

**ACT 4 - SCENE II. A room in FORD'S house.**

*Enter  
FALSTAFF and MISTRESS FORD*

**FALSTAFF**

Mistress Ford, your sorrow hath eaten up my sufferance. I see you are obsequious in your love, and I profess requital to a hair's breadth; not only, Mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in all the accoutrement, complement and ceremony of it. But are you sure of your husband now?

**MISTRESS FORD**

He's a-birding, sweet Sir John.

**MISTRESS PAGE**

[Within] What, ho, gossip Ford! what, ho!

**MISTRESS FORD**

Step into the chamber, Sir John.

*Exit FALSTAFF  
Enter MISTRESS PAGE*

**MISTRESS PAGE**

How now, sweetheart! who's at home besides yourself?

**MISTRESS FORD**

Why, none but mine own people.

**MISTRESS PAGE**

Indeed!

**MISTRESS FORD**

No, certainly.

**Aside to her**

Speak louder.

**MISTRESS PAGE**

Truly, I am so glad you have nobody here.

**MISTRESS FORD**

Why?

**MISTRESS PAGE**

Why, woman, your husband is in his old lunes again: he so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, of what complexion soever; and so buffets himself on the forehead, crying, 'Peer out, peer out!'

that any madness I ever yet beheld seemed but tameness, civility and patience, to this his distemper he is in now: I am glad the fat knight is not here.

***MISTRESS FORD***

How near is he, Mistress Page?

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Hard by; at street end; he will be here anon.

***MISTRESS FORD***

I am undone! The knight is here.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Why then you are utterly shamed, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you!--Away with him, away with him! better shame than murder.

***FORD***

Which way should he go? how should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?

***Re-enter FALSTAFF***

***FALSTAFF***

No, I'll come no more i' the basket. May I not go out ere he come?

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Alas, three of Master Ford's brothers watch the door with pistols, that none shall issue out; otherwise you might slip away ere he came. But what make you here?

***FALSTAFF***

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

***MISTRESS FORD***

There they always use to discharge their birding-pieces. Creep into the kiln-hole.

***FALSTAFF***

Where is it?

***MISTRESS FORD***

He will seek there, on my word. Neither press, coffer, chest, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abstract for the remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his note: there is no hiding you in the house.

***FALSTAFF***

I'll go out then.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

If you go out in your own semblance, you die, Sir John. Unless you go out disguised--

***MISTRESS FORD***

How might we disguise him?

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Alas the day, I know not! There is no woman's gown big enough for him otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler and a kerchief, and so escape.

***FALSTAFF***

Good hearts, devise something: any extremity rather than a mischief.

***MISTRESS FORD***

My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown above.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

On my word, it will serve him; she's as big as he is: and there's her thrummed hat and her muffler too. Run up, Sir John.

***MISTRESS FORD***

Go, go, sweet Sir John: Mistress Page and I will look some linen for your head.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Quick, quick! we'll come dress you straight: put on the gown the while.

***Exit FALSTAFF***

***MISTRESS FORD***

I would my husband would meet him in this shape: he cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he swears she's a witch; forbade her my house and hath threatened to beat her.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Heaven guide him to thy husband's cudgel, and the devil guide his cudgel afterwards!

***MISTRESS FORD***

But is my husband coming?

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Ah, in good sadness, is he; and talks of the basket too, howsoever he hath had intelligence.

***MISTRESS FORD***

We'll try that; for I'll appoint my men to carry the basket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did last time.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Nay, but he'll be here presently: let's go dress him like the witch of Brentford.

***MISTRESS FORD***

I'll first direct my men what they shall do with the basket. Go up; I'll bring linen for him straight.

*Exit*

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Hang him, dishonest varlet! we cannot misuse him enough. We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do, Wives may be merry, and yet honest too: We do not act that often jest and laugh; 'Tis old, but true, Still swine eat all the draff.

*Exit*

*Re-enter MISTRESS FORD with two Servants*

***MISTRESS FORD***

Go, sirs, take the basket again on your shoulders: your master is hard at door; if he bid you set it down, obey him: quickly, dispatch.

*Exit*

***First Servant***

Come, come, take it up.

***Second Servant***

Pray heaven it be not full of knight again.

***First Servant***

I hope not; I had as lief bear so much lead.

*Enter FORD, PAGE, SHALLOW, DOCTOR CAIUS, and SIR HUGH EVANS*

***FORD***

Ay, but if it prove true, Master Page, have you any way then to unfool me again? Set down the basket, villain! Somebody call my wife. Youth in a basket! O you panderly rascals! there's a knot, a ging, a pack, a conspiracy against me: now shall the devil be shamed. What, wife, I say! Come, come forth! Behold what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching!

**PAGE**

Why, this passes, Master Ford; you are not to go loose any longer; you must be pinioned.

**SIR HUGH EVANS**

Why, this is lunatics! this is mad as a mad dog!

**SHALLOW**

Indeed, Master Ford, this is not well, indeed.

**FORD**

So say I too, sir.

***Re-enter MISTRESS FORD***

Come hither, Mistress Ford; Mistress Ford the honest woman, the modest wife, the virtuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her husband! I suspect without cause, mistress, do I?

**MISTRESS FORD**

Heaven be my witness you do, if you suspect me in any dishonesty.

**FORD**

Well said, brazen-face! hold it out. Come forth, sirrah!

***Pulling clothes out of the basket***

**PAGE**

This passes!

**MISTRESS FORD**

Are you not ashamed? let the clothes alone.

**FORD**

I shall find you anon.

**SIR HUGH EVANS**

'Tis unreasonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? Come away.

**FORD**

Empty the basket, I say!

**MISTRESS FORD**

Why, man, why?

**FORD**

Master Page, as I am a man, there was one conveyed out of my house yesterday in this basket: why may not he be there again? In my house I am sure he is:

my intelligence is true; my jealousy is reasonable.  
Pluck me out all the linen.

*MISTRESS FORD*

If you find a man there, he shall die a flea's death.

*PAGE*

Here's no man.

*SHALLOW*

By my fidelity, this is not well, Master Ford; this wrongs you.

*SIR HUGH EVANS*

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

*FORD*

Well, he's not here I seek for.

*PAGE*

No, nor nowhere else but in your brain.

*FORD*

Help to search my house this one time. If I find not what I seek, show no colour for my extremity; let me for ever be your table-sport; Satisfy me once more; once more search with me.

*MISTRESS FORD*

What, ho, Mistress Page! come you and the old woman down; my husband will come into the chamber.

*FORD*

Old woman! what old woman's that?

*MISTRESS FORD*

Nay, it is my maid's aunt of Brentford.

*FORD*

A witch, a quean, an old cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by spells, by the figure, and such daubery as this is, beyond our element we know nothing. Come down, you witch, you hag, you; come down, I say!

***MISTRESS FORD***

Nay, good, sweet husband! Good gentlemen, let him not strike the old woman.

***Re-enter  
FALSTAFF in woman's clothes,  
and MISTRESS PAGE***

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Come, Mother Prat; come, give me your hand.

***FORD***

I'll prat her.

***Beating him***

Out of my door, you witch, you hag, you baggage, you polecat, you runyon! out, out! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you.

***Exit FALSTAFF***

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Are you not ashamed? I think you have killed the poor woman.

***MISTRESS FORD***

Nay, he will do it. 'Tis a goodly credit for you.

***FORD***

Hang her, witch!

***SIR HUGH EVANS***

By the yea and no, I think the 'oman is a witch indeed: I like not when a 'oman has a great peard; I spy a great peard under his muffler.

***FORD***

Will you follow, gentlemen? I beseech you, follow; see but the issue of my jealousy.

***PAGE***

Let's obey his humour a little further: come, gentlemen.

***Exeunt  
FORD, PAGE, SHALLOW,  
DOCTOR CAIUS, and SIR HUGH EVANS***

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

***MISTRESS FORD***

What think you?

Shall we tell our husbands how we have served him?

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Yes, by all means;

***MISTRESS FORD***

I'll warrant they'll have him publicly shamed: and methinks there would be no period to the jest, should he not be publicly shamed.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Come, to the forge with it then; shape it: I would not have things cool.

*Exeunt*

**ACT 4 – SCENE III. Street**

**Chasing The Witch of Brentford DS and around set**

*Possible song*

**ACT 4 - SCENE IV. FORD'S house - later**

**Mistress Page and Mistress Ford at Ford's house with everyone (Page, Ford, Hugh Evans, Shallow) explaining their jest to the men – party/laughter**

***SIR HUGH EVANS***

'Tis one of the best discretions of a 'oman as ever I did look upon.

***PAGE***

And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Within a quarter of an hour.

***FORD***

Pardon me, wife. Henceforth do what thou wilt; I rather will suspect the sun with cold Than thee with wantonness: now doth thy honour stand In him that was of late an heretic, As firm as faith.

***PAGE***

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

***FORD***

There is no better way than that they spoke of.

**PAGE**

How? to send him word they'll meet him in the park at midnight? Fie, fie! he'll never come.

**SIR HUGH EVANS**

You say he has been thrown in the rivers and has been grievously peaten as an old 'oman: methinks there should be terrors in him that he should not come; methinks his flesh is punished, he shall have no desires.

**PAGE**

So think I too.

**MISTRESS FORD**

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

**MISTRESS PAGE**

There is an old tale goes that Herne the hunter,  
Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,  
Doth all the winter-time, at still midnight,  
Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns;  
And there he blasts the tree and takes the cattle  
And makes milch-kine yield blood and shakes a chain  
In a most hideous and dreadful manner:

**PAGE**

Why, yet there want not many that do fear  
In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak:  
But what of this?

**MISTRESS FORD**

Marry, this is our device;  
That Falstaff at that oak shall meet with us.

**PAGE**

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

**MISTRESS PAGE**

That likewise have we thought upon, and thus:  
Nan Page my daughter and three or four more we'll dress  
Like urchins, ouphes and fairies, green and white,  
With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads,  
And rattles in their hands: upon a sudden,  
As Falstaff, she and I, are newly met,  
Let them from forth a sawpit rush at once  
With some diffused song: upon their sight,  
We two in great amazedness will fly:  
Then let them all encircle him about

And, fairy-like, to pinch the unclean knight,  
And ask him why, that hour of fairy revel,  
In their so sacred paths he dares to tread  
In shape profane.

***MISTRESS FORD***

And till he tell the truth,  
Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound  
And burn him with their tapers.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

The truth being known,  
We'll all present ourselves, dis-horn the spirit,  
And mock him home to Windsor.

***FORD***

The children must  
Be practised well to this, or they'll ne'er do't.

***SIR HUGH EVANS***

I will teach the children their behaviors; and I  
will be like a jack-an-apes also, to burn the  
knight with my taber.

***FORD***

That will be excellent. I'll go and buy them vizards.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

My Nan shall be the queen of all the fairies,  
Finely attired in a robe of white.

***PAGE***

That silk will I go buy.

***Aside***

And in that time  
Shall Master Slender steal my Nan away  
And marry her at Eton. Go send to Falstaff straight.

***FORD***

Nay I'll to him again in name of Brook  
He'll tell me all his purpose: sure, he'll come.

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Fear not you that. Go get us properties  
And tricking for our fairies.

***SIR HUGH EVANS***

Let us about it: it is admirable pleasures and fery  
honest knaveries.

*Exeunt PAGE, FORD, and SIR HUGH EVANS*

***MISTRESS PAGE***

Go, Mistress Ford,  
Send quickly to Sir John, to know his mind.

*Exit MISTRESS FORD*

I'll to the doctor: he hath my good will,  
And none but he, to marry with Nan Page.  
That Slender, though well landed, is an idiot;  
And he my husband best of all affects.  
The doctor is well money'd, and his friends  
Potent at court: he, none but he, shall have her,  
Though twenty thousand worthier come to crave her.

*Exit*

<p><u>Scene Change: The Garter Inn</u></p>
<p>Host revolve the bar Can Can Dancers remove tapestries Possible dance or song:</p>
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**ACT 4 - SCENE V. A room in the Garter Inn.**

*Enter Host and SIMPLE*

*HOST*

What wouldst thou have, boor? what: thick-skin? speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short, quick, snap.

*SIMPLE*

Marry, sir, I come to speak with Sir John Falstaff from Master Slender.

*Host*

There's his chamber, his house, his castle, his standing-bed and truckle-bed; 'tis painted about with the story of the Prodigal, fresh and new. Go knock and call; hell speak like an Anthropophagianian unto thee: knock, I say.

*SIMPLE*

There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone up into his chamber: I'll be so bold as stay, sir, till she come down; I come to speak with her, indeed.

*Host*

Ha! a fat woman! the knight may be robbed: I'll call. Bully knight! bully Sir John! speak from thy lungs military: art thou there? it is thine host, thine Ephesian, calls.

*FALSTAFF*

[Above] How now, mine host!

*Host*

Here's a Bohemian-Tartar tarries the coming down of thy fat woman. Let her descend, bully, let her descend; my chambers are honourable: fie! privacy? fie!

*Enter FALSTAFF from SL door*

*FALSTAFF*

There was, mine host, an old fat woman even now with me; but she's gone.

*SIMPLE*

Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of Brentford?

*FALSTAFF*

Ay, marry, was it, mussel-shell: what would you with her?

*SIMPLE*

My master, sir, Master Slender, sent to her, seeing her go through the streets, to know, sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguiled him of a chain, had the chain or no.

*FALSTAFF*

I spake with the old woman about it.

*SIMPLE*

And what says she, I pray, sir?

*FALSTAFF*

Marry, she says that the very same lady that beguiled Master Slender of his chain cozened him of it.

*SIMPLE*

I would I could have spoken with the woman herself; I had other things to have spoken with her too from him.

*FALSTAFF*

What are they? let us know.

*Host*

Ay, come; quick.

*SIMPLE*

Why, sir, they were nothing but about Mistress Anne Page; to know if it were my master's fortune to have her or no.

*FALSTAFF*

'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

*SIMPLE*

What, sir?

*FALSTAFF*

To have her, or no. Go; say the woman told me so.

*SIMPLE*

I thank your worship: I shall make my master glad with these tidings.

*Exit*

*Host*

Thou art clerkly, thou art clerkly, Sir John. Was there a wise woman with thee?

*FALSTAFF*

Ay, that there was, mine host; one that hath taught me more wit than ever I learned before in my life; and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

Now, whence come you?

*Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY*

*MISTRESS QUICKLY*

From the two parties, forsooth.

*FALSTAFF*

The devil take one party and his dam the other! and so they shall be both bestowed. I have suffered more for their sakes, more than the villanous inconstancy of man's disposition is able to bear.

*MISTRESS QUICKLY*

And have not they suffered? Yes, I warrant; speciously one of them; Mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

*FALSTAFF*

What tellest thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford: but that my admirable dexterity of wit, my counterfeiting the action of an old woman, delivered me, the knave constable had set me i' the stocks, i' the common stocks, for a witch.

*MISTRESS QUICKLY*

Sir, let me speak with you in your chamber: you shall hear how things go; and, I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. Good hearts, what ado here is to bring you together! Sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, that you are so crossed.

*FALSTAFF*

Come up into my chamber.

*Exeunt SL door*

**ACT 4 - SCENE VI. Another room in the Garter Inn.***Enter FENTON and Host**HOST*

Master Fenton, talk not to me; my mind is heavy: I will give over all.

*FENTON*

Yet hear me speak. Assist me in my purpose,  
And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee  
A hundred pound in gold more than your loss.

*HOST*

I will hear you, Master Fenton; and I will at the least keep your counsel.

*FENTON*

From time to time I have acquainted you  
With the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page;  
Who mutually hath answer'd my affection,  
So far forth as herself might be her chooser,  
Even to my wish: I have a letter from her  
Of such contents as you will wonder at;  
To-night at Herne's oak, just 'twixt twelve and one,  
Must my sweet Nan present the Fairy Queen;  
The purpose why, is here: in which disguise,  
While other jests are something rank on foot,  
Her father hath commanded her to slip  
Away with Slender and with him at Eton  
Immediately to marry: she hath consented: Now, sir,  
Her mother, ever strong against that match  
And firm for Doctor Caius, hath appointed  
That he shall likewise shuffle her away,  
While other sports are tasking of their minds,  
And at the deanery, where a priest attends,  
Straight marry her: to this her mother's plot  
She seemingly obedient likewise hath  
Made promise to the doctor. Now, thus it rests:  
Her father means she shall be all in white,  
And in that habit, when Slender sees his time  
To take her by the hand and bid her go,  
She shall go with him: her mother hath intended,  
The better to denote her to the doctor,  
For they must all be mask'd and vizarded,  
That quaint in green she shall be loose enrobed,  
With ribands pendent, flaring 'bout her head;  
And when the doctor spies his vantage ripe,

To pinch her by the hand, and, on that token,  
The maid hath given consent to go with him.

*HOST*

Which means she to deceive, father or mother?

*FENTON*

Both, my good host, to go along with me:  
And here it rests, that you'll procure the vicar  
To stay for me at church 'twixt twelve and one,  
And, in the lawful name of marrying,  
To give our hearts united ceremony.

*HOST*

Well, husband your device; I'll to the vicar:  
Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a priest.

*FENTON*

So shall I evermore be bound to thee;  
Besides, I'll make a present recompense.

*Exeunt*

**ACT V - SCENE I. A room in the Garter Inn.**

*Enter FALSTAFF and MISTRESS QUICKLY*

*FALSTAFF*

Prithee, no more prattling; go. I'll hold. This is the third time; I hope good luck lies in odd numbers. Away I go. They say there is divinity in odd numbers, either in nativity, chance, or death. Away!

*MISTRESS QUICKLY*

I'll provide you a chain; and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

*FALSTAFF*

Away, I say; time wears: hold up your head, and mince.

*Exit MISTRESS QUICKLY*

*Enter FORD*

How now, Master Brook! Master Brook, the matter will be known to-night, or never. Be you in the Park about midnight, at Herne's oak, and you shall see wonders.

Follow me: I'll tell you strange things of this knave Ford, on whom to-night I will be revenged, and I will deliver his wife into your hand. Follow. Strange things in hand, Master Brook! Follow.

*FORD (aside)*

Strange things indeed!

*Exeunt*