

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR
BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ARTSREACH playing script prepared by David Richman

NOTE TO SHAKSPERIANS

This adaptation of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was made for the ARTSREACH program of the University of New Hampshire's Department of Theater and Dance. ARTSREACH's purpose is to bring dramatic productions on tour to high schools, middle schools, libraries, and other institutions throughout New Hampshire. The adaptation, performed without intermission, can be played in about ninety minutes. For touring purposes, we also excerpted a forty-five minute version from this adaptation. I offer this version to SHAKSPER with the hope that it will encourage other universities to consider launching similar touring theatrical programs. If this version is used for any purpose, I request that it be accompanied by the following note:

ADAPTED BY DAVID RICHMAN FOR THE ARTSREACH PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEW HAMPSHIRE'S DEPARTMENT OF THEATER AND DANCE

This version attempts to preserve the Falstaff story and the story of Anne Page. Other plots and characters are cut. I have relied on the Oxford Text Archive version of the 1623 Folio, though I have imported the name Brooke and a few other things from the Quarto. I have modernized some spelling and punctuation, and I have incorporated some deliberate pastiche.

This version is intended for eight performers, four men and four women, cast as follows:

Actor One: Falstaff
Actor Two: Ford
Actor Three: Page and Slender
Actor Four: Fenton, Host, Pistol
Actress One: Mistress Ford
Actress Two: Mistress Page and Caius
Actress Three: Anne Page, Bardolph, Robin
Actress Four: Mistress Quickly, Sir Hugh, Nym

All the actors became fairies and servants at need, and we brought members of the audience on to the stage to participate in the fairies' tormenting of Falstaff. There was no special lighting, and scenery was minimal. We had several multipurpose stools which stacked, became Herne's oak. We had a large prop box on stage that doubled as the buckbasket and as the bar in the Garter Inn. A great deal of laundry and other odd props were produced from this box.

Typically, performers would change personae in full view of the audience. For example, Mistress Quickly would remove her velcroed skirt

and immediately become Sir Hugh or Nym. Fenton would don an apron and become the host. The scene in which Fenton and the host converse, with the single performer throwing off and on the apron and giving takes to the spectators, was well received by our audiences. Slender and Caius were represented by plywood torsos, painted and ornamented, and set on wheels. Master and Mistress Page manipulated these creatures like puppets, and spoke for them--ventriloquist fashion. We hoped the results would be funny, and the audiences' reactions suggested that they were. The prologue's purpose is to introduce the characters, and to get the audience used to the notion that a single performer will be playing several parts. As each character introduces himself or herself, that character displays a symbolizing prop or costume piece.

David Richman
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Prologue to THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

"Green Sleeves" on kazoos. Then, enter symmetrically Mistress Ford and Mistress Page.

Mistress Ford and Mistress Page. We are the merry wives of Windsor.

Mistress Ford. My husband, Master Frank Ford, has masses of money.
(Ford enters.)

Mistress Page. My husband, Master George Page, has masses of money.
(Page enters.)

Page. My daughter, Anne Page, will inherit all my wealth.
(Anne enters.)

Page. Anne Page also plays the page boy, Robin. Every . . . creature in Windsor desires to marry her and possess her wealth. I wish her to marry the rich young master Abraham Slender.
(Slender enters.)

Slender. I am not a real man, and that is why Father Page desires Anne to marry me.

Mistress Page. I do not like Master Slender.

Mistress Quickly (entering with Caius.) She likes my master, the learned Doctor Caius.

Caius. I am not a real man, and that is why Mother Page desires Anne to marry me.

Fenton (entering.) I am called Master Fenton. I AM a real man.

Anne. That is why I desire to marry you.
(They sigh.)

Page. Tonight, Mistress Page and I are giving a great feast.

Ford. I despise feasting and chatter. I will not attend. (He exits.)

Mistress Ford. O, sweet Frank! I must attend the feast, for I must rejoice with my dear friend, Meg Page.

Mistress Quickly. I must not attend the feast, for I must attend on my master, Doctor Caius.
(Caius exits.)

Sir Hugh. But I shall attend the feast. And when sweet Mistress Anne does marry, I will speak the holy words. I am Sir Hugh, the priest.

Nym. I attend no bloody feast. But my master will attend. My master wants Page's money. I am a follower of Sir John Falstaff, the fat knight. My name is Nym.

Fenton. I will not attend the feast. But after the feast, I will meet secretly with you, Anne.
(They sigh.)

Pistol. No bloody feast I'll grace with discourse mild.
My master, Sir John Falstaff, WILL attend.
I am a follower of Sir John Falstaff, the fat knight. My name is Pistol called.

Host. I will not attend the Pages' feast, for I make my own perpetual feast. I am the jolly host of the Garter Inn, where Sir John Falstaff lodges. I will not be a guest at the Pages' feast, but the Pages' chief guest is my chief guest, that wondrous fat knight-- (exits.)

Page. That roasted Manningtree ox--

Anne. With the pudding in his belly--

Mistress Page. That cloakbag of guts--

Mistress Ford. That huge hill of flesh--

Host (Off) Sir John Falstaff!

(Falstaff's grand entrance.)
Scene I.

Fal. Mistris Ford, by my troth you are very wel met: by your leave good Mistris. (kisses her.)

Page. Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome. (Falstaff kisses Mistress Page.)

Anne. Shall I serve the wine in the great dining- chamber, father?

Slen. Oh heaven: This is sweet Anne Page!

Page. Yes, daughter. We and our guests shall drink within. Come, we have a hot Venison pasty to dinner; Come gentlemen, I hope we shall drinke downe all unkindnesse.
(Exeunt all but Slender and Evans.)

Slen. I had rather then forty shillings I had my booke of Songs and Sonnets heere.

Evans. Master Slender, can you affection the woman?

Slen. I will marry her (Sir) at your request; but if there bee no great love in the beginning, yet Heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when wee are married, and have more occasion to know one another: I hope upon familiarity will grow more contempt.

Evans. Here comes faire Mistris Anne; would I were yong for your sake, Mistris Anne.

An. The dinner is on the Table, my Father desires your worships company.

Ev. Od's plessed wil: I wil not be absence at the grace.

An. Wil't please your worship to come in, Sir?

Slen. No, I thank you forsooth, hartely; I am very well.

An. The dinner attends you, Sir.

Sl. I am not a hungry, I thanke you, forsooth.

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

Sl. I' faith, ile eate nothing: I thanke you as much as though I did.

An. I pray you Sir walke in.

Sl. I had rather walke here (I thanke you).

(Exeunt: Anne pulling Slender offstage.)

Scene II.

Enter Falstaffe, Host, Nym, Pistoll, Robin.

Fal. Mine Host of the Garter?

Ho. What saies my Bully Rooke? speake schollerly, and wisely.

Fal. Truely mine Host; I must turne away some of my followers.

Ho. Discard, (bully Hercules) casheere; let them wag; trot, trot.

Fal. There is no remedy: I must conicatch, I must shift.

Pist. Young Ravens must have foode.

Fal. Which of you know Ford of this Towne?

Pist. I ken the wight: he is of substance good.

Fal. My honest Lads, I will tell you what I am about.

Pist. Two yards, and more.

Fal. No quips now Pistoll: (Indeede I am in the waste two yards about: but I am now about no waste: I am about thrift) briefly: I doe meane to make love to Fords wife: I spie entertainment in her: shee discourses: shee carves: she gives the leere of invitation. Now, the report goes, she has all the rule of her husbands Purse: he hath a legend of Angels.

Robbin. angels?

Fal. Gold, boy, gold angels!

Pist. As many divels entertaine: and to her Boy say I.

Ni. The humor rises: it is good: humor me the angels.

Fal. I have writ me here a letter to her: & here another to Pages wife, who even now gave mee good eyes too; examind my parts with most judicious admiration: sometimes the beame of her view, guilded my foote: sometimes my portly belly.

Pist. Then did the Sun on dung hill shine.

Ni. I thanke thee for that humour.

Fal. The appetite of her eye did seeme to scorch me up like a burning glass: here's another letter to her: She beares the Purse too: She is a Region in Guiana: all gold, and bountie: I will be Cheaters to them both, and they shall be Exchequers to mee: they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both: Goe, beare thou this Letter to Mistris Page; and thou this to Mistris Ford: we will thrive (Lads) we will thrive.

Pist. Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become, And by my side weare Steele?
then Lucifer take all.

Ni. I will run no base humor: here take the humor Letter.

Fal. Hold Sirha, beare you these Letters tightly, Saile like my
Pinnasse to these golden shores. (Exit Robin with the
letters.)
Rogues, hence, avaunt, vanish like haile stones; goe, Trudge.
Plod away. Seeke shelter, pack:
Falstaffe will learne the honor of the age,
French thrift, you Rogues, my selfe, and skirted Page. (Exit
Falstaff.)

Pist. Let Vultures gripe thy guts!

Ni. I have operations, Which be humors of revenge.

Pist. Wilt thou revenge?

Ni. By Welkin, and her Star.

Pist. With wit, or Steele?

Ni. With both the humors, I: I will discusse the humour of this Love to
Page.

Pist. And I to Ford shall eke unfold How Falstaffe (varlet vile) His
Dove will prove; his gold will hold, And his soft couch
defile. (Exeunt.)

Scene III. Enter Quickly, solus.

Quickly. I am up early and down late. Sir Hugh, the Welsh Priest, has
begged me to speak to my dear friend, Anne Page, about
marriage with the rich, silly, young Master Slender. But, o,
the French Doctor my Master, (I may call him my Master, looke
you, for I keepe his house; and I wash, ring, brew, bake,
scowre, dresse meat and drinke, make the beds, and doe all my
selfe.)my Master himsele is in love with Mistris Anne Page:
but notwithstanding that I know Ans mind, that's neither heere
nor there.

Caius. (Entering.) You, Quickly, give 'a this Letter to Sir Hugh, by
gar it is a shallenge: I will cut his troat in de Parke, and I
will teach a scuruy Jackanape Priest to meddle, or make:=== By
gar I will cut all his two stones: by gar, he shall not have a
stone to throw at his dogge.

Qui. Alas: he speakes but for his friend.

Caius. It is no matter 'a ver dat: do not you tell a me dat I shall
have Anne Page for my selfe? by gar, I vill kill de Jack

Priest: by gar, I wil my selfe have Anne Page.

Qui. Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall bee well.

Caius. By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I shall turne your head out of my dore. (Exit)

Qui. You shall have An fooles head of your owne: No, I know Ans mind for that: never a woman in Windsor knowes more of Ans minde then I doe, nor can doe more then I doe with her, I thanke heaven.

Fenton. (Within) Who's with in there, hoa?

Qui. Who's there, I troa? Come neere the house I pray you.
Enter Fenton.

Fen. How now (good woman) how dost thou?

Qui. The better that it pleases your good Worship to ask.

Fen. What newes? how does pretty Mistris Anne?

Qui. In truth Sir, and shee 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.

Fen. Shall I doe any good thinkst thou? shall I not loose my suit?

Qui. Troth Sir, all is in his hands above: but notwithstanding (Master Fenton) Ile be sworne on a booke shee loves you: have not your Worship a wart above your eye?

Fen. Yes marry have I, what of that?

Qui. Wel, thereby hangs a tale: good faith, it is such another Nan; (but (I detest) an honest maid as ever broke bread: wee had an hour's talke of that wart--

Fen. Well: I shall see her to day: hold, there's money for thee: Let mee have thy voice in my behalfe: if thou seest her before me, commend me.

Qui. Will I? I faith that wee will. Fare well to your Worship.
(Exit Fenton)
Truely an honest Gentleman: but Anne loves him not: for I know Anne's minde as well as another does: out upon't: what have I forgot? Exit.

Scene Iv. Enter Robin.

Robin. (calling) Mistress Page! Mistress Page!
Enter Mistress Page.

Robin. A letter from Sir John Falstaff! (Exit Robin.)

Mist.Page. What, have I escaped Love letters in the holly day time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see.
"Aske me no reason why I love you, for though Love use Reason for his physician, hee admits him not for his Counsellor: you are not yong, no more am I: goe to then, there's simpathie: you are merry, so am I: ha, ha, then there's more simpathie: you love sacke, and so do I: would you desire better simpathie? Let it suffice thee (Mistris Page) at the least if the Love of Souldier can suffice, that I love thee: I will not say pittie mee, 'tis not a Souldier like phrase; but I say, love me: By me,
Thine owne true Knight,
By day or night:
Or any kinde of light,
With all his might,
For thee to fight.
John Falstaffe."
O wicked, wicked world: One that is well nye worne to peeces with age To show himselfe a young Gallant? What an unweighed Behaviour hath this fat drunkard pickt out of my conversation, that he dares In this manner assay me? why, hee hath not beene thrice In my Company: what should I say to him? I was then Frugall of my mirth: (heaven forgive mee:) why Ile Exhibit a Bill in the Parliament for the putting downe of men: how shall I be reveng'd on him? for reveng'd I will be? as sure as his guts are made of puddings.
Enter Mistress Ford.

Mis.Ford. Mistris Page, trust me, I was going to your house.

Mis.Page. And trust me, I was comming to you: you looke very ill.

Mis.Ford. Nay Ile nere beleeve that; I have to show to the contrary.

Mis.Page. 'Faith but you do in my minde.

Mis.Ford. Well: I do then: yet I say, I could show you to the contrary:
O Mistris Page, give mee some counsel.

Mis.Page. What's the matter, woman?

Mi.Ford. O woman: if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour.

Mi.Page. Hang the trifle (woman) take the honour: what is it? dispence with trifles: what is it?

Mi.Ford. If I would but goe to hell, for an eternall moment, or so: I could be knighted.

Mi.Page. What thou liest? Sir Alice Ford?

Mi.Ford. Wee burne day light: heere, read, read: perceive how I might
bee knighted, I shall thinke the worse of fat men, as long as
I have an eye to make difference of mens liking: What tempest
threw this Whale, (with so many Tuns of oyle in his belly)
ashore at Windsor? How shall I bee revenged on him? I thinke
the best way were, to entertaine him with hope, till the
wicked fire of lust have melted him in his owne greace: Did
you ever heare the like?

Mis.Page. Letter for letter; but that the name of Page and Ford
differs: Heere's the twyn brother of thy Letter: I warrant he
hath a thousand of these Letters, writ with blancke space for
different names (sure more): hee will print them out of doubt:
for he cares not what hee puts into the presse, when he would
put us two: I had rather be a Giantesse, and lye under Mount
Pelion: Well; I will find you twentie lascivious Turtles ere
one chaste man.

Mis.Ford. Why this is the very same: the very hand: the very words:
what doth he thinke of us?

Mis.Page. Nay I know not: it makes me almost readie to wrangle with
mine owne honesty: Ile entertaine my selfe like one that I am
not acquainted withall: for sure unlesse hee know some straine
in mee, that I know not my selfe, hee would never have boarded
me in this furie.

Mi.Ford. Boording, call you it? Ile bee sure to keepe him above decke.

Mi.Page. So will I: if hee come under my hatches, Ile never to Sea
again: Let's bee reveng'd on him: let's appoint him a
meeting: give him a show of comfort in his Suit, and lead him
on with a fine baited delay.

Mi.Ford. Nay, I wil consent to act any villany against him, that may
not sully the charinesse of our honesty: oh that my husband
saw this Letter: it would give eternall food to his jealousy.

Mis.Page. Why look where he comes; and my good man too: hee's as farre
from jealousy, as I am from giving him cause, and that (I
hope) is an unmeasurable distance.

Mis.Ford. You are the happier woman.

Mis.Page. Let's consult together against this greasie Knight: Come
hither.
Enter Ford with Pistol, and Page with Nym.

Ford. Well: I hope, it be not so.

Pist. Hope is a curtall dog in some affaires: Sir John affects thy

wife.

Ford. Why sir, my wife is not young.

Pist. He wooes both high and low, both rich & poor, both yong and old,
one with another (Ford) he loves the Gallymawfry (Ford)
perpend.

Ford. Love my wife?

Pist. With liver, burning hot: prevent: Or goe thou like Sir Acteon he,
with Ring wood at thy heeles: O, odious is the name.

Ford. What name Sir?

Pist. The horne I say: Farewell: A man whose wife doth stray doth grow
great horns alway. (Exit)

Ford. I will be patient: I will find out this.

Nim. And this is true: I like not the humor of lying: hee hath wronged
mee in some humors: I should have borne the humour'd Letter to
her: but I have a sword: and it shall bite upon my necessitie:
he loves your wife; There's the short and the long: My name is
Corporall Nim: I speak, and I auouch; 'tis true: my name is
Nim: and Falstaffe loves your wife: adiev, I love not the
humour of bread and cheese: adiev. (Exit)

Page. The humour of it (quoth 'a?) heere's a fellow frights English out
of his wits.

Ford. I will seeke out Falstaffe.

Page. I never heard such a drawling affecting rogue.

Ford. If I doe finde it: well.

Page. I will not beleeve such a Cataian, though the Priest o' th' Towne
commended him for a true man.

Ford. 'Twas a good sensible fellow: well.

Page. How now Meg?

Mist.Page. Whither goe you (George?) harke you.

Mis.Ford. How now (sweet Frank) why art thou melancholy?

Ford. I melancholy? I am not melancholy: Get you home: goe.

Mis.Ford. Faith, thou hast some crochets in thy head, Now: will you
goe, Mistris Page?

Mis.Page. Have with you: you'll come to dinner George? Looke who comes yonder: shee shall bee our Messenger to this paltrie Knight.

Mis.Ford. Trust me, I thought on her: shee'll fit it. Enter Quickly.

Mis.Page. You are come to see my daughter Anne?

Qui. I forsooth: and I pray how does good Mistresse Anne?

Mis.Page. Go in with us and see: we have an houres talke with you.
(Exeunt Mistress Ford, Mistress Page, Mistress Quickly.)

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 thinke there is truth in them?

Page. Hang 'em slaves: I do not thinke Falstaff would offer it: But these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives, are a yoake 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 beter for that, Does he lye at the Garter?

Page. I marry does he: if hee should intend this voyage toward my wife, I would turne her loose to him; and what hee gets more of her, then sharpe words, let it lye on my head.

Ford. I do not misdoubt my wife: but I would bee loath to turne them together: a man may be too confident: I would have nothing lye on my head: I cannot be thus satisfied.

Page. Looke where my ranting Host of the Garter comes: there is eyther liquor in his pate, or mony in his purse, when hee lookes so merrily.
Enter Host.
How now mine Host?

Host. How now Bully Rooke?

Ford. Good mine Host o'th' Garter: a word with you. I desire to pay a visit, in disguise, to your guest Sir John Falstaff.

Host. Hast thou no suit against my Knight? my guest Cavaleire?

Ford. None, I protest: but Ile give you a pottle of burn'd sacke, to

give me recourse to him, and tell him my name is Brook: onely for a jest.

Host. My hand, (Bully:) thou shalt have egress and regress, (said I well?) and thy name shall be Brook.

Falstaff (offstage) Mine host of the Garter!

Host. It is a merry Knight:
(Exeunt all but Ford.)

Ford. Though Page be a secure foole, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty; yet, I cannot put off my opinion so easily: she was in his company at Pages house: and what they made there, I know not. Well, I wil looke further into't, and I have a disguise, to sound Falstaffe; if I finde her honest, I lose not my labour: if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed. Exit.

Scene V. Enter Falstaffe and Pistoll.

Fal. I will not lend thee a penny.

Pist. Why then the world's mine Oyster, which I, with sword will open.

Fal. Reason, you roague, reason: thinkst thou Ile endanger my soule, gratis? at a word, hang no more about mee, I am no gibbet for you: goe, you'll not beare a Letter for mee you roague? you stand upon your honor: why, (thou unconfinable basenesse) it is as much as I can doe to keepe the termes of my honor precise.

Pist. I doe relent: what would thou more of man? Enter Robin.

Robin. Sir, here's a woman would speake with you.

Fal. Let her approach. Enter Mistress Quickly.

Qui. Give your worship good morrow.

Fal. Good morrow, good wife.

Qui. Not so, and't please your worship.

Fal. Good maid then.

Qui. Ile be sworne, As my mother was the first houre I was borne.

Fal. I doe beleve the swearer; what with me?

Qui. Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word, or two?

Fal. Two thousand (faire woman) and ile vouchsafe thee the hearing.

Qui. There is one Mistresse Ford, (Sir) I pray come a little neerer
this waies: I my selfe dwell with Master Doctor Caius.

Fal. Well, on; Mistresse Ford, you say.

Qui. Your worship saies very true: I pray your worship come a little
neerer this waies.

Fal. I warrant thee, no bodie heares: mine owne people, mine owne
people.

Qui. Are they so? God blesse them, and make them his Servants.

Fal. Well; Mistresse Ford, what of her?

Qui. Why, Sir; shee's a good creature; Lord, Lord, your Worship's a
wanton: well: heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray--

Fal. Mistresse Ford: come, Mistresse Ford.

Qui. Marry this is the short, and the long of it: you have brought her
into such a Canaries, as 'tis wonderfull: the best Courtier of
them all (when the Court lay at Windsor) could never have
brought her to such a Canarie: yet there has beene Knights,
and Lords, and Gentlemen, with their Coaches; I warrant you
Coach after Coach, letter after letter, gift after gift,
smelling so sweetly; all Muske, and so rushling, I warrant
you, in silke and gold, and in such alligant termes, and in
such wine and sugar of the best, and the fairest, that would
have won any womans heart: but I warrant you all is one with
her.

Fal. But what saies shee to mee? be briefe my good sheeMercurie.

Qui. Marry, she hath receiv'd your Letter: for the which she thanks
you a thousand times; and she gives you to notifie, that her
husband will be absence from his house, betweene ten and
eleven.

Fal. Ten, and eleven.

Qui. I, forsooth: and then you may come and see the picture (she sayes)
that you wot of: Master Ford her husband will be from home:
alas, the sweet woman leades an ill life with him: hee's a
very jealousy man; she leads a very frampold life with him,
(good hart.)

Fal. Ten, and eleven. Woman, commend me to her, I will not faile her.

Qui. Why, you say well: But I have another messenger to your worship:
Mistresse Page hath her heartie commendations to you to: and
let mee tell you in your eare, shee's as fartuous a civill
modest wife, and one (I tell you) that will not misse her

morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, who ere bee the other: and shee bade me tell your worship, that her husband is seldome from home, but she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so doate upon a man; surely I thinke you have charmes, la: yes in truth.

Fal. Not I, I assure thee; setting the attraction of my good parts aside, I have no other charmes.

Qui. Blessing on your heart for't.

Fal. But I pray thee tell me this: has Fords wife, and Pages wife acquainted each other, how they love me?

Qui. That were a jest indeed: they have not so little grace I hope, that were a tricke indeed: But Mistris Page would desire you to send her your little Page of al loves: her husband has a marvellous infection to the little Page: and truely Master Page is an honest man: never a wife in Windsor leades a better life then she does: do what shee will, say what she will, take all, pay all, goe to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will: and truely she deserves it; for if there be a kinde woman in Windsor, she is one: you must send her your Page, no remedie.

Fal. Why, I will.

Qui. Nay, but do so then, and looke you, hee may come and goe betweene you both: and in any case have a nay word, that you may know one anothers minde, and the Boy never neede to understand any thing; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness: old folkes you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.

Fal. Farethee well, commend mee to them both: there's my purse, I am yet thy debter: Boy, goe along with this woman.
(Exit Quickly with Robin.)
This newes distracts me.

Pist. Mistress Quickly distracts me! She is my prize, or Ocean whelme them all.
(Exit Pistol, pursuing Quickly.)

Fal. Saist thou so (old Jack) go thy waies: Ile make more of thy old body then I have done: will they yet looke after thee? wilt thou after the expence of so much money, be now a gainer? good Body, I thanke thee: let them say 'tis grossely done, so it bee fairely done, no matter.
Enter Bardolph.

Bar. Sir John, there's one Master Brook below would faine speake with you, and be acquainted with you; and hath sent your worship a mornings draught of Sacke.

Fal. Brook is his name?

Bar. I Sir.

Fal. Call him in: such Brooks are welcome to mee, that ore'flowes such liquor.
(Exit Bardolph.)
Ah ha, Mistresse Ford and Mistresse Page, have I encompass'd you? goe to, via.
Enter Bardolph, with Ford disguised as Brook.

Ford. 'Blesse you sir.

Fal. And you sir: would you speake with me?

Ford. I make bold, to presse, with so little preparation upon you.

Fal. You'r welcome, what's your will? give us leave Bardolph. (exit Bardolph.)

Ford. Sir, I am a Gentleman that have spent much, my name is Brook.

Fal. Good Master Brook, I desire more acquaintance of you.

Ford. Good Sir John, I sue for yours: not to charge you, for I must let you understand, I thinke my selfe in better plight for a Lender, then you are: the which hath something emboldned me to this unseason'd intrusion: for they say, if money goe before, all waies do lye open.

Fal. Money is a good Souldier (Sir) and will on.

Ford. Troth, and I have a bag of money heere troubles me: if you will helpe to beare it (Sir John) take all, or halfe, for easing me of the carriage.

Fal. Sir, I know not how I may deserve to bee your Porter.

Ford. I will tell you sir, if you will give mee the hearing.

Fal. Speake (good Master Brook) I shall be glad to be your Servant.

Ford. Sir, I heare you are a Scholler: (I will be briefe with you) and you have been a man long knowne to me, though I had never so good means as desire, to make my selfe acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine owne imperfection: but (good Sir John) as you have one eye upon my follies, as you heare them unfolded, turne another into the Register of your owne, that I may passe with a reproofe the easier, sith you your selfe know how easie it is to be such an offender.

Fal. Very well Sir, proceed.

Ford. There is a Gentlewoman in this Towne, her husbands name is Ford.

Fal. Well Sir.

Ford. I have long lov'd her, and I protest to you, bestowed many presents on her: followed her with a doating observance. Ingross'd opportunities to meete her: briefly, I have pursued her, as Love hath pursued mee.

Fal. Have you receiv'd no promise of satisfaction at her hands?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Have you importun'd her to such a purpose?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Of what qualitie was your love then?

Ford. Like a fair house, built on another mans ground, so that I have lost my edifice, by mistaking the place, where I erected it.

Fal. To what purpose have you unfolded this to me?

Ford. When I have told you that, I have told you all: Some say, that though she appeare honest to mee, yet in other places shee enlargeth her mirth so farre, that there is shrewd construction made of her. Now (Sir John) here is the heart of my purpose: you are a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, of great admittance, authenticke in your place and person, generally allow'd for your many war like, court like, and learned preparations.

Fal. O Sir.

Ford. Beleeve it, for you know it: there is money, spend it, spend it, spend more; spend all I have, onely give me so much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable siege to the honesty of this Fords wife: use your Art of wooing; win her to consent to you: if any man may, you may as soone as any.

Fal. Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection that I should win what you would enjoy? Methinkes you prescribe to your selfe very preposterously.

Ford. O, understand my drift: she dwells so securely on the excellency of her honor, that the folly of my soule dares not present it selfe: shee is too bright to be look'd against. Now, could I come to her with any detection in my hand; my desires had instance and argument to commend themselves, I could drive her then from the ward of her purity, her reputation, her marriage

vow, and a thousand other her defences, which now are too too strongly embattled against me: what say you too't, Sir John?

Fal. Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money: next, give mee your hand: and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Fords wife.

Ford. O good Sir.

Fal. I say you shall.

Ford. Want no money (Sir John) you shall want none.

Fal. Want no Mistresse Ford (Master Brook) you shall want none: I shall be with her (I may tell you) by her owne appointment, even as you came in to me, her assistant, or goe betweene, parted from me: I say I shall be with her betweene ten and eleven: for at that time the jealous rascally knave her husband will be forth: come you to me at night, you shall know how I speed.

Ford. I am blest in your acquaintance: do you know Ford Sir?

Fal. Hang him (poore Cuckoldly knave) I know him not: yet I wrong him to call him poore: They say the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money, for the which his wife seemes to me well favourd: I will use her as the key of the Cuckoldly rogues Coffer, & there's my harvest home.

Ford. I would you knew Ford, sir, that you might avoid him, if you saw him.

Fal. Hang him, mechanicall salt butter rogue; I wil stare him out of his wits: I will awe him with my cudgell: it shall hang like a Meteor ore the Cuckolds horns: Master Brook, thou shalt know, I will predominate over the pezant, and thou shalt lye with his wife.
(Exit Falstaff)

Ford. What a damn'd Epicurian Rascall is this? my heart is ready to cracke with impatience: who saies this is improvident jealousy? My wife hath sent to him, the hour is fixt, the match is made: would any man have thought this? See the hell of having a false woman: my bed shall be abus'd, my Coffers ransack'd, my reputation gnawne at. and I shall not onely receive this villanous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abhominable termes, and by him that does mee this wrong: Termes, names: Amaimon sounds well: Lucifer, well: Barbason, well: yet they are Divels additions, the names of fiends: But Cuckold, Wittoll, Cuckold? the Divell himselve hath not such a name. Page is an Ass, a secure Ass; hee will trust his wife, hee will not be jealous: I will rather trust a fat man with my butter, Parson Hugh the Welshman with my Cheese, Falstaff with my liquor bottle, or a Thief to walke my ambling gelding, then

my wife with her selfe. Then she plots, then shee ruminates, then shee devises: and what they thinke in their hearts they may effect; they will breake their hearts but they will effect. Heaven bee prais'd for my jealousie: eleven o' clocke the hour, I will prevent this, detect my wife, bee reveng'd on Falstaffe, and laugh at Page.

Enter Page, Slender, Evans, Caius, and Host.

Page. Well met Master Ford.

Ford. Trust me, a good knotte; I have good cheere at home, and I pray you all go with me.

Host. I must excuse my selfe Master Ford.

Slen. And so must I Sir, We have appointed to dine with sweet Anne Page, And I would not breake with her for more mony Then Ile speake of.

Evans. We have linger'd about a match betweene An Page, and Master Abraham Slender, and this day wee shall have our answer.

Slen. I hope I have your good will Father Page.

Page. You have Mr Slender, I stand wholly for you, But my wife (Mr Doctor) is for you altogether.

Cai. I be gar, and de Maid is love a me: my nursh a Quickly tell me so mush.

Host. What say you to young Master Fenton? He capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth: he writes verses, hee speakes holliday, he smels April and May, he wil carry't, he will carry't, 'tis in his buttons, he will carry't.

Page. Not by my consent I promise you. The Gentleman is of no having, hee kept companie with the wilde Prince, and Pointz: he is of too high a Region, he knows too much: no, hee shall not knit a knot in his fortunes, with the finger of my substance: if he take her, let him take her simply: the wealth I have waits on my consent, and my consent goes not that way.

Ford. I beseech you heartily, some of you goe home with me to dinner: besides your cheere you shall have sport, I will shew you a monster: Master Doctor, you shal go, so shall you Master Page, and you Sir Hugh. Will you go Gentles?

All. Have with you, to see this Monster. Exeunt.

Scene VI. Enter Mistress Ford, Mistress Page, Robin, Servants.

Mist.Ford. What John, what Robin.

M.Page. Quickly, quickly: Is the Buck basket--

Mis.Ford. I warrant. What Robin I say.

Mis.Page. Come, come, come.

Mist.Ford. Heere, set it downe.

M.Page. Give your people the charge, we must be briefe.

M.Ford. Marrie, as I told you before (John & Robin) be ready here hard by in the Brew house, & when I suddenly call you, come forth, and (without any pause, or staggering) take this basket on your shoulders. Trudge with it in all haste, and empty it in the muddie ditch, close by the Thames side.

M.Page. You will do it?

M.Ford. I ha told them over and over, they lack no direction. Be gone, and come when you are call'd.

Rob. My old Master, Sir John is come in at your back doore Mistress Ford, and requests your company.

M.Page. You little Jack a lent, have you bin true to us?

Rob. I, Ile be sworne: my Master knowes not of your being heere: and hath threatned to put me into everlasting liberty, if I tell you of it: for he swears he'll turne me away.

Mist.Pag. Thou'rt a good boy. Ile go hide me.

Mi.Ford. Do so: go tell thy Master, I am alone: (Exit Robin.) Mistris Page, remember you your Cue.

Mist.Pag. I warrant thee, if I do not act it, hisse me. (Exit Mistress Page.)

Mist.Ford. Go too then: we'll use this unwholsome humidity, this gross watery Pumpion; we'll teach him to know Turtles from Jayes. Enter Falstaff.

Fal. Have I caught thee, my heavenly Jewell? Why now let me die, for I have liv'd long enough: This is the period of my ambition: O this blessed houre.

Mist.Ford. O sweet Sir John.

Fal. Mistris Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate (Mistris. Ford) now shall I sin in my wish; I would thy Husband were dead, Ile speake it before the best Lord, I would make thee my Lady.

Mist.Ford. I your Lady Sir John? Alas, I should bee a pittifull Lady.

Fal. Let the Court of France show me such another: I see how thine eye would emulate the Diamond. Thou hast the right arched beauty of the brow that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valliant--

Mist.Ford. A plaine Kerchiefe, Sir John: My browes become nothing else, nor that well neither.

Fal. Thou art a tyrant to say so: thou wouldst make an absolute Courtier, and the firme fixture of thy foote, would give an excellent motion to thy gate, in a semicircled Farthingale. I see what thou wert if Fortune thy foe, were not Nature thy friend: Come, thou canst not hide it.

Mist.Ford. Beleeve me, there's no such thing in me.

Fal. What made me love thee? Let that perswade thee. Ther's something extraordinary in thee. I love thee, none but thee; and thou deserv'st it.

M.Ford. Do not betray me sir, I fear you love Mistress Page.

Fal. Thou mightst as well say, I love to walke by the Counter gate, which is as hatefull to me, as the reeke of a Lime kill.

Mis.Ford. Well, heaven knowes how I love you, And you shall one day finde it.

Fal. Keepe in that minde, Ile deserve it.

Mist.Ford. Nay, I must tell you, so you do; Or else I could not be in that minde.
Enter Robin.

Rob. Mistris Ford, Mistris Ford: heere's Mistris Page at the doore, sweating, and blowing, and looking wildely, and would needs speake with you presently.

Fal. She shall not see me, I will ensconce mee behinde the Arras.

M.Ford. Pray you do so, she's a very tatling woman.
Falstaff hides. Enter Mistress Page.
Whats the matter? How now?

Mist.Page. O mistris Ford what have you done? You're sham'd, you're overthrowne, you're undone for ever.

M.Ford. What's the matter, good mistris Page?

M.Page. O weladay, mistris Ford, having an honest man to your husband, to give him such cause of suspition.

M.Ford. What cause of suspition?

M.Page. What cause of suspition? Out upon you: How am I mistooke in you?

M.Ford. Why (alas) what's the matter?

M.Page. Your husband's comming hether (Woman) with all the Officers in Windsor, to search for a Gentleman, that he sayes is heere now in the house; by your consent to take an ill advantage of his absence: you are undone.

M.Ford. 'Tis not so, I hope.

M.Page. Pray heaven it be not so, that you have such a man heere: but 'tis most certaine your husband's comming, with halfe Windsor at his heeles, to serch for such a one, I come before to tell you: If you know your selfe cleere, why I am glad of it: but if you have a friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amaz'd, call all your senses to you, defend your reputation, or bid farwell to your good life for ever.

M.Ford. What shall I do? There is a Gentleman my deere friend: and I feare not mine owne shame so much, as his perill. I had rather then a thousand pound he were out of the house.

M.Page. For shame, never stand (you had rather, and you had rather:) your husband's heere at hand, bethinke you of some conveyance: in the house you cannot hide him. Oh, how have you deceiv'd me? Looke, heere is a basket, if he be of any reasonable stature, he may creepe in heere, and throw fowle linnen upon him, as if it were going to bucking.

M.Ford. He's too big to go in there: what shall I do?

Fal. Let me see't, let me see't, O let me see't: Ile in, Ile in: Follow your friends counsell, Ile in.

M.Page. What Sir John Falstaffe? Are these your Letters, Knight?

Fal. I love thee, helpe mee away: let me creepe in heere: Ile never--

M.Page. Helpe to cover your master (Boy:) Call your men (Mistris. Ford.) You dissembling Knight.

M.Ford. What John, Robert, John; Go, take up these cloathes heere, quickly: Carry them to the Landresse in Datchet mead: quickly, come.
Enter Ford, Evans, Page.

Ford. 'Pray you come nere: if I suspect without cause, Why then make sport at me, then let me be your jest, I deserve it: How now? Whether beare you this?

Ser. To the Landresse forsooth?

M.Ford. Why, what have you to doe whether they beare it? You were best meddle with buck washing.

Ford. Buck? I would I could wash my selfe of the Buck: Bucke, bucke, bucke, I bucke: I warrant you Bucke, And of the season too; it shall appeare. Gentlemen, I have dream'd to night, Ile tell you my dreame: heere, heere, heere bee my keys, ascend my Chambers, search, seeke, finde out: Ile warrant wee'll unkennell the Fox.

Page. Good master Ford, be contented: You wrong your selfe too much.

Ford. True (master Page) up Gentlemen, You shall see sport anon: Follow me Gentlemen.

Evans. This is fery fantasticall humors and jealousies.

Page. Nay follow him (Gentlemen) see the issue of his search.
(Exieunt all but Mistress Page and Mistress Ford.)

Mist.Page. Is there not a double excellency in this?

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

Mist.Page. What a taking was hee in, when your husband askt who was in the basket?

Mist.Ford. I am halfe affraid he will have neede of washing: so throwing him into the water, will doe him a benefit.

Mist.Page. Hang him dishonest rascall: I would all of the same straine, were in the same distresse.

Mist.Ford. I thinke my husband hath some speciall suspicion of Falstaffs being heere: for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.

Mist.Page. I will lay a plot to try that, and wee will yet have more trickes with Falstaffe: his dissolute disease will scarce obey this medicine.

Mis.Ford. Shall we send that foolish Carion, Mistris Quickly to him, and excuse his throwing into the water, and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment?

Mist.Page. We will do it: let him be sent for to morrow eight a clocke to have amends.
Enter Ford, Page, Evans.

Ford. I cannot finde him: may be the knave bragg'd of that he could not

compasse.

Mis.Page. (Aside to Mistress Ford) Heard you that?

Mis.Ford. You use me well, Master Ford? Do you?

Ford. I, I do so.

M.Ford. Heaven make you better then your thoghts

Ford. Amen.

Mi.Page. You do your selfe mighty wrong (Master Ford)

Ford. I, I: I must beare it.

Evans. If there be any pody in the house, & in the chambers, and in the
coffers, and in the presses: heaven forgive my sins at the day
of judgement.

Page. Fy, fy, Master Ford, are you not asham'd? What spirit, what
devill suggests this imagination? I would not have your
distemper in this kind, for the welth of Windsor castle.

Ford. 'Tis my fault (Master Page) I suffer for it.

Evans. You suffer for a pad conscience: your wife is as honest a
o'mans, as I will desires among five thousand, and five
hundred too.

Ford. Well, I promisd you a dinner: come, come, walk in the Parke, I
pray you pardon me: I wil hereafter make knowne to you why I
have done this. Come wife, come Mistris Page, I pray you
pardon me. Pray hartly pardon me.

Page. Let's go in Gentlemen, but (trust me) we'll mock him: I do invite
you to morrow morning to my house to breakfast: after we'll a
Birding together, I have a fine Hawke for the bush. Shall it
be so:

Ford. Any thing. Exeunt.

Scene VII. Enter Fenton and Anne Page.

Fen. I see I cannot get thy Fathers love,
Therefore no more turne me to him sweet Nan.

Anne. Alas, how then?

Fen. Why thou must be thy selfe.
He doth object, I am too great of birth,
And that my state being gall'd with my expence,
I seeke to heale it onely by his wealth.

Besides these, other barres he layes before me,
My Riots past, my wilde Societies,
And tels me 'tis a thing impossible
I should love thee, but as a property.

An. May be he tels you true.

Fent. No, heaven so speed me in my time to come,
Albeit I will confesse, thy Fathers wealth
Was the first motive that I woo'd thee (Anne:)
Yet wooing thee, I found thee of more valew
Then stampe in Gold, or summes in sealed bags:
And 'tis the very riches of thy selfe,
That now I ayme at.

An. Gentle Master Fenton,
Yet seeke my Fathers love, still seeke it sir,
If opportunity and humblest suite Cannot attaine it, why then
harke you hither.

Page. (Within) Nay, Mistris Quickly. Master Slender, my favourite,
shall speake for himselfe.
Fenton withdraws. Enter Page, Slender, Mistress Quickly.

Slen. Ile make a shaft or a bolt on't, slid, tis but venturing.

Page. Be not dismayd.

Slen. No, she shall not dismay me: I care not for that, but that I am
affeard.

Qui. Hark ye, Master Slender would speak a word with you

An. I come to him. This is my Fathers choice:
O what a world of vilde ill favour'd faults
Lookes handsome in three hundred pounds a yeere.

Page. Shee's comming; to her Boy: O boy, thou hadst a father.

Slen. I had a father (Mistris. An) Your father can tel you good jests
of him: pray you Sir, tel Mistris. Anne the jest how my
Father stole two Geese out of a Pen, good Sir.

Page. Mistris Anne, this young man loves you.

Slen. I that I do, as well as I love any woman in Glocestershire.

Page. He will maintaine you like a Gentlewoman.

Slen. I that I will, come cut and long taile, under the degree of a
Squire.

Page. He will make you a hundred and fiftie pounds joynture.

Anne. Good father, let him woo for himselfe.

Page. Ile leave you for a little.
Exit page; Fenton enters and observes.

Anne. Now Master Slender.

Slen. Now good Mistris Anne.

Anne. What is your will?

Slen. My will? Odd's hartlings, that's a prettie jest indeede: I ne're made my Will yet (I thanke Heaven:) I am not such a sickely creature, I give Heaven praise.

Anne. I meane (Master Slender) what would you with me?

Slen. Truely, for mine owne part, I would little or nothing with you: your father hath made motions: your father can tell you how things go, better then I can: you may aske your father, heere he comes again.
Enter Page and Mistress Page.

Page. Now Master Slender; Love him daughter Anne.
Why how now? What does Mr Fenten here?
You wrong me Sir, thus still to haunt my house.
I told you Sir, my daughter is disposd of.

Fen. Nay Master Page, be not impatient.

Mist.Page. Good Master Fenton, come not to my child.

Page. She is no match for you.

Fen. Sir, will you heare me?

Page. No, good Master Fenton.
Come sonne Slender, in;
Knowing my minde, you wrong me Master Fenton.
Exeunt Page and Slender.)

Qui. Speake to Mistris Page.

Fen. Good Mistress Page, for that I love your daughter
In such a righteous fashion as I do,
Perforce, against all checkes, rebukes, and manners,
I must advance the colours of my love,
And not retire. Let me have your good will.

An. Good mother, do not marry me to yond foole.

Mist.Page. I meane it not, I seeke you a better husband.

Qui. That's my master, Master Doctor.

An. Alas I had rather be set quick in the earth,
And bowl'd to death with Turnips.

Mist. Page. Come, trouble not your selfe good Master Fenton,
I will not be your friend, nor enemy:
My daughter will I question how she loves you,
And as I finde her, so am I affected:
Till then, farewell Sir, she must needs go in,
Her father will be angry.

Fen. Farewell gentle Mistris: farewell Nan.
Exeunt Mistress Page and Anne.

Qui. This is my doing now: Nay, saide I, will you cast away your childe
on a Foole, and a Physician: Looke on Master Fenton, this is
my doing.

Fen. I thanke thee: and I pray thee once to night,
Give my sweet Nan this Ring: there's for thy paines.

Qui. Now heaven send thee good fortune. (Exit Fenton.)
A kinde heart he hath: a woman would run through fire & water
for such a kinde heart. But yet, I would my Master had
Mistris Anne, or I would Master Slender had her: or (in sooth)
I would Master Fenton had her; I will do what I can for them
all three, for so I have promis'd, and Ile bee as good as my
word, but speciously for Master Fenton. Well, I must of
another errand to Sir John Falstaffe from my two Mistresses:
what a beast am I to slacke it.
Exit.

Scene VIII. Enter Falstaffe, Bardolfe.

Fal. Bardolfe I say.

Bar. Heere Sir.

Fal. Go, fetch me a quart of Sacke, put a tost in't.
(Exit Bardolph.)

Have I liv'd to be carried in a Basket like a barrow of
butchers Offall? and to be throwne in the Thames? Wel, if I
be serv'd such another tricke, Ile have my braines taken out
and butter'd, and give them to a dogge for a New yeares gift.
The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse,
as they would have drown'de a blinde bitches Puppies, fifteene
i'th litter: and you may know by my size, that I have a kinde
of alacrity in sinking: if the bottom were as deepe as hell, I
should down. I had beene drown'd, but that the shore was
shelvy and shallow: a death that I abhorre: for the water
swelles a man; and what a thing should I have beene, when I

had beene swel'd? I should have beene a Mountaine of Mummie.
Enter Bardolph.

Bar. Here's Mistress Quickly Sir to speake with you.

Fal. Come, let me poure in some Sack to the Thames water: for my belly's as cold as if I had swallow'd snowbals, for pilles to coole the reines. Call her in.

Bar. Come in woman.
Enter Quickly.

Qui. By your leave: I cry you mercy? Give your worship good morrow.

Fal. Take away these Challices: Go, brew me a pottle of Sacke finely.

Bard. With Egges, Sir?

Fal. Simple of it selfe: Ile no Pullet Sperme in my brewage. (Exit Bardolph) How now?

Qui. Marry Sir, I come to your worship from Mistris. Ford.

Fal. Mistris. Ford? I have had Ford enough: I was thrown into the Ford; I have my belly full of Ford.

Qui. Alas the day, (good heart) that was not her fault: she does so take on with her men; they mistooke their erection.

Fal. So did I mine, to build upon a foolish Womans promise.

Qui. Well, she laments Sir for it, that it would yern your heart to see it: her husband goes this morning a birding; she desires you once more to come to her, betweene eight and nine: I must carry her word quickly, she'll make you amends I warrant you.

Fal. Well, I will visit her, tell her so: and bidde her thinke what a man is: Let her consider his frailety, and then judge of my merit.

Qui. I will tell her.

Fal. Do so. Betweene nine and ten saist thou?

Qui. Eight and nine Sir.

Fal. Well, be gone: I will not misse her.

Qui. Peace be with you Sir. (Exit)

Fal. I marvel I heare not of Master Brook: he sent me word to stay within: I like his money well. Oh, heere he comes.
Enter Ford.

Ford. Blesse you Sir.

Fal. Now Master Brook, you come to know What hath past betweene me, and Fords wife.

Ford. That indeed (Sir John) is my businesse.

Fal. Master Brook I will not lye to you, I was at her house the houre she appointed me.

Ford. And sped you Sir?

Fal. Very ill favouredly Master Brook.

Ford. How so sir, did she change her determination?

Fal. No (Master Brook) but the peaking Curnuto her husband (Master Brook) dwelling in a continual larum of jelousie, coms me in the instant of our encounter, after we had embrast, kist, protested, & (as it were) spoke the prologue of our Comedy: and at his heeles, a rabble of his companions, thither provoked and instigated by his distemper, and (forsooth) to serch his house for his wife's Love.

Ford. What? While you were there?

Fal. While I was there.

Ford. And did he search for you, & could not find you?

Fal. You shall heare. As good lucke would have it, comes in one Mistress Page, gives intelligence of Fords approach: and in her invention, and Ford's wife's distraction, they convey'd me into a bucke basket.

Ford. A Buck basket?

Fal. By the lord, a Buck basket: ram'd mee in with foule Shirts and Smockes, Socks, foule Stockings, greasie Napkins, that (Master Brook) there was the rankest compound of villanous smell, that ever offended nostrill.

Ford. And how long lay you there?

Fal. Nay, you shall heare (Master Brook) what I have sufferd, to bring this woman to evill, for your good: Being thus cram'd in the Basket, a couple of Fords knaves, his Hindes, were cald forth by their Mistris, to carry mee in the name of foule Cloathes to Datchet lane: they tooke me on their shoulders: met the jealous knave their Master in the doore; who ask'd them once or twice what they had in their Basket? I quak'd for feare least the Lunatic Knave would have search'd it: but Fate (ordaining he should be a Cuckold) held his hand: well, on

went hee, for a search, and away went I for foule Cloathes. O to be stopt in like a strong distillation with stinking Cloathes, that fretted in their owne grease. Think of that, a man of my kidney, think of that, that am as subject to heat as butter. Thinke of that, hissing hot, Thinke of that, Naster Brook.

Ford. In good sadnesse Sir, I am sorry, that for my sake you have sufferd all this. My suite then is desperate: You'll undertake her no more?

Fal. Master Brook: I will be throwne into Etna, as I have beene into Thames, ere I will leave her thus; her Husband is this morning gone a Birding: I have received from her another ambassie of meeting: 'twixt eight and nine is the houre (Master Brook.)

Ford. 'Tis past eight already Sir.

Fal. Is it? I will then addresse mee to my appointment: Come to mee at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speede: and the conclusion shall be crowned with your enjoying her: adiew: you shall have her (Master Brook) Master Brook, you shall cuckold Ford.
(Exit.)

Ford. Hum: ha? Is this a vision? Is this a dreame? doe I sleepe? Master Ford awake, awake Master Ford: there's a hole made in your best coate (Master Ford:) this 'tis to be married; this 'tis to have Lynnen, and Buckbaskets: Well, I will proclaime my selfe what I am: I will now take the Leacher: hee is at my house: hee cannot scape me: 'tis impossible hee should: hee cannot creepe into a halfe penny purse, nor into a PepperBoxe: But least the Divell that guides him, should aide him, I will search impossible places: though what I am, I cannot avoide; yet to be what I would not, shall not make me tame: If I have hornes, to make one mad, let the proverbe goe with me, Ile be horn-mad. Exit.

Scene IX. Enter Falstoffs, Mist.Ford.

Fal. Mistress Ford, Your sorrow hath eaten up my sufferance ; I see you are obsequious in your love, and I professe requitall to a haire bredth, not onely Mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in all the accoutrement, complement, and ceremony of it: But are you sure of your husband now?

Mis.Ford. Hee's a birding (sweet Sir John.)

Mis.Page. (Within) What hoa, gossip Ford: what hoa.

Mis.Ford. Step into the chamber, Sir John.
Exit Falstaff, Enter Mistress Page.

Mis.Page. How now (sweete heart) whose at home besides your selfe?

Mis.Ford. Why none but mine owne people.

Mis.Page. Indeed?

Mis.Ford. No certainly: Speake louder.

Mist.Page. Truly, I am so glad you have no body here.

Mist.Ford. Why?

Mis.Page. Why woman, your husband is in his olde lines againe: he so takes on yonder with my husband, so railes against all married mankinde; so curses all Eves daughters, of what complexion soever; and so buffettes himselfe on the forehead: crying peere out, peere out, that any madnesse I ever yet beheld, seem'd but tamenesse, civility, and patience to this his distemper he is in now: I am glad the fat Knight is not heere.

Mist.Ford. Why, does he talke of him?

Mist.Page. Of none but him, and swears he was caried out the last time hee search'd for him, in a Basket: Protests to my husband he is now heere, & hath drawne him and the rest of their company from their sport, to make another experiment of his suspition: But I am glad the Knight is not heere; now he shall see his owne foolerie.

Mist.Ford. How neere is he Mistris Page?

Mist.Pag. Hard by, at street end; he wil be here anon.

Mist.Ford. I am undone, the Knight is heere.

Mist.Page. Why then you are utterly sham'd, & hee's but a dead man. What a woman are you? Away with him, away with him: Better shame, then murther.

Mist.Ford. Which way should he go? How should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket againe?

Fal. No, Ile come no more in the Basket: May I not go out ere he come?

Mist.Page. Alas: three of Master Fords brothers watch the doore with Pistols, that none shall issue out: otherwise you might slip away ere hee came: But what make you heere?

Fal. What shall I do? Ile creepe up into the chimney.

Mist.Ford. There they alwaies use to discharge their Birding peeces: creepe into the Kill hole.

Fal. Where is it?

Mist.Ford. He will seeke there on my word: Neyther Presse, Coffe,
Chest, Trunke, Well, Vault, but he hath an abstract for the
remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his Note:
There is no hiding you in the house.

Fal. Ile go out then.

Mist.page. If you goe out in your owne semblance, you die Sir John,
unlesse you go out disguis'd--

Mist.Ford. How might we disguise him?

Mist.Page. Alas the day I know not, there is no womans gowne bigge
enough for him: otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler,
and a kerchiefe, and so escape.

Fal. Good hearts, devise something: any extremitie, rather then a
mischiefe.

Mist.Ford. My Maids Aunt the fat woman of Brainford, has a gowne above.

Mist.Page. On my word it will serve him: shee's as big as he is: and
there's her thrum'd hat, and her muffler too: run up Sir John.

Mist.Ford. Go, go, sweet Sir John: Mistris Page and I will looke some
linnen for your head.

Mist.Page. Quicke, quicke! Wee'll come dresse you straight: put on the
gowne the while. (Exit Falstaff)

Mist.Ford. I would my husband would meete him in this shape: he cannot
abide the old woman of Brainford; he sweares she's a witch,
forbad her my house, and hath threatened to beate her.

Mist.Page. Heaven guide him to thy husbands cudgell: and the devill
guide his cudgell afterwards.

Mist.Ford. But is my husband comming?

Mist.Page. I in good sadnesse is he, and talkes of the basket too,
howsoever he hath had intelligence.

Mist.Ford. Wee'll try that: for Ile appoint my men to carry the basket
again, to meete him at the doore with it, as they did last
time.

Mist.Page. Nay, but hee'l be heere presently: let's go dresse him like
the witch of Brainford.

Mist.Ford. Ile first direct my men, what they shall do with the basket:
Goe up, Ile bring linnen for him straight.

Mist.Page. Hang him dishonest Varlet, We cannot misuse him enough:
We'll leave a proove by that which we will doo, Wives may be
merry, and yet honest too.

Mist.Ford. Go Sirs, take the basket againe on your shoulders: your
Master is hard at doore: if hee bid you set it downe, obey
him: quickly, dispatch.
(Exit Mistress Ford and Mistress Page.)

Ser. Come, come, take it up.

Ser. Pray heaven it be not full of Knight againe.

Ser. I hope not, I had as lief beare so much lead.
Enter Ford, Page, Sir Hugh.

Ford. I, but if it prove true (Master Page) have you any way then to
unfoole me againe. Set downe the basket villaine: some body
call my wife: Youth in a basket: Oh you Panderly Rascals,
there's a knot: a gin, a packe, a conspiracie against me: Now
shall the divel be sham'd. What wife I say: Come, come forth:
behold what honest cloathes you send forth to bleaching.

Page. Why, this passes Master Ford: you are not to goe loose any
longer, you must be pinnion'd.

Evans. Why, this is Lunaticks: this is madde, as a mad dogge.

Ford. Come hither Mistris Ford, Mistris Ford, the honest woman, the
modest wife, the vertuous creature, that hath the jealous
foole to her husband: I suspect without cause (Mistris) do I?

Mist.Ford. Heaven be my witsse you doe, if you suspect me in any
dishonesty.

Ford. Well said Brazon face, hold it out: Come forth sirrah.

Page. This passes.

Mist.Ford. Are you not asham'd, let the cloths alone.

Ford. I shall finde you anon.

Eva. 'Tis unreasonable; will you take up your wives cloathes? Come,
away.

Ford. Empty the basket I say.

M.Ford. Why man, why?

Ford. Master Page, as I am a man, there was one convay'd out of my
house yesterday in this basket: why may not he be there
again? in my house I am sure he is: my Intelligence is true,
my jealousy is reasonable, pluck me out all the linnen.

Mist.Ford. If you find a man there, he shall dye a Fleas death.

Page. Heer's no man.

Evans. Master Ford, you must pray, and not follow the imaginations of your owne heart: this is jealousies.

Ford. Well, hee's not heere I seeke for.

Page. No, nor no where else but in your braine.

Ford. Helpe to search my house this one time: if I find not what I seeke, show no colour for my extremity: Let me for ever be your Table sport: Let them say of me, as jealous as Ford, that search'd a hollow Wall nut for his wife's lover. Satisfie me once more, once more serch with me.

M.Ford. What hoa (Mistris Page,) come you and the old woman downe: my husband will come into the Chamber.

Ford. Old woman? what old womans that?

M.Ford. Why it is my maids Aunt of Brainford.

Ford. A witch, a Queane, an olde couzening queane: Have I not forbid her my house. She comes of errands does she? We are simple men, wee doe not know what's brought to pass under the profession of Fortune telling. She workes by Charmes, by Spels, by the Figure, & such dawbry as this is, beyond our Element: wee know nothing. Come downe you Witch, you Hagge you, come downe I say.

Mist.Ford. Nay, good sweet husband,
Enter Mistress Page, with Falstaff in woman's clothes.
good Gentlemen, let him strike the old woman?

Mist.Page. Come mother Prat, Come give me your hand.

Ford. Ile Prat her: Out of my doore, you Witch, you Hagge, you Baggage, you Poulcat, you Runnion, out, out: Ile conjure you, Ile fortune tell you.
(Ford chases Falstaff. This is an elaborate chase through the audience.)

Mist.Page. Are you not asham'd? I thinke you have kill'd the poore woman. (Exit Falstaff)

Mist.Ford. Nay he will do it, 'tis a goodly credite for you.

Ford. Hang her witch.

Eva. By yea, and no, I thinke the o'man is a witch indeede: I like not

when a o'man has a great peard; I spie a great peard under his muffler.

Ford. Will you follow Gentlemen, I beseech you follow: see but the issue of my jealousy: If I cry out thus upon no traile, never trust me when I open againe.

Page. Let's obey his humour a little further: Come Gentlemen. (exeunt all but Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford.)

Mist.Page. Trust me he beate him most pittifully.

Mist.Ford. Nay by th' Masse that he did not: he beate him most unpittifully, me thought.

Mist.Page. Ile have the cudgell hallow'd, and hung ore the Altar, it hath done meritorious service.

Mist.Ford. What thinke you? May we with the warrant of woman hood, and the wisse of a good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge?

M.Page. The spirit of wantonnesse is sure scar'd out of him. He will never (I thinke) in the way of waste, attempt us againe.

Mist.Ford. Shall we tell our husbands how wee have serv'd him?

Mist.Page. Yes, by all meanes: if it be but to scrape the figures out of your husbands braines: if they can find in their hearts, the poore unvertuous fat Knight shall be any further afflicted, wee two will still bee the ministers.

Mist.Ford. Ile warrant, they'l have him publicly sham'd, and me thinkes there would be no period to the jest, should he not be publicly sham'd.

Mist.Page. Come, to the Forge with it, then shape it: I would not have things coole.

Mrs. Ford. I would have my husband cool, and then we shall tell all.
Exeunt

Scene X. Enter Page, Ford, Mistris Page, Mistris Ford, and Evans.

Eva. 'Tis one of the best discretions of a o'man as euer I did looke upon.

Page. And did he send you both these Letters at an instant?

Mist.Page. Within a quarter of an houre.

Ford. Pardon me (wife) henceforth do what thou wilt:
I rather will suspect the Sunne with cold,

Then thee with wantonnes: Now doth thy honor stand
In him that was of late an Heretike)
As firme as faith.

Page. 'Tis well, 'tis well, no more: Be not as extreme in submission, as
in offence,
But let our plot go forward: Let our wives
Yet once againe (to make us publike sport)
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,
Where we may take him, and disgrace him for it.

Ford. There is no better way then that they spoke of.

Page. How? to send him word they'll meete him in the Parke at midnight?
Fie, fie, he'll never come.

Eu. You say he has bin throwne in the Rivers: and has bin greevously
peaten, as an old o'man: me thinkes there should be terrors in
him, that he should not come: Me thinkes his flesh is
punish'd, hee shall have no desires.

Page. So thinke I too.

M.Page. Devise but how you'l use him when he comes,
And let us two devise to bring him thither.

Mis.Ford. There is an old tale goes, that Herne the Hunter
(Sometime a keeper heere in Windsor Forrest)
Doth all the winter time, at still midnight
Walke round about an Oake, with great rag'd hornes,
And there he blasts the tree, and takes the cattle,
And makes milch kine yeeld blood, and shakes a chaine
In a most hideous and dreadfull manner.

Page. Why yet there want not many that do feare
In deepe of night to walke by this Hernes Oake:
But what of this?

Mist.Ford. Marry this is our devise,
That Falstaffe at that Oake shall meete with us.

Page. Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come,
And in this shape, when you have brought him thither,
What shall be done with him? What is your plot?

Mist.Pa. That likewise have we thoght upon: & thus:
Nan Page (my daughter) and my little sonne,
And three or foure more of their growth, wee'l dresse
Like Urchins, Ouphes, and Fairies, greene and white,
With rattles in their hands; upon a sodaine,
As Falstaffe, she, and I, are newly met,
Let them from forth a saw pit rush at once;
Then let them all encircle him about,
And Fairy like to pinch the uncleane Knight;

And aske him why that houre of Fairy Revell,
In their so sacred pathes, he dares to tread
In shape prophane.

Ford. And till he tell the truth,
Let the supposed Fairies pinch him, sound!

Mist.Ford. The truth being knowne,
We'll all present our selves; dis horne the spirit,
And mocke him home to Windsor.

Ford. The children must be practis'd well to this, or they'll never do
it.

Eva. I will teach the children their behaviours: and I will be like a
Jacke an Apes also, to peate the Knight with my clup.

Ford. That will be excellent, Ile go buy them masks.

Mist.Page. My Nan shall be the Queene of all the Fairies,
Finely attired in a robe of white.

Page. That silke will I go buy, and in that time
Shall Master Slender steale my Nan away,
And marry her at Eaton: go, send to Falstaffe straight.

Mistress Page. Go get us properties and tricking for our Fayries.

Evans. Let us about it, It is admirable pleasures, and ferry honest
knaveries. (Exeunt all but Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford.)

Mis.Page. Go Mistris Ford, Send quickly to Sir John, to know his minde.
(Exit Mrs. Ford.)
Ile to the Doctor, he hath my good will,
And none but he to marry with Nan Page:
That Slender (though well landed) is an Idiot:
And he, my husband best of all affects:
The Doctor is well monied, and his friends
Potent at Court: he, none but he shall have her,
Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave her.
(Exit)

Scene XI. Enter Host, crossing the stage.

Host. O! I have been robbed, I have been swindled! I have been
cozened! (Exit.) Enter Falstaff.

Fal. I would all the world might be cozened; for I have been cozened
and beaten too. If it should come to the ear of the court,
how I have been transformed and how my transformation hath
been washed and cudgelled, they would melt me out of my fat
drop by drop and liquor fishermen's boots with me. Well, if
my wind were but long enough to say my prayers, I would

repent.
Enter Mistress Quickly.
Now? Whence come you?

Qui. From the two parties forsooth.

Fal. The Devill take one partie, and his Dam the other: and so they shall be both bestowed; I have suffer'd more for their sakes; more then the villanous inconstancy of mans disposition is able to beare.

Qui. And have not they suffer'd? Yes, I warrant; speciously one of them; Mistris Ford (good heart) is beaten black and blew, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

Fal. What tell'st thou mee of black, and blew? I was beaten my selfe into all the colours of the Rainbow.

Qu, Sir: let me speake with you in your Chamber, you shall heare how things goe, and (I warrant) to your content: here is a Letter will say somewhat: (good hearts) what adoe here is to bring you together? Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, that you are so cross'd.

Fal. Come up into my Chamber. D Exeunt.
Scene XII. Enter Fenton, Host.

Host. Master Fenton, talke not to mee, I have suffered grievous losses. my minde is heavy: I will give over all.

Fen. Yet heare me speake: assist me in my purpose,
And (as I am a gentleman) ile give thee
A hundred pound in gold, more then your losse.

Host. I will heare you (Master Fenton) and I will (at the least) keepe your counsell.

Fen. From time to time, I have acquainted you
With the deare love I beare to faire Anne Page.
To night at Hernes Oke, just 'twixt twelve and one,
Must my sweet Nan present the Faerie Queene.
While other jests are something ranke on foote,
Her father hath commanded her to slip
Away with Slender, and with him, at Eaton
Immediately to Marry: She hath consented:
Now Sir, Her Mother, (even strong against that match
And firme for Doctor Caius) hath appointed
That he shall likewise shuffle her away,
And at the Deanry, where a Priest attends
Strait marry her.

Host. Which meanes she to deceive? Father, or Mother?

Fen. Both (my good Host) to go along with me:

And heere it rests, that you'll procure the Vicar
To stay for me at Church, 'twixt twelve, and one,
And in the lawfull name of marrying,
To give our hearts united ceremony.

Host. Well, husband your device; Ile to the Vicar, Bring you the Maid,
you shall not lack a Priest.

Fen. So shall I evermore be bound to thee; Besides, Ile make a present
recompence. Exeunt

Scene XIII. Enter Page, and Slender.

Page. Come, come: wee'll couch i'th Castle ditch, till we see the light
of our Fairies. Remember son Slender, my daughter is in
white.

Slen. I forsooth, I have spoke with her, & we have a nay word, how to
know one another. I come to her in white, and cry Mum; she
cries Budget, and by that we know one another.

Page. The night is darke, Light and Spirits will become it wel: Heaven
prosper our sport. No man means evill but the devill, and we
shal know him by his hornes. Exeunt.

Scene XIV. Enter Mist.Page, Mist.Ford, Caius.

Mist.Page. Master Doctor, my daughter is in green, when you see your
time, take her by the hand, away with her to the Deanerie, and
dispatch it quickly: go before into the Parke: we two must go
together.

Cai. I know vat I have to do, adiev.

Mist.Page. Fare you well (Sir:) my husband will not rejoyce so much at
the abuse of Falstaffe, as he will chafe at the Doctors
marrying my daughter: But 'tis no matter; better a little
chiding, then a great deale of heartbreake.

Mist.Ford. Where is Nan now? and her troop of Fairies?

Mist.Page. They are all couch'd in a pit hard by Hernes Oake.

Mist.Ford. The houre drawes on: to the Oake, to the Oake. Exeunt.

Scene XV. Enter Falstaffe.

Fal. The Windsor bell hath struck twelve: the Minute drawes on: Now the
hot blooded Gods assist me: Remember Jove, thou was't a Bull
for thy Europa, Love set on thy hornes. O powerfull Love,
that in some respects makes a Beast a Man: in som other, a Man
a beast. When Gods have hot backs, what shall poore men do?
For me, I am heere a Windsor Stag, and the fattest (I thinke)

in the Forrest. Send me a coole rut time (Jove) or who can blame me to pisse my Tallow? Who comes heere? my Doe?
Enter Mistress Ford and Mistress Page.

M.Ford. Sir John? Art thou there (my Deere?) My male Deere?

Fal. My Doe, my female Deere! Let the skie raine Potatoes: let it thunder, to the tune of Greenesleeves, haile kissing Comfits, and snow Eringoes: Let there come a tempest of provocation, I will shelter mee heere.

M.Ford. Mistris Page is come with me (sweet hart.)

Fal. Divide me like a brib'd Bucke, each a Haunch: I will keepe my sides to my selfe, my shoulders for the fellow of this walke; and my hornes I bequeath your husbands. Am I a Woodman, ha? Speake I like Herne the Hunter? Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience, he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome.
(Noise of fairies.)

M.Page. Alas, what noise?

M.Ford. Heaven forgive our sinnes.

Fal. What should this be?

M.Ford. M.Page. Away, away.
(Exeunt Mistress Ford and Mistress Page.)

Fal. I thinke the divell wil not have me damn'd, Least the oyle that's in me should set hell on fire; He would never else crosse me thus.
Enter Fairies--quickly, Anne, Pistol, Page, Ford, Mistress Page, Mistress Ford, and others if we can get them. Mistress Quickly guides several audience members on to the stage.

Qui. Fairies black, gray, greene, and white,
You Moone shine revellers, and shades of night.

Fal. They are Fairies, he that speaks to them shall die, Ile winke, and couch: No man their workes must eye.

Anne. Pray you lock hand in hand: your selves in order set:
And twenty glow wormes shall our Lanthornes bee
To guide our Measure round about the Tree.
But stay, I smell a man of middle earth.

Quickly. If he start,
It is the flesh of a corrupted hart.

Pist. A triall, come.

Fal. Oh, oh, oh.

Qui. Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in desire.
About him (Fairies) sing a scornfull rime,
And as you trip, still pinch him to your time.
The Song.
Fie on sinnefull phantasie:
Fie on Lust, and Luxurie:
Lust is but a bloody fire,
Kindled with unchaste desire,
Fed in heart whose flames aspire,
As thoughts do blow them higher and higher.
Pinch him (Fairies) mutuallly:
Pinch him for his villanie.
Pinch him, and burne him, and turne him about,
Till Candles, & Star light, & Moone shine be out.
They torment Falstaff. Slender and Caius exit with false
partners. Fenton steals Anne.

Page. Nay do not flye, I thinke we have watcht you now:
Will none but Herne the Hunter serve your turne?

M.Page. I pray you come, hold up the jest no higher.
Now (good Sir John) how like you Windsor wives?

Mistress Ford. See you these husband? Do not these faire yoakes
Become the Forrest better than the Towne?

Ford. Now Sir, whose a Cuckold now? Master Brook, Falstaffes a Knave,
a Cuckoldly knave, Heere are his hornes Master Brook: And
Master Brook, he hath enjoyed nothing of Ford's, but his Buck
basket, his cudgell, and twenty pounds of money, which must be
paid to Master Brook.

M.Ford. Sir John, we have had ill lucke: wee could never meete: I will
never take you for my Love againe, but I will alwayes count
you my Deere.

Fal. I do begin to perceive that I am made an Ass.

Ford. I, and an Ox too: both the proofes are extant.

Fal. And these are not Fairies: I was three or foure times in the
thought they were not Fairies.

Evans. Sir John Falstaffe, serve Got, and leave your desires, and
Fairies will not pinse you.

Ford. Well said Fairy Hugh.

Evans. And leave you your jealousies too, I pray you.

Ford. I will never mistrust my wife againe.

Fal. Tis time I were choak'd with a peece of toasted Cheese.

Eu. Seese is not good to give putter; your belly is al putter.

Fal. Seese, and Putter? Have I liv'd to stand at the taunt of one that makes Fritters of English?

Mist.Page. Why Sir John, do you thinke though wee would have thrust vertue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, and have given our selves without scruple to hell, that ever the devill could have made you our delight?

Ford. What, a hodge pudding? A bag of flax?

Mist.Page. A puft man?

Page. Old, cold, wither'd, and of intollerable entrailles? _

Ford. And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

Page. And as poore as Job?

Ford. And as wicked as his wife?

Fal. Well, I am your Theame: you have the start of me, I am dejected.

Ford. Marry Sir, wee'll bring you to Windsor to one Mr Brook, that you have cozen'd of money, to whom you should have bin a Pander: over and above that you have suffer'd, I thinke, to repay that money will be a biting affliction.

Page. Yet be cheerefull Knight: thou shalt eat a posset to night at my house, where I will desire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughes at thee: Tell her Master Slender hath married her daughter.

Mist.Page. Doctors doubt that; If Anne Page be my daughter, she is (by this) Doctour Caius wife.
Enter Slender.

Slen. Whoa hoe, hoe, Father Page.

Page. Sonne? How now? How now Sonne, Have you dispatch'd?

Slen. Dispatch'd? I came yonder at Eaton to marry Mistris Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy.

Page. Upon my life then, you tooke the wrong.

Slen. What neede you tell me that? I think so, when I tooke a Boy for a Girl: If I had bene married to him, (for all he was in

womans apparrell) I would not have had him.

Page. Why this is your owne folly.

Mist.Page. Good George be not angry, I knew of your purpose. But
indeede my daughter is now with the Doctor at the Deanrie, and
there married.
Enter Caius.

Cai. Ver is Mistris Page: by gar I am cozoned, I ha married oon
Garsoon, a boy; oon pesant, by gar. A boy, it is not An Page,
by gar, I am cozened.

Ford. This is strange: Who hath got the right Anne?

Page. My heart misgives me, here comes Master Fenton.
Enter Fenton and Anne. How now Master Fenton?

Anne. Pardon good father, good my mother pardon!

Page. Now Mistris: How chance you went not with Master Slender?

M.Page. Why went you not with Master Doctor, maid?

Fen. You do amaze her: heare the truth of it,
You would have married her most shamefully,
Where there was no proportion held in love:
The truth is, she and I (long since contracted)
Are now so sure that nothing can dissolve us:
The offence is holy, that she hath committed,
And this deceit looses the name of craft,
Of disobedience, or unduteous title,
Since therein she doth evitate and shun
A thousand irreligious cursed houres
Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

Ford. Stand not amaz'd, here is no remedie:
In Love, the heavens themselves do guide the state,
Money buyes Lands, and wives are sold by fate.

Fal. I am glad, though you have tane a special stand to strike at me,
that your Arrow hath glanc'd.

Page. Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give thee joy,
What cannot be eschew'd, must be embrac'd.

Fal. When night dogges run, all sorts of Deere are chac'd.

Mist.Page. Well, I will muse no further: Master Fenton,
Heaven give you many, many merry dayes.

Mistress Ford. Good husband, let us every one go home,
And laugh this sport ore by a Countrie fire,
Sir John and all.

Ford. Let it be so (Sir John:)
To Master Brook, you yet shall hold your word,
For he, to night, shall lye with Mistress Ford: Exeunt
FINIS. THE Merry Wives of Windsor.