

1 The Merry  
2 Wives of  
3 Windsor

4 Dramatis Personae

5  
6 Sir John Falstaff

7 Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire

8 Master Abraham Slender

9 Master Frank Ford

10 Master George Page

11 Sir Hugh Evans

12 Doctor Caius

13 Host of the Garter Inn

14 Mistress Alice Ford

15 Mistress Meg Page

16 Mistress Anne Page

17 Mistress Quickly  
18

## Snow Day and Rehearsal Policies

- 1) Rehearsals are every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 to 5:30 in the HS Cafetorium. You must bring a pencil and be prepared to work at every rehearsal. I will not add extra rehearsals, unless it is to make up a missed one due to the weather, so learn your lines and do not miss a practice!!!
- 2) Check the call board in the music room hallway as to which scenes we will be working on each rehearsal. If you're not scheduled to be there, then don't show up. I do not need extra bodies to watch. If you are to be there, don't be late. We have no time to waste to get this show together.
- 3) If there's school, there's rehearsal. If we are released early from school due to weather, that practice is canceled. It will have to be made up on the following Saturday at noon.
- 4) If school is canceled due to bad weather on a Tuesday or a Thursday, we can not have rehearsal, even if the roads are clear later in the day. This rehearsal will be made up the following Saturday at noon.
- 5) If there are ever any questions or concerns from yourself or your parents, please notify me. We have a very strong cast and a very, very funny play. Don't let any misinformation or assumptions spoil the work we can do. This show is going to be a great show.

## I.1

*Enter Shallow, Evans, Slender*

**Shallow:** No, Sir Hugh, persuade me not. I will make a royal council matter of it. He will see me in the King's Star Chamber. Even if he were twenty Sir John Falstaffs, he will not abuse Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire.

**Evans:** Justice Shallow, if Sir John Falstaff has committed disparagements against you, I am of the church and I will be glad to use my benevolence to make any compromises between the two of you.

**Shallow:** I want no compromises. The Council shall hear of it. It shall be a riot.

**Evans:** It does not meet with the Council to hear a riot, Sir.

**Shallow:** Ha! On my life! If I were young again, the sword should end it.

**Evans:** It is better that friends be the sword that ends it. You must put it aside. There is another device in my brain that will be far more profitable than your dispute with Sir John Falstaff.

**Shallow:** There is no profit better than my revenge, Sir Hugh.

**Evans:** No? There is Mistress Anne Page, the daughter of Master George Page.

**Shallow:** Sir Hugh, do not suggest that a man of my age and station...

**Evans:** No, no, no, not for yourself my friend, for your nephew, Master Abraham Slender.

**Shallow:** Ay, it might do him well. Abraham, do you know Anne Page?

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

**Shallow:** (*aside*) Heaven be blessed, he knows the difference.

**Evans:** On her Grandfather's death bed, he left her seven hundred pounds when she is able to overtake seventeen years old.

**Shallow:** Seven hundred pounds you say, and her father has made her a better penny as well.

**Evans:** It would be a good motion that we leave our brabbles and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.

**Shallow:** I know the young gentle woman. She has good gifts.

**Evans:** Seven hundred pounds and possibilities are gifts good enough.

**Shallow:** Well then, let us go and see Master Page. We are near his house.

**Evans:** Perhaps this would not be the best hour to call. Let us return later.

**Shallow:** But why, we are here and... Is Falstaff there?

**Evans:** Shall I tell you a lie? I do despise a liar as I do despise one that is false, or one that is not true. Yes, Sir John Falstaff is at the house of Master Page. I beseech you. You are best ruled by those who wish you the best.

**Shallow:** The best for me is to rid the world of Sir John Falstaff!! We are here. Call Master Page.

**Evans:** Justice Shallow, I feel.....

1 **Shallow:** Call Master Page.  
2 **Evans:** Very well. What ho! God bless this house.  
3 **Page:** Who's there?  
4 **Shallow:** Justice Shallow, Master Slender, and Sir Hugh Evans, if the matter grows to  
5 your liking.  
6 *Enter Page*  
7 **Page:** Oh, I am glad to see your worships.  
8 **Shallow:** Is Sir John Falstaff here?  
9 **Page:** Sir, he is within, and I wish I could do a good office between you.  
10 **Evans:** Spoken as any true Christian should.  
11 **Shallow:** He has wronged me, sir. Indeed he has, in a word, he has. Believe me,  
12 Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire, says he has been wronged.  
13 *Enter Falstaff*  
14 **Page:** Here comes Sir John.  
15 **Falstaff:** Justice Shallow, I hear of your complaint to the King.  
16 **Shallow:** Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, broken open my lodge,  
17 and stolen my property..  
18 **Falstaff:** Ahh,...But I've not kissed your gamekeeper's daughter.  
19 **Shallow:** This shall be answered.  
20 **Falstaff:** Oh, I will answer it straightway. I have done all this. There, it is answered.  
21 **Shallow:** The Council shall know of this!  
22 **Falstaff:** 'Twere better for you if it be not known in Council. You'll be laughed at.  
23 *Enter Anne*  
24 **Anne:** Father?  
25 **Page:** Nay daughter, carry the wine in, we'll drink within.  
26 **Slender:** Oh, heaven, this is Mistress Anne Page.  
27 *Enter Ms Ford, Ms Page*  
28 **Page:** How now, Mistress Ford?  
29 **Falstaff:** Mistress Ford, by my troth, you are very well met. By your leave, good  
30 mistress.  
31 *Falstaff kisses Ms Ford's hand*  
32 **Page:** Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome. Come, Sir John has given us a hot  
33 venison pastry for dinner.  
34 **Shallow:** My venison.  
35 **Page:** Come now, gentlemen, I hope we can drink down all unkindness.  
36 *Exeunt, save Slender, Shallow, Evans*  
37 **Shallow:** Come along, nephew, we stay for you. There is an offer here, made by Sir  
38 Hugh. Do you understand me?  
39 **Slender:** Ay, Sir, you shall find me reasonable.  
40 **Shallow:** You understand me.

1 **Slender:** So I do, Sir.  
2 **Evans:** Give ear to his notion, Master Slender.  
3 **Slender:** I will do as my uncle says.  
4 **Evans:** But, that is not the question. The question is concerning your marriage.  
5 **Shallow:** Ay, marry, there's the point, sir.  
6 **Evans:** Marry is the very point, to Mistress Anne.  
7 **Slender:** If it be so, I'll marry her upon reasonable demands.  
8 **Shallow:** But can you love her?  
9 **Slender:** I hope I will, sir.  
10 **Shallow:** You must. Will you, upon good dowry, marry her?  
11 **Slender:** I will marry her, sir, at your request. Though there be no great love, and  
12 heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, but when we are married and  
13 have more occasion to know one another, I hope familiarity will grow into  
14 contentment. If you say marry her, I will marry her.  
15 *Enter Anne*  
16 **Shallow:** That's a good boy. Here comes Mistress Anne. *(aside)* Oh, would I were  
17 young again, Mistress Anne.  
18 **Anne:** The dinner is on the table. My father desires your worship's company.  
19 **Shallow:** I'll not have him wait on me, fair Anne.  
20 **Evans:** God's blessed will, I'll be not absent at the blessing.  
21 *Exit Shallow, Evans*  
22 **Anne:** Will it please your worship to come in, Sir?  
23 **Slender:** No, I thank you. I am very well here.  
24 **Anne:** But the dinner attends you, sir.  
25 **Slender:** I am not hungry, I thank you. *(bow)*  
26 **Anne:** Forgive me, but I may not go in without your worship, and they will not sit till  
27 you come.  
28 **Slender:** In faith, I'll eat nothing.  
29 **Anne:** I pray you, sir, walk in.  
30 **Slender:** I had rather walk here, I thank you.  
31 *Enter Page*  
32 **Page:** Come Master Slender, we wait for you.  
33 **Slender:** I'll eat nothing, I thank you, Sir. *(bow)*  
34 **Page:** By God, you shall not choose, sir. Come, come.  
35 **Slender:** Nay, pray you lead the way, Master Page.  
36 **Page:** Come on, Sir.  
37 **Slender:** Mistress Anne, you shall go first.  
38 **Anne:** Not I, sir. Pray you, keep on.  
39 **Slender:** Truly, I will not go first. I will not do you that wrong.  
40 **Anne:** I pray you, sir. Go in!

1 **Slender:** I'd rather be unmannerly than troublesome. You do yourself the wrong,  
2 indeed.

3 *Exeunt, Slender first*

## 4 5 I.2

6 *Enter Falstaff,*

7 *Enter Host*

8 **Falstaff:** My dear host of the Garter....

9 **Host:** Sir John Falstaff, my bully rook, speak scholarly and wisely.

10 **Falstaff:** Oh truly, sir, truly. I sit here at ten pounds a week, do I not?

11 **Host:** I'd say you sit more like ten times ten pounds.

12 **Falstaff:** In faith, I bear my weight with lightness.

13 **Host:** You may good sir, you may, but your board is another matter.

14 **Falstaff:** Are you not rewarded enough to say you have Sir John Falstaff at your fine  
15 public house?

16 **Host:** Sir, a grand reputation does take up the cost of living.

17 **Falstaff:** Good man, do you know the Ford of this town?

18 **Host:** Indeed, I say I do. He is a man of good substance.

19 **Falstaff:** Well, I will tell you what I am about...

20 **Host:** I'd say about two yards or more.

21 **Falstaff:** No quips now. Indeed, I am in the waist two yards about, but I am now  
22 about no waste. Briefly, I mean to woo Ford's wife.

23 **Host:** Truly?

24 **Falstaff:** I spy great entertainment in her. She discourses, she carves, she gives the  
25 leer of invitation. I can construe the action of her familiar style to say 'I belong  
26 to Sir John Falstaff.'

27 **Host:** You can see that in her actions?

28 **Falstaff:** I have a keen eye for subtlety. Now the report goes that she has the rule of  
29 all her husband's purse.

30 **Host:** So I've heard as well.

31 **Falstaff:** I have here written a letter to her, and another to Master Page's wife, who  
32 even now gave me good eyes as well, examined my parts with the most  
33 amorous of glances. The beam of her view glided from my foot to crown.

34 **Host:** She was able to pass by your portly belly?

35 **Falstaff:** Oh, that took a second glance.

36 **Host:** I'm not surprised.

37 **Falstaff:** Enough. She did so course over my exteriors with such a greedy intention  
38 that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning-glass!  
39 Here's another letter to her as well for I know she bears the purse too. I will be

1 suitor to them both and they shall be exchequers to me. They shall be my East  
2 and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go bear this letter to Mistress  
3 Page and this to Mistress Ford. We will thrive, my friend, we will thrive.  
4

### 5 I.3

6 *Enter Shallow, Ms Quickly*

7 **Shallow:** *(To Audience Member)* Please, look ahead. There is the house of Doctor  
8 Caius. There also dwells one Mistress Quickly, who is his nurse, or his cook, or  
9 his washer, or his wringer. Give her this letter, for she is a woman that is well  
10 acquainted with Mistress Anne Page. The letter asks of her to solicit the  
11 affections of Mistress Anne for my nephew, Master Abraham Slender. Now I  
12 pray you, be gone.

13 *Send Audience Member to stage*

14 *Exit Shallow*

15 **Ms Quickly:** Good day, sir. Have you an appointment with the good Doctor? I am  
16 afraid he is out, and not expected to return until late.

17 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

18 **Ms Quickly:** Let me see. Attend me, if you would. *(Reading)* ‘Mistress Quickly, I  
19 write to ask you for your intercession with Mistress Anne Page for my nephew,  
20 Master Abraham Slender. It is my desire to form a union between them.  
21 Yours, Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire.’ Master Abraham Slender? ...Oh, I  
22 remember him. He holds his head, as it were, up and struts. Well, heaven send  
23 Anne Page no worse a fortune! Tell Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire, I will do  
24 what I can for his nephew, Master Abraham Slender. Anne is a good girl, and I  
25 wish her....

26 *Enter Caius*

27 **Caius:** Mistress Quickly!

28 **Ms Quickly:** Alas, my master. We shall be blamed. Hide in here, good man. He  
29 shall not stay long, I assure you. *(Sings)*

30 *Exit Audience Member*

31 **Caius:** *(French)* What is that you sing?

32 **Ms Quickly:** Oh, ‘tis nothing, just idle entertainment.

33 **Caius:** Tres bein. Mistress Quickly, I must change these clothes. Pray you go and  
34 fetch my waist coat from my closet.

35 **Ms Quickly:** Yes, I’ll fetch it for you. *(aside)* I am glad he went not in himself. If he  
36 found the young man, he would have been horn mad.

37 *Exit Ms Quickly*

38 **Caius:** *(Sings, French, sword play)*

39 *Enter Ms Quickly*

1 **Ms Quickly:** Is it this one, Sir?

2 **Caius:** Oui. By my troth, I tarry too long. I must be to court. *(French)* I have

3 forgotten my bag. *(French)*

4 *Exit Caius*

5 **Ms Quickly:** Ay me, he'll find the young man there, and be quite mad.

6 **Caius:** *(French)* What is in my closet? Villainy!!

7 *Enter Audience Member and moves to Mistress Quickly*

8 *Enter Caius*

9 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

10 **Ms Quickly:** Good master, be content.

11 **Caius:** Wherefore shall I be content?

12 **Ms Quickly:** Pray you sir, he is an honest man. Aren't you?

13 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

14 **Caius:** What shall an honest man do in my closet?

15 **Ms Quickly:** Sir, the young man has come out off the closet.

16 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

17 **Ms Quickly:** I beseech you, hear the truth of it. He came on an errand to me from

18 Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire.

19 **Caius:** Well?

20 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

21 **Ms Quickly:** He came to ask for a good word to Mistress Anne Page for Master

22 Abraham Slender, in the way of a marriage contract.

23 **Caius:** Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire sent you?

24 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

25 **Caius:** For Master Abraham Slender?

26 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

27 **Caius:** Because Slender wishes to marry Mistress Anne Page?

28 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

29 **Caius:** *(French)* You, jackanape!!

30 **Ms Quickly:** Run, sir.

31 *Exit Audience Member*

32 **Caius:** Oui, run, you needy, hallow-eyed, sharp-looking wretch. I will cut your

33 throat from ear to ear. I will teach you and Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire, to

34 meddle in these affairs. You two are a rabble of vile, weak-brained sheep.

35 Mistress Anne would not have anything to do with the likes of you, you

36 tottering, tardy-gaited, tickle-brained toad-spotted, t t,t,t... *(To any Audience*

37 *Member)* Quick, someone give me a 'T' word . . . *(Audience suggested word)*

38 Oui, Oui, be gone!! It is good that you do not tarry here, lest you wish the

39 French to teach you scum and base lackey English peasants how to behave.

40 *(French)*



1 **Ms Quickly:** Alas, good doctor, he speaks only for a friend.

2 **Caius:** It is of no matter. Did you not tell me that I shall marry Mistress Anne Page?  
3 *(French)* I will kill that man if I ever see him again. I myself will have Anne  
4 Page!!

5 **Ms Quickly:** Sir, the maid loves you, and she shall be yours, but we must give folks  
6 leave to dream.

7 **Caius:** *(French)* I must be to court. By God, if I do not have Anne Page, I shall turn  
8 your head out of my door.

9 *Exit Caius*

10 **Ms Quickly:** You shall have Anne, I promise.

11 *Exit Ms Quickly*

## 13 II.1

15 *Enter Host, Ms Page*

16 *Exit Host*

17 **Ms Page:** What, have I escaped love-letters in my youth just to be subject to them  
18 now?

19 *Enter Falstaff*

20 **Falstaff:** Ask me no reason why I love you, for Jove has his own reason. You are not  
21 young, no more than I. There is sympathy. You are merry, so am I. There is  
22 more sympathy. You love food and wine, so do I. Would you desire better  
23 sympathy? Let it suffice you, Mistress Page, at the least, if the love of a soldier  
24 can suffice, I love you. I will not say pity me, for it is not a soldier's phrase, but  
25 I do say love me, Yours eternally, Sir John Falstaff.

26 *Exit Falstaff*

27 **Ms Page:** Oh, wicked, wicked world! What has that swag bellied drunkard done? I  
28 have not been but three times in his company and he proclaims love to me.  
29 What should I say to him? Heaven forgive me if this be my penance. I should  
30 partition Parliament for the abolition of men. What retribution shall I have?  
31 For I will have retribution, as sure as his guts are filled with puddings.

32 *Enter Ms Ford*

33 **Ms Ford:** Mistress Page!

34 **Ms Page:** Mistress Ford, you look very ill. What's the matter woman?

35 **Ms Ford:** I could be knighted.

36 **Ms Page:** Sir Alice Ford? How to, my lady?

37 *Enter Ford, Page, Host*

38 **Ms Ford:** We burn daylight. Here, here, read. Perceive how I could be knighted.

39 *(Hand letter to Ms Page) (aside)* I shall think the worst of any fat man as long

1 as I have an eye to make the difference. How shall I be revenged on him? I  
2 think the best way would be to entertain him with the hope of love till the  
3 wicked fire of his lust has melted him in his own grease. Did you ever hear the  
4 like? (*Ms Page hands both letters to Ms Ford*)  
5 **Ford:** Well, I hope it be not so.  
6 **Host:** Hope is a mad dog in some affairs. I tell you, Sir John affects your wife.  
7 **Ford:** How, sir? My wife is not young.  
8 **Host:** Oh, he woos both high and low, both rich and poor, both young and old.  
9 **Ford:** My wife, Alice Ford?  
10 **Host:** With love burning hot. Farewell.  
11 **Ms Page:** Ah! Letter for letter the same, save the name of Page and Ford. I'll warrant  
12 he has a thousand of these letters, each writ with a blank space for different  
13 names.  
14 **Ms Ford:** Why, this is the very same, the very same hand, the very same words.  
15 What does he think of us? (*Hand one letter to Ms Page*)  
16 **Ms Page:** I know not. It makes me ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. Unless  
17 he knows some strain in me that I know not myself, why would he come to  
18 board me in this fury?  
19 **Ms Ford:** Boarding, you call it? I'll be sure to keep him above deck.  
20 **Ms Page:** Oh, so will I. He'll ne'er come under these hatches. Let's be revenged on  
21 him. We'll appoint him a meeting, give him a show of comfort in his suit, and  
22 lead him on with a fine baited delay until he has pawned all his goods.  
23 **Page:** Surely, you mistake me for someone else.  
24 **Host:** Master Page, all I've said is true. I do not like the humor of lying. Falstaff  
25 loves your wife.  
26 **Ms Ford:** I will consent to any act of villainy against him that may not sully our  
27 honesty. Oh, if my husband saw this letter! It would give him eternal food for  
28 his jealousy.  
29 **Ms Page:** Why, look, here he comes, and my good man too. He's as far from  
30 jealousy as I am from giving him cause. Come, let's consult together against  
31 this knight.  
32 **Page:** (*aside*) The humor of it.  
33 **Ford:** (*aside*) I will seek out this Falstaff.  
34 **Page:** (*aside*) I never heard such a rambling rogue.  
35 **Ford:** (*aside*) If I do find it well.  
36 **Page:** (*aside*) I will not believe such a man even if a priest were to commend him for  
37 a true man.  
38 **Ford:** (*aside*) He is a good sensible fellow.  
39 **Page:** How now, Meg?  
40 **Ms Page:** Whither go you, George?

1 **Ms Ford:** How now, sweet Frank, why are you so melancholy?  
2 **Ford:** I melancholy? I am not melancholy. Let us go home.  
3 *Enter Ms Quickly*  
4 **Ms Page:** Look who comes yonder. She will be our messenger to the paltry knight.  
5 **Ms Ford:** Trust me, I thought of her. She'll fit it.  
6 **Ms Page:** Have you come to see my daughter?  
7 **Ms Quickly:** Ay, how does good Mistress Anne?  
8 **Ms Page:** Oh, quite well, come in with us and see. We have an hour's talk with you.  
9 *Exit Ms Ford, Ms Page, Ms Quickly*  
10 **Page:** Master Ford?  
11 **Ford:** You heard what that knave told me, did you not?  
12 **Page:** Yes, and you heard what he told me as well.  
13 **Ford:** Do you think there is truth in him?  
14 **Page:** Hang 'em. I do not think the knight would offer it.  
15 **Ford:** But he does lie at the Garter.  
16 **Page:** Yes, he does. I tell you, if he should intend this voyage toward my wife, I  
17 should turn her loose on him, and if he gets more than her sharp tongue, then let  
18 it lie on my head. We have nothing to fear. Good day. *(bow)*  
19 *Exit Page*  
20 **Ford:** *(aside)* I do not doubt my wife, but I would be loath to turn them together. A  
21 man can be too confident. Though Page be a secure fool and stands so firmly  
22 on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot. She was in Falstaff's company at Page's  
23 house, and what they did there, I do not know. Well, I will look further into it.  
24 I should disguise myself to sound out Falstaff. If I find her honest, I lose not  
25 my labors. If she be otherwise, then 'tis labor best served.  
26 *Exit Ford*  
27

## II.2

*Enter Falstaff*

*Enter Ms Quickly*

31 **Ms Quickly:** The lord give your worship, good morrow.  
32 **Falstaff:** And good morrow, good woman.  
33 **Ms Quickly:** Might I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?  
34 **Falstaff:** Two thousand, fair woman, and I'll vouchsafe you the hearing.  
35 **Ms Quickly:** There is one Mistress Ford, sir, I pray, come a little nearer this way. I  
36 myself dwell with Master Doctor Caius.  
37 **Falstaff:** Well, on. Mistress Ford, you say...  
38 **Ms Quickly:** Your worship says very true. I pray your worship, come a little nearer  
39 this way.

1 **Falstaff:** I'll warrant you nobody hears.  
2 **Ms Quickly:** I thank you sir, but perchance you have come too close.  
3 **Falstaff:** Well, Mistress Ford, what of her?  
4 **Ms Quickly:** Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, your worship is a wanton varlet!  
5 Heaven forgive you, and all of us.  
6 **Falstaff:** Come, come Mistress Ford.  
7 **Ms Quickly:** This is the long and short of it. You have brought her to such a  
8 quandary. The best courtier of them all could never have brought her to such a  
9 quandary. Yet there have been knights, lords and gentlemen with their coaches,  
10 I warrant you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift, in silk and in  
11 gold, enough to have won any woman's heart, they could never get as much as  
12 a wink from her eye.  
13 **Falstaff:** But what says she of me? And be brief, my good woman.  
14 **Ms Quickly:** She has received your letter, for which she thanks you a thousand times,  
15 and she bids me to tell you her husband, Master Ford, will be absent from his  
16 house betwixt ten and eleven today.  
17 **Falstaff:** Ten and eleven.  
18 **Ms Quickly:** Aye, then you may come to her. Alas, the sweet woman leads an ill life  
19 with her husband. He's a very jealous man.  
20 **Falstaff:** Ten and eleven. Woman, commend me to her. I will not fail her.  
21 *Enter Ford disguised as Brook*  
22 **Ms Quickly:** Oh, but sir, I have another message for your worship. Mistress Page  
23 sends her hearty commendations to you as well, and let me tell you in your ear.  
24 She is a virtuous, civil woman, and one that will not miss you in her morning  
25 and evening prayers. She bids me tell you her husband is seldom far from  
26 home, but she hopes there will come a time when you may visit. I never knew a  
27 woman so to dote upon any man as she does you. Surely you have some  
28 charms.  
29 *Enter Host*  
30 **Falstaff:** Oh, not I, I assure you. Setting the attraction of my best parts aside, I have  
31 no other charms.  
32 **Ms Quickly:** Blessing on your heart for your grace to all women.  
33 **Falstaff:** But I pray you, tell me this, have Ford's wife and Page's wife told each  
34 other how much they both love me.  
35 **Ms Quickly:** Oh, that's a merry jest indeed, sir! They have not so little grace.  
36 **Falstaff:** Ahh, good. Fare thee well, then. Commend me to them both. I am forever  
37 your debtor. *(bow)*  
38 *Exit Ms Quickly*  
39 **Host:** Sir John, there's one Master Brook would speak with you, and he has sent your  
40 worship a tankard of this morning's draught.

1 **Falstaff:** Brook is his name?  
2 **Host:** Ay, sir.  
3 **Falstaff:** Call him forth. (*aside*) All Brooks are welcome to me that overflow with  
4 such fine liquor.  
5 **Ford:** God bless you, sir. (*bow*)  
6 **Falstaff:** And you, sir. Would you speak to me?  
7 **Ford:** Good Sir John, I have a bag of money here which troubles me. If you will help  
8 to bear it, you may take half, or all for easing my pains.  
9 **Falstaff:** Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter, but I will gladly be  
10 your servant, Master Brook.  
11 **Ford:** Sir, I hear you are a scholar, so I will be brief with you.  
12 **Falstaff:** Very well, proceed.  
13 **Ford:** There is a gentle woman in this town. Her husband's name is Ford.  
14 **Falstaff:** (*Spit take*) Yes, sir?  
15 **Ford:** I have long loved her. I have pursued her as love has pursued me.  
16 **Falstaff:** Have you received no promise of satisfaction at her hands?  
17 **Ford:** No, never.  
18 **Falstaff:** Then to what purpose have you unfolded this tale to me?  
19 **Ford:** Now, Sir John, there is a heart to my purpose. You are a gentleman of  
20 excellent breeding and admirable discourse.  
21 **Falstaff:** Oh, sir!  
22 **Ford:** Believe it, for you know it to be true. (*Drops money bag on table*) There is  
23 the money. Spend it, spend it. Spend more, spend all I have. Only do this in  
24 exchange. Use your art of wooing, win her to consent to you. For if any man  
25 may, you may as soon as any.  
26 **Falstaff:** You have a fine eye for nature, sir, but what good will it serve to you?  
27 **Ford:** Oh, understand my aim. You can drive her from her marriage vow, which is  
28 now too strongly embattled against me. After her husband has turned her out, I  
29 will have leave to woo her myself.  
30 **Falstaff:** Master Brook, I will first be bold with your money and next, as I am a  
31 gentleman, I will have Ford's wife, for your sake.  
32 **Ford:** Oh, good sir!  
33 **Falstaff:** I say I shall have her!  
34 **Ford:** You'll want for no money, Sir John.  
35 **Falstaff:** I shall be with her between ten and eleven, for at that time the jealous fool-  
36 born knave, her husband, will be gone.  
37 **Ford:** I am blest in your acquaintance, sir. Do you know this Master Ford?  
38 **Falstaff:** Hang the poor lout! I do not. Yet I am wrong to call him poor. They say  
39 he has masses of money. I will use her as the key to his coffers, for your sake.  
40 **Ford:** I wish you knew Ford, sir, so that you might avoid him, if you saw him.

**Falstaff:** Hang him. I will stare the milk-livered pigeon egg out of his wits. Master Brook, come to me soon at night. By then, I'll have his wife.

**Ford:** For my sake.

**Falstaff:** Oh, yes, for your sake. Good day, Master Brook.

*Exit Falstaff*

**Ford:** *(aside)* My heart is ready to crack. My wife has sent for him. The hour is fixed. Would any man have thought of this? See the hell in having a false woman! My marriage shall be abused, my coffers ransacked. Page is an ass, a secure ass. He will trust his wife. I would rather trust a thief to tend to my house than Falstaff to my wife. God be praised for my jealousy! Eleven o'clock is the hour. I will prevent this, detect my wife, be revenged on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. Better three hours too soon than a minute late.

*Exit Ford*

## II.3

*Enter Ms Quickly*

*Enter Caius*

**Caius:** Mistress Quickly, what news? How does pretty Mistress Anne Page?

**Ms Quickly:** In truth, sir, she is pretty, and honest, and gentle. She is also one that loves you, but good Doctor, if you are to wed with mistress Anne, you should at least be able to say her name. Let's try again. Anne Page.

**Caius:** Anne Page. *(On Page)*

**Ms Quickly:** Anne Page

**Caius:** Anne Page *(On Page)*

**Ms Quickly:** Oh dear, Page

**Caius:** Page *(Page)*

**Ms Quickly:** Page, Page

**Caius:** Page, Page *(Page)*

**Ms Quickly:** P,P,P Page. P-a-g-e.

**Caius:** P,P,P Page. P-a-g-e. *(Page)*

**Ms Quickly:** Alright, let's try Anne. Anne

**Caius:** Anne *(On)*

**Ms Quickly:** Anne

**Caius:** Anne *(On)*

**Ms Quickly:** A as in apple.

**Caius:** Apple *(Onpuh)*

**Ms Quickly:** Apple. A-p-p-l-e. Apple.

**Caius:** Apple *(Onpuh)*

**Ms Quickly:** Apple - L as in lard.

1 **Caius:** Lard. (*Lawd*)  
2 **Ms Quickly:** Lard. L-a-r, r as in revel.  
3 **Caius:** Revel. (*Chevel*)  
4 **Ms Quickly:** Revel. R-e-v, v as in villain!  
5 **Caius:** Villain. (*Villon*)  
6 **Ms Quickly:** Villain, villain, villain!  
7 **Caius:** Villain. (*Villain*)  
8 **Ms Quickly:** Yes! Like in Anne Page.  
9 **Caius:** Anne Page. (*On Paje*)  
10 **Ms Quickly:** Oh!

11 *Exit Caius, Ms Quickly*  
12

### 13 III.1

14 *Enter Anne*

15 *Enter Ms Page*

16 **Anne:** Good morrow, Mother.  
17 **Ms Page:** Good morning, Anne. Do these morning hours find you well?  
18 **Anne:** Of course. Why need you ask?  
19 **Ms Page:** In truth, no good reason. It's just a mother's lot to worry about her  
20 children. Anne, now that you've reached seventeen years old, it is time to think  
21 about your future.  
22 **Anne:** Oh, I've thought about it often.  
23 **Ms Page:** Truly? Have you thought about whom you should marry when the time  
24 comes?  
25 **Anne:** As a matter of fact, I have...  
26 **Ms Page:** Your father likes Master Slender. He is a slow-witted knave and the wrong  
27 husband for you. He has not so much brains as ear wax.  
28 **Anne:** So say I. His brain is as dry as the deck after a voyage.  
29 **Ms Page:** Oh, I suppose he does little harm...  
30 **Anne:** Save, but to his bed clothes at night.  
31 **Ms Page:** No, the true match for you is Doctor Caius.  
32 **Anne:** Doctor Caius?  
33 **Ms Page:** He's rich and well connected at the court.  
34 **Anne:** Mother, no.  
35 **Ms Page:** Of course, if your mother's opinion means so little to you. He is a doctor.  
36 How could you do better than that? Tell me.  
37 **Anne:** I could marry for love.  
38 **Ms Page:** You'll learn to love him.  
39 **Anne:** He speaks so little English and I speak no French. How can we speak of love?

1 **Ms Page:** So, his English needs work, it's more romantic that way. It adds a sense of  
2 mystery.

3 **Anne:** Mystery? Everything he speaks is a mystery to me. He visits and I only hear  
4 an infinite amount of nothing.

5 **Ms Page:** Of course, who am I to tell my only daughter, my own flesh and blood  
6 whom I have raised for the last seventeen years, what's best for her? And let's  
7 not even talk about the ten and a half hours of labor, hard labor. You'll excuse  
8 me for only wanting the best for my little girl.

9 **Anne:** Mother, please. I mean only that I wish to marry whom I wish and when I  
10 wish. Is there nothing so wrong in that?

11 **Ms Page:** No, there is nothing wrong with letting life and good opportunity pass as  
12 you sit idly by. I suppose you have someone that fits in your mind.

13 **Anne:** Well,...

14 **Ms Page:** It isn't that simpleton, Master Fenton, is it?

15 **Anne:** Master Fenton is no simpleton.

16 **Ms Page:** Well, God made him, so therefore let him pass as a man, but he is not  
17 worth the dust that the rude wind blows in your face. Trust your mother, the  
18 good Doctor Caius is the match for you.

19 **Anne:** Better yet, marry me to a dog with a bone in its mouth.

20 **Ms Page:** Then I ask for your forgiveness. A mother bears such a great weight for  
21 her children when they are best left to their own devices.

22 *Exit Ms Page*

23 **Anne:** Mother!....

24 *Exit Anne*

## 25 26 III.2

27 *Enter Ford, Page, Shallow, Slender, Evans, Host and Caius*

28 **Ford:** (*aside*) Has Page any brains? Has he any eyes? Surely they sleep and he has  
29 no use for them. The hour is at hand and my assurance bids me search for Sir  
30 John Falstaff. I shall be praised for this, not mocked, for it is as sure as the  
31 earth is firm, that Falstaff is there.

32 **All:** Ford! (*etc.*)...

33 **Ford:** Gentlemen, I have good cheer at home. I pray you'll join me there.

34 **Shallow:** My nephew and I must excuse ourselves. We are appointed to dine with  
35 Mistress Anne.

36 **Ford:** Mistress Anne?

37 **Shallow:** We have lingered about a match between Anne and my nephew Slender,  
38 and today we are to have our answer.

39 **Slender:** I hope I have your goodwill, Master Page.



1 **Page:** Oh, you do, my son, but my wife stands for Doctor Caius.  
2 **Caius:** Ay, and by God, the maid does love me. My nurse, Mistress Quickly, told me  
3 as much.  
4 **Host:** But what of the young Master Fenton? He dances and has youth in his eyes. I  
5 hear he capers and writes verses. I believe he will carry the day.  
6 **Page:** Not by my consent, I promise you. The man is of no having. He knows too  
7 much. He is not for my Anne.  
8 **Ford:** Gentlemen, I beseech you, some of you must go home with me to dinner.  
9 Besides good cheer, I'll show you some sport. Good Doctor, Master Page, Sir  
10 Hugh?  
11 **All:** Very well. *(etc.)* ...  
12 **Shallow:** Well, fare you well. We shall have the freer wooing with Mistress Anne  
13 Page.  
14 **Host:** And farewell, I will to my honest Inn.  
15 **Ford:** Along then.

16 *Exeunt*

### 17 18 **III.3**

19 *Enter Ms Page, Ms Ford*

20 *Enter Falstaff*

21 **Ms Page:** Has all been made ready?  
22 **Ms Ford:** Oh, yes. We'll have quite a time with Sir John Falstaff.  
23 **Falstaff:** *(ad lib to Audience Member)* Go and announce my arrival to Mistress Alice  
24 Ford.

25 *Send Audience Member to stage*

26 **Ms Ford:** *(ad lib)* Good day.

27 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

28 **Ms Page:** I'll go hide myself.

29 *Exit Ms Page*

30 **Ms Ford:** Do so. Go tell your master I am alone. Mistress Page, remember your cue.

31 *Send Audience Member to Falstaff*

32 **Falstaff:** What say you? Is my love ready for me?

33 **Audience Member:** *(ad lib)*

34 **Falstaff:** Thank you *(ad lib)* At last.....

35 **Ms Ford:** Sir John Falstaff.

36 **Falstaff:** Mistress Alice Ford, have I finally caught you, my heavenly jewel? Now  
37 let me die, for I have lived long enough.

38 **Ms Ford:** Oh, sweet Sir John!

39 **Falstaff:** Mistress Ford, forgive me my sin, for I wish your husband dead.

1 **Ms Ford:** Dead sir?  
2 **Falstaff:** Ay, then I would make you my lady.  
3 **Ms Ford:** I, your lady, Sir John? I would make a pitiful lady.  
4 **Falstaff:** Let the court of France show me a better one.  
5 **Ms Ford:** Oh, sir...  
6 **Falstaff:** I see how thine eye would emulate a diamond.  
7 **Ms Ford:** A plain stone, sir, nothing more.  
8 **Falstaff:** By the Lord, you are cruel to say so. Come, come, do not hide your beauty.  
9 **Ms Ford:** Believe me, there is no such thing in me.  
10 **Falstaff:** Then what made me love you? Let that persuade you that there's something  
11 extraordinary in you. Mistress Alice Ford, I love you, I love you, and none but  
12 you, and you deserve it.  
13 **Ms Ford:** But sir, do you not betray me? I fear you love another, one Mistress Page.  
14 **Falstaff:** Mistress Page?? You might as well say I love to walk by a sour stream,  
15 which is more loathsome to me than a lime kiln.  
16 **Ms Ford:** Well, only heaven knows how much I love you, and you shall one day  
17 know.  
18 **Falstaff:** Keep in mind that I deserve it.  
19 **Ms Ford:** Oh, so you do, so you do.  
20 **Ms Page:** (*Off Stage*) Mistress Ford?  
21 **Ms Ford:** It's Mistress Page!!  
22 **Falstaff:** She should not see me here. I must hide.  
23 **Ms Ford:** Pray you, do so. She is a tattling woman. Mistress Page, how now?  
24 *Exit Falstaff*  
25 *Enter Ms Page*  
26 **Ms Page:** Oh, Mistress Ford, what have you done? You are shamed. You are  
27 undone forever.  
28 **Ms Ford:** My good Mistress Page, what is the matter?  
29 **Ms Page:** Mistress Ford, to have such an honest man as your husband and to give  
30 him such cause for suspicion!  
31 **Ms Ford:** What cause for suspicion?  
32 **Ms Page:** What cause, say you? Oh, how I mistook you!  
33 **Ms Ford:** Why? What's the matter?  
34 **Ms Page:** Your husband comes nigh, woman, with all the officers of Windsor, to  
35 search for a gentleman that he says is here now in the house, by your consent, to  
36 take advantage of his absence. You are undone.  
37 **Ms Ford:** 'Tis not so.  
38 **Ms Page:** Pray heaven it be not so. I came before to tell you. If you know yourself  
39 clear, then I'm glad for it. But if you have a friend here, convey him out or bid  
40 goodbye to your reputation forever.

1 *Enter Ford, Page, Evans, Caius*

2 **Ms Ford:** What shall I do? There is such a man here. My friend, I fear not so much

3 for my shame, as I do for his own peril. My husband is a mad dog of jealousy.

4 **Ford:** Mock me if you will, but I'll soon know the truth.

5 **Ms Page:** Oh, how I've been deceived by you. Very well, you cannot hide him here

6 in this house, but how should we... Look, here is a basket. If he be of any

7 reasonable stature, he may creep in here and be taken away with the soiled

8 linen.

9 **Ford:** Pray you gentlemen, come nearer.

10 **Ms Ford:** Oh, he's far too big to go in there. What shall I do? Master Ford will,

11 *(Ms Page pantomimes)* will beat him till he cries for mercy. Then he'll flog

12 him unmercifully till his flesh falls from his bones and then he'll feed it to the

13 buzzards.

14 *Enter Falstaff*

15 **Falstaff:** Let me see it. Let me see the basket. Mistress Ford, follow your friends'

16 counsel.

17 **Ms Page:** What, Sir John Falstaff!!

18 **Falstaff:** Mistress Page! I love you, I love you and none but you. Please hide me

19 away.

20 **Ms Ford:** You can under here.

21 **Falstaff:** Under where?

22 **Ms Page:** No, no, just bed linens.

23 **Falstaff:** I'll be in here.

24 **Ford:** If I suspect without cause, then make your sport of me. I'll be your jest for I

25 deserve it.

26 **Ms Ford:** Master Ford?

27 **Ford:** Good wife. Gentlemen, here be my keys, let us ascend to my chamber.

28 Search, seek, find out. We'll unkennel the fox.

29 *Exit Ford*

30 **Page:** Good, Master Ford, you wrong yourself too much.

31 *Exit Page*

32 **Evans:** This fiery fantastical jealousy.

33 *Exit Evans*

34 **Caius:** What is the reason to be jealous? 'Tis quite the fashion in France.

35 *Exit Page*

36 **Ms Ford:** Now to the basket. It's too heavy to lift.

37 **Ms Page:** We must get help.

38 *Ms Ford, Ms Page approach two Audience Members,*

39 *bring them to the stage.*

40 **Ms Ford:** Help us, please. *(ad lib)*

1 **Ms Page:** Would you help us? (*ad lib*)  
2 *Enter Ford, Page, Evans, Caius*  
3 **Ford:** How now, what do we have here? Who are these men?  
4 **Ms Ford:** They've come to carry the basket to the laundress, nothing more.  
5 **Ford:** Then off with them. Gentlemen, I am at a loss. Maybe the knave bragged of  
6 what he could not do.  
7 *Audience Members remove basket from stage, leaving Falstaff behind*  
8 **Ms Page:** Heard you that?  
9 **Ms Ford:** Ay, I did. Do you use me, Master Ford?  
10 **Ford:** I do, good wife.  
11 *Falstaff jumps out window*  
12 **Ms Ford:** Heaven make you better than your thoughts.  
13 **Ford:** Amen.  
14 **Ms Ford:** Does anyone feel a draft?  
15 **Ms Page:** You do yourself a mighty wrong, Master Ford.  
16 **Ford:** Ay, ay, and I must bear it.  
17 **Evans:** If there be anybody in the house, then heaven forgive my sins at the Day of  
18 Judgment.  
19 **Caius:** By God, I too. There are no bodies!  
20 **Page:** Fie! Master Ford, are you not ashamed? What spirit, what devil suggests this  
21 imagination?  
22 **Ford:** 'Tis my fault, Master Page. I'll suffer for it.  
23 **Evans:** You'll suffer. Your wife is as honest a woman as I would desire amongst  
24 five thousand.  
25 **Caius:** By God, I'll see 'tis an honest woman.  
26 **Ford:** Yes, yes, well, I promised you a dinner. Come, come walk in the park with  
27 me. I pray you, pardon me. I will make known to you why I have done this.  
28 **Page:** Let's go along gentlemen, but trust me. We will mock him. I invite you all to  
29 my house tomorrow morning to breakfast. Afterwards we will go a-birding  
30 together. I have a fine hawk for the bush. Shall it be so?  
31 **Ford:** Anything.  
32 **Evans:** If there is one, I shall make two in the company.  
33 **Caius:** If there be two, I shall make the turd.  
34 **Ford:** Pray you lead on, Master Page.  
35 *Exit Ford, Page, Evans, Caius*  
36 **Ms Page:** (*laughing*) Is there not a double excellency in this?  
37 **Ms Ford:** (*laughing*) I know not which pleases me more, deceiving my husband or  
38 Sir John.  
39 **Ms Page:** What a shaking there was when your husband asked what was in the  
40 basket!

1 **Ms Ford:** I am sure Falstaff was in need of washing after that.  
2 **Ms Page:** Hang him, the dishonest plum-pucked rascal.  
3 **Ms Ford:** Shall we send Mistress Quickly to him and give him another hope, just to  
4 betray him to another punishment?  
5 **Ms Page:** Yes! We will do it. Let him be sent for tomorrow at eight to make  
6 amends.

7 *Exit Ms Page, Ms Ford*

### III.4

10 *Enter Anne*

11 *Enter Shallow, Slender*

12 **Shallow:** There she is. Now you do remember what to do?

13 **Slender:** Yes, Uncle.

14 **Shallow:** Good. Mistress Anne, Mistress Anne. Hark, Master Slender here would  
15 speak a word with you.

16 **Anne:** I'll come to him. *(aside)* This is my father's choice.

17 **Shallow:** She's coming. Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you with a deep burning  
18 fire.

19 **Slender:** Ay, that I do, as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.

20 **Anne:** I thank you. There is some comfort in that.

21 **Shallow:** He will keep you like a gentle woman in the finest manner.

22 **Slender:** Ay, that I will, under the degree of a squire.

23 **Shallow:** He will make you one hundred and fifty pounds.

24 **Anne:** Good, Master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

25 **Shallow:** Ha-ha. Yes, yes, I see, and I thank you for it. She calls you cousin. I will  
26 leave.

27 **Anne:** Now, Master Slender.

28 **Slender:** Now, good Mistress Anne.

29 **Anne:** What is your will?

30 **Slender:** My will? That's a pretty jest indeed. I've never made my will yet, I thank  
31 God, I'm not such a sickly creature.

32 **Anne:** I mean, Master Slender, what would you do with me?

33 *Enter Page, Ms Page*

34 **Slender:** Truly, for my own part, I would do little or nothing with you. Your father  
35 and my uncle have made motions. They can tell you how things go better than I  
36 can. You may ask your father, for here he comes.

37 **Page:** Now, Master Slender, daughter Anne. How goes it?

38 **Slender:** It will go as you say.

39 **Page:** Come, Master Shallow, Master Slender.

*Exit Page, Shallow, Slender*

**Anne:** Good mother, do not marry me to that fool.

**Ms Page:** I mean not to. I have a better husband, Doctor Caius.

**Anne:** Alas, I would rather be set in the earth and bowled to death with turnips.

**Ms Page:** Come, trouble yourself not. We must go in. Your father will be angry.

### **III.5**

*Enter Falstaff*

*Enter Host*

**Host:** Here, Sir John.

**Falstaff:** Have I lived to be hidden in a basket like a coward, jump from a chamber window and land in the Thames? Well, if I be blessed with another such trick, I'll have my brains scooped out, buttered and served to the dogs for breakfast. I surely would have drown, if I had not found the might to swim to shore. And you may know from my size, I have a kind of alacrity in sinking. If the bottom were as deep as hell, I should go all the way down. I should have been drown, a death that I abhor, for water swells a man. What a thing I'd be, if I swelled. I should be a mountain of a mummy.

**Host:** There's Mistress Quickly to speak with you, sir.

**Falstaff:** Come in, woman.

*Exit Host*

*Enter Ms Quickly*

**Ms Quickly:** By your leave, I cry your mercy, my lord. God give your worship a good morrow.

*Enter Ford disguised as Brook*

**Falstaff:** How now?

**Ms Quickly:** Sir, I come to your worship from Mistress Ford.

**Falstaff:** Mistress Ford? I have had ford enough. I fell into the ford. My belly is full of the ford, madam.

**Ms Quickly:** Ah, well, she laments for it, sir. Her husband goes a-birding this morning. She desires you once more come to her betwixt eight and nine. She'll make amends, I'll warrant you.

**Falstaff:** Well, I will visit her, tell her so. And bid her to think what a man truly is. Let her consider his frailty, and his sensitivities, then judge my merit.

**Ms Quickly:** I will tell her.

**Falstaff:** Do so. Between nine and ten, you say?

**Ms Quickly:** Eight and nine, sir.

**Falstaff:** Very well, be gone, my good woman. I'll not miss her.

**Ms Quickly:** Peace be with you, sir.

1 *Exit Ms Quickly*

2 **Falstaff:** I marvel I have not heard from Master Brook. Oh, look, here he comes.

3 **Ford:** Bless you, Sir John.

4 **Falstaff:** Now, Master Brook, you have come to know what has passed between me  
5 and Ford's wife?

6 **Ford:** Indeed, that is my business.

7 **Falstaff:** I will not lie to you. I was at her house the hour she appointed me.

8 **Ford:** And how sped you, sir?

9 **Falstaff:** At the moment of our encounter, we embraced, kissed, and spoke the  
10 prologue of lovers, and then in an instant, her husband comes home, and at his  
11 heels a rabble of companions provoked to search the house for his wife's love.

12 **Ford:** What, while you were still there?

13 **Falstaff:** Ay, while I was still there.

14 **Ford:** Did he search for you and not find you?

15 **Falstaff:** You shall hear, you shall hear. As luck would have it, in comes one  
16 Mistress Page, and gives intelligence of Ford's approach, and in her invention  
17 and Ford's wife's distraction, they hid me in a buck-basket.

18 **Ford:** (*aside*) The buck-basket!! And how long did you lay there?

19 **Falstaff:** Until the mistress found two knaves to carry it off.

20 **Ford:** And you with it.

21 **Falstaff:** I would have hoped so, but my girth broke through the bottom, leaving me  
22 to escape out the chamber window and fall into the awaiting Thames.

23 **Ford:** In good sadness, sir, I am sorry that you suffered all of this for my sake. We'll  
24 undertake her no more.

25 **Falstaff:** Oh, no sir. I have yet received another embassy. Her husband is this very  
26 morning gone a-birding between eight and nine.

27 **Ford:** 'Tis past eight already, sir.

28 **Falstaff:** Is it? Then I should address my appointment. You shall know how I speed  
29 and the conclusion will be crowned with you enjoying her. Adieu, Master  
30 Brook.

31 *Exit Falstaff*

32 **Ford:** (*aside*) Is this a dream? Do I sleep? Awake Master Ford, awake. I will take  
33 the lecher. He is at my house. He cannot escape me now. There'll be no buck-  
34 baskets this time. I will search impossible places. I am on my way, Sir John  
35 Falstaff.

36 *Exit Ford*

## IV.1

*Enter Falstaff, Ms Ford*

**Falstaff:** Mistress Ford, your sorrow has eaten up my suffering. I see you are finally overwhelmed by my passion for you. But are you sure of your husband now?

**Ms Ford:** Oh, yes, he's a-birding, sweet Sir John.

**Ms Page:** Mistress Ford?

**Ms Ford:** Step into the chamber, Sir John.

*Exit Falstaff*

*Enter Ms Page*

**Ms Page:** How now, who's at home besides yourself?

**Ms Ford:** Why, none, but mine own people.

**Ms Page:** Indeed?

**Ms Ford:** Most certainly. Speak louder.

**Ms Page:** Truly I am glad that you have nobody here.

**Ms Ford:** Why?

**Ms Page:** Why? Because your husband is in his old lunes again. He speaks now with my husband. He rails against all married mankind and curses the daughters of Eve. He is in such madness, that civility and patience could not distemper him now. I am glad that fat knight is not here.

**Ms Ford:** Oh, does he speak of him?

**Ms Page:** Oh, none but him. Your husband believes he is here now and has the whole of his company away from their sport to make another experiment of his suspicion. But I am glad the fat knight is not here. Now he will see his own foolery.

**Ms Ford:** How near is he, Mistress Page?

**Ms Page:** Hard by at the street's end.

**Ms Ford:** I am undone. The fat knight is here.

**Ms Page:** Why then, you are utterly shamed, and he is a dead man. What a woman you are! Away with him, better your shame than his murder.

**Ms Ford:** Which way should he go? Shall I put him in the basket again?

*Enter Falstaff*

**Falstaff:** No, I'll go no more in the basket. May I not go out here?

**Ms Ford:** Alas, three of Master Ford's men watch the door with pistols. None may go out.

**Falstaff:** What shall I do? I'll creep up into the chimney.

**Ms Ford:** No, they will use it to discharge their birding-pieces. No, there's no hiding you in this house.

**Falstaff:** Then I must go out.



1 **Ms Page:** If you go out in your own semblance, you will die Sir John, unless you go  
2 out disguised.

3 **Ms Ford:** How might we disguise him?

4 **Ms Page:** Alas, the day, I know not. There is no woman's gown big enough for him,  
5 otherwise he might put on a muffler and a kerchief and so escape.

6 **Falstaff:** Good hearts, please devise something.

7 **Ms Ford:** My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford has a gown above.

8 **Ms Page:** On my word, it will serve. She is as big as he is.  
9 *Exit Falstaff*

10 **Ms Ford:** Go, go sweet Sir John. We'll come dress you straight away. I would like  
11 my husband meet him in this shape. He cannot abide the old woman of  
12 Brentford. He swears she's a witch and forbids her in his house.

13 **Ms Page:** Oh, then heaven, guide Falstaff to your husband.

14 **Ms Ford:** But is my husband truly coming?

15 **Ms Page:** Ay, in good sadness, he is. And he'll be here presently.

16 **Ms Ford:** Then let's go dress the witch of Brentford.

17 **Ms Page:** The gorbellied varlet, we cannot misuse him enough.  
18 *Exit Ms Ford, Ms Page laughing*  
19 *Enter Ford, Page, Evans, Shallow*

20 **Ford:** Somebody call my wife. Now shall the devil be shamed. What ho! Wife, I  
21 say, come forth and see what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching! Come  
22 out you rascal!!!

23 **Page:** Why this passes, Master Ford? You are not to go loose any longer.

24 **Evans:** Why, this is lunacy! You're as wild as a mad dog.

25 **Shallow:** Indeed, Master Ford, this is not well, indeed.

26 **Ford:** So say I, this is not well, sirs. Come out Mistress Ford, the honest woman, the  
27 modest wife and the virtuous creature. I suspect you without cause, do I?  
28 *Enter Ms Ford*

29 **Ms Ford:** Heaven be my witness, you do, if you suspect me in any dishonesty.

30 **Ford:** Master Page, there was one hidden in that basket yesterday. Why may he not  
31 be there again? I am sure he is in my house. Pluck out the linen.  
32 *Page removes linen from basket*

33 **Ms Ford:** If there be a man in there, he should die a flea's death.

34 **Page:** There's no one here.  
35 *Ford runs to linen*

36 **Shallow:** By my word, Master Ford, this is not well. This wrongs you, sir.

37 **Evans:** Master Ford, you must pray, and not follow the imaginations of your own  
38 heart.

39 **Ford:** He's not here.

40 **Page:** Nor anywhere else, but in your brain.

1 **Ford:** Help me search the house. If I cannot find what I seek, let me forever be your  
2 sport. Let them say as jealous as Ford that searched a hollow walnut tree for his  
3 wife's lover. Satisfy me once more. One more search with me.

4 **Ms Ford:** What ho, Mistress Page! Come you and the old woman down. My  
5 husband will come into the chamber.

6 **Ford:** Old woman? What old woman is that?

7 **Ms Ford:** Why, it is my maid's aunt of Brentford.

8 **Ford:** A witch!! Have I not forbid her in my house? She comes of errands, does  
9 she? We are simple men. We do not know what's brought to pass under the  
10 guise of her fortune-telling. Gentlemen, she works by charms and spells that  
11 are beyond our element. Come out, you witch, you hag. Come out, I say!

12 **Ms Ford:** Sweet husband, please. Good gentlemen, let him not strike the old woman.

13 *Enter Ms Page*

14 **Ms Page:** Come, Mother Pratt. Come give me your hand.

15 *Enter Falstaff*

16 **Ford:** I'll pratt her. Out of my house, you witch, you rag, you craven baggage. Out,  
17 out!! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you.

18 *Exit Falstaff*

19 **Ms Page:** Are you not ashamed? I think you could have killed that woman.

20 **Ford:** Hang her, she a witch!!

21 **Evans:** I think that woman is a witch indeed. I spied a great beard under her muffler.

22 **Ford:** Now, will you follow gentlemen? I beseech you, follow. See the issue of my  
23 jealousy.

24 **Page:** Let's obey his humor a little further. Come gentlemen.

25 **Shallow:** Sir, I must beg your forgiveness. The hour calls me. I must leave you to  
26 search without my aid.

27 **Ford:** Very well, off with you then.

28 *Exit Ford, Page, Evans*

29 **Shallow:** My ladies.

30 *Exit Shallow*

31 **Ms Ford:** (*laughing*) What do you think? Should we pursue Falstaff with any further  
32 revenge?

33 **Ms Page:** (*laughing*) The spirit of wantonness is surely scared out of him. He will  
34 never, I think, attempt us again.

35 **Ms Ford:** Shall we then tell our husbands how we have served them?

36 **Ms Page:** Yes, by all means.

37 **Ms Ford:** I'll warrant you, they'll have him publicly shamed and there'll be no  
38 period to the jest.

39 **Ms Page:** Come then, to the forge with it. I would not have things cool.

40 *Exit Ms Ford, Ms Page*

## IV.2

*Enter Falstaff*

*Enter Shallow*

**Falstaff:** I would that all the world might be deceived. For I have been deceived and beaten as well. If it should come to the ear of the court how I have been transformed, they would melt me out of my fat drop by drop, and liquor the fisherman's boots with me. I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits till I were as crest fallen as a dried pear. If my wind were long enough, I would repent.

**Shallow:** I pray you, my good lady, are you not the wise woman of Brentford?

**Falstaff:** Huh? (*Falsetto*) Oh, ay that I am.

**Shallow:** Mind that I do not believe in such witchcraft, but it is said that you have the power to foretell the future.

**Falstaff:** I have been known to foreshadow events.

**Shallow:** I have of late lost a golden watch dear to me. Do you foreshadow that I might see it again?

**Falstaff:** I see that you have been wronged.

**Shallow:** Yes, I have.

**Falstaff:** You have a quarrel with a man of this town, one of great stature.

**Shallow:** You may call it that.

**Falstaff:** This man has your property.

**Shallow:** Falstaff! I knew it. Will I see justice with this man?

**Falstaff:** You can find justice with this man today.

**Shallow:** Ha! Justice Robert Shallow, Esquire will not be wronged. Good woman, I have another query.

**Falstaff:** Go on.

**Shallow:** My nephew, Abraham Slender....

**Falstaff:** ...Is courting Mistress Anne Page.

**Shallow:** Yes. How did you know?

**Falstaff:** I have seen the future.

**Shallow:** Of course. I must ask you, will they marry?

**Falstaff:** Yes, the two will marry.

**Shallow:** Each other?

**Falstaff:** Each other.

**Shallow:** Oh, joy unbounded. Abraham is a born idiot, but he is kin. And now Master Page will be my kin, as well. Madam, I was not one to believe in fortune telling, but all you've said is true. I am a believer.

**Falstaff:** I must take my leave.

1 **Shallow:** Wait, please. I must hear more of your prophecies. *(to Audience Member)*  
2 Here, ask this wise woman a question.

3 *Falstaff, Shallow ad lib 'Psychic Network' with Audience Members*

4 **Falstaff:** I feel my power is failing. I must rest.

5 **Shallow:** Yes, yes, go home and rest. You are truly a gifted woman. I will call on  
6 you tomorrow.

7 **Falstaff:** I look forward to it.

8 *Exit Falstaff*

9 *Exit Shallow*

## 10 V.1

11 *Enter Page with Falstaff's letters, Ford, Ms Page, Ms Ford*

12 **Page:** And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

13 **Ms Page:** Within a quarter of an hour.

14 **Ford:** Pardon me, wife. Henceforth, do as you will. I would rather suspect the sun  
15 of cold, than you of wantonness.

16 **Page:** 'Tis well, 'tis well. No more. But let the plot go forward. Wives, appoint a  
17 meeting with this old fat fellow where we may disgrace him once more.

18 **Ms Ford:** You may devise how you'll use him. Let us devise how to bring him  
19 again.

20 **Ms Page:** There is a tale of Herne the Hunter, a keeper here in the Windsor Forest.  
21 At the still of mid-night, he walks around an oak with a great chain and ragged  
22 horns upon his head.

23 **Page:** Yes, but what of this?

24 **Ms Ford:** This is our device. As that Falstaff dares not venture to this house again,  
25 we'll send word he should meet us in the field, disguised as Herne, with huge  
26 horns on his head.

27 **Ford:** What shall be done with him at that time?

28 **Ms Page:** We, and five or six more, will dress like fairies and encircle him about and  
29 haunt the knight. We'll ask why at that hour of fairy revelry he should tread  
30 such sacred paths.

31 **Ms Ford:** And to end our jest, we'll present ourselves, dis-horn the spirit, and mock  
32 him home to Windsor.

33 **Ford:** That will be excellent. I'll go to him again in the name of Brook. He'll tell me  
34 all his purpose.

35 **Ms Page:** My Anne shall be the Queen of the Fairies, dressed all in white.

36 **Page:** *(aside)* And at that time shall Master Slender steal Anne away and marry her at  
37 Eaton.

38 **Ms Ford:** Go get us our properties.

1 *Exit Page, Ford*

2 **Ms Page:** Go Mistress Ford, send Mistress Quickly to Sir John. (*Exit Ms Ford*) I'll  
3 to the good Doctor Caius. He has my good will, and none but he will marry  
4 Anne Page. Slender is an idiot. The doctor is well moneyed and his friends are  
5 potent at the court. He, none but he, shall have her.

6 *Exit Ms Page*

7  
8 **V.2**

9 *Enter Page, Shallow, Slender*

10 **Page:** Come, come, we'll crouch in the castle ditch till we see the lights of our fairies.  
11 Remember, Slender, my daughter...

12 **Slender:** Ay, I have spoken with her and we have a password how to know one  
13 another. I come to her in white, and cry 'mum' she cries 'budget' and by that  
14 we will know each other.

15 **Shallow:** That's good, but what needs either your 'mum' or her 'budget'? The white  
16 will decipher her well enough.

17 **Page:** The night is dark. Lights and spirits will become it well. Heaven prosper our  
18 sport. No man means evil, but the devil and we shall know him by his horns.  
19 Let's away.

20 *Exuent*

21  
22 **V.3**

23 *Enter Ms Quickly, Falstaff*

24 **Falstaff:** I pray you, no more. I'll go, I'll go, though I have suffered more for their  
25 sakes than any man should bear.

26 **Ms Quickly:** And have they not suffered?

27 **Falstaff:** How have they suffered? I was beaten into all the colors of the rainbow.  
28 This is the third and last time. I hope good luck lies in odd numbers. Away!

29 *Enter Ford disguised as Brook*

30 **Ms Quickly:** I'll provide you a chain, and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of  
31 horns.

32 **Falstaff:** Away, I say, time wears on. (*Exit Ms Quickly*) How now, Master Brook?  
33 Master Brook, the matter will be known tonight or never. Be you in the park  
34 about midnight, at Herne's oak, and you shall see wonders.

35 **Ford:** But were you not with her yesterday? Sir, you told me it had been appointed.

36 **Falstaff:** I went to her, Master Brook, as a poor old man, but I came from her, Master  
37 Brook as a poor old woman. That same knave Ford beat me grievously. Go  
38 along with me, Master Brook, and I tell you all. I will be revenged, and I will

1 deliver his wife into your hand. Follow. Strange things at hand, Master Brook!  
2 Follow.

3 *Exit Falstaff, Ford*

## 4 V.4

5 *Enter Ms Page, Ms Ford, Caius*

6 **Ms Page:** Master Doctor, my daughter is in green. When you see your time, take her  
7 by the hand, away with her to the deanery. Dispatch it quickly. Go before into  
8 the park. We two must go together.

9 **Caius:** I know what to do. Adieu. (*bow*)

10 *Exit Caius*

11 **Ms Page:** Fare you well, sir. My husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of  
12 Falstaff as he will chafe at the Doctor's marrying my daughter. But it doesn't  
13 matter. Better a little chiding than a great deal of heart break.

14 **Ms Ford:** Where is Anne now, and her troop of Fairies, and the Scots devil, Sir  
15 Hugh?

16 **Ms Page:** They are even now on their way to a pit hard by Herne's Oak. At the very  
17 instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

18 **Ms Ford:** That cannot choose but to amaze him.

19 **Ms Page:** If he be not amazed, he'll be mocked. If he be amazed, he will be mocked  
20 even more.

21 **Ms Ford:** The hour draws on, to the oak, to the oak.

22 *Exit Ms Ford, Ms Page*

## 23 V.5

24 *Enter and exit as needed*

25 *Evans, Anne Page, Shallow, Slender, Caius, Audience Members, Extras*

26 **Evans:** Hurry fairies. Come, come, remember your parts. Be bold, I pray you.

27 Follow me to the pit. When I give the word, do as I do. ... It's not much

28 further ... I pray you be bold, now, .... Which way is Herne's oak? ... I think

29 it's this way. ... No, maybe ... Oh, dear ... The entire woods change at night.

30 ... Are we all here, I pray? Stay together. (*ad lib*) Ahh, there it is.

## 31 V.6

32 *Enter Falstaff disguised as Herne*

33 **Falstaff:** The Windsor bell has struck twelve. The minute draws on. Now, the hot  
34 blooded gods assist me. Oh powerful love, that in respects makes a beast a

1 man, and in some other a man a beast. For me, I am here a Windsor stag, and  
2 the fattest, I think in the forest. Who comes here? My doe?  
3 *Enter Ms Ford, Ms Page*  
4 **Ms Ford:** Sir John! Are you there, my dear, my proud, male deer?  
5 **Falstaff:** Ah, my doe with the short tale. Let the heavens thunder the tune  
6 'Greensleeves.' I will shelter you here.  
7 *Falstaff embraces Ms Ford*  
8 **Ms Ford:** Oh Mistress Page has come with me, sweetheart.  
9 **Falstaff:** Well, divide me as you wish. I will keep my sides to myself, shoulders for  
10 the fellow of this walk, and my horns I bequeath to your husbands. As I am a  
11 true spirit, welcome.  
12 **Ms Page:** Alas, what is that dreadful noise?  
13 **Ms Ford:** Heaven forgive our sin.  
14 *Exit Ms Page, Ms Ford*  
15 **Falstaff:** I should think the devil would not have me dammed, lest the oil that's in me  
16 should set Hell on fire. He would never cross me thus.  
17 *Enter Evans, Ms Quickly, Anne, Audience Members, Cast, Extras.*  
18 *Enter Slender and take one Audience Member off stage.*  
19 *Enter Caius and take one Audience Member off stage.*  
20 **Ms Quickly:** Fairies black, gray, green and white, You moon-shine revelers, and  
21 shades of night. You orphaned heirs of fixed destiny. Attend your office and  
22 your quality.  
23 **Falstaff:** They are fairies. He that speaks to them shall die. No mortal man must see  
24 their works.  
25 **Ms Quickly:** Who is this that mocks our fantasy? What a disgrace it is to remember  
26 the name of Falstaff.  
27 **Falstaff:** Heavens defend me!  
28 **Ms Quickly:** With fire touch his finger end. If he be chaste, the flame will back  
29 descend. But if he start, it is the flesh of a corrupted heart.  
30 *Evans touches Falstaff*  
31 *They encircle Falstaff and chant his name under the following lines.*  
32 **Falstaff:** Oh!  
33 **Ms Quickly:** Corrupt, Corrupt, and tainted in desire. Fie on sinful fantasy! Fie on  
34 lust! Lust is but an unchaste desire, fed in heart whose flames aspire. Pinch  
35 him, fairies, pinch his villainy. Pinch him, burn him and turn him about till the  
36 candles and starlight and moon-shine is out.

1 *Exit all, save Falstaff*  
2 *Enter Page, Ms Page, Ford with Brook disguise, Ms Ford*  
3 **Ms Page:** I pray you come, let's hold the jest no longer. Now good Sir John, how do  
4 you like the Windsor wives? See these, husband? Do not these horns become  
5 the forest better than the town?  
6 *Ms Page removes Falstaff's horns*  
7 **Ford:** Now, sir, who's a fool now? Is Master Brook Falstaff's knave, or Brook the  
8 master and Falstaff the knave? Master Brook has enjoyed nothing of Ford's  
9 while you have had his buck-basket, his beatings and twenty pounds of his  
10 purse.  
11 **Ms Ford:** Alas, Sir John, we have had ill luck. We could never meet. I will never  
12 take you for my love. But I will always count you my dear.  
13 **Falstaff:** Your deer? I do perceive that I am made an ass.  
14 **Ford:** Ay, and an ox as well.  
15 **Falstaff:** And those were not true fairies. I was three or four times in the thought  
16 they were not fairies, truly.  
17 **Ms Page:** Sir John, did you think that we would thrust virtue out of our hearts and  
18 have given ourselves without scruple to hell?  
19 **Falstaff:** Well, I am your theme. You have the start of me. I am dejected. Ignorance  
20 itself is a plummet over me. Use me as you will.  
21 **Ford:** Oh, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to one Master Brook, that you have  
22 deceived of money. Over and above what you have suffered, I think to repay  
23 that money will be a biting affliction.  
24 **Page:** Yet, be cheerful, knight. You shall eat at my house tonight and laugh at my  
25 wife as she laughs at you now. Tell her Master Slender has married her  
26 daughter.  
27 *Enter Slender, Audience Member*  
28 **Slender:** Ho! Father Page!  
29 **Page:** Master Slender, how now my new son? Have you dispatched?  
30 **Slender:** Dispatched? I'd make the best of Gloucestershire know of it were I hanged.  
31 **Page:** My son?  
32 **Slender:** I came to Eton to marry Mistress Anne Page and found her instead.  
33 **Page:** Upon my life you took the wrong one.  
34 **Slender:** You need not tell me that.  
35 **Page:** Why, this is your own folly. Did I not tell you how you should know my  
36 daughter by her garments?  
37 **Slender:** I went to her in white, and yet it was not Anne.



*Exit Slender and Audience Member*

**Ms Page:** Good husband, be not angry. I knew of your purpose and turned my daughter into green. Indeed she is now with the Doctor at the Deanery and there married to him.

*Enter Caius and Audience Member*

**Caius:** (*French*) Where is Mistress Anne Page? By god, I have been deceived. I have married this one instead. This is not Anne Page.

**Ms Page:** How? Did you take her in green?

**Caius:** Ay, *(French)* I'll raise all Windsor for this jest. *(French)*.

*Exit Caius and Audience Member*

**Ford:** This is strange. Who has the right Anne?

*Enter Anne with Audience Member*

**Page:** My heart misgives me. Here is our Anne with Master Fenton.

**Anne:** Pardon, good father. Pardon, good mother.

**Page:** Anne, how chance you are not with Master Slender?

**Ms Page:** Why went you not with Doctor Caius?

**Anne:** Hear the truth of it. You would have married me most shamefully where there is no love. The truth is Master Fenton and I have long since contracted this holy union.

**Ford:** Stand not amazed. There is no remedy. In love, the heavens do guide the state.

**Page:** Well, Master Fenton, heaven give you joy. What cannot be eschewed, must be embraced.

**Ms Page:** Well, I will muse no further. Master Fenton, heaven give you many, many happy days. Good husband, let us every one go home, and laugh this sport over by a country fire, Sir John and all.

**Ford:** Let it be so. Sir John, be not troubled, you shall hold your word to Master Brook, for tonight he shall be with Mistress Ford.

*Exeunt*

### *Curtain Call*

## Characters by Scenes

- 1  
2  
3 I.1 – Shallow, Evans, Slender, Falstaff, Anne, Page, Ms Ford, Ms Page  
4 I.2 – Falstaff, Host  
5 I.3 – Shallow, Audience Member, Mistress Quickly, Caius  
6 II.1 – Ms Page, Ms Ford, Falstaff, Ford, Page, Host, Ms Quickly  
7 II.2 – Ms Quickly, Falstaff, Ford, Host  
8 II.3 – Ms Quickly, Caius  
9 III.1 – Ms Page, Anne  
10 III.2 – Ford, Page, Shallow, Slender, Host, Caius, Evans  
11 III.3 – Ms Page, Ms Ford, Falstaff, Ford, Page, Evans, Caius, Audience Member  
12 III.4 – Anne, Shallow, Slender, Page, Mistress Page  
13 III.5 – Falstaff, Host, Quickly, Ford  
14 IV.1 – Falstaff, Ms Ford, Ms Page, Ford, Page, Evans, Shallow  
15 IV.2 – Falstaff, Shallow, Audience Member  
16 V.1 – Page, Ms Page, Ford, Ms Ford  
17 V.2 – Page, Slender, Shallow  
18 V.3 – Falstaff, Ms Quickly, Ford  
19 V.4 – Ms Page, Caius, Ms Ford  
20 V.5 – Evans, Shallow, Anne, Ms Quickly, Host, Slender, Caius, Audience Member  
21 V.6 – Company, Audience Members

## Scenes by Characters

- 23  
24  
25 Sir John Falstaff – I.1, I.2, I.1, II.2, III.3, III.5, IV.1, IV.2, V.3, V.6  
26 Justice Robert Shallow – I.1, I.3, III.2, III.4, IV.1, IV.2, V.2, V.5, V.6  
27 Master Abraham Slender – I.1, III.2, III.4, V.2, V.5, V.6  
28 Master Frank Ford – II.1, II.2, III.2, III.3, III.5, IV.1, V.1, V.3, V.6  
29 Master George Page – I.1, II.1, III.2, III.3, III.4, IV.1, V.1, V.2, V.6  
30 Sir Hugh Evans – I.1, III.2, III.3, IV.1, V.5, V.6  
31 Doctor Caius – I.3, II.3, III.2, III.3, V.4, V.5, V.6  
32 Host of the Garter Inn – I.2, II.1, II.2, III.2, III.5, V.5, V.6  
33 Mistress Alice Ford – I.1, II.1, III.3, IV.1, V.1, V.4, V.6  
34 Mistress Meg Page – I.1, II.1, III.1, III.3, III.4, IV.1, V.1, V.4, V.6  
35 Mistress Anne Page – I.1, III.1, III.4, V.5, V.6  
36 Mistress Quickly – I.3, II.1, II.2, II.3, V.3, V.5, V.6  
37 Audience Member – I.3, III.3, V.5, V.6