

The Merry Wives of Windsor

4.1

Enter Mistress Page, Mistress Quickly, and William Page

MISTRESS PAGE Is he at Mistress Ford's already, thinkest thou?

MISTRESS QUICKLY Sure he is by this, or will be presently. But truly he is very courageous-mad about his throwing into the water. Mistress Ford desires you to come suddenly. 5

MISTRESS PAGE I'll be with her by and by. I'll but bring my young man here to school.

Enter Sir Hugh Evans

Look where his master comes. 'Tis a playing day, I see.±±How now, Sir Hugh, no school today? 10

EVANS No, Master Slender is let the boys leave to play.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Blessing of his heart!

MISTRESS PAGE Sir Hugh, my husband says my son profits nothing in the world at his book. I pray you ask him some questions in his accidence. 15

EVANS Come hither, William. Hold up your head. Come.

MISTRESS PAGE Come on, sirrah. Hold up your head. Answer your master; be not afraid.

EVANS William, how many numbers is in nouns?

WILLIAM Two. 20

MISTRESS QUICKLY Truly, I thought there had been one number more, because they say `Od's nouns'.

EVANS Peace your tattlings!±±What is `fair', William?

WILLIAM `Pulcher'.

MISTRESS QUICKLY Polecats? There are fairer things than polecats, sure. 25

EVANS You are a very simplicity 'oman. I pray you peace.±±What is `lapis', William?

WILLIAM A stone.

EVANS And what is `a stone', William? 30

WILLIAM A pebble.

EVANS No, it is `lapis'. I pray you remember in your prain.

WILLIAM `Lapis'.

EVANS That is a good William. What is he, William, that
does lend articles? 35

WILLIAM Articles are borrowed of the pronoun, and be
thus declined. *Singulariter nominativo: `hic, haec, hoc`.*

EVANS *Nominativo: `hig, hag, hog`.* Pray you mark:
genitivo: `huius`. Well, what is your accusative case?

WILLIAM *Accusativo: `hinc`±±* 40

EVANS I pray you have your remembrance, child.
Accusativo: `hing, hang, hog`.

MISTRESS QUICKLY `Hang-hog' is Latin for bacon, I warrant
you.

EVANS Leave your prabbles, 'oman!±±What is the focative 45
case, William?

WILLIAM O±±*vocativo*, O±±

EVANS Remember, William, focative is *caret*.

MISTRESS QUICKLY And that's a good root.

EVANS 'Oman, forbear. 50

MISTRESS PAGE (to Mistress Quickly) Peace.

EVANS What is your genitive case plural, William?

WILLIAM Genitive case?

EVANS Ay.

WILLIAM *Genitivo: `horum, harum, horum`.* 55

MISTRESS QUICKLY Vengeance of Jenny's case! Fie on her!
Never name her, child, if she be a whore.

EVANS For shame, 'oman!

MISTRESS QUICKLY You do ill to teach the child such words.
He teaches him to hick and to hack, which they'll do 60
fast enough of themselves, and to call `whorum'. Fie
upon you!

EVANS 'Oman, art thou lunatics? Hast thou no
understandings for thy cases, and the numbers of the
genders? Thou art as foolish Christian creatures as I 65
would desires.

MISTRESS PAGE (to Mistress Quickly) Prithee, hold thy peace.

EVANS Show me now, William, some declensions of your
pronouns.

WILLIAM Forsooth, I have forgot. 70

EVANS It is `qui, que, quod'. If you forget your `qui's, your
`que's, and your `quod's, you must be preeches. Go your
ways and play; go.

MISTRESS PAGE He is a better scholar than I thought he
was. 75

EVANS He is a good sprag memory. Farewell, Mistress
Page.

MISTRESS PAGE Adieu, good Sir Hugh.

Exit Evans

Get you home, boy.

Exit William

(To Mistress Quickly) Come, we stay too long. 80

Exeunt