

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?

Mrs. *Ford*. He's a birding, sweet sir *John*.

Mrs. *Page*. [*within*] What ho, gossip *Ford*! what ho!

Mrs. *Ford*. Step into the chamber, sir *John*. [*Ex. Falstaff.*]

*Enter mistress Page.*

Mrs. *Page*. How now, sweet heart? who's at home besides yourself?

Mrs. *Ford*. Why, none but mine own people.

Mrs. *Page*. Indeed?

Mrs. *Ford*. No, certainly. — Speak louder.

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

Mrs. *Ford*. Why?

Mrs. *Page*. Why, woman, your husband is in his old luns 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 seem'd but tameness, civility, and patience to this distemper he is in now; I am glad, the fat knight is not here.

Mrs. *Ford*. Why, does he talk of him?

Mrs. *Page*. Of none but him; and swears he was carry'd out, the last time he search'd for him, in a basket; protests to my husband he is now here; and hath drawn him and the rest of their company from their sport, to make another experiment of his suspicion; but I am glad, the knight is not here; now he shall see his own foolery.

Mrs. *Ford*. How near is he, mistress *Page*?

Mrs. *Page*. Hard by, at street's end, he will be here anon.

Mrs. *Ford*. I am undone! the knight is here.

Mrs. *Page*. Why then thou art utterly sham'd, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you! away with him, away with him; better shame than murder.

Mrs. *Ford*. Which way should he go? how should I bestow him? shall I put him into the basket again?

S C E N E