

The Second part of King Henry the Fourth

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SCENE II. Gloucestershire. Before SHALLOW'S house.

Enter SHALLOW and SILENCE, meeting; MOULDY, SHADOW, WART, FEEBLE, BULLCALF, a Servant or two with them

SHALLOW

Come on, come on, come on, sir; give me your hand,
sir, give me your hand, sir: an early stirrer, by
the rood! And how doth my good cousin Silence?

SILENCE

Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

SHALLOW

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

SILENCE

Alas, a black ousel, cousin Shallow!

SHALLOW

By yea and nay, 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

A' 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.

SILENCE

You were called 'lusty Shallow' then, cousin.

SHALLOW

By the mass, I was called any thing; and I would
have done any thing 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 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 soldiers?

SHALLOW

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

SILENCE

We shall all follow, cousin.

SHADOW

Certain, 'tis certain; very sure, very sure: death,
as the Psalmist saith, is certain to all; all shall
die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?

SILENCE

By my troth, I was not there.

SHALLOW

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

SILENCE

Dead, sir.

SHALLOW

Jesu, Jesu, dead! a' drew a good bow; and dead! a' shot a fine shoot: John a Gaunt loved him well, and betted much money on his head. Dead! a' would have clapped i' the 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?

SILENCE

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

SHALLOW

And is old Double dead?

SILENCE

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

Enter BARDOLPH and one with him

BARDOLPH

Good morrow, honest gentlemen: I beseech you, which is Justice Shallow?

SHALLOW

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

BARDOLPH

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

SHALLOW

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

BARDOLPH

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: good phrases are surely, and ever were, very commendable. Accommodated! it comes of 'accommodo' very good; a good phrase.

BARDOLPH

Pardon me, sir; I have heard the word. Phrase call you it? by this good day, I know not the phrase; but I will maintain the word with my sword to be a soldier-like 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 a' may be thought to be accommodated;
which is an excellent thing.

SHALLOW

It is very just.

Enter FALSTAFF

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: welcome, good Sir John.

FALSTAFF

I am glad to see you well, good Master Robert Shallow: Master Surecard, as I think?

SHALLOW

No, Sir John; it is my cousin Silence, in commission with me.

FALSTAFF

Good Master Silence, it well befits you should be of the peace.

SILENCE

Your good-worship is welcome.

FALSTAFF

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 see, let me see, let me see. So, so: yea, marry, sir: Ralph Mouldy! Let them appear as I call; let them do so, let them do so. Let me see; where is Mouldy?

MOULDY

Here, an't 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

'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, 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 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.

MOULDY

Spent!

SHALLOW

Peace, fellow, peace; stand aside: know you where you are? For the 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.

SHALLOW

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

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

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 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 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' the green!

FALSTAFF

Yea, marry, 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

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, sir.

FALSTAFF

Come, thou shalt go to the wars in a gown; we wilt have away thy cold; and I will take such order that my friends shall ring for thee. Is here all?

SHALLOW

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 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

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

By the mass, I could anger her to the heart. She was then a bona-roba. Doth she hold her own well?

FALSTAFF

Old, old, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

Nay, she must be old; she cannot choose but be old; 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 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, we have: our watch-word was 'Hem boys!'
Come, let's to dinner; come, let's to dinner:
Jesus, the days that we have seen! Come, come.

Exeunt FALSTAFF and Justices

BULLCALF

Good Master Corporate Bardolph, stand my friend;
and 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 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

Go to; stand aside.

MOULDY

And, good master corporal captain, for my old
dame's sake, stand my friend: she has nobody to do
any thing about her when I am gone; and she is old,
and cannot help 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 a death: I'll ne'er bear a base mind:
an't be my destiny, so; an't be not, so: no man is
too good to serve's prince; and let it go which way
it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next.

BARDOLPH

Well said; thou'rt a good fellow.

FEEBLE

Faith, I'll bear no base mind.

Re-enter FALSTAFF and the Justices

FALSTAFF

Come, sir, which men shall I have?

SHALLOW

Four of which you please.

BARDOLPH

Sir, a word with you: I have three pound to free
Mouldy and Bullcalf.

FALSTAFF

Go to; well.

SHALLOW

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.

SHALLOW

Sir John, Sir John, do not yourself wrong: they are your 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 thewes, the stature, bulk, and big assemblance of a man! Give me the spirit, Master Shallow. Here's Wart; you see what a ragged appearance it is; a' shall charge you and discharge you with the motion of a 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 spare men, and spare me the great ones. Put me a caliver into Wart's hand, Bardolph.

BARDOLPH

Hold, Wart, traverse; thus, thus, thus.

FALSTAFF

Come, manage me your caliver. So: very well: go to: very good, exceeding good. O, give me always a little, lean, old, chapt, bald shot. Well said, i' faith, Wart; thou'rt a good scab: hold, there's a tester for thee.

SHALLOW

He is not his craft's master; he doth not do it right. 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 quiver fellow, and a' would manage you his piece thus; and a' would about and about, and come you in and come you in: 'rah, tah, tah,' would a' say; 'bounce' would a' say; and away again would a' go, and again would a' 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. 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 our old acquaintance be renewed; peradventure I will with ye to the court.

FALSTAFF

'Fore God, I would you would, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW

Go to; I have spoke at a word. God keep you.

FALSTAFF

Fare you well, gentle gentlemen.

Exeunt Justices

On, Bardolph; lead the men away.

Exeunt BARDOLPH, Recruits, & c

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 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 a' was naked, he was, for all the world, like a forked radish, with a head fantastically carved upon it with a knife: a' was so forlorn, that his dimensions to any thick sight were invincible: a' was the very genius of famine; yet lecherous as a monkey, and the whores called him mandrake: a' came ever in the rearward of the fashion, and sung those tunes to the overscutched huswives that he heard the carmen whistle, and swear they were his fancies or his good-nights. And now is this Vice's dagger become a squire, and talks as familiarly of John a Gaunt as if he had been sworn brother to him; and I'll be sworn a' 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 a Gaunt he beat his own name; 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 it shall go hard but I will 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 nature but I may snap at him. Let time shape, and there an end.

Exit