“Humour” Excerpt: Merry Wives of Windsor, Act 2, Scene 1

CONTEXT: Nym is a loyal friend and servant of a man named Falstaff who is trying to trick some married women (including the wife of Master Page). In this speech to Master Page, Nym decides not to help Falstaff take advantage of these women, and instead reveals Falstaff’s mischievous plans.

TASK: As you read Nym’s speech, note that “humour” is used in different ways in one brief speech. The definition may be different from what you expect. Read the speech carefully, and do your best to infer the meaning of each use of “humour.” Fill in synonyms for each use of “humour” in the blanks below.

NYM [to Master Page]

And this is true; I like not the humour of lying. He hath wronged me in some humours: I should have borne the humoured letter to her; but I have a sword and it shall bite upon my necessity. He loves your wife; there's the short and the long. My name is Corporal Nym; I speak and I avouch; 'tis true: my name is Nym and Falstaff loves your wife. Adieu. I love not the humour of bread and cheese, and there's the humour of it. Adieu.

(Source: http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/MobMerr.html)

And this is true; I like not the __________
of lying. He hath wronged me in some __________: I should have borne the __________ letter to her; but I have a sword and it shall bite upon my necessity. He loves your wife; there's the short and the long. My name is Corporal Nym; I speak and I avouch; 'tis true: my name is Nym and Falstaff loves your wife. Adieu. I love not the __________ of bread and cheese, and there's the __________ of it. Adieu.