

2 Henry IV

3.2

Enter Justice Shallow and Justice Silence

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 Good morrow, good cousin Shallow.

SHALLOW And how doth my cousin your bedfellow? And 5
your fairest daughter and mine, my god-daughter 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? 10

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. 15

SHALLOW By the mass, I was called anything; and I would
have done anything indeed, too, and roundly, too.
There was I, and little John Doit of Staffordshire, and
black George Barnes, and Francis Pickbone, and Will
Squeal, a Cotswold man; you had not four such swinge- 20
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. 25

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

SHALLOW The same Sir John, the very same. I see him
break Scoggin's head at the court gate when a was a
crack, not thus high. And the very same day did I fight 30
with one Samson 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.

SHALLOW Certain, 'tis certain; very sure, very sure. Death, 35

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? 40

SILENCE Dead, sir.

SHALLOW Jesu, Jesu, dead! A drew a good bow; and dead!
A shot a fine shoot. John o' Gaunt loved him well, and
betted much money on his head. Dead! A would have
clapped i'th' clout at twelve score, and carried you a 45
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. 50

SHALLOW And is old Double dead?

Enter Bardolph and [the Page]

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

[SHALLOW] Good morrow, honest gentlemen.

BARDOLPH I beseech you, which is Justice Shallow? 55

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, 60
and a most gallant leader.

SHALLOW 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 Sir, pardon, a soldier is better accommodated 65
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 70
`*accommodo*'. 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 soldier-

like word, and a word of exceeding good command, by 75
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.

Enter Sir John Falstaff

SHALLOW It is very just. Look, here comes good Sir John. 80
(*To Sir John*) Give me your hand, give me your worship's
good hand. By my troth, you like well, and bear your
years very well. Welcome, good Sir John.

SIR JOHN I am glad to see you well, good Master Robert
Shallow. (*To Silence*) Master Surecard, as I think. 85

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

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

SILENCE Your good worship is welcome. 90

SIR JOHN Fie, this is hot weather, gentlemen. Have you
provided me here half a dozen sufficient men?

SHALLOW Marry, have we, sir. Will you sit?

SIR JOHN Let me see them, I beseech you.

[He sits]

SHALLOW Where's the roll, where's the roll, where's the 95
roll? Let me see, let me see, let me see; so, so, so, so,
so. Yea, marry, sir: 'Ralph Mouldy'. (*To Silence*) Let
them appear as I call, let them do so, let them do so.
Let me see, (*calls*) where is Mouldy?

[Enter Mouldy]

MOULDY Here, an't please you. 100

SHALLOW What think you, Sir John? A good-limbed
fellow, young, strong, and of good friends.

SIR JOHN Is thy name Mouldy?

MOULDY Yea, an't please you.

SIR JOHN 'Tis the more time thou wert used. 105

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.

SIR JOHN Prick him.

MOULDY I was pricked well enough before, an you could 110
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.

SIR JOHN Go to, peace, Mouldy. You shall go, Mouldy; it 115
is time you were spent.

MOULDY Spent?

SHALLOW Peace, fellow, peace. Stand aside; know you
where you are?

[Mouldy stands aside]

For th'other, Sir John, let me see: `Simon Shadow'±± 120

SIR JOHN Yea, marry, let me have him to sit under. He's
like to be a cold soldier.

SHALLOW *(calls)* Where's Shadow?
[Enter Shadow]

SHADOW Here, sir.

SIR JOHN Shadow, whose son art thou? 125

SHADOW My mother's son, sir.

SIR JOHN 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 not of the father's
substance. 130

SHALLOW Do you like him, Sir John?

SIR JOHN Shadow will serve for summer. Prick him, for
we have a number of shadows fill up the muster book.

[Shadow stands aside]

SHALLOW *(calls)* `Thomas Wart.'

SIR JOHN Where's he? 135
[Enter Wart]

WART Here, sir.

SIR JOHN Is thy name Wart?

WART Yea, sir.

SIR JOHN Thou art a very ragged wart.

SHALLOW Shall I prick him, Sir John? 140

SIR JOHN 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. 145

[Wart stands aside]

(Calls) `Francis Feeble.'

[Enter Feeble]

FEEBLE Here, sir.

SHALLOW What trade art thou, Feeble?

FEEBLE A woman's tailor, sir.

SHALLOW Shall I prick him, sir? 150

SIR JOHN You may, but if he had been a man's tailor,
he'd ha' pricked you. *(To Feeble)* 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. 155

SIR JOHN 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. 160

FEEBLE I would Wart might have gone, sir.

SIR JOHN 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. 165

FEEBLE It shall suffice, sir.

SIR JOHN I am bound to thee, reverend Feeble.

[Feeble stands aside]

Who is next?

SHALLOW *(calls)* 'Peter Bullcalf o'th' green.'

SIR JOHN Yea, marry, let's see Bullcalf. 170

[Enter Bullcalf]

BULLCALF Here, sir.

SIR JOHN Fore God, a likely fellow! Come, prick Bullcalf
till he roar again.

BULLCALF O Lord, good my lord captain!

SIR JOHN What, dost thou roar before thou'rt pricked? 175

BULLCALF O Lord, sir, I am a diseased man.

SIR JOHN 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. 180

SIR JOHN Come, thou shalt go to the wars in a gown. We
will have away thy cold, and I will take such order
that thy friends shall ring for thee.

[Bullcalf stands aside]

Is here all?

SHALLOW There is two more called than your number. 185
You must have but four here, sir, and so I pray you
go in with me to dinner.

SIR JOHN Come, I will go drink with you, but I cannot
tarry dinner. I am glad to see you, by my troth, Master
Shallow. 190

SHALLOW O, Sir John, do you remember since we lay all
night in the Windmill in Saint George's Field?

SIR JOHN No more of that, good Master Shallow, no more
of that.

SHALLOW Ha, 'twas a merry night! And is Jane Nightwork 195
alive?

SIR JOHN She lives, Master Shallow.

SHALLOW She never could away with me.

SIR JOHN Never, never. She would always say she could
not abide Master Shallow. 200

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

SIR JOHN 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 205
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? 210

SIR JOHN We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master
Shallow.

SHALLOW That we have, that we have; in faith, Sir John,
we have. Our watchword was 'Hem boys!' Come, let's
to dinner; come, let's to dinner. Jesus, the days that 215
we have seen! Come, come.

Exeunt Shallow, Silence, and Sir John

BULLCALF *[coming forward]* 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 220
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 *[taking the money]* Go to; stand aside. 225
[Bullcalf stands aside]

MOULDY *[coming forward]* 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 herself. You shall have forty, sir. 230

BARDOLPH Go to; stand aside.
[Mouldy stands 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's too good to serve's prince. And let it go which way it will, he 235
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.
Enter Sir John Falstaff, Shallow, and Silence

SIR JOHN Come, sir, which men shall I have?

SHALLOW Four of which you please. 240

BARDOLPH *(to Sir John)* Sir, a word with you. *(Aside to him)*
I have three pound to free Mouldy and Bullcalf.

SIR JOHN Go to, well.

SHALLOW Come, Sir John, which four will you have?

SIR JOHN Do you choose for me. 245

SHALLOW Marry, then: Mouldy, Bullcalf, Feeble, and Shadow.

SIR JOHN 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. 250
[Exeunt Bullcalf and Mouldy]

SHALLOW Sir John, Sir John, do not yourself wrong. They are your likeliest men, and I would have you served with the best.

SIR JOHN Will you tell me, Master Shallow, how to choose a man? Care I for the limb, the thews, the stature, 255
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. 260
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 265
spare me the great ones.±±Put me a caliver into Wart's
hand, Bardolph.

BARDOLPH (*giving Wart a caliver*) Hold, Wart. Traverse±±
thas, thas, thas!

[Wart marches]

SIR JOHN (*to Wart*) Come, manage me your caliver. So; 270
very well. Go to, very good, exceeding good. O, give
me always a little, lean, old, chapped, bald shot! Well
said, i'faith, Wart; thou'rt a good scab. Hold; (*giving
a coin*) there's a tester for thee.

SHALLOW He is not his craft's master; he doth not do it 275
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. `Ra-ta-ta!' 280
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.

SIR JOHN These fellows will do well, Master Shallow. God
keep you, Master Silence; I will not use many words 285
with you. Fare you well, gentlemen both; I thank you.
I must a dozen mile tonight.±±Bardolph, give the
soldiers coats.

SHALLOW Sir John, the Lord bless you; God prosper your
affairs! God send us peace! As you return, visit my 290
house; let our old acquaintance be renewed.
Peradventure I will with ye to the court.

SIR JOHN Fore God, would you would!

SHALLOW Go to, I have spoke at a word. God keep you!

SIR JOHN Fare you well, gentle gentlemen. 295

Exeunt Shallow and Silence

On, Bardolph, lead the men away.

Exeunt Bardolph, Wart, Shadow, and Feeble

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 300 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 305 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 invisible. A was the very genius of famine. And now is this Vice's dagger become a squire, and talks as familiarly of John o' 310 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 o' Gaunt he beat his own name; for you might have trussed him 315 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 beeves. Well, I'll be acquainted with him if I return; and't shall go hard but I'll make him a philosopher's two stones to me. If the young dace be 320 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