

SCENE III.

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. No, I'll come no more i' th' basket: may I not go out ere he come?

Mrs. Page. Alas, alas, three of master *Ford*'s brothers watch the door with pistols, that none should issue out; otherwise you might slip ere he came: but what make you here?

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

Mrs. Ford. There they always use to discharge their birding-pieces; creep into the kiln-hole.

Fal. Where is it?

Mrs. 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.

Fal. I'll go out then.

Mrs. Ford. If you go out in your own semblance, you die, sir *John*, unless you go out disguis'd. How might we disguise him?

Mrs. 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.

Fal. Good heart, devise something; any extremity rather than mischief.

Mrs. Ford. My maid's aunt, the fat woman of *Brainford*, has a gown above.

Mrs. Page. On my word, it will serve him; she's as big as he is, and there's her thrumb hat, and her muffler too. Run up, sir *John*.

Mrs. Ford. Go, go, sweet sir *John*, mistress *Page* and I will look some linen for your head.

Mrs. Page. Quick, quick, we'll come dress you straight; put on the gown the while. [*Exit.* Falstaff.]

Mrs. Ford. I would, my husband would meet him in this shape; he cannot abide the old woman of *Brainford*; he swears, she's a witch, forbad her my house, and hath threatned to beat her.

Mrs.