

HENRY V: Side - Fluellen

3.6. The English camp in Picardy.

Enter GOWER and FLUELLEN, meeting

GOWER

How now, Captain Fluellen, come you from the bridge?

FLUELLEN

I assure you, there is very excellent services committed at the bridge.

GOWER

Is the Duke of Exeter safe?

FLUELLEN

The Duke of Exeter is as magnanimous as Agamemnon; and a man that I love and honour with my soul, and my heart, and my duty, and my life, and my living, and my uttermost power. He is not, God be praised and blessed, any hurt in the world, but keeps the bridge most valiantly, with excellent discipline. There is an anchient lieutenant there at the pridge; I think in my very conscience he is as valiant a man as Mark Antony, and he is a man of no estimation in the world; but I did see him do as gallant service.

GOWER

What do you call him?

FLUELLEN

He is called Anchient Pistol.

GOWER

I know him not.

Enter PISTOL

FLUELLEN

Here is the man.

PISTOL

Captain, I thee beseech to do me favours. The Duke of Exeter doth love thee well.

FLUELLEN

Ay, I praise God, and I have merited some love at his hands.

PISTOL

Bardolph, a soldier, firm and sound of heart, of buxom valour, hath, by cruel fate, and giddy Fortune's furious fickle wheel, that goddess blind that stands upon the rolling restless stone--

FLUELLEN

By your patience, Anchient Pistol. Fortune is painted blind, with a muffler afore her eyes, to signify to you that Fortune is blind; and she is painted also with a wheel, to signify to you, which is the moral of it, that she is turning, and inconstant, and mutability, and variation: and

33

her foot, look you, is fixed upon a spherical stone, which rolls, and rolls, and rolls. In good truth, the poet makes a most excellent description of it: Fortune is an excellent moral.

PISTOL

Fortune is Bardolph's foe, and frowns on him, for he hath stolen a pax, and hanged must 'a be. A damned death! Let gallows gape for dog, let man go free, and let not hemp his wind- pipe suffocate! But Exeter hath given the doom of death for pax of little price. Therefore, go speak--the Duke will hear thy voice--and let not Bardolph's vital thread be cut with edge of penny cord and vile reproach. Speak, Captain, for his life, and I will thee requite.

FLUELLEN

Anchient Pistol, I do partly understand your meaning.

PISTOL

Why then, rejoice therefore.

FLUELLEN

Certainly, Anchient, it is not a thing to rejoice at: for if, look you, he were my brother, I would desire the Duke to use his good pleasure and put him to execution; for discipline ought to be used.

PISTOL

Die and be damn'd! and *fico* for thy friendship! **FLUELLEN**

It is well.

PISTOL

The fig of Spain!

Exit

FLUELLEN

Very good.

GOWER

Why, this is an arrant counterfeit rascal; I remember him now-- a bawd, a cutpurse.

FLUELLEN

I tell you what, Captain Gower; I do perceive he is not the man that he would gladly make show to the world he is. If I find a hole in his coat, I will tell him my mind.*Drum heard*

Hark you, the king is coming.