

MERRY WIVES SIDE 1 ANNE PAGE - ABRAHAM SLENDER

Anne Page is inviting Slender into join the others for a meal. Slender is nervous around her.

ANNE PAGE

Will't please your worship to come in, sir?

SLENDER

No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well.

ANNE PAGE

The dinner attends you, sir.

SLENDER

I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth.

ANNE PAGE

I may not go in without your worship: they will not sit till you come.

SLENDER

I' faith, I'll eat nothing; I thank you as much as though I did.

ANNE PAGE

I pray you, sir, walk in.

SLENDER

I had rather walk here, I thank you. I bruised my shin th' other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence; three veneys for a dish of stewed prunes; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since. Why do your dogs bark so? be there bears i' the town?

ANNE PAGE

I think there are, sir; I heard them talked of.

SLENDER

I love the sport well but I shall as soon quarrel at it as any man in England. You are afraid, if you see the bear loose, are you not?

ANNE PAGE

Ay, indeed, sir.

SLENDER

That's meat and drink to me, now. I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cried and shrieked at it, that it passed: but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favored rough things.

MERRY WIVES SIDE 2

SIR HUGH EVANS and SIMPLE

Sir Hugh Evans is a Welsh parson with a Welsh accent. Simple is, well, simple.

Enter SIR HUGH EVANS and SIMPLE

SIR HUGH EVANS

Go your ways, and ask of Doctor Caius' house which is the way: and there dwells one Mistress Quickly, which is in the manner of his nurse, or his dry nurse, or his cook, or his laundry, his washer, and his wringer.

SIMPLE

Well, sir.

SIR HUGH EVANS

Nay, it is petter yet. Give her this letter; for it is a 'oman that altogether's acquaintance with Mistress Anne Page: and the letter is, to desire and require her to solicit your master's desires to Mistress Anne Page. I pray you, be gone: I will make an end of my dinner; there's pippins and cheese to come.

Exeunt

MERRY WIVES SIDE 3

MISTRESS QUICKLY and SIMPLE

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Peter Simple, you say your name is?

SIMPLE

Ay, for fault of a better.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

And Master Slender's your master?

SIMPLE

Ay, forsooth.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Does he not wear a great round beard, like a
glover's paring-knife?

SIMPLE

No, forsooth: he hath but a little wee face, with a
little yellow beard, a Cain-coloured beard.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

A softly-sprighted man, is he not?

SIMPLE

Ay, forsooth: but he is as tall a man of his hands
as any is between this and his head; he hath fought
with a warrener.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

How say you? O, I should remember him: does he not
hold up his head, as it were, and strut in his gait?

SIMPLE

Yes, indeed, does he.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Well, heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell
Master Parson Evans I will do what I can for your
master.

MERRY WIVES SIDE 4 - MISTRESS QUICKLY and FENTON

Enter FENTON

FENTON

How now, good woman? how dost thou?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

The better that it pleases your good worship to ask.

FENTON

What news? how does pretty Mistress Anne?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

In truth, sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way; I praise heaven for it.

FENTON

Shall I do any good, thinkest thou? shall I not lose my suit?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Troth, sir, all is in his hands above: but notwithstanding, Master Fenton, I'll be sworn on a book, she loves you. Have not your worship a wart above your eye?

FENTON

Yes, marry, have I; what of that?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Well, thereby hangs a tale: good faith, it is such another Nan; but, I detest, an honest maid as ever broke bread: we had an hour's talk of that wart. I shall never laugh but in that maid's company! But indeed she is given too much to allicholy and musing: but for you--well, go to.

FENTON

Well, I shall see her to-day. Hold, there's money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf: if thou seest her before me, commend me.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Will I? i'faith, that we will; and I will tell your worship more of the wart the next time we have confidence; and of other wooers.

FENTON

Well, farewell; I am in great haste now.

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Farewell to your worship.

MERRY WIVES - SIDE 5 - MISTRESS PAGE reading letter

Enter MISTRESS PAGE, with a letter

MISTRESS PAGE

What, am I now a subject for love-letters?
Let me see.

Reads

'Ask me no reason why I love you; for though
Love use Reason for his physician, he admits him
not for his counsellor. You are not young, no more
am I; go to then, there's sympathy: you are merry,
so am I; ha, ha! then there's more sympathy: you
love sack, and so do I; would you desire better
sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page,--at
the least, if the love of soldier can suffice,--
that I love thee. I will not say, pity me; 'tis
not a soldier-like phrase: but I say, love me. By me,
Thine own true knight,
By day or night,
Or any kind of light,
With all his might
For thee to fight, JOHN FALSTAFF'
(To audience) O wicked world!
One that is well-nigh worn to pieces with
age to show himself a young gallant! What an
unweighed behavior hath this Flemish drunkard
picked--with the devil's name!--out of my
conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me?
Why, he hath not been thrice in my company! What
should I say to him? I was then frugal of my
mirth: Heaven forgive me! Why, I'll exhibit a bill
in the parliament for the putting down of men. How
shall I be revenged on him? for revenged I will be,
as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

MERRY WIVES - SIDE 6 - FORD AND PAGE

PAGE

How now, Master Ford!

FORD

You heard what this knave told me, did you not?

PAGE

Yes: and you heard what the other told me?

FORD

Do you think there is truth in them?

PAGE

Hang 'em, slaves! I do not think the knight would offer it: but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives are a yoke of his discarded men; very rogues, now they be out of service.

FORD

Were they his men?

PAGE

Marry, were they.

FORD

I like it never the better for that. Does he lie at the Garter?

PAGE

Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage towards my wife, I would turn her loose to him; and what he gets more of her than sharp words, let it lie on my head.

FORD

I do not misdoubt my wife; but I would be loath to turn them together. A man may be too confident: I would have nothing lie on my head: I cannot be thus satisfied.

MERRY WIVES - SIDE 7 - FORD - PISTOL

Enter FORD with PISTOL in mid-conversation.

FORD

Well, I hope it be not so.

PISTOL

Hope is a curtal dog in some affairs:
Sir John affects thy wife.

FORD

Why, sir, my wife is--

PISTOL (interrupts)

He wooes both high and low, both rich and poor,
Both young and old, one with another, Ford;
He loves the gallimaufry: Ford, perpend.

FORD

Love my wife!

PISTOL

With liver burning hot. Prevent, or go thou,
Like Sir Actaeon he, with Ringwood at thy heels:
O, odious is the name!

FORD

What name, sir?

PISTOL

The horn, I say. Farewell.
Take heed, have open eye, for thieves do foot by night:
Take heed, ere summer comes or cuckoo-birds do sing.
Away!

MERRY WIVES - SIDE 8 - HOST and CAIUS

Host

Pardon, guest-justice. A word, Mounseur Mockwater.

DOCTOR CAIUS

Mock-vater! vat is dat?

Host

Mock-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.

DOCTOR CAIUS

By gar, den, I have as mush mock-vater as de Englishman. Scurvy jack-dog priest! by gar, me vill cut his ears.

Host

He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

DOCTOR CAIUS

Clapper-de-claw! vat is dat?

Host

That is, he will make thee amends.

DOCTOR CAIUS

By gar, me do look he shall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

Host

And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

DOCTOR CAIUS

Me tank you for dat.
By gar, me vill kill de priest; for he speak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page.

Host

Let him die: sheathe thy impatience, throw cold water on thy choler: go about the fields with me through Frogmore: I will bring thee where Mistress Anne Page is, at a farm-house a-feasting; and thou shalt woo her. Cried I aim? said I well?

DOCTOR CAIUS

By gar, me dank you for dat: by gar, I love you; and I shall procure-a you de good guest, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentlemen, my patients.

Host

For the which I will be thy adversary toward Anne Page. Said I well?

DOCTOR CAIUS

By gar, 'tis good; vell said.

MERRY WIVES - SIDE 9 - FORD - Mistress PAGE

Enter FORD

FORD

Well met, Mistress Page. Whither go you?

MISTRESS PAGE

Truly, sir, to see your wife. Is she at home?

FORD

Ay; and as idle as she may hang together, for want of company. I think, if your husbands were dead, you two would marry.

MISTRESS PAGE

Be sure of that,--two other husbands.

FORD

Where had you this pretty weather-cock?

MISTRESS PAGE

I cannot tell what the dickens his name is my husband had him of. What do you call your knight's name, sirrah? Sir John....

FORD

Sir John Falstaff!

MISTRESS PAGE

He, he; I can never hit on's name. There is such a league between my good man and he! Is your wife at home indeed?

FORD

Indeed she is.

MISTRESS PAGE

By your leave, sir: I am sick till I see her.

MERRY WIVES - SIDE 10 - MISTRESS FORD- MISTRESS PAGE

(After having tricked Falstaff and Ford)

MISTRESS PAGE

Is there not a double excellency in this?

MISTRESS FORD

I know not which pleases me better, that my husband is deceived, or Sir John.

MISTRESS PAGE

What a taking was he in when your husband asked who was in the basket!

MISTRESS FORD

I am half afraid he will have need of washing; so throwing him into the water will do him a benefit.

MISTRESS PAGE

Hang him, dishonest rascal! I would all of the same strain were in the same distress.

MISTRESS FORD

I think my husband hath some special suspicion of Falstaff's being here; for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.

MISTRESS PAGE

I will lay a plot to try that; and we will yet have more tricks with Falstaff: his dissolute disease will scarce obey this medicine.

MISTRESS FORD

Shall we send that foolish carrion, Mistress Quickly, to him, and excuse his throwing into the water; and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment?

MISTRESS PAGE

We will do it: let him be sent for to-morrow, eight o'clock, to have amends.

MERRY WIVES - SIDE 11 - ANNE PAGE - FENTON

A room in PAGE'S house.

Enter FENTON and ANNE PAGE

FENTON

I see I cannot get thy father's love;
Therefore no more turn me to him, sweet Nan.

ANNE PAGE

Alas, how then?

FENTON

Why, thou must be thyself.
He doth object I am too great of birth--,
And that, my state being gall'd with my expense,
I seek to heal it only by his wealth:
Besides these, other bars he lays before me,
My riots past, my wild societies;
And tells me 'tis a thing impossible
I should love thee but as a property.

ANNE PAGE

May be he tells you true.

FENTON

No, heaven so speed me in my time to come!
Albeit I will confess thy father's wealth
Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne:
Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value
Than stamps in gold or sums in sealed bags;
And 'tis the very riches of thyself
That now I aim at.

ANNE PAGE

Gentle Master Fenton,
Yet seek my father's love; still seek it, sir:
If opportunity and humblest suit
Cannot attain it, why, then,--

MERRY WIVES SIDE 12 - SHALLOW, SLENDER, SIR HUGH EVANS

This scene opens the play. Windsor. Before PAGE's house.

Enter SHALLOW, SLENDER, and SIR HUGH EVANS

SHALLOW

Sir Hugh, persuade me not; I will make a Star-chamber matter of it: if he were twenty Sir John Falstaffs, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire.

SLENDER

In the county of Gloucester, justice of peace and 'Coram.'

SHALLOW

Ay, cousin Slender, and 'Custalourum.

SIR HUGH EVANS

If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I am of the church, and will be glad to do my benevolence to make atonements and compromises between you.

SHALLOW

Ha! o' my life, if I were young again, the sword should end it.

SIR HUGH EVANS

It is petter that friends is the sword, and end it: and there is also another device in my prain, which peradventure prings goot discretions with it: there is Anne Page, which is daughter to Master Thomas Page, which is pretty virginity.

SLENDER

Mistress Anne Page? She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman.

SIR HUGH EVANS

It is that fery person for all the orld, as just as you will desire; and seven hundred pounds of moneys, and gold and silver, is her grandsire upon his death's-bed--Got deliver to a joyful resurrections! --give, when she is able to overtake seventeen years old: it were a goot motion if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.

(SIDE 12 CONTINUES)

SLENDER

Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pound?

SIR HUGH EVANS

Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

SLENDER

I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

SIR HUGH EVANS

Seven hundred pounds and possibilities is goot gifts.

SHALLOW

Well, let us see honest Master Page. Is Falstaff there?

SIR HUGH EVANS

Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a liar as I do despise one that is false, or as I despise one that is not true. The knight, Sir John, is there; and, I beseech you, be ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the door for Master Page.

SIDE 13 - FORD MONOLOGUE

FORD

What a damned Epicurean rascal is this! My heart is ready to crack with impatience. Who says this is improvident jealousy? my wife hath sent to him; the hour is fixed; the match is made. Would any man have thought this? See the hell of having a false woman! My bed shall be abused, my coffers ransacked, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villanous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. Terms! names! Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer, well; Barbason, well; yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends: but Cuckold! Wittol!--Cuckold! the devil himself hath not such a name. Page is an ass, a secure ass: he will trust his wife; he will not be jealous. I will rather trust a Fleming with my butter, Parson Hugh the Welshman with my cheese, an Irishman with my aqua-vitae bottle, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself; then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect. God be praised for my jealousy! Eleven o'clock the hour. I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it; better three hours too soon than a minute too late. Fie, fie, fie! cuckold! cuckold! cuckold!

