be merry, be merry, my wife has all,
 For women are shrews, both short and tall.
 'Tis merry in hall when beards wag all,
 And welcome merry Shrovetide.
 Be merry, be merry.

FALSTAFF

45 I did not think Master Silence had been a man of this mettle.

SILENCE

Who, I? I have been merry twice and once ere now.

Enter DAVY

DAVY

[To BARDOLPH] There's a dish of leather-coats for you.

SHALLOW

Davy!

DAVY

50 Your Worship, I'll be with you straight.—
[to BARDOLPH] A cup of wine, sir?

SILENCE

[sings] A cup of wine that's brisk and fine,
 And drink unto thee, leman mine,
 And a merry heart lives long-a.

SILENCE

"Yes, sir," he said. We will do nothing but eat and be happy--
[Singing]
And thank God for a happy year,
When meat is cheap, but women are expensive,
And lusty lads go here and there,
So happily,
Always so happily.

FALSTAFF

That's the spirit! Master Silence, I will toast to you in just a moment.

SHALLOW

Give Master Bardolph some wine, Davy.

DAVY

Kind sir, sit down. I'll be with you in just a minute. Most kind sir, sit down, please. Master Page, good master Page, sit down as well. Welcome! Although we don't have much food, we can make up for it with what we have in drink! You just have to put up with it, the heart's what matters!

DAVY exits.

SHALLOW

Have fun, Master Bardolph. And you too, my little soldier there, have some fun!

SILENCE

[Singing]
Be happy, be happy, my wife has it all,
Since women can be shrews, whether they're short or they're tall.
Be happy at a party when men joke around,
And let's all be happy on this Shrovetide ⁴.
Be happy, be happy!

⁴ Shrovetide is a season of festivities comprising of the three days before Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent.

FALSTAFF

I didn't think Master Silence had this in him.

SILENCE

What, me? I've let my hair down a few times in my life.

DAVY enters.

DAVY

[To BARDOLPH] Here's a dish of russet apples ⁵ for you.

⁵ Russet apples have a particular type of skin—slightly rough, usually with a greenish-brown to yellowish-brown color.

SHALLOW

Davy!

DAVY

Yes, sir, I'll be with you in a minute.

[To BARDOLPH] Would you like a glass of wine, sir?

SILENCE

[Singing]
A glass of wine is quick and fine,
And drink to you, sweetheart of mine,
A happy heart lives long!

FALSTAFF

55 Well said, Master Silence.

SILENCE

And we shall be merry; now comes in the sweet o' th' night.

FALSTAFF

Health and long life to you, Master Silence.

SILENCE

[sings] *Fill the cup, and let it come,
I'll pledge you a mile to th' bottom.*

SHALLOW

Honest Bardolph, welcome. If thou wantest anything and wilt not call, beshrew thy heart. —

[to the PAGE] Welcome, my little tiny thief, and welcome

65 indeed too. I'll drink to Master Bardolph, and to all the cabileroes about London.

DAVY

I hope to see London once ere I die.

BARDOLPH

And I might see you there, Davy!

SHALLOW

70 By the Mass, you'll crack a quart together, ha, will you not, Master Bardolph?

BARDOLPH

Yea, sir, in a pottle-pot.

SHALLOW

By God's liggens, I thank thee. The knave will stick by thee, I can assure thee that. He will not out, he. 'Tis true bred!

BARDOLPH

And I'll stick by him, sir.

SHALLOW

Why, there spoke a king. Lack nothing, be merry. [One knocks at door.] Look who's at door there, ho. Who knocks?

Exit DAVY

FALSTAFF

[to SILENCE] Why, now you have done me right.

SILENCE

[sings] *Do me right,
And dub me knight,
Samingo.
Is 't not so?*

FALSTAFF

'Tis so.

FALSTAFF

Well said, Master Silence.

SILENCE

So let's have some fun. Now is the best time of the night.

FALSTAFF

May you have good health and a long life, Master Silence.

SILENCE

[Singing]
*Fill up your cup and pass it round,
I'll drink right to the bottom,
Even if it's a mile to the ground.*

SHALLOW

Welcome, honest Bardolph. If you ever want something and don't ask for it, that's your own fault.

[To the PAGE] Welcome, my little tiny thief, a very warm welcome indeed. I will drink to Master Bardolph, and to all the fine gentlemen of London.

DAVY

I would like to see London before I die.

BARDOLPH

And I might see you there, Davy!

SHALLOW

By God, you'll drink a whole quart between the two of you, won't you, Master Bardolph?

BARDOLPH

Yes we will, sir, in a two-quart  glass!

 *Bardolph is doubling Shallow's estimate of the amount they can drink together.*

SHALLOW

By God's eyes, I thank you. This rascal will stick with you, I can promise you that. He won't drop out, he's been raised well.

BARDOLPH

I'll stick by him too, sir.

SHALLOW

Spoken just like a king. Have whatever you want, enjoy yourselves! [There is knocking heard offstage] Hey, Davy, go see who's at the door. Who is knocking?

DAVY exits.

FALSTAFF

[To SILENCE] Why, you're managing to drink just as much as I do!

SILENCE

[Singing]
*Keep up with me,
And call me a knight,
Samingo .*

Isn't that right?

 "Samingo" was the popular refrain from a French drinking song, "Monsieur Mingo."

FALSTAFF

It certainly is.

SILENCE

Is 't so? Why then, say an old man can do somewhat.

Enter DAVY

DAVY

An 't please your Worship, there's one Pistol come from
90 the court with news.

FALSTAFF

From the court? Let him come in.

Enter PISTOL

How now, Pistol?

PISTOL

Sir John, God save you.

FALSTAFF

95 What wind blew you hither, Pistol?

PISTOL

Not the ill wind which blows no man to good. Sweet knight,
thou art now one of the greatest men in this realm.

SILENCE

By 'r Lady, I think he be, but Goodman Puff of Barson.

PISTOL

100 Puff?
Puff in thy teeth, most recreant coward base!—
Sir John, I am thy Pistol and thy friend,
And helter-skelter have I rode to thee,
And tidings do I bring, and lucky joys,
105 And golden times, and happy news of price.

FALSTAFF

I pray thee now, deliver them like a man of this world.

PISTOL

A foute for the world and worldlings base!
I speak of Africa and golden joys.

FALSTAFF

110 O base Assyrian knight, what is thy news?
Let King Cophetua know the truth thereof.

SILENCE

[sings] *And Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John.*

PISTOL

Shall dunghill curs confront the Helicons,
And shall good news be baffled?
Then, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies' lap.

SILENCE

115 Honest gentleman, I know not your breeding.

PISTOL

Why then, lament therefor.

SILENCE

Is it? Well then, you need to admit that an old man can do some things.

DAVY enters.

DAVY

Sir, if I may, a man called Pistol is here from the court with some news.

FALSTAFF

From the court? Let him come in.

PISTOL enters.

How are you, Pistol?

PISTOL

God save you, Sir John.

FALSTAFF

What wind blew you here, Pistol?

PISTOL

Don't worry, it's not a bad wind that doesn't blow any man towards something good. My sweet knight, you are now one of the biggest man in this whole country.

SILENCE

Truthfully, I think he would be, if it weren't for that good man, Puff from Barson.

PISTOL

Puff? Puff in your mouth, you disloyal coward! Sir John, I am your Pistol and your friend, and I rode here as quick as I could to tell you something. I bring you good luck, joyful times, and happy, important news.

FALSTAFF

Please, tell me this news like an ordinary person in the world.

PISTOL

Curse this world and the awful people in it! I have news about Africa, and its golden riches!

FALSTAFF

Oh, you vile Assyrian knight, what is your news? Tell King Cophetua [8] what you know.

SILENCE

[Singing]
And Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John. [9]

[8] Here, Falstaff refers to the ballad "A Beggar and a King," which names the African King Cophetua.

[9] Silence sings a verse from another ballad here, "Robin Hood and the Jolly Pinder of Wakefield."

PISTOL

Will dirty dogs attack the Muses of poetry? Will my happy news be ruined like this? If so, then Pistol, go ahead and enlist the help of the Furies, those forces of revenge.

SILENCE

Honest gentleman, I don't know how you were raised.

PISTOL

That's a shame for you.

SHALLOW

Give me pardon, sir. If, sir, you come with news from the court, I take it there's but two ways, either to utter them, or to conceal them. I am, sir, under the King in some authority.

120

PISTOL

Under which king, besonian? Speak or die.

SHALLOW

Under King Harry.

PISTOL

125 Harry the Fourth, or Fifth?

SHALLOW

Harry the Fourth.

PISTOL

A foute for thine office!—Sir John, thy tender lambkin now is king. Harry the Fifth's the man. I speak the truth. 130 When Pistol lies, do this [*he makes an obscene gesture*] and fig me, like The bragging Spaniard.

FALSTAFF

What, is the old king dead?

PISTOL

135 As nail in door. The things I speak are just.

FALSTAFF

Away, Bardolph.—Saddle my horse.—Master Robert Shallow, choose what office thou wilt in the land, 'tis thine. Pistol, I will double-charge thee with dignities.

BARDOLPH

140 O joyful day! I would not take a knighthood for my fortune.

PISTOL

What, I do bring good news!

FALSTAFF

Carry Master Silence to bed.—Master Shallow, my Lord Shallow, be what thou wilt. I am Fortune's steward. Get on thy boots. We'll ride all night.—O sweet Pistol!—Away, Bardolph!

145

Exit BARDOLPH

Come, Pistol, utter more to me, and withal devise something to do thyself good. Boot, boot, Master Shallow. I know the young King is sick for me. Let us take any man's horses. The laws of England are at my commandment. Blessed are they that have been my friends, and woe to my Lord Chief Justice!

155

PISTOL

Let vultures vile seize on his lungs also! "Where is the life that late I led?" say they. Why, here it is. Welcome these pleasant days.

Exeunt

SHALLOW

Pardon me, sir, but if you come with news from the court, it seems like you only have two options: either to tell us what you know, or conceal what you know. I have some power from the King, I will have you know.

PISTOL

From which King, you fool? Speak, or die.

SHALLOW

From King Henry.

PISTOL

Henry the Fourth, or Henry the Fifth?

SHALLOW

Henry the Fourth.

PISTOL

Then damn your power! Sir John, your little lamb is now the king. Henry the Fifth is now the man. I am telling you the truth. If Pistol is a liar, then do this, [*He makes an obscene gesture*] ¹⁰ and tell me to go screw myself, like some ridiculous Spanish man.

¹⁰ Here, Pistol would stick his thumb between two fingers, thus making the sign of the fig—a rude gesture in Mediterranean cultures.

FALSTAFF

What, is the old king dead?

PISTOL

Dead as a doornail. I am telling you the truth.

FALSTAFF

Get going, Bardolph—saddle up my horse ready to leave. Master Robert Shallow, choose whatever job you want to have in this country, and you can have it. Pistol, I will give you so many honors!

BARDOLPH

Oh, what a happy day! I wouldn't even choose a knighthood over my new, good fortune!

PISTOL

See, didn't I tell you that I brought good news!

FALSTAFF

Put Master Silence to bed. Master Shallow, or Lord Shallow—call yourself whatever you want. I am in charge of people's fortunes now! Put on your boots. It's time for us to go. We will ride all night. Oh, sweet Pistol! Let's go, Bardolph!

BARDOLPH exits.

Come, Pistol, tell me more about what has happened, and we will come up with something good for you. We need our boots, our boots, Master Shallow. I know the young King needs me. Let us take any horses—I now control all of the laws of England. Anyone who has been my friend is lucky, and you just be careful, my Lord Chief Justice!

PISTOL

Let vultures eat out his lungs as well! At some point, people have to say, "Where is the life that I used to lead?" Well, that moment is here for us—welcome to a happier time.

They all exit.

Act 5, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter BEADELS, dragging in MISTRESS QUICKLY and DOLL TEARSHEET

MISTRESS QUICKLY

No, thou arrant knave. I would to God that I might die,
that
I might have thee hanged. Thou hast drawn my shoulder
out
of joint.

5

FIRST BEADLE

The Constables have delivered her over to me, and she
shall
have whipping cheer enough, I warrant her. There hath
been
10 a man or two lately killed about her.

10

DOLL TEARSHEET

Nut-hook, nut-hook, you lie! Come on, I'll tell thee
what,
thou damned tripe-visaged rascal: an the child I now go
with
15 do miscarry, thou wert better thou hadst struck thy
mother,
thou paper-faced villain.

15

MISTRESS QUICKLY

O the Lord, that Sir John were come! I would make this
a
20 bloody day to somebody. But I pray God the fruit of her
womb might miscarry.

20

FIRST BEADLE

If it do, you shall have a dozen of cushions again; you
have
but eleven now. Come, I charge you both go with me, for
the
25 man is dead that you and Pistol beat amongst you.

25

DOLL TEARSHEET

I'll tell you what, you thin man in a censer, I will
have you
as soundly swinged for this, you bluebottle rogue, you
30 filthy
famished correctioner. If you be not swinged, I'll
forswear
half-kirtles.

30

FIRST BEADLE

Come, come, you she knight-errant, come.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

35 O God, that right should thus overcome might! Well, of
suffrance comes ease.

35

DOLL TEARSHEET

Come, you rogue, come, bring me to a justice.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Ay, come, you starved bloodhound.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Goodman Death, Goodman Bones!

Shakescleare Translation

The BEADELS ¹ enter, dragging in MISTRESS QUICKLY and DOLL TEARSHEET.

¹ Beadles were minor parish officers.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

No, you utter villain! I wish to God that I were dead so that I
could have you hanged! You have dislocated my shoulder!

5

FIRST BEADLE

The Constables gave her to me, and she will be thoroughly
whipped ² soon enough, I swear it. She has been involved
in a couple of murders recently.

10

DOLL TEARSHEET

You scum, you scum, that's a lie! Come on! I'll tell you what,
you damned flabby idiot, if I have a miscarriage ³ because
of this, you're going to wish you'd hit your mother instead,
you white-faced villain!

15

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Oh, if only Sir John were here! He would make someone
pay for this. I pray to God that she does have a miscarriage ⁴

20

FIRST BEADLE

Well if she does, then I guess you will have twelve cushions
again. You only have eleven, as she is wearing one of the
cushions under her dress to look like a pregnant belly.
Come on, I order both of you to follow me, for the man that
you and Pistol attacked is now dead.

25

DOLL TEARSHEET

I'll tell you what, you thin rat, I will have you beaten up for
this, you blue-coat wearing rogue! You filthy, starving
correction officer. If you're not beaten up for this, then I will
give up wearing skirts.

30

FIRST BEADLE

Come on, you night wanderer, come with me.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Oh God, as if right is overcoming might like this ⁵! Well,
struggles help us to grow as people.

35

DOLL TEARSHEET

Come on then, you scoundrel. Take me to a judge.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Yes, come on, you starving dog.

DOLL TEARSHEET

Master Death! Master Bones!

² Whipping was the standard form of punishment for prostitutes.

³ Here, Doll Tearsheet tries to use pregnancy to avoid punishment. "Pleading the belly," or claiming to be pregnant, was a way of avoiding punishment, even up to the death penalty.

⁴ There is a possibility here that Doll is actually pregnant with Falstaff's child—but we can't know for certain. The First Beadle goes on to assume that she is faking her pregnancy.

⁵ Mistress Quickly misquotes the proverb. She actually means to say, "might overcomes right."

MISTRESS QUICKLY

40 Thou atomy, thou!

DOLL TEARSHEET

Come, you thin thing, come, you rascal.

FIRST BEADLE

Very well.

Exeunt

MISTRESS QUICKLY

You skeleton, you!

DOLL TEARSHEET

Come on you stick-like thing, come on you thin deer. 6

6 A "rascal" was also the name of a lean deer.

FIRST BEADLE

Let's go then.

They all exit.

Act 5, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Enter two GROOMS, strewing rushes

FIRST GROOM

More rushes, more rushes.

SECOND GROOM

The trumpets have sounded twice.

FIRST GROOM

'Twill be two o'clock ere they come from the coronation.

5 Dispatch, dispatch.

Exeunt

Enter FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, PISTOL, BARDOLPH, and PAGE

FALSTAFF

Stand here by me, Master Robert Shallow. I will make the King do you grace. I will leer upon him as he comes by, and

10 do but mark the countenance that he will give me.

PISTOL

God bless thy lungs, good knight!

FALSTAFF

Come here, Pistol, stand behind me. — [to SHALLOW] O, if I had had time to have made new liveries, I would have bestowed the thousand pound I borrowed of you. But 'tis no matter. This poor show doth better. This doth infer the zeal I had to see him.

SHALLOW

20 It doth so.

FALSTAFF

It shows my earnestness of affection—

SHALLOW

It doth so.

FALSTAFF

My devotion—

Shakescleare Translation

The two GROOMS enter, covering the floor in rushes 1.

1 In the early modern period, bare floors were covered with "rushes" or reeds.

FIRST GROOM

More rushes, more rushes.

SECOND GROOM

The trumpets have already been blown twice.

FIRST GROOM

It will be two o'clock before they get here from the coronation. Hurry up and finish. Hurry.

They exit.

FALSTAFF, SHALLOW, PISTOL, BARDOLPH, and PAGE enter.

FALSTAFF

Stand here next to me, Master Robert Shallow. I will make the King give you his approval. I will look at him charmingly as he walks past us, and just wait for the face he will make back at me.

PISTOL

God bless your words, good knight!

FALSTAFF

Come here, Pistol, stand behind me.

[To SHALLOW] Oh, if I had had the time to make us new uniforms 2, I would have used that thousand pounds I borrowed from you. But, it doesn't matter. It's better that we look poor—it shows how eager I was to see him.

2 In the original text, Falstaff uses the word "liveries." These were the uniforms of men in the royal service.

SHALLOW

Yes, it does.

FALSTAFF

It shows him how serious my feelings are for him--

SHALLOW

It does.

FALSTAFF

My devotion--

SHALLOW

It doth, it doth, it doth.

FALSTAFF

As it were, to ride day and night, and not to deliberate, not to remember, not to have patience to shift me—

SHALLOW

It is best, certain.

FALSTAFF

But to stand stained with travel and sweating with desire to see him, thinking of nothing else, putting all affairs else in oblivion, as if there were nothing else to be done but to see him.

35

PISTOL

'Tis semper idem, for obsque hoc nihil est;
'tis all in every part.

SHALLOW

'Tis so indeed.

PISTOL

My knight, I will inflame thy noble liver, and make thee rage. Thy Doll and Helen of thy noble thoughts is in base durance and contagious prison, Haled thither by most mechanical and dirty hand. Rouse up revenge from ebon den with fell Alecto's snake, for Doll is in. Pistol speaks nought but truth.

45

FALSTAFF

I will deliver her.

Shouts within, and the trumpets sound

PISTOL

50 There roared the sea, and trumpet-clangor sounds.

Enter PRINCE HENRY and his train, the Lord CHIEF JUSTICE among them

FALSTAFF

God save thy Grace, King Hal, my royal Hal.

PISTOL

The heavens thee guard and keep, most royal imp of fame!

FALSTAFF

God save thee, my sweet boy!

KING

55 My Lord Chief Justice, speak to that vain man.

CHIEF JUSTICE

[to FALSTAFF] Have you your wits? Know you what 'tis to speak?

FALSTAFF

My King, my Jove, I speak to thee, my heart!

SHALLOW

It does, it does, it does.

FALSTAFF

The truth is, we rode all day and all night, not considering our plan, not thinking of stopping, not even having the time to change my shirt—

SHALLOW

It will look good, that's for certain.

FALSTAFF

We will stand there, dirty from our journey and sweating with our desire to see him. We couldn't think of anything else, all other matters were ignored, our only concern was seeing him.

PISTOL

It is all the same, for there is nothing apart from this.
Nothing else is important.

3 In the original text, Pistol speaks in Latin to increase the grandeur of their conversation.

SHALLOW

That's true indeed.

PISTOL

My knight, I am going to stir up your noble liver⁴, and make you angry. Your Doll, the mistress of your noble thoughts, has been imprisoned in a dirty and infected jail-hauled there by an unemotional and dirty hand. Summon up revenge from the deepest pit of your stomach, and release the snakes of hell⁵. For Doll is in prison. Pistol only speaks the truth.

4 The liver was considered the site of passions. Here it is used as the site of rage and anger.

5 In the original text, Pistol mentions Alecto, one of the Furies—hell's infernal goddesses. She was represented as having snakes wrapped in her hair, and blood dripping from her eyes.

FALSTAFF

I will set her free.

Shouts are heard offstage. Trumpets sound.

PISTOL

That was the sea roaring. The blaring trumpets have sounded.

PRINCE HENRY, his attendants, and the Lord CHIEF JUSTICE enter.

FALSTAFF

God save your Grace, King Hal, my royal Hal.

PISTOL

May the heavens look after you, you royal child of fame!

FALSTAFF

God save you, my sweet boy!

KING

My Lord Chief Justice, speak to that foolish man.

CHIEF JUSTICE

[To FALSTAFF] Are you out of your mind? Do you know what you are saying?

FALSTAFF

My King, my Jupiter⁶, I am speaking to you, my dear one!

6 Jupiter was the ancient Roman king of the gods.

KING

I know thee not, old man. Fall to thy prayers.
 How ill white hairs become a fool and jester.
 I have long dreamt of such a kind of man,
 So surfeit-swelled, so old, and so profane;
 But being awaked, I do despise my dream.
 Make less thy body hence, and more thy grace;
 65 Leave gormandizing. Know the grave doth gape
 For thee thrice wider than for other men.
 Reply not to me with a fool-born jest.
 Presume not that I am the thing I was,
 For God doth know—so shall the world perceive—
 70 That I have turned away my former self.
 So will I those that kept me company.
 When thou dost hear I am as I have been,
 Approach me, and thou shalt be as thou wast,
 The tutor and the feeder of my riots.
 75 Till then I banish thee, on pain of death,
 As I have done the rest of my misleaders,
 Not to come near our person by ten mile.
 For competence of life I will allow you,
 That lack of means enforce you not to evils.
 80 And, as we hear you do reform yourselves,
 We will, according to your strengths and qualities,
 Give you advancement.
 [to CHIEF JUSTICE] Be it your charge, my lord,
 85 To see performed the tenor of my word.—
 [To the attendants] Set on.

Exeunt PRINCE HENRY, the CHIEF JUSTICE, and the attendants.

FALSTAFF

Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pound.

SHALLOW

Yea, marry, Sir John, which I beseech you to let me
 90 have
 home with me.

FALSTAFF

That can hardly be, Master Shallow. Do not you grieve
 at
 this. I shall be sent for in private to him. Look you,
 95 he must
 seem thus to the world. Fear not your advancements. I
 will
 be the man yet that shall make you great.

SHALLOW

I cannot well perceive how, unless you should give me
 100 your
 doublet and stuff me out with straw. I beseech you,
 good Sir
 John, let me have five hundred of my thousand.

FALSTAFF

Sir, I will be as good as my word. This that you heard
 105 was
 but a color.

SHALLOW

A color that I fear you will die in, Sir John.

FALSTAFF

Fear no colors. Go with me to dinner.—Come, Lieutenant
 Pistol.—Come, Bardolph.—I shall be sent for soon at
 110 night.

*Enter the Lord CHIEF JUSTICE and Prince John of LANCASTER; officers
 with them*

KING

I don't know you, old man 7. Fall to your knees and pray.
 White hair doesn't suit a fool and a clown like you. I
 have dreamed about a man like you for a long time--
 ridiculously swollen, old, and so foul. But now that I am
 awake, I hate that dream. Lose some weight and find some
 manners instead; stop eating so much. You know that your
 grave is going to have to be three times wider than other
 men's. And don't reply to me with some kind of foolish joke,
 because I am not the man I was before. For God knows--and
 the whole world will soon realize--that I have left behind my
 previous life. And so I will also leave behind the people I
 knew in that life. If you ever hear that I have gone back to
 my old ways, then come and find me. You will be like you
 were before--my teacher and the inspiration of my
 rebellious ways. But until then, I banish you, on pain of
 death, and you must not come within ten miles of me--this
 is the same warning I have given to the other men who have
 misled me. I will give you just enough money to live on, so
 that you won't be tempted to do bad things. And, if we hear
 that you have changed your ways, we will give you the
 honors that your strengths and qualities deserve.

[*To CHIEF JUSTICE*] It is up to you to make sure that this
 order is carried out.

[*To the attendants*] Let's go.

*PRINCE HENRY, the CHIEF JUSTICE, and the attendants
 exit.*

FALSTAFF

Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pounds.

SHALLOW

Yes, indeed, Sir John. And I would like to take the money
 home with me.

FALSTAFF

You can't do that, Master Shallow. Don't worry about this.
 He will want to talk to me in private--this is just how he has
 to act in front of everyone else. Don't worry about your own
 future, I will still be the man who will make you great.

SHALLOW

I don't know how you plan on doing that, unless you let me
 wear your jacket and stuff it full of straw 8. Please, good
 Sir John, can I just have five pounds out of that thousand?

FALSTAFF

Sir, I will be as good as my word. Everything you just heard
 is simply a color, just a pretense.

SHALLOW

A collar 9 that I am scared will kill you, Sir John.

FALSTAFF

Don't be afraid of any collars. Come on, let's go and have
 lunch. Come on, Lieutenant Pistol. Come on, Bardolph. He
 will send for me soon in the evening.

*The Lord CHIEF JUSTICE, Prince John of LANCASTER, and
 officers enter.*

7 In Henry IV Part 1, when Falstaff is role-playing with Hal, he asks him to never forget his friend Falstaff—to which Hal replies, "I do, I will." This is that moment of "will" coming true, as Hal steps into his new role as King.

8 Shallow puns here on the meaning of "great" as large or fat, for that is all Falstaff is able to make him.

9 Shallow expresses his fears for Falstaff, punning on the similarity of the words "color" and "collar," that is, the hangman's noose.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Go, carry Sir John Falstaff to the Fleet.
Take all his company along with him.

FALSTAFF

My lord, my lord—

CHIEF JUSTICE

I cannot now speak. I will hear you soon.—
Take them away.

115

PISTOL

Si fortune me tormenta, spero me contenta.

Exeunt all but Prince John of LANCASTER and the CHIEF JUSTICE

LANCASTER

I like this fair proceeding of the King's.
He hath intent his wonted followers
Shall all be very well provided for,
120 But all are banished till their conversations
Appear more wise and modest to the world.

CHIEF JUSTICE

And so they are.

LANCASTER

The King hath called his parliament, my lord.

CHIEF JUSTICE

He hath.

LANCASTER

I will lay odds that, ere this year expire,
We bear our civil swords and native fire
As far as France: I beard a bird so sing,
Whose music, to my thinking, pleased the King.
Come, will you hence?

Exeunt

CHIEF JUSTICE

Go on, take Sir John Falstaff to prison ¹⁰ and take all of his friends with him as well.

FALSTAFF

My lord, my lord--

CHIEF JUSTICE

I can't speak to you now. I will hear what you have to say soon enough. Take them away.

PISTOL

If my fortunes torment me, then hope contents me. ¹¹

¹⁰ The Chief Justice refers to "The Fleet," a famous prison in London.

¹¹ Pistol's outcry here is a repetition of the exclamation he made in Act 2, Scene 4. It is the same jumbled mess of Spanish, French, and Italian.

Everyone except for Prince John of LANCASTER and the CHIEF JUSTICE exits.

LANCASTER

I like how the King has handled this situation. He has made sure that his old followers will be looked after and provided for, but he has banished them until they can act with the intelligence and modesty they need to have in this world.

CHIEF JUSTICE

That he has.

LANCASTER

The King has assembled his parliament, my lord.

CHIEF JUSTICE

He has.

LANCASTER

I bet that before this year is over, we will have tried to invade France. I heard a bird singing about it, and I noticed that the King liked hearing that song. Come on, will you go with me?

They exit.

Epilogue

Shakespeare

Enter the EPILOGUE.

Shakescleare Translation

The EPILOGUE enters.

First my fear; then my curtsy, last my speech. My fear
is your
displeasure my curtsy my duty; and my speech, to beg
your
5 pardons. If you look for a good speech now, you undo
me,
for what I have to say is of mine own making, and what
indeed I should say will, I doubt, prove mine own
marring.
10 But to the purpose, and so to the venture. Be it known
to you,
as it is very well, I was lately here in the end of a
displeasing
play to pray your patience for it and to promise you a
better.
15 I meant indeed to pay you with this, which, if like an
ill
venture it come unluckily home, I break, and you, my gentle
20 creditors, lose. Here I promised you I would be, and here I
commit my body to your mercies. Bate me some, and I will
pay you some, and, as most debtors do, promise you
infinitely. And so I kneel down before you, but,
indeed, to
25 pray for the Queen.
If my tongue cannot entreat you to acquit me, will you command me to use my legs? And yet that were but light
30 payment, to dance out of your debt. But a good conscience
will make any possible satisfaction, and so would I.
All the
gentlewomen here have forgiven me; if the gentlemen
35 will
not, then the gentlemen do not agree with the gentlewomen,
which was never seen before in such an assembly.
One word more, I beseech you: if you be not too much
40 cloyed with fat meat, our humble author will continue the
story, with Sir John in it, and make you merry with fair
Katherine of France, where, for anything I know,
45 Falstaff
shall die of a sweat, unless already he be killed with your
hard opinions; for Oldcastle died a martyr, and this is not
50 the man. My tongue is weary; when my legs are too, I will
bid you good night.

Exits

First, I will tell you about my worries. Then I will bow to you. And, after that, I will finally end with my speech. I am worried that you didn't like the play, and so I bow to you out of duty and will make my speech to ask you for forgiveness. If you are expecting a great speech, then that is a bad thing. For I wrote the speech myself, and I am sure that what I'm going to say will lead to bad things for me. But, as for the matter at hand, I will just have to risk it. Hopefully you will know that I was here on this stage recently at the end of another annoying play to ask you to have patience with it, and to promise you a better play next time. I was hoping to pay you off with this one, but if that didn't work, then I'm just like a businessman coming home from an unsuccessful trading trip--I have broken my promise and gone bankrupt. And you, my lovely creditors, have lost out. I promised you that I would be here, and so here I will give myself up to your mercy. Let me off, and I promise I will pay you back at some point. That's what most people in debt do, they just keep promising to pay next time. So I will kneel down before you, but not to beg you, but to pray for the Queen. If my words can't convince you to forgive me, then maybe you will let me try dancing? That would be easy, if you could dance your way out of your debt. But anyone with a good conscience will make sure that they repay their debt, and I plan on doing the same. All the women here have forgiven me. If the men will not forgive me, then the men don't agree with the women--and I think that would be the first time that's happened in a theater audience. One thing more, please. If this fat flesh hasn't clogged you up too much already, then our author will continue the story in his next play, with Sir John in it, and entertain you with the story of the beautiful Catherine of France. As far as I know, Falstaff is going to die of some kind of sweating fever--if he hasn't already been killed off because of your negative opinions of him from this play. Let it be said that Oldcastle died a martyr, and so he is nothing like this man at all. My tongue is tired now, and so are my legs. This is where I say good night to you all.

1 It is uncertain whether Shakespeare had originally planned to include Falstaff in Henry V--the play he mentions here--and then changed his mind, or if there is another reason he includes Falstaff in the epilogue.

2 Hal will woo the French princess Catherine of Valois in the play Henry V.

3 In earlier versions of Henry IV, Shakespeare called Falstaff by the name of Sir John Oldcastle. He was made to change the name when descendants of Oldcastle himself complained about the negative attributes of the character.

The EPILOGUE exits.

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