

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 imperfections; 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.

Fal. Very well: sir, proceed.

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

Fal. Well, sir.

Ford. I have long lov'd her, and, I protest to you, bestow'd much on her, follow'd her with a doting observance, engross'd opportunities to meet her, see'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 pursu'd her as love hath pursu'd 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 purchas'd 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.*

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

Ford. Never.

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

Ford. Never.

Fal. Of what quality was your love then?

Ford. Like a fair house built on 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?

Ford. When I have told you that, I have told you all. Some say, that though she appear honest to me, yet, in other places she enlargeth