

Selected Scenes from

*Texas Dick*

By Sperry Hunt

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INT. HOSPITAL NURSE'S STATION - NIGHT

High-desert town of Little Bend, Texas - population 6000. At the nurses' station, DOROTHY (35), a chunky, authoritarian nurse, snaps her gum and flips the pages of a magazine.

INSERT - A CLOCK ON THE WALL

which reads: 1:05.

The custodian, ELMER (60), an older man in cowboy boots, makes uninspired swirls with his mop.

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.S.)

Zounds!

Elmer freezes. Dorothy looks up.

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I am stung! The glassy adder doth  
stab me with a venomous tooth?

Dorothy bustles down the hall. Elmer follows cautiously.

INT. PATIENT ROOM -- NIGHT

Chris and Dimitri are patients. Dimitri has just awakened from his coma believing that he is the Shakespearean character FALSTAFF! He tears an IV from his arm.

DOROTHY

Calm down, Sir. You've been in a coma.

FALSTAFF

Fie! I am assailed!

Falstaff tears a monitor probe from his chest. MONITOR BEEPS.

Dorothy resets the monitor. Falstaff leaps to his feet, his gown flapping about his hairy, white buttocks.

FALSTAFF (CONT'D)

Where is Hal?

DOROTHY

Who?

FALSTAFF

The Prince and the sweetest wag who  
e'er drew breath. What is this place?

DOROTHY

ICU.

FALSTAFF

See me? Never a man never tramped the  
earth less invisible.

(eying Dorothy  
thoroughly)

Though art lavish of bosom, Madame.

DOROTHY

Behave, Sir, and get back in bed.

FALSTAFF

(smiles)

Behave, Mistress? I shalt behalf  
thee with my liberal manhood.

DOROTHY

Elmer! Help me restrain him.

FALSTAFF

Do so, rogue, and kiss the lips of thy  
life adieu.

ELMER

I'd like to hep you, ma'am, but ...

FALSTAFF

(spies Chris)

What hast thou done to this wretch?

Falstaff pulls the tubes from Chris and stomps on them.

FALSTAFF (CONT'D)

Who is he?

DOROTHY

A John Doe.

FALSTAFF

Arise, Doe.

DOROTHY  
He's not really John Doe.

FALSTAFF  
What lunacy! Does't though call each  
inmate what his is not named?

DOROTHY  
He mumbled something about a duke.

FALSTAFF  
A duke? Let us rob ... rouse him.  
(slaps Richard)  
A Duke from where?

DOROTHY  
Stop it, sir.

Falstaff fails to notice his slaps are bringing Chris around.

FALSTAFF  
The Duke of Stopit?

DOROTHY  
Of Gloucester, he said.

Chris's eyes brim with fury for he now believes himself to be Shakespeare's Gloucester, the future RICHARD III!

FALSTAFF  
I know the duke and this fellow ...

Richard suddenly grabs as much of Falstaff's throat as he can get his right hand around. Although his left arm seems to have limited motion, he is very strong and terrifying.

RICHARD  
Who is this summit of flesh, this  
butter barrel who doth strike the next  
king?

Richard flings Falstaff away. Falstaff rubs his throat.

FALSTAFF  
Sir John Falstaff, my lord. A knight  
of the realm and friend to the prince.

RICHARD

Thou art counterfeit in all but  
falsehoods, False Stuff.

FALSTAFF

Falstaff, sir. A noble mantle ...

RICHARD

Bring my dagger that I might prick this  
bag of gas. Fetch it, or I'll murder  
thee in a wink!

Richard stalks Dorothy menacingly, then staggers.

ELMER

Easy, mister. You'd best set 'fore  
you

(regards his arm)

... keel over.

RICHARD

Care, rogue. I did'st behead the last  
man who fixed an eye on my withered  
limb. And he was a king!

ELMER

Sorry. You fellas from New York?

RICHARD

I am of York. Are you of Lancaster?

ELMER

You talk like yore English.

RICHARD

I am of ... What is this place?

ELMER

Texas.

RICHARD

Texas? How far from London?

ELMER

'Bout five thousand.

RICHARD

Is this true, wench?

DOROTHY

Yes, sir.

Richard rocks back with the news.

RICHARD

I have long slumbered. Who is king?

DOROTHY

Nobody. That old Elizabeth is queen.

FALSTAFF

Madame though art a fumbler of facts.  
Henry is regent.

RICHARD

Elizabeth? That crow who stood by  
idle whilst her hag sister did name me  
poisonous hunchbacked toad?

(to Elmer)

Deliver my sword, rogue!

FALSTAFF

(aside to Elmer)

Play his game lest his game be us.

DOROTHY

There'll be no swords in my hospital.

FALSTAFF

Fetch me mine, and I'll have two: a  
dagger for my defense and a broadsword  
for thy pleasure.

RICHARD

The spheroid thinks the wench a whore.

DOROTHY

(slaps Falstaff hard)

They don't pay me enough for this.  
Lie down, or I'll call the sheriff!

FALSTAFF

Zounds, if he be friend to the sheriff  
of Eastcheap, then he doth keep a  
monstrous watch for Sir John. Bind  
the wench lest you be hanged for

innocent acquaintance with my gentle self.

RICHARD

(to Elmer)

Truss up this brutish maid. Fail me, and I'll bind thee so tight thine eyes will spring out and gaze at thee from thy lap.

ELMER

Sure thing, but don't hurt her none. Say, you boys ain't crooks, are you?

They tie Dorothy to a chair and gag her with a pillowcase.

RICHARD

Crooks?

ELMER

Thieves. Murderers.

RICHARD

(sweetens suddenly)

Nay, we are but civil men who wet our cheeks with the gentle rain of pity to see a babe without its mother. Forgive us, sir, and show us to our clothes.

LATER

Wearing their medieval costumes, Falstaff and Richard adjust their hats and foils. Falstaff smells his armpits.

FALSTAFF

Tis a pity this turgid vixen turned so hot against me.

Bound, Dorothy shouts into her gag.

RICHARD

Is it December, Elmer, or has the flower of five and fourteen-eighty fallen?

FALSTAFF

The fifteenth century is hardly a bud,  
my lord.

ELMER

You funnin' me? It's the  
twenty-first, Mister.

FALSTAFF

God-a-mercy, ye cuckoo. Are ye mad or  
a devil?

RICHARD

(to himself)

If Elmer, the ass, be a devil's fool,  
could Satan be the larger mule? If  
this is all to Devil's spell,  
Then I may come to rule in Hell!

Falstaff winks at Elmer and thumps his temple. Elmer nods.

FALSTAFF

Whilst the Duke doth employs his  
thoughts, wouldst thou have a cup of  
sack?

ELMER

Sack o what?

FALSTAFF

A doublet of bastard? A snifter of  
brew? My tongue's a dusty dune, Man.

RICHARD

The red rogue craves drink.

ELMER

They got tequila up to the One Knight  
that'll turn you pret'near wall-eyed.  
We can hop in my car and run up there.

RICHARD

Lead on. As the rule of man is a foot,  
there are men afoot to rule.

FALSTAFF

To hop and run and drink till dawn.  
And race the wench till moon is gone.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Falstaff, Richard and Elmer walk toward Elmer's car.

FALSTAFF

We are lost. In England heaven was  
n'er so bright, nor earth so bare.

RICHARD

A man is lost where he cannot find  
himself.

FALSTAFF

Are thee not afraid, my lord?

RICHARD

I fear not what I know most constantly,  
for my father's house was awash in the  
hot blood of cold men.

Richard stares off for a moment.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Who is the king of Texas?

ELMER

Nobody. We're a democracy. We all  
vote for who runs things.

RICHARD

Peers and rogues as well?

ELMER

Everybody.

Falstaff gapes as Elmer opens his car door.

FALSTAFF

Is this thy wagon?

ELMER

My wife's. Normally she don't let me  
drive it 'cause I leave the keys in it  
and the lights on. But mine's busted.  
It's a Merc'ry. See?

ANGLE ON EMBLEM

BACK TO SCENE

FALSTAFF

I regard the deity himself, but where  
art the nags?

ELMER

Ha! Ha! Get in and find out, boys.

Richard glares at Elmer, unsheathes his sword and enters.  
Falstaff enters comically.

FALSTAFF

How is it propelled?

Falstaff watches Elmer intently as he starts the car.

ELMER

Turn the key ... pull this down, press  
the pedal with your foot and two  
hundred nags do the rest.

The Mercury shoots away.

INT. ELMER'S CAR - NIGHT

Elmer swings the car wildly from the parking lot. Falstaff is  
thrown onto Richard who shoves him away.

RICHARD

Away, ye falling house of guts!

Falstaff spins his head around at the sight of the drive-in.

FALSTAFF

Sblood, a dazzling court hath this ...  
Dairy Queen! I would ...

ELMER

There's the sheriff.

FALSTAFF

Zounds!

All heads swing around to watch the parked patrol car.

EXT. SANDERSON'S PATROL CAR -- NIGHT

Sanderson scratches his head at seeing the bearded knave smashed against the window of Elmer's car.

EXT. 4X4 -- NIGHT

In an alley nearby Coleman pulls the 4X4 behind Baby Jones' Harley. Jones approaches Coleman.

BABY JONES

He's up yonder. You were right. He waited till his momma went to bed and snuck out. How'd you know?

COLEMAN

'Cause I did it when I was his age and too scared to sleep. Grab him and bring him to the bar.

BABY JONES

You must be some kinda crazy 'bout his momma.

Coleman puts the 4X4 into gear.

COLEMAN

Mind your own bidness, Boy. And don't be a fool. Go down when I hit you the first time cause the second one might just kill ya.

The 4X4 tears away.

EXT. ONE KNIGHT STAND - NIGHT

Falstaff, Elmer and Richard walk toward the door which is bracketed by hitching posts. COUNTRY MUSIC thumps inside. Falstaff notes the sign that reads, "One Knight Stand."

FALSTAFF

Oh-nee-kay...

ELMER

One Knight Stand.

RICHARD

Thou canst read, villain?

ELMER

Sure. And I ain't no villain.

RICHARD

Master thy tongue, or I'll hole thy  
belt and send thee to the devil.

ELMER

I'm just a harmless old man, mister,  
but watch out. There's a bad boy or  
two comes in here now and again.

INT. ONE KNIGHT STAND - NIGHT

By the door stands a cheap suit of armor with a Texas flag painted on the shield. A scored old bar supports the elbows of the high and the low of Little Bend. Behind the bar are a TV and a photo of John Wayne. Robert converses with Carlos, Fud, ELVIS (the bartender), and JIMMY, a cowboy poet.

The patrons gawk at the entering trio.

Coleman sits alone at a corner table.

Falstaff marvels at the armor. He raps it with a knuckle and opens the visor to see if it is occupied.

FALSTAFF

Hollow as a lawyer's conscience.

He walks to the juke box. He peeks behind and under it, then catches up to the others who have arrived at the bar.

FALSTAFF (CONT'D)

Art there mad musicians mewed up in a  
dungeon below?

ELMER

(laughs)

Dangit, Sir John. You're too much.

FALSTAFF

Prince Hal doth oft hold there is too  
much of Sir John. Sblood!

Falstaff SEES a talking head on the television. He rushes around the bar, draws his sword and swipes at the air beneath the television.

FALSTAFF (CONT'D)

(continuing)

Begone, ye sulfurous, untrunked  
spirit.

Everyone except Richard ducks as Falstaff hurls a bottle at the TV which then explodes in a blinding shower of sparks.

When the smoke clears, Elvis grabs Falstaff.

ELVIS

Mister, you'd better come up with four  
...six hundred dollars pronto.

Elmer intervenes prying Elvis' fingers from Falstaff.

ELMER

Easy does it there, Elvis. This ole  
boy just got outta the hospital.

ELVIS

(shakes his fist)

I got a round trip ticket for him.

Elmer pulls Falstaff away.

FALSTAFF

What world is this that avenges  
spirits and harries august ancients?

Elvis cleans up the glass. Elmer puts a hand on Falstaff's shoulder.

ELMER

Settle down, Sir John.

ROBERT

Not Sir John Falstaff?

FALSTAFF

Thou clappest eyes on his noble self.

ROBERT

And you are, sir ..?

RICHARD

Richard Plantagenet, Duke of ...

ROBERT  
Richard III?

RICHARD  
(aside)  
If thou wouldst purchase my favor,  
friend, thy coin is good.

ROBERT  
Excellent! I'm an actor myself.

RICHARD  
I expect action from all in my employ.

ROBERT  
Where are you performing the play?

RICHARD  
Careful, rogue. Wit may cut the fool  
who wields it indelicately.

Robert laughs. Richard storms away.

FALSTAFF  
That mad-headed ape thinks himself the  
Duke of Gloucester. He hath mettle in  
him though, so beware.

ROBERT  
You play an excellent Falstaff, sir.

FALSTAFF  
As a herring plays a fish, Sir?

ROBERT  
Robert Brady,  
(winks at Falstaff)  
... Sir John.

FALSTAFF  
Thou alone savage not my noble tongue.  
Tis worse here than Wales. That rogue  
claims we're a world from London.

ROBERT  
To confute him I am unable.

FALSTAFF

I am woe to hear't, and doubly so that  
I cannot find my sweet prince.

ROBERT

Hal?

FALSTAFF

Thou know'st where he is?

ROBERT

Plotting to steal thy hard won purse  
and prove thee coward?

FALSTAFF

He plays me a fool as Pan plays a pipe.  
But I'd kiss the Devil's boot to see  
his cunning face. I was departing to  
him how discretion is the better part  
of valor when there came a crashing  
clamor and a rank odor did'st my  
nostril offend. Sorcery was afoot  
I'll warrant. But art thou with my  
self acquainted?

ROBERT

Of Falstaff 'twas said *If that man  
should be lewdly given, he deceiveth  
me, for I see virtue in his looks.*

FALSTAFF

Thou art a favored son of his good  
mother. Embrace me, brother.

Falstaff gives Robert a crushing hug and a great kiss.

Every other male at the bar winces GROANS.

Suddenly the door bursts open. Percy rushes in and runs behind  
the bar.

Baby Jones steps inside scowling.

We SEE face after face frozen in terror.

Baby flings off his jacket exposing deep pleats of muscle and  
a huge holstered pistol. He walks toward the bar.

BABY JONES

Get out here, you little mick faggot.

ROBERT

(steps in Baby's way)

Leave him alone, you talking ape.

Before the talking ape can grab Robert, little Percy vaults over the bar, puts an ineffective shoulder into Baby and bounces off onto the barroom floor. Percy crawls backward, drawing Baby away from his grandfather.

We HEAR a CHAIR being pushed back loudly.

Coleman approaches Baby. Baby takes a step toward Coleman, then suddenly stops, looks down at the tip of Richard's sword poking his diaphragm.

BABY JONES

Fucking ow!

RICHARD

How quick do those brave drummers  
battering in thy breast do flaunt  
their soft-footed heels at the  
worrying tip of so dainty a point.

Richard steps back and lowers his sword and observes the fear in the faces of the crowd.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

By thy frosted brows, I take this to  
be your master.

Baby Jones looks Richard up and down.

BABY JONES

A tough guy maybe, and no *person of color*. Anglo-Saxon maybe. But way too queer.

RICHARD

My cousins did scythe down the savage  
Saxons at Hastings like spring wheat.  
Of color? I regard the Moor's scimitar  
as would I the Scot's mace. Tough?  
Thou should'st ask a rogue who,  
boasting of his broils, did ask of

mine. I bowled the head of Lord  
Somerset at his feet and did command  
it: Speak for me, Somerset, and tell  
them what I did. Queer?

Baby draws his pistol and aims it at Richard.

BABY JONES

Sissy-boy, faggot, boy-lover.

(to the crowd)

Did you think he was gonna stomp me  
when your stupid sheriff  
can't...Shit!

In the second that Baby took his eyes off him, Richard has  
stabbed Baby in the hand. The pistol drops. Richard kicks  
Baby to his knees then slugs him brutally. Richard picks up  
the pistol which discharges holing the picture of John Wayne.  
Everyone ducks. Falstaff hits the floor with a seismic thud.

RICHARD

'Tis a cannon in my hand. How many  
balls does't it employ?

ELMER

Lots so go easy, Mister.

RICHARD

So, rogue, should I return thy balls,  
or wilt thou depart without them?

BABY JONES

(scurries away)

You can keep 'em.

RICHARD

(aside)

If this vermin be a lord in Texas, I  
shall be regent in a fortnight.

Coleman rolls a quarter across his knuckles as he studies  
Richard.

FALSTAFF

(to Robert)

I wouldst myself disarm the villain,  
but am accursed with a knee disorder'd  
in combat.

RICHARD

(to Elvis)

Unpack thy virtue, Drawer, and unstop  
the cocks?

JIMMY AND CARLOS

Huh?

ROBERT

Drinks for ever'body!

The patrons all cheer. Elvis makes a phone call.

Patrons slap Richard's back as he helps Percy to his feet.

RICHARD

Arise, my young Trojan named ...

PERCY

Percy, sir.

FALSTAFF

Percy?

RICHARD

Falstaff, stuff thy guts in thy girdle  
and get them to me.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(to Robert)

Are thee blood to this lad?

ROBERT

His grandfather and thanks be to you,  
sir, for savin' us from that black  
hearted thug.

Richard, Robert, Percy and Falstaff sit at a table. Richard  
sees Falstaff furtively pocket a coaster and loose change.  
Richard smacks the gun on the table.

RICHARD

(to Percy)

Thy valor returned to me a virtue  
 long estrang'd. One Percy, called  
 Hotspur, was an honored knight with a  
 hot spleen. In days unborn thou shalt  
 match him.

Richard pats Percy's back. Percy straightens and smiles.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

(to Robert)

On the morrow I will test whither the  
 winds of fortune be fair or if the vane  
 doth tremble to the gale of war. But  
 this night will we drink and gabble and  
 call the other friend.

FALSTAFF

It has been said, my lord, that at  
 Shrewsbury I was the brawn and brow of  
 Mars himself when -

RICHARD

(loudly to Robert)

I'll be sworn this buckram bagpipe is  
 without advantage in war, but his  
 red-nosed ramblings do tickle my  
 cankered mind. Be vexed not that we  
 are few, for the strong oft attend the  
 brave. Behind every man who strives is  
 ...

FALSTAFF

(staring behind  
 Richard)

...a sheriff.

Sanderson stands behind Richard looking very nervous. Beside  
 Sanderson is DEPUTY TYLER, a fit female officer.

Richard picks up the pistol.

Sanderson draws his nightstick hesitantly.

As Richard turns the gun toward the sheriff, Deputy Tyler steps  
 up and smacks Richard soundly on the head.

DARKNESS