

HENRY IV SIDES (Falstaff)

Falstaff #1:

FALSTAFF

For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen! For tears do stop the floodgates of her eyes. Peace, good ticklebrain. —Harry, I do not only marvel where thou spendest thy time, but also how thou art accompanied. For though the chamomile, the more it is trodden upon, the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted, the more it wears. That thou art my son, I have partly thy mother's word, partly my own opinion, but chiefly a villainous trick of thine eye and a foolish-hanging of thy nether lip, that doth warrant me. If then thou be son to me, here lies the point: why, being son to me, art thou so pointed at? Shall the sun of England prove a thief and take purses? A question to be asked. There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of, and it is known to many in our land by the name of pitch. This pitch, as ancient writers do report, doth defile; so doth the company thou keepest. For, Harry, now I do not speak to thee in drink but in tears; not in pleasure but in passion; not in words only, but in woes also: and yet there is a virtuous man whom I have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

PRINCE HENRY

What manner of man, an it like your Majesty?

FALSTAFF

A goodly portly man; of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye and a most noble carriage; and, as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r lady, inclining to threescore; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff. If that man should be lewdly given, he deceiveth me; for, Harry, I see virtue in his looks. I speak it: there is virtue in that Falstaff. Him keep with, the rest banish. Tell me now, where hast thou been this month?

Falstaff #2:

FALSTAFF

Hal—if thou see me down in the battle, bestride me, so! 'Tis a point of friendship.

PRINCE HENRY

Nothing but a colossus can do thee that friendship. Say thy prayers, and farewell.

FALSTAFF

I would 'twere bedtime, Hal, and all well.

PRINCE HENRY

Why, thou owest God a death.

FALSTAFF

'Tis not due yet. I would be loath to pay him before his day.

Exit PRINCE HENRY and WESTMORELAND

What need I be so forward with him that calls not on me? Well, 'tis no matter; honor pricks me on. Yea, but how if honor prick me off when I come on? How then? Can honor set to a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the grief of a wound? No. Honor hath no skill in surgery, then? No. What is honor? A word. What is in that word honor? What is that honor? Air—a trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that died a Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. 'Tis insensible, then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it. Honor is a mere display—and so ends my catechism.