

And, that my love may appear plain and free,  
All that was mine in Silvia I give thee.

*Jul.* O me unhappy!

*Pro.* Look to the boy.

*Val.* Why, boy! why, wag! how now! what's  
the matter?

Look up; speak.

*Jul.* O good sir, my master charg'd me

To deliver a ring to Madam Silvia,

Which out of my neglect was never done.

*Pro.* Where is that ring, boy?

*Jul.* Here 'tis: this is it. [*Gives a ring.*]

*Pro.* How! let me see.

Why, this is the ring I gave to Julia.

*Jul.* O, cry you mercy, sir; I have mistook:

This is the ring you sent to Silvia.

[*Shows another ring.*]

*Pro.* But how cam'st thou by this ring?

At my depart I gave this unto Julia.

*Jul.* And Julia herself did give it me;

And Julia herself hath brought it hither.

*Pro.* How! Julia!

*Jul.* Behold her that gave aim to all thy oaths,

And entertain'd them deeply in her heart:

How oft hast thou with perjury cleft the root!

O Proteus! let this habit make thee blush.

Be thou asham'd that I have took upon me

Such an immodest raiment; if shame live

In a disguise of love.

It is the lesser blot, modesty finds,

Women to change their shapes than men their

minds.

*Pro.* Than men their minds! 'tis true. O

heaven! were man

But constant, he were perfect: that one error

Fills him with faults; makes him run through

all the sins:

Inconstancy falls off ere it begins.

What is in Silvia's face, but I may spy

More fresh in Julia's with a constant eye?

*Val.* Come, come, a hand from either.

Let me be blest to make this happy close:

'Twere pity two such friends should be long

foes.

*Pro.* Bear witness, heaven, I have my wish,

for ever.

*Jul.* And I mine.

*Enter Outlaws with DUKE and THURIO.*

*Out.* A prize! a prize! a prize!

*Val.* Forbear, forbear, I say; it is my lord

the duke.

Your Grace is welcome to a man disgrac'd,

Banished Valentine.

*Duke.* Sir Valentine!

*Thu.* Yonder is Silvia; and Silvia's mine.

*Val.* Thurio, give back, or else embrace thy  
death;

Come not within the measure of my wrath;

Do not name Silvia thine; if once again,

Verona shall not hold thee. Here she stands;

Take but possession of her with a touch;

I dare thee but to breathe upon my love.

*Thu.* Sir Valentine, I care not for her, I.

I hold him but a fool that will endanger

His body for a girl that loves him not:

I claim her not, and therefore she is thine.

*Duke.* The more degenerate and base art

thou,

To make such means for her as thou hast done,

And leave her on such slight conditions.

Now, by the honour of my ancestry,

I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,

And think thee worthy of an empress' love.

Know then, I here forget all former griefs,

Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again,

Plead a new state in thy unrivall'd merit,

To which I thus subscribe: Sir Valentine,

Thou art a gentleman and well deriv'd;

Take thou thy Silvia, for thou hast deserv'd her.

*Val.* I thank your Grace; the gift hath made

me happy.

I now beseech you, for your daughter's sake,

To grant one boon that I shall ask of you.

*Duke.* I grant it, for thine own, whate'er it be.

*Val.* These banish'd men, that I have kept

withal

Are men endu'd with worthy qualities:

Forgive them what they have committed here,

And let them be recall'd from their exile.

They are reformed, civil, full of good,

And fit for great employment, worthy lord.

*Duke.* Thou hast prevail'd; I pardon them,

and thee;

Dispose of them as thou know'st their deserts.

Come, let us go: we will include all jars

With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity.

*Val.* And as we walk along, I dare be bold

With our discourse to make your Grace to smile.

What think you of this page, my lord?

*Duke.* I think the boy hath grace in him: he

blushes.

*Val.* I warrant you, my lord, more grace

than boy.

*Duke.* What mean you by that saying?

*Val.* Please you, I'll tell you as we pass along,

That you will wonder what hath fortun'd.

Come, Proteus; 'tis your penance, but to hear

The story of your loves discovered:

That done, our day of marriage shall be yours;

One feast, one house, one mutual happiness.

[*Exeunt.*]

## THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.  
FENTON, a young Gentleman.  
SHALLOW, a Country Justice.  
SLENDER, Cousin to Shallow.  
FORD, } two Gentlemen dwelling at Windsor.  
PAGE, }  
WILLIAM PAGE, a Boy, Son to Page.  
SIR HUGH EVANS, a Welsh Parson.  
DOCTOR CAIUS, a French Physician.  
HOST of the Garter Inn.  
BARDOLPH, PISTOL, Nym, Followers of Falstaff.

ROBIN, Page to Falstaff.  
SIMPLE, Servant to Slender.  
RUGBY, Servant to Doctor Caius.

MISTRESS FORD.  
MISTRESS PAGE.  
ANNE PAGE, her Daughter, in love with Fenton.  
MISTRESS QUICKLY, Servant to Doctor Caius.

Servants to Page, Ford, &c.

SCENE.—Windsor; and the Neighbourhood.

### ACT I

SCENE I.—Windsor. Before PAGE's House.

*Enter JUSTICE SHALLOW, SLENDER, and SIR HUGH EVANS.*

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

*Slen.* In the county of Gloster, justice of  
peace, and coram.

*Shal.* Ay, cousin Slender, and cust-alorum.

*Slen.* Ay, and rato-lorum too; and a gentle-  
man born, Master Parson; who writes himself  
armigero, in any bill, warrant, quittance, or  
obligation,—armigero.

*Shal.* Ay, that I do; and have done any time  
these three hundred years.

*Slen.* All his successors gone before him hath  
done 't; and all his ancestors that come after him  
may: they may give the dozen white laces in  
their coat.

*Shal.* It is an old coat.

*Eva.* The dozen white louses do become an  
old coat well; it agrees well, *passant*; it is a  
familiar beast to man, and signifies love.

*Shal.* The luce is the fresh fish; the salt fish  
is an old coat.

*Slen.* I may quarter, coz?

*Shal.* You may, by marrying.

*Eva.* It is marrying indeed, if he quarter it.

*Shal.* Not a whit.

*Eva.* Yes, py'r lady; if he has a quarter of  
your coat, there is but three skirts for yourself,  
in my simple conjectures: but that is all one.  
If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparage-  
ments unto you, I am of the Church, and will be  
glad to do my benevolence to make atonements  
and compromises between you.

*Shal.* The Council shall hear it; it is a riot.

*Eva.* It is not meet the Council hear a riot;  
there is no fear of Got in a riot. The Council,  
look you, shall desire to hear the fear of Got, and  
not to hear a riot; take your vizaments in that.

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

*Eva.* It is petter that friends is the sword,  
and end it; and there is also another device in  
my prain, which, peradventure, prings goot dis-  
cretions with it. There is Anne Page, which is  
daughter to Master Thomas Page, which is pretty  
virginity.

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

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

*Shal.* Did her grandsire leave her seven hun-  
dred pound?

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

*Shal.* I know the young gentlewoman; she  
has good gifts.

*Eva.* Seven hundred pounds and possibilities  
is goot gifts.

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

*Eva.* Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a  
liar as I do despise one that is false; or as I  
despise one that is not true. The knight, Sir  
John, is there; and, I beseech you, be ruled by  
your well-willers. I will peat the door for Master  
Page. [*Knocks.*] What, ho! Got pless your  
house here!

*Page.* [*Within.*] Who's there?

*Eva.* Here is Got's plessing, and your friend,  
and Justice Shallow; and here young Master  
Slender, that peradventures shall tell you an-  
other tale, if matters grow to your likings.

*Enter PAGE.*

*Page.* I am glad to see your worships well.  
I thank you for my venison, Master Shallow.

*Shal.* Master Page, I am glad to see you;  
much good do it your good heart! I wished your  
venison better; it was ill killed. How doth good



Mistress Page?—and I thank you always with my heart, la! with my heart.

Page. Sir, I thank you. 88

Shal. Sir, I thank you; by yea and no, I do.

Page. I am glad to see you, good Master Slender.

Slen. How does your fallow greyhound, sir? I heard say he was outrun on Cotsall. 93

Page. It could not be judged, sir.

Slen. You'll not confess, you'll not confess.

Shal. That he will not: 'tis your fault, 'tis your fault. 'Tis a good dog. 97

Page. A cur, sir.

Shal. Sir, he's a good dog, and a fair dog; can there be more said? he is good and fair. Is Sir John Falstaff here? 101

Page. Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good office between you.

Eva. It is spoke as a Christians ought to speak.

Shal. He hath wronged me, Master Page. 105

Page. Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

Shal. If it be confessed, it is not redressed: is not that so, Master Page? He hath wronged me; indeed, he hath;—at a word, he hath,—believe me: Robert Shallow, esquire, saith, he is wronged.

Page. Here comes Sir John. 112

Enter SIR JOHN FALSTAFF, BARDOLPH, NYM, and PISTOL.

Fal. Now, Master Shallow, you'll complain of me to the king?

Shal. Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge. 116

Fal. But not kissed your keeper's daughter?

Shal. Tut, a pin! this shall be answered.

Fal. I will answer it straight: I have done all this. That is now answered. 120

Shal. The Council shall know this.

Fal. 'Twere better for you if it were known in counsel: you'll be laughed at.

Eva. *Pauca verba*, Sir John; goot worts. 124

Fal. Good worts! good cabbage. Slender, I broke your head: what matter have you against me?

Slen. Marry, sir, I have matter in my head against you; and against your cony-catching rascals, Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. They carried me to the tavern, and made me drunk, and afterwards picked my pocket. 132

Bard. You Banbury cheese!

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Pist. How now, Mephistophilus!

Slen. Ay, it is no matter. 136

Nym. Slice, I say! *pauca, pauca*; slice! that's my humour.

Slen. Where's Simple, my man? can you tell, cousin? 140

Eva. Peace, I pray you. Now let us understand: there is three umpires in this matter, as I understand; that is—Master Page, *fidelicet*, Master Page; and there is myself, *fidelicet*, myself; and the three party is, lastly and finally, mine host of the Garter.

Page. We three, to hear it and end it between them. 148

Eva. Fery goot: I will make a prief of it in my note-book; and we will afterwards ork upon the cause with as great discreetly as we can.

Fal. Pistol! 152

Pist. He hears with ears.

Eva. The tevil and his tam! what phrase is this, 'He hears with ear?' Why, it is affectations.

Fal. Pistol, did you pick Master Slender's purse? 157

Slen. Ay, by these gloves, did he,—or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else,—of seven groats in mill-sixpences, and two Edward shovel-boards, that cost me two shilling and two pence a-piece of Yead Miller, by these gloves.

Fal. Is this true, Pistol? 164

Eva. No; it is false, if it is a pick-purse.

Pist. Ha, thou mountain foreigner!—Sir John and master mine,

I combat challenge of this latten bilbo. 168

Word of denial in thy labras here!

Word of denial: froth and scum, thou liest.

Slen. By these gloves, then, 'twas he.

Nym. Be advised, sir, and pass good humours,

I will say, 'marry trap,' with you, if you run the nuthook's humour on me: that is the very note of it. 174

Slen. By this hat, then, he in the red face had it; for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an ass. 178

Fal. What say you, Scarlet and John?

Bard. Why, sir, for my part, I say, the gentleman had drunk himself out of his five sentences.

Eva. It is his 'five senses,' fie, what the ignorance is! 183

Bard. And being fap, sir, was, as they say, cashier'd; and so conclusions pass'd the careires.

Slen. Ay, you spake in Latin then too; but 'tis no matter. I'll ne'er be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil, godly company, for this trick: if I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of God, and not with drunken knaves. 191

Eva. So Got udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

Fal. You hear all these matters denied, gentlemen; you hear it. 194

Enter ANNE PAGE, with Wine; MISTRESS FORD and MISTRESS PAGE.

Page. Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within. [Exit ANNE PAGE.]

Slen. O heaven! this is Mistress Anne Page.

Page. How now, Mistress Ford!

Fal. Mistress Ford, by my troth, you are very well met: by your leave, good mistress. 200

[Kissing her.]

Page. Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome. Come, we have a hot venison pasty to dinner: come, gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness. 204

[Exeunt all but SHALLOW, SLENDER, and EVANS.]

Slen. I had rather than forty shillings I had my Book of Songs and Sonnets here.

Enter SIMPLE.

How now, Simple! Where have you been? I must wait on myself, must I? You have not the Book of Riddles about you, have you? 209

Sim. Book of Riddles! why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake upon All-Hallowmas last, a fortnight afore Michaelmas? 212

Shal. Come, coz; come, coz; we stay for you. A word with you, coz; marry, this, coz: there is, as 'twere a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off by Sir Hugh here: do you understand me? 216

Slen. Ay, sir, you shall find me reasonable: if it be so, I shall do that that is reason.

Shal. Nay, but understand me.

Slen. So I do, sir. 220

Eva. Give ear to his motions, Master Slender: I will description the matter to you, if you pe capacity of it.

Slen. Nay, I will do as my cousin Shallow says. I pray you pardon me; he's a justice of peace in his country, simple though I stand here.

Eva. But that is not the question; the question is concerning your marriage. 228

Shal. Ay, there's the point, sir.

Eva. Marry, is it, the very point of it; to Mistress Anne Page.

Slen. Why, if it be so, I will marry her upon any reasonable demands. 233

Eva. But can you affection the 'oman? Let us command to know that of your mouth or of your lips; for divers philosophers hold that the lips is parcel of the mouth: therefore, precisely, can you carry your good will to the maid? 239

Shal. Cousin Abraham Slender, can you love her?

Slen. I hope, sir, I will do as it shall become one that would do reason. 243

Eva. Nay, Got's lords and his ladies! you must speak possitable, if you can carry her your desires towards her.

Shal. That you must. Will you, upon good dowry, marry her? 248

Slen. I will do a greater thing than that, upon your request, cousin, in any reason.

Shal. Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet coz: what I do, is to pleasure you, coz. Can you love the maid? 253

Slen. I will marry her, sir, at your request; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when we are married and have more occasion to know one another: I hope, upon familiarity will grow more contempt: but if you say, 'Marry her,' I will marry her; that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely. 261

Eva. It is a fery discretion answer; save, the faul is in the ort 'dissolutely': the ort is, according to our meaning, 'resolutely.' His meaning is goot.

Shal. Ay, I think my cousin meant well.

Slen. Ay, or else I would I might be hanged, la! 268

Shal. Here comes fair Mistress Anne.

Re-enter ANNE PAGE.

Would I were young for your sake, Mistress Anne.

Anne. The dinner is on the table; my father desires your worships' company. 273

Shal. I will wait on him, fair Mistress Anne.

Eva. Od's plessed will! I will not be absence at the grace. 276

[Exeunt SHALLOW and EVANS.]

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

Slen. No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily; I am very well. 280

Anne. The dinner attends you, sir.

Slen. I am not a-hungry, I thank you forsooth. Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go wait upon my cousin Shallow. [Exit SIMPLE.] A justice of peace sometime may be beholding to his friend for a man. I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead; but what though? yet I live like a poor gentleman born. 289

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

Slen. I' faith, I'll eat nothing; I thank you as much as though I did. 294

Anne. I pray you, sir, walk in.

Slen. I had rather walk here, I thank you. I bruised my shin th' other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence; three veneys for a dish of stewed prunes;—and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since. Why do your dogs bark so? be there bears i' the town? 301

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

Slen. I love the sport well; but I shall as soon quarrel at it as any man in England.

You are afraid, if you see the bear loose, are you not?

Anne. Ay, indeed, sir. 308

Slen. That's meat and drink to me, now: I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cried and shrieked at it, that it passed: but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favoured rough things. 315

Re-enter PAGE.

Page. Come, gentle Master Slender, come; we stay for you.

Slen. I'll eat nothing, I thank you, sir.

Page. By cock and pie, you shall not choose, sir! come, come. 320

Slen. Nay, pray you, lead the way.

Page. Come on, sir.

Slen. Mistress Anne, yourself shall go first.

Anne. Not I, sir; pray you, keep on. 324

Slen. Truly, I will not go first: truly, la! I will not do you that wrong.

Anne. I pray you, sir.

Slen. I'll rather be unmannerly than troublesome. You do yourself wrong, indeed, la! 329

[Exeunt.]



SCENE II.—*The Same.*

Enter SIR HUGH EVANS and SIMPLE.

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

Sim. Well, sir.

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

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Garter Inn.*

Enter FALSTAFF, Host, BARDOLPH, NYM, PISTOL, and ROBIN.

Fal. Mine host of the Garter!  
Host. What says my bully-rook? Speak scholarly and wisely.

Fal. Truly, mine host, I must turn away some of my followers.

Host. Discard, bully Hercules; cashier: let them wag; trot, trot.

Fal. I sit at ten pounds a week.

Host. Thou'rt an emperor, Caesar, Keisar, and Pheezar. I will entertain Bardolph; he shall draw, he shall tap: said I well, bully Hector?

Fal. Do so, good mine host.

Host. I have spoke; let him follow. [To BARD.] Let me see thee froth and lime: I am at a word; follow.

Fal. Bardolph, follow him. A tapster is a good trade: an old cloak makes a new jerkin; a withered serving-man, a fresh tapster. Go; adieu.

Bard. It is a life that I have desired. I will thrive.

Pistol. O base Hungarian wight! wilt thou the spigot wield?

Nym. He was gotten in drink; is not the humour conceited?

Fal. I am glad I am so acquit of this tinder-box; his thefts were too open; his filching was like an unskilful singer; he kept not time.

Nym. The good humour is to steal at a minim's rest.

Pistol. 'Convey,' the wise it call. 'Steal!' foh! a fico for the phrase!

Fal. Well, sirs, I am almost out at heels.

Pistol. Why, then, let kibes ensue.

Fal. There is no remedy; I must cony-catch, I must shift.

Pistol. Young ravens must have food.

Fal. Which of you know Ford of this town?

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

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

Pistol. Two yards, and more.

Fal. No quips now, Pistol! Indeed, I am in

the waist two yards about; but I am now about no waste; I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife: I spy entertainment in her; she discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation: I can construe the action of her familiar style; and the hardest voice of her behaviour, to be Englished rightly, is, 'I am Sir John Falstaff's.'

Pistol. He hath studied her well, and translated her well, out of honesty into English.

Nym. The anchor is deep: will that humour pass?

Fal. Now, the report goes she has all the rule of her husband's purse; he hath a legion of angels.

Pistol. As many devils entertain, and 'To her, boy,' say I.

Nym. The humour rises; it is good: humour me the angels.

Fal. I have writ me here a letter to her; and here another to Page's wife, who even now gave me good eyes too, examined my parts with most judicious œilliades: sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly belly.

Pistol. Then did the sun on dunghill shine.

Nym. I thank thee for that humour.

Fal. O! she did so course o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention, that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning-glass. Here's another letter to her: she bears the purse too; she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be 'cheator to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me: they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go bear thou this letter to Mistress Page; and thou this to Mistress Ford. We will thrive, lads, we will thrive.

Pistol. Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become, And by my side wear steel? then, Lucifer take all!

Nym. I will run no base humour: here, take the humour-letter. I will keep the haviour of reputation.

Fal. [To ROBIN.] Hold, sirrah, bear you these letters tightly:

Sail like my pinnacle to these golden shores. Rogues, hence! avaunt! vanish like hailstones,

go; Trudge, plod away o' the hoof; seek shelter, pack!

Falstaff will learn the humour of this age, French thrift, you rogues: myself and skirted page.

[Exeunt FALSTAFF and ROBIN.]  
Pistol. Let vultures gripe thy guts! for gourd and fullam holds,

And high and low beguile the rich and poor. Tester I'll have in pouch when thou shalt lack, Base Phrygian Turk!

Nym. I have operations in my head, which be humours of revenge.

Pistol. Wilt thou revenge?

Nym. By welkin and her star!

Pistol. With wit or steel?

Nym. With both the humours, I: I will discuss the humour of this love to Page.

Enter DOCTOR CAIUS.

Caius. Vat is you sing? I do not like dese toys. Pray you, go and vetch me in my closet *une boittine verte*; a box, a green-a box: do intend vat I speak? a green-a box.

Quick. Ay, forsooth; I'll fetch it you. [Aside.] I am glad he went not in himself: if he had found the young man, he would have been horn-mad.

Caius. *Fe, fe, fe, fe! ma foi, il fait fort chaud. Je m'en vais à la cour,—la grande affaire.*

Quick. Is it this, sir?

Caius. *Oui; mettez le au mon pocket; dé-pêchez, quickly.—Vere is dat knave Rugby?*

Quick. What, John Rugby! John!

Re-enter RUGBY.

Rug. Here, sir.

Caius. You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby: come, take-a your rapier, and come after my heel to de court.

Rug. 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

Caius. By my trot, I tarry too long.—Od's me! *Qu'ay j'oublié?* dere is some simples in my closet, dat I vill not for de varld I shall leave behind.

Quick. [Aside.] Ay me! he'll find the young man there, and be mad.

Caius. *O diable! diable!* vat is in my closet?—Villain! larron! [Pulling SIMPLE out.] Rugby, my rapier!

Quick. Good master, be content.

Caius. Verefore shall I be content-a?

Quick. The young man is an honest man.

Caius. Vat shall de honest man do in my closet? dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet.

Quick. I beseech you, be not so phlegmatic. Hear the truth of it: he came of an errand to me from Parson Hugh.

Caius. Vell.

Sim. Ay, forsooth, to desire her to—

Quick. Peace, I pray you.

Caius. Peace-a your tongue!—Speak-a your tale.

Sim. To desire this honest gentlewoman, your maid, to speak a good word to Mistress Anne Page for my master in the way of marriage.

Quick. This is all, indeed, la! but I'll ne'er put my finger in the fire, and need not.

Caius. Sir Hugh send-a you?—Rugby, baillez me some paper: tarry you a little-a while.

[Writes.]  
Quick. I am glad he is so quiet: if he had been thoroughly moved, you should have heard him so loud, and so melancholy. But, notwithstanding, man, I'll do your master what good I can; and the very yea and the no is, the French doctor, my master,—I may call him my master, look you, for I keep his house; and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself,—

Sim. 'Tis a great charge to come under one body's hand.

Quick. Are you avis'd o' that? you shall find

Pistol. And I to Ford shall eke unfold

How Falstaff, varlet vile,

His dove will prove, his gold will hold,

And his soft couch defile.

Nym. My humour shall not cool: I will incense Page to deal with poison; I will possess him with yellowness, for the revolt of mine is dangerous: that is my true humour.

Pistol. Thou art the Mars of malcontents: I second thee; troop on.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*A Room in DOCTOR CAIUS's House.*

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY and SIMPLE.

Quick. What, John Rugby!—

Enter RUGBY.

I pray thee, go to the casement, and see if you can see my master, Master Doctor Caius, coming: if he do, i' faith, and find anybody in the house, here will be an old abusing of God's patience and the king's English.

Rug. I'll go watch.

Quick. Go; and we'll have a posset for't soon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire.

[Exit RUGBY.] An honest, willing, kind fellow, as ever servant shall come in house withal; and, I warrant you, no tell-tale, nor no breed-bate: his worst fault is, that he is given to prayer; he is something peevish that way, but nobody but has his fault; but let that pass. Peter Simple you say your name is?

Sim. Ay, for fault of a better.

Quick. And Master Slender's your master?

Sim. Ay, forsooth.

Quick. Does he not wear a great round beard like a Glover's paring-knife?

Sim. No, forsooth: he hath but a little whey-face, with a little yellow beard—a cane-coloured beard.

Quick. A softly-sprighted man, is he not?

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

Quick. Howsay you?—O! I should remember him: does he not hold up his head, as it were, and strut in his gait?

Sim. Yes, indeed, does he.

Quick. Well, heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell Master Parson Evans I will do what I can for your master: Anne is a good girl, and I wish—

Re-enter RUGBY.

Rug. Out, alas! here comes my master.

Quick. We shall all be shent. Run in here, good young man; go into this closet. [Shuts SIMPLE in the closet.] He will not stay long. What, John Rugby! John, what, John, I say! Go, John, go inquire for my master; I doubt he be not well, that he comes not home.

[Exit RUGBY.] [Sings.]

'And down, down, adown-a,' &amp;c.



it a great charge: and to be up early and down late; but notwithstanding,—to tell you in your ear,—I would have no words of it,—my master himself is in love with Mistress Anne Page: but notwithstanding that, I know Anne's mind, that's neither here nor there.

*Caius.* You jack'nape, give-a dis letter to Sir Hugh; by gar, it is a challenge: I will cut his throat in de Park; and I will teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make. You may be gone; it is not good you tarry here: by gar, I will cut all his two stones; by gar, he shall not have a stone to throw at his dog. *[Exit SIMPLE.]*

*Quick.* Alas! he speaks but for his friend. *Caius.* It is no matter—a for dat:—do not you tell-a me dat I shall have Anne Page for myself? By gar, I will kill de Jack priest; and I have appointed mine host of de *Jartiere* to measure our weapon. By gar, I will myself have Anne Page.

*Quick.* Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall be well. We must give folks leave to prate: what, the good-ger!

*Caius.* Rugby, come to the court vit me. By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I shall turn your head out of my door. Follow my heels, Rugby. *[Exeunt CAIUS and RUGBY.]*

*Quick.* You shall have An fool's-head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that: never a woman in Windsor knows more of Anne's mind than I do; nor can do more than I do with her, I thank heaven.

*Fent.* *[Within.]* Who's within there? ho! *Quick.* Who's there, I trow? Come near the house, I pray you.

*Enter FENTON.*

*Fent.* How now, good woman! how dost thou? *Quick.* The better, that it pleases your good worship to ask.

*Fent.* What news? how does pretty Mistress Anne?

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

*Fent.* Shall I do any good, thinkest thou? Shall I not lose my suit?

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

*Fent.* Yes, marry have I; what of that?

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

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

*Quick.* Will I? i' faith, that we will: and I will tell your worship more of the wart the

next time we have confidence; and of other woovers.

*Fent.* Well, farewell; I am in great haste now.

*Quick.* Farewell to your worship. *[Exit FENTON.]* Truly, an honest gentleman: but Anne loves him not; for I know Anne's mind as well as another does. Out upon't! what have I forgot? *[Exit.]*

## ACT II

### SCENE I.—Before PAGE's House.

*Enter MISTRESS PAGE, with a Letter.*

*Mrs. Page.* What! have I 'scaped love-letters in the holiday-time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see.

Ask me no reason why I love you; for though Love use Reason for his physician, he admits him not for his counsellor. You are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's sympathy; you are merry, so am I; ha! ha! then, there's more sympathy; you love sack, and so do I; would you desire better sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page, at the least, if the love of a soldier can suffice, that I love thee. I will not say, pity me,—'tis not a soldier-like phrase; but I say, love me. By me,

Thine own true knight,  
By day or night,  
Or any kind of light,  
With all his might  
For thee to fight,

JOHN FALSTAFF.

What a Herod of Jewry is this! O wicked, wicked world! one that is well-nigh worn to pieces with age, to show himself a young gallant! What an unweighed behaviour hath this Flemish drunkard picked, with the devil's name! out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company! What should I say to him? I was then frugal of my mirth:—heaven forgive me! Why, I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down of men. How shall I be revenged on him? for revenged I will be, as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

*Enter MISTRESS FORD.*

*Mrs. Ford.* Mistress Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

*Mrs. Page.* And, trust me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I'll ne'er believe that: I have to show to the contrary.

*Mrs. Page.* Faith, but you do, in my mind.

*Mrs. Ford.* Well, I do then; yet, I say I could show you to the contrary. O, Mistress Page! give me some counsel.

*Mrs. Page.* What's the matter, woman?

*Mrs. Ford.* O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!

*Mrs. Page.* Hang the trifle, woman; take the honour. What is it?—dispense with trifles;—what is it?

*Mrs. Ford.* If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment or so, I could be knighted.

*Mrs. Page.* What? thou liest. Sir Alice Ford! These knights will hack; and so thou shouldst not alter the article of thy gentry.

*Mrs. Ford.* We burn daylight: here, read, read; perceive how I might be knighted. I shall think the worse of fat men as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking; and yet he would not swear; praised women's modesty; and gave such orderly and well-behaved reproof to all uncomeliness, that I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words; but they do no more adhere and keep place together than the Hundredth Psalm to the tune of 'Green Sleeves.' What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? I think, the best way were to entertain him with hope, till the wicked fire of lust have melted him in his own grease. Did you ever hear the like?

*Mrs. Page.* Letter for letter, but that the name of Page and Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the twin brother of thy letter: but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant, he hath a thousand of these letters, writ with blank space for different names, sure more, and these are of the second edition. He will print them, out of doubt; for he cares not what he puts into the press, when he would put us two: I had rather be a giantess, and lie under Mount Pelion. Well, I will find you twenty lascivious turtles ere one chaste man.

*Mrs. Ford.* Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. What doth he think of us?

*Mrs. Page.* Nay, I know not: it makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he know some strain in me, that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

*Mrs. Ford.* Boarding call you it? I'll be sure to keep him above deck.

*Mrs. Page.* So will I: if he come under my hatches, I'll never to sea again. Let's be revenged 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, till he hath pawned his horses to mine host of the Garter.

*Mrs. Ford.* Nay, I will consent to act any villany against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. O, that my husband saw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealousy.

*Mrs. Page.* Why, look, where he comes; and my good man too: he's as far from jealousy, as I am from giving him cause; and that, I hope, is an unmeasurable distance.

*Mrs. Ford.* You are the happier woman.

*Mrs. Page.* Let's consult together against this greasy knight. Come hither. *[They retire.]*

*Enter FORD, PISTOL, PAGE, and NYM.*

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

*Pist.* Hope is a curial dog in some affairs: Sir John affects thy wife.

*Ford.* Why, sir, my wife is not young.

*Pist.* He woos both high and low, both rich and poor.

Both young and old, one with another, Ford. He loves the galimaufry: Ford, perpend.

*Ford.* Love my wife!

*Pist.* With liver burning hot: prevent, or go thou,

Like Sir Actæon he, with Ringwood at thy heels.

O! odious is the name!

*Ford.* What name, sir?

*Pist.* The horn, I say. Farewell:

Take heed; have open eye, for thieves do foot by night:

Take heed, ere summer comes or cuckoo-birds do sing.

Away, sir Corporal Nym!

Believe it, Page; he speaks sense. *[Exit.]*

*Ford.* *[Aside.]* I will be patient: I will find out this.

*Nym.* *[To 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. *[Exit.]*

*Page.* *[Aside.]* 'The humour of it,' quoth 'a! here's a fellow frights humour out of his wits.

*Ford.* I will seek out Falstaff.

*Page.* I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue.

*Ford.* If I do find it: well.

*Page.* I will not believe such a Cataian, though the priest o' the town commended him for a true man.

*Ford.* 'Twas a good sensible fellow: well.

*Page.* How now, Meg!

*Mrs. Page.* Whither go you, George?—Hark you.

*Mrs. Ford.* How now, sweet Frank! why art thou melancholy?

*Ford.* I melancholy! I am not melancholy. Get you home, go.

*Mrs. Ford.* Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head now. Will you go, Mistress Page?

*Mrs. Page.* Have with you. You'll come to dinner, George? *[Aside to MRS. FORD.]* Look, who comes yonder; she shall be our messenger to this paltry knight.

*Mrs. Ford.* Trust me, I thought on her: she'll fit it.

*Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.*

*Mrs. Page.* You are come to see my daughter Anne?

*Quick.* Ay, forsooth; and, I pray, how does good Mistress Anne?

*Mrs. Page.* Go in with us, and see: we'd have an hour's talk with you.

*[Exeunt MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS FORD, and MISTRESS QUICKLY.]*



Page. How now, Master Ford! 172  
 Ford. You heard what this knave told me, did you not?

Page. Yes; and you heard what the other told me? 176

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

Ford. Were they his men?  
 Page. Marry, were they. 184  
 Ford. I like it never the better for that. Does he lie at the Garter?

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

Ford. I do not misdoubt my wife, but I would be loath to turn them together. A man may be too confident: I would have nothing 'lie on my head.' I cannot be thus satisfied. 194

Page. Look, where my ranting host of the Garter comes. There is either liquor in his pate or money in his purse when he looks so merrily.— 198

Enter Host and SHALLOW.

How now, mine host!  
 Host. How now, bully-rook! thou'rt a gentleman. Cavaliero-justice, I say! 201

Shal. I follow, mine host, I follow. Goodeven and twenty, good Master Page! Master Page, will you go with us? we have sport in hand. 204

Host. Tell him, cavaliero-justice; tell him, bully-rook.

Shal. Sir, there is a fray to be fought between Sir Hugh the Welsh priest and Caius the French doctor. 209

Ford. Good mine host o' the Garter, a word with you.

Host. What sayest thou, my bully-rook? 212

Shal. [To PAGE.] Will you go with us to behold it? My merry host hath had the measuring of their weapons, and, I think, hath appointed them contrary places; for, believe me, I hear the parson is no jester. Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be. [They go aside.]

Host. Hast thou no suit against my knight, my guest-cavalier? 220

Ford. None, I protest: but I'll give you a pottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him and tell him my name is Brook, only for a jest.

Host. My hand, bully: thou shalt have egress and regress; said I well? and thy name shall be Brook. It is a merry knight. Will you go, mynheers?

Shal. Have with you, mine host. 228  
 Page. I have heard, the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier.

Shal. Tut, sir! I could have told you more. In these times you stand on distance, your passes, stoccadoes, and I know not what: 'tis the heart, Master Page; 'tis here, 'tis here. I

have seen the time with my long sword I would have made you four tall fellowsskip like rats. 236  
 Host. Here, boys, here, here! shall we wag?  
 Page. Have with you. I had rather hear them scold than fight.

[Exeunt Host, SHALLOW, and PAGE.]  
 Ford. Though Page be a secure fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily. She was in his company at Page's house, and what they made there, I know not. Well, I will look further into 't; and I have a disguise to sound Falstaff. If I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Room in the Garter Inn.

Enter FALSTAFF and PISTOL.

Fal. I will not lend thee a penny.  
 Pist. Why, then the world's mine oyster, Which I with sword will open.

I will retort the sum in equipage. 4

Fal. Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn: I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow Nym; or else you had looked through the grate, like a gemmy of baboons. I am damned in hell for swearing to gentlemen my friends, you were good soldiers and tall fellows; and when Mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took 't upon mine honour thou hadst it not. 14

Pist. Didst thou not share? hadst thou not fifteen pence?

Fal. Reason, you rogue, reason: thinkest thou, I'll endanger my soul gratis? At a word, hang no more about me; I am no gibbet for you: go: a short knife and a throng!—to your manor of Pickt-hatch! go. You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue!—you stand upon your honour!—Why, thou unconfinable baseness, it is as much as I can do to keep the terms of mine honour precise. I, I, I, myself sometimes, leaving the fear of God on the left hand and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge and to lurch; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce your rags, your cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases, and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour! You will not do it, you!

Pist. I do relent: what wouldst thou more of man? 32

Enter ROBIN.

Rob. Sir, here's a woman would speak with you.

Fal. Let her approach.

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY.

Quick. Give your worship good morrow. 36

Fal. Good morrow, good wife.

Quick. Not so, an't please your worship.

Fal. Good maid, then.

Quick. I'll be sworn 40

As my mother was, the first hour I was born.

Fal. I do believe the swearer. What with me? Quick. Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two? 44

Fal. Two thousand, fair woman; and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

Quick. There is one Mistress Ford, sir,—I pray, come a little nearer this ways:—I myself dwell with Master Doctor Caius. 49

Fal. Well, on: Mistress Ford, you say,—

Quick. Your worship says very true:—I pray your worship, come a little nearer this ways. 52

Fal. I warrant thee, nobody hears; mine own people, mine own people.

Quick. Are they so? God bless them, and make them his servants! 56

Fal. Well: Mistress Ford; what of her?

Quick. Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, Lord! your worship's a wanton! Well, heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray! 60

Fal. Mistress Ford; come, Mistress Ford,—

Quick. Marry, this is the short and the long of it. You have brought her into such canaries as 'tis wonderful: the best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a canary; yet there has been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; smelling so sweetly—all musk, and so rushing, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms; and in such wine and sugar of the best and the fairest, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her. I had myself twenty angels given me this morning; but I defy all angels, in any such sort, as they say, but in the way of honesty: and, I warrant you, they could never get her so much as sip on a cup with the proudest of them all; and yet there has been earls, nay, which is more, pensioners; but, I warrant you, all is one with her.

Fal. But what says she to me? be brief, my good she-Mercury. 83

Quick. Marry, she hath received your letter; for the which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven. 88

Fal. Ten and eleven?

Quick. Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot of: Master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him; he's a very jealousy man; she leads a very frampold life with him, good heart.

Fal. Ten and eleven. Woman, commend me to her; I will not fail her. 97

Quick. Why, you say well. But I have another messenger to your worship: Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too; and let me tell you in your ear, she's as fartuous a civil modest wife, and one, I tell you, that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other: and she bade me tell your worship that her husband is seldom from home; but, she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote

upon a man: surely, I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth. 109

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

Quick. Blessing on your heart for 't! 112

Fal. But, I pray thee, tell me this: has Ford's wife and Page's wife acquainted each other how they love me? 115

Quick. That were a jest indeed! they have not so little grace, I hope: that were a trick, indeed! But Mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves: her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page; and, truly, Master Page is an honest man. Never a wife in Windsor leads a better life than she does: do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will: and, truly she deserves it; for if there be a kind woman in Windsor, she is one. You must send her your page; no remedy. 128

Fal. Why, I will.

Quick. Nay, but do so, then: and, look you, he may come and go between you both; and in any case have a nay-word, that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand any thing; for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness: old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world. 137

Fal. Fare thee well: commend me to them both. There's my purse; I am yet thy debtor.—Boy, go along with this woman.—[Exeunt MISTRESS QUICKLY and ROBIN.] This news distracts me. 142

Pist. This punk is one of Cupid's carriers. Clap on more sails; pursue; up with your fights; Give fire! she is my prize, or ocean overwhelm them all! [Exit.]

Fal. Sayest thou so, old Jack? go thy ways; I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee? Wilt thou, after the expense of so much money, be now a gainer? Good body, I thank thee. Let them say 'tis grossly done; so it be fairly done, no matter. 151

Enter BARDOLPH, with a cup of Sack.

Bard. Sir John, there's one Master Brook below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted with you: and hath sent your worship a morning's draught of sack.

Fal. Brook is his name? 156

Bard. Ay, sir.

Fal. Call him in. [Exit BARDOLPH.] Such Brooks are welcome to me, that o'erflow such liquor. Ah, ha! Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, have I encompassed you? go to; via! 161

Re-enter BARDOLPH, with FORD disguised.

Ford. Bless you, sir!

Fal. And you, sir; would you speak with me?

Ford. I make bold to press with so little preparation upon you. 165

Fal. You're welcome. What's your will?—Give us leave, drawer. [Exit BARDOLPH.]



Ford. Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much: my name is Brook. 169

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 think myself in better plight for a lender than you are; the which hath something emboldened me to this unseasoned intrusion; for, they say, if money go before, all ways do lie open. 177

Fal. Money is a good soldier, sir, and will on.

Ford. Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me; if you will help to bear it, Sir John, take all, or half, for easing me of the carriage. 183

Fal. Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter.

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

Fal. Speak, good Master Brook; I shall be glad to be your servant. 189

Ford. Sir, I hear you are a scholar,—I will be brief with you, and you have been a man long known to me, though I had never so good means, as desire, to make myself acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfection; but, good Sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the register of your own, that I may pass with a reproof the easier, sith you yourself know how easy it is to be such an offender. 200

Fal. Very well, sir; proceed.

Ford. There is a gentlewoman in this town, her husband's name is Ford.

Fal. Well, sir. 204

Ford. I have long loved her, and, I protest to you, bestowed much on her; followed her with a doting observance; engrossed opportunities to meet her; fee'd every slight occasion that could but niggardly give me sight of her; not only bought many presents to give her, but have given largely to many to know what she would have given. Briefly, I have pursued her as love hath pursued me; which hath been on the wing of all occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my mind or in my means, meed, I am sure, I have received none; unless experience be a jewel that I have purchased at an infinite rate; and that hath taught me to say this,

Love like a shadow flies when substance love pursues;

Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues. 220

Fal. Have you received no promise of satisfaction at her hands?

Ford. Never. 224

Fal. Have you importuned her to such a purpose?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Of what quality was your love, then? 228

Ford. Like a fair house built upon another man's 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? 233

Ford. When I have told you that, I have told you all. Someday, that though she appear honest to me, yet in other places she enlargeth her mirth so far 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, authentic in your place and person, generally allowed for your many war-like, court-like, and learned preparations.

Fal. O, sir! 244

Ford. Believe it, for you know it. There is money; spend it, spend it; spend more; spend all I have; only give me so much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable siege to the honesty of this Ford's wife: use your art of wooing, win her to consent to you; if any man may, you may as soon as any. 251

Fal. Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection, that I should win what you would enjoy? Methinks you prescribe to yourself very preposterously. 255

Ford. O, understand my drift. She dwells so securely on the excellency of her honour, that the folly of my soul dares not present itself: she is too bright to be looked 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 to't, Sir John? 266

Fal. Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

Ford. O good sir!

Fal. I say you shall. 272

Ford. Want no money, Sir John; you shall want none.

Fal. Want no Mistress Ford, Master Brook; you shall want none. I shall be with her, I may tell you, by her own appointment; even as you came in to me, her assistant or go-between parted from me: I say I shall be with her between 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. 283

Ford. I am blest in your acquaintance. Do you know Ford, sir?

Fal. Hang him, poor cuckoldly knave! I know him not. Yet I wrong him, to call him poor: they say the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money; for the which his wife seems to me well-favoured. I will use her as the key of the cuckoldly rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home. 292

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

Fal. Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cudgel: it shall hang like a meteor o'er

the cuckold's horns. Master Brook, thou shalt know I will predominate over the peasant, and thou shalt lie with his wife. Come to me soon at night. Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style; thou, Master Brook, shalt know him for knave and cuckold. Come to me soon at night. [Exit.]

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

### SCENE III.—A Field near Windsor.

Enter CAIUS and RUGBY.

Caius. Jack Rugby!

Rug. Sir?

Caius. Vat is de clock, Jack?

Rug. 'Tis past the hour, sir, that Sir Hugh promised to meet.

Caius. By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come: he has pray his Pible vell, dat he is no come. By gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

Rug. He is wise, sir; he knew your worship would kill him, if he came.

Caius. By gar, de herring is no dead so as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

Rug. Alas, sir! I cannot fence.

Caius. Villany, take your rapier. 16

Rug. Forbear; here's company.

Enter Host, SHALLOW, SLENDER, and PAGE.

Host. Bless thee, bully doctor!

Shal. Save you, Master Doctor Caius!

Page. Now, good Master doctor! 20

Slen. Give you good morrow, sir.

Caius. Vat be all you, one, two, tree, four, come for?

Host. To see thee fight, to see thee foin, to see thee traverse; to see thee here, to see thee there; to see thee pass thy punto, thy stock, thy reverse, thy distance, thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian? is he dead, my Francisco? ha, bully! What says my Æsculapius? my Galen? my heart of elder? ha! is he dead, bully stale? is he dead? 31

Caius. By gar, he is de coward Jack priest of de vorld; he is not show his face.

Host. Thou art a Castilian King Urinal! Hector of Greece, my boy! 35

Caius. I pray you, bear witness that me have stay six or seven, two, tree hours for him, and he is no come. 38

Shal. He is the wiser man, Master doctor: he is a curer of souls, and you a curer of bodies; if you should fight, you go against the hair of your professions. Is it not true, Master Page? 43

Page. Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

Shal. Bodykins, Master Page, though I now be old and of the peace, if I see a sword out, my finger itches to make one. Though we are justices and doctors and churchmen, Master Page, we have some salt of our youth in us; we are the sons of women, Master Page.

Page. 'Tis true, Master Shallow. 52

Shal. It will be found so, Master Page. Master Doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am sworn of the peace: you have showed yourself a wise physician, and Sir Hugh hath shown himself a wise and patient churchman. You must go with me, Master doctor.

Host. Pardon, guest-justice.—A word, Monsieur Mockwater. 60

Caius. Mock-vater! vat is dat?

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

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

Host. He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

Caius. Clapper-de-claw! vat is dat? 68

Host. That is, he will make thee amends.

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

Host. And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag. 73

Caius. Me tank you for dat.

Host. And moreover,—bully, But first, Master guest, and Master Page, and eke Cavaliero Slen-der, go you through the town to Frogmore. 77

[Aside to them.]

Page. Sir Hugh is there, is he?

Host. He is there: see what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields. Will it do well? 81

Shal. We will do it.

Page, Shal., and Slen. Adieu, good Master doctor. [Exeunt PAGE, SHAL., and SLEN.]

Caius. By gar, me vill kill de priest; for he speak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page. 86

Host. Let him die. Sheathe thy impatience; throw cold water on thy choler: go about the