

Maggie &
Winifred
#8

40

INTO THE BREECHES!

MAGGIE.

Now, time to earn those paychecks! How about a tiny sample from everyone? You first, Winifred. Falstaff, hilarious Falstaff, nothing but trouble. Page seven? From "Marry, then"?

WINIFRED. Oh! Of course.

(She reads as FALSTAFF, painfully unfunny, un-everything.)

WINIFRED AS FALSTAFF. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty. Let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon -

MAGGIE. And stop.

STUART. Hold!

WINIFRED. Was it funny?

MAGGIE. It's early.

WINIFRED. It didn't really feel funny.

MAGGIE. Early days, early days. So, something to think about, Falstaff, she's - he's - he's one of those, a type, I guess, a roly-poly, fun-loving drunk.

WINIFRED. Ah! My uncle was a drunk.

MAGGIE. There you have it!

WINIFRED. But he wasn't funny.

MAGGIE. No, no, I suppose they're not all -

WINIFRED. Died very young.

MAGGIE. No, really, it's more of a, a type, like I said, just a funny type. Do you want to try that last part again? Think more, try thinking a comic lilt.

WINIFRED. Ah!

MAGGIE. Yes?

WINIFRED. Yes!

(She launches into it again with a damaging lilt, funny for all the wrong reasons.)

WINIFRED AS FALSTAFF. Marry, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's beauty. Let us be Diana's -

(MAGGIE can't take any more and:)

MAGGIE. Okay! There we go, let's stop it there.

~~STUART. Hold, please!~~

WINIFRED. Better?

MAGGIE. Early days.

END

(IDA enters, her coat on, sits, and starts her sewing.)

Let's move on to our leads, to King Henry the Fourth, (Gestures to GRACE.) who thinks that his son, (To CELESTE, a grimace at the age difference.) the Prince, is a good-for-nothing who has become his greatest enemy. Let's have a bit of that, look at page sixty-seven, where the King gives the Prince the business.

GRACE. But, but I can't just jump in like – read with Miss Fielding?

CELESTE. Oh, you poor thing. I can only imagine the terror and intimidation this moment must contain. But remember, we only ask your very best.

GRACE. But – but –!

MAGGIE. Do me a favor, dear. Breathe in –

(GRACE does.)

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

Breathe out.

Breathe in.

“But wherefore?”

(GRACE reads haltingly, but with good instincts.)

GRACE AS HENRY IV. But wherefore do I tell these news to thee?

Why Henry, do I tell thee of my foes,

Which art my nearest and dearest enemy?

(CELESTE reads, a lyrical Gielgud-y approach.)

CELESTE AS HENRY V. Do not think so. You shall not find it so. And God forgive them that so much have swayed