

HENRY IV / MIDSUMMER – MALE OVER 30 (ish)

FALSTAFF

(making fun of Prince Hal)

'Sblood, you starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's tongue, you bull's pizzle, you stock-fish! O for breath to utter what is like thee! You tailor's-yard, you sheath, you bowcase, you vile standing tuck, you!

FALSTAFF

(telling the story of being robbed of his spoils after committing a robbery – exaggerating a lot...)

A plague of all cowards, say I! – Give me a cup of sack, boy. – There be four of us here have ta'en a thousand pound this day morning. Where is it, you ask? Taken from us it is: a hundred upon poor four of us. I am a rogue if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together! I have 'scaped by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the hose! If I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish. I have peppered two of them – two I am sure I have paid, two rogues in buckram suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face, call me horse. These four came all a-front, and mainly thrust at me. I made me no more ado but took all their seven points in my target, thus. These nine in buckram that I told thee of, their points being broken, began to give me ground; but I followed me close, came in foot and hand, and with a thought, seven of the eleven I paid.

KING HENRY IV

(giving terms to one of the rebel leaders before they fight)

How now, my Lord of Worcester? 'Tis not well
That you and I should meet upon such terms
As now we meet. You have deceived our trust,
And made us doff our easy robes of peace
To crush our old limbs in ungentle steel:
This is not well, my lord, this is not well.
Your wrongs indeed you have articulate,
Proclaim'd at market-crosses, read in churches,
To face the garment of rebellion
With some fine colour that may please the eye
Of fickle changelings and poor discontents.
And never yet did insurrection want
Such water-colours to impaint his cause.
We love our people well; even those we love
That are misled upon your cousin's part,
And, will they take the offer of our grace,
Both he and they and you, every man
Shall be my friend again and I'll be his.
So tell your cousin, and bring me word
What he will do: but if he will not yield,
Rebuke and dread correction wait on us
And they shall do their office. So, be gone;
We will not now be troubled with reply.
We offer fair; take it advisedly.

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SNOUT as Wall:

(A working man playing a wall in a play at court)

In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a crannied hole or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,
Did whisper often very secretly.
This loam, this rough-cast and this stone doth show
That I am that same wall; the truth is so.
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

BOTTOM

(lobbying to play all the parts in a play)

I will play Pyramus, a lover that kills himself most gallant for love. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it. If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes. I will move storms; I will condole in some measure. To the rest. Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split:

The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.

This was lofty! Now name the rest of the players. But if I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too! I'll speak in a monstrous little voice: "Thisne, Thisne!" "Ah, Pyramus, lover dear! Thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!"