

НБ ОНУ імені І.І.Мечникова

Ваше письмо

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M U C H A D O  
A B O U T  
N O T H I N G  
A  
C O M E D Y

By SHAKESPEARE,

As performed at the  
THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

To which are added  
The NOTES of Mr. THEOBALD.

L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXXVI.





# Dramatis Personæ.

1776.

## M E N.

Don Pedro	—	—	Mr. Packer
Leonato	—	—	Mr. Jefferson
Don John	—	—	Mr. Aickin
Claudio	—	—	Mr. Brereton
Benedick	—	—	Mr. Garrick
Balthazer	—	—	Mr. Vernon
Antonio	—	—	Mr. Hurst
Borachio	—	—	Mr. Usher
Conrade	—	—	Mr. Griffiths
Dogberry	—	—	Mr. Parsons
Verges	—	—	Mr. Carpenter
Fryar	—	—	Mr. Wright
Town-Clerk	—	—	Mr. Baddeley
Sexton	—	—	Mr. Wroughten

## W O M E N.

Hero	—	—	Miss Hopkins
Beatrice	—	—	Mrs. Abington
Margaret	—	—	Mrs. Bradshaw
Ursula	—	—	Mrs. Millidge.

# (i) MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

N. B. *The Parts marked thus (‘) are omitted in the Representation.*

## ACT I.

SCENE, *a Court before Leonato's House.*

*Enter Leonato, Hero, and Beatrice,  
with a Messenger.*

LEONATO.

Learn in this letter, that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

Mess. He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leon. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

Mess. But few of any Sort, and none of Name.

Leon. A victory is twice itself, when the atchiever brings home full numbers; I find here, that Don Pedro hath

(1) *Much Ado about Nothing.*] *Innogen*, the Mother of *Hero*, in the oldest *Quarto* that I have seen of this Play, printed in 1600, is mention'd to enter in two several Scenes. The succeeding Editions have all continued her Name in the *Dramatis Personæ*. But I have ventur'd to expunge it; there being no mention of her through the Play, no one Speech address'd to her, nor one Syllable spoken by her. Neither is there any one Passage from



hath bestowed much honour on a young *Florentine*, call'd *Claudio*.

*Mess.* Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don *Pedro*: he hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion: 'he hath, indeed, better bet-  
'ter'd expectation, than you must expect of me to tell  
'you how.'

*Leon.* He hath an uncle here in *Messina* will be very much glad of it.

*Mess.* I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much, that joy could not shew itself modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.

*Leon.* Did he break out into tears?

*Mess.* In great measure.

*Leon.* A kind overflow of kindness. There are no faces truer than those that are so wash'd. 'How much better is  
'it to weep at joy, than to joy at weeping!'

*Beat.* I pray you, is Signior *Montanto* return'd from the wars or no?

*Mess.* I know none of that name, Lady; there was none such in the army of any sort.

*Leon.* What is he that you ask for, Niece?

*Hero.* My Cousin means Signior *Benedick* of *Padua*.

*Mess.* O, he's return'd, and as pleasant as ever he was.

*Beat.* 'He set up his bills here in *Messina*, and  
'challeng'd *Cupid* at the flight; and my Uncle's fool,  
'reading the the challenge, subscrib'd for *Cupid*, and  
'challeng'd him to the bird-bolt.'" I pray you, how  
many hath he kill'd and eaten in these wars? but how  
many hath he kill'd? for, indeed, I promis'd to eat all  
his killing.

*Leon.* Faith, Niece, you tax Signior *Benedick* too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

from which we have any Reason to determine that *Hero's* Mother was living. It seems, as if the Poet had in his first Plan designed such a Character; which, on a Survey of it, he found would be superfluous; and therefore left it out.

*Mess.*

*Mess.* He hath done good service, Lady, in these wars.

*Beat.* You had musty victuals, and he hath holp to eat it; he's a very valiant trencher-man, he hath an excellent stomach.

*Mess.* And a good soldier too, Lady,

*Beat.* And a good soldier to a lady? but what is he to a lord?

*Mess.* 'A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuff  
'with all honourable virtues.'

*Beat.* 'It is so indeed: (2) he is no less than a stuff  
'man: but for the stuffing.—well, we are all mortal.'

*Leon.* You must not, Sir, mistake my Niece; there is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior *Benedick* and her; they never meet, but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

*Beat.* Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict, four or five of his wits went halting off, and now is the whole man govern'd with one: So that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wit that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? he hath every month a new sworn brother.

*Mess.* Is it possible?

*Beat.* Very easily possible; he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat, it ever changes with the next block.

*Mess.* I see, Lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

(2) — he is no less than a stuff man: but for the Stuffing well, we are all mortal.] Thus has this Passage been all along stop'd, from the very first Edition downwards. If any of the Editors could extract Sense from this Pointing, their Sagacity is a Pitch above mine. I believe, by my Regulation, I have retrieved the Poet's true Meaning. Our Poet seems to use the Word *Stuffing* here much as *Plautus* does in his *Mostellaria*; Act 1. Sc. 3.

*Non Vestem amatores mulieris amant, sed Vestis factum.*

A 4

*Beat.*



*Beat.* No; an he were I would burn my Study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? 'is there no young squarer now, that will make a voyage with him 'to the devil?'

*Mess.* He is most in the company of the right noble *Claudio*.

*Beat.* O lord, he will hang upon him like a disease; he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble *Claudio*, if he have caught the *Benedick*; it will cost him a thousand pounds ere he be cur'd.

*Mess.* I will hold friends with you, Lady.

*Beat.* Do, good friend.

*Leon.* You'll ne'er run mad, Niece.

*Beat.* No, not till a hot *January*.

*Mess.* Don *Pedro* is approach'd.

[A Flourish.]

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Balthazar, and Don John.

*Pedro.* Good Signior *Leonato*, you are come to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

*Leon.* Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace; for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave.

*Pedro.* You embrace your charge too willingly: I think, this is your daughter.

*Leon.* Her mother hath many times told me so.

*Bene.* Were you in doubt, Sir, that you askt her?

*Leon.* Signior *Benedick*, no; for then were you a child.

*Pedro.* You have it full, *Benedick*; we may guess by this what you are, being a man: truly, the lady favours herself; be happy, lady, for you are like an honourable father.

*Bene.* If Signior *Leonato* be her Father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all *Messina*, as like him as she is.

[*Prince and Leonato talk apart.*

*Beat*

*Beat.* I wonder, that you will still be talking, Signior *Benedick*; no body marks you.

*Bene.* What, my dear lady *Disdain*! are you yet living?

*Beat.* Is it possible, *Disdain* should die, while she hath such meet food to feed it, as Signior *Benedick*? Courtesy itself must convert to *Disdain*, if you come in her presence.

*Beat.* Then is courtesy a turn-coat; but it is certain, I am lov'd of all ladies, only you excepted; and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truly I love none.

*Bene.* A dear happiness to women; they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that; I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow, than a man swear he loves me.

*Bene.* God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall escape a predestinate scratcht face.

*Beat.* Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

*Bene.* Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

*Beat.* A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

*Bene.* I would, my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer; but keep your way o' God's name, I have done.

*Beat.* You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old.

*Pedro.* This is the sum of all: *Leonato*, — Signior *Claudio*, and Signior *Benedick*, — my dear friend *Leonato* hath invited you all; I tell him, we shall stay here at the least a month: and he heartily prays, some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear, he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

*Leon.* If you swear, my Lord, you shall not be forsworn. — Let me bid you welcome, my lord, being reconciled to the prince your brother; I owe you all duty.

A 5.

*John.*



*John.* I thank you; I am not of many words, but I thank you.

*Leon.* Please it your Grace lead on?

*Pedro.* Your hand, *Leonato*; we will go together.

[*Exeunt all but Benedick and Claudio.*]

*Claud.* *Benedick*, didst thou note the daughter of *Signior Leonato*?

*Bene.* I noted her not, but I look'd on her.

*Claud.* Is she not a modest young lady?

*Bene.* Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment? or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

*Claud.* No, I pr'ythee, speak in sober judgment.

*Bene.* Why, i'faith, methinks, she is too low for an high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise; only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

*Claud.* Thou think'st I am in sport; I pray thee, tell me truly how thou lik'st her.

*Bene.* Would you buy her, that you enquire after her?

*Claud.* Can the world buy such a jewel?

*Bene.* Yea, and a case to put it into; but speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting *Jack*, 'to tell us *Cupid* is a good hare-finder, and *Vulcan* a rare 'carpenter?' come, in what key shall a man take you to go in the Song?

*Claud.* In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that I ever look'd on.

*Bene.* I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter; there's her Cousin, if she were not possess'd with such a Fury, exceeds her as much in beauty, as the first of *May* doth the last of *December*: but I hope, you have no intent to turn husband, have you?

*Claud.* I would scarce trust myself, tho' I had sworn the contrary, if *Hero* would be my wife.

*Bene.* Is't come to this, in faith? hath not the world  
one

one man, but he will wear his cap with suspicion? shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? go to i'faith. if thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away *Sundays*: look, *Don Pedro* is return'd to seek you.

*Re-enter Don Pedro and Don John.*

*Pedro.* What secret hath held you here, that you follow'd not to *Leonato's* house?

*Bene.* I would, your Grace would constrain me to tell.

*Pedro.* I charge thee on thy allegiance.

*Bene.* You hear, Count *Claudio*, I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but on my allegiance, mark you this, on my allegiance;—he is in love; with whom? now that is your Grace's part: mark, how short his answer is, with *Hero*, *Leonato's* short daughter.

*Claud.* If this were so, so were it utter'd.

*Bene.* Like the old tale, my lord, it is not so, nor 'twas not so; but indeed, God forbid it should be so.

*Claud.* If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

*Pedro.* Amen, if you love her, for the Lady is very well worthy.

*Claud.* You speak this to fetch me in, my Lord.

*Pedro.* By my troth, I speak my thought.

*Claud.* And, in faith, my Lord, I spoke mine.

*Bene.* And by my two faiths and troths, my Lord, I speak mine.

*Claud.* That I love her, I feel.

*Pedro.* That she is worthy, I know.

*Bene.* That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake.

*Pedro.* Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

*Claud.* And never could maintain his part, but in the force of his will.

*Bene.* That a woman conceived me, I thank her:



that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheate winded in my forehead, 'or hang my bugle in an invifible bald-ricke,' all women shall pardon me; because I will not do them the Wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the Right to trust none; and the fine is, (for the which I may go the finer) I will live a bachelor.

*Pedro.* I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

*Bene.* With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord, not with love; prove, that ever I lose more blood with love, than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house for the sign of blind *Cupid*.

*Pedro.* Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

*Bene.* If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me; 'and he that hits me, let him be clapt on the shoulder, and call'd *Adam*.' (3.)

*Pedro.* Well, as time shall try; in time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.

*Bene.* The savage bull may, but if ever the sensible *Benedick* bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead, and let me be vilely painted;

(3) *And he that hits me, let him be clap'd on the Shoulder, and call'd Adam.*] But why should he therefore be call'd *Adam*? Perhaps, by a Quotation or two we may be able to trace the Poet's Allusion here. In *Lazo-Tricks*, or, *Who would have thought it*, (a Comedy written by *John Day*, and printed in 1608) I find this Speech,

*I have heard, Old Adam was an honest Man, and a good Gardiner & loved Lettice well, Sallads and Cabbage reasonable well, yet no Tobacco; — Again, Adam Bell, a substantial Outlaw, and a passing good Archer yet no Tobacconist.*

By this it appears, that *Adam Bell* at that time of day was of Reputation for his Skill at the Bow. I find him again mentioned in a Burlesque Poem of *Sir William Davenant's*, called *The long Vacation in London*: and had I the Convenience of consulting *Ascham's Toxophilus*, I might probably grow still better acquainted with his History.

and

and in such great letters as they write, *Here is good Horse to hire*, let them signify under my Sign, *Here you may see Benedick the marry'd man*.

'*Claud.* If this should ever happen, thou would'st be 'horn-mad.'

*Pedro.* Nay, if *Cupid* hath not spent all his quiver in *Venice*, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

*Bene.* I look for an earthquake too them.

*Pedro.* Well, you will temporize with the hours; in the mean time, good Signior *Benedick*, repair to *Leonato's*, commend me to him, and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed, he hath made great preparation.

*Bene.* I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassy, and so I commit you——

*Claud.* To the tuition of God; from my house, if I had it,——

*Pedro.* The sixth of *July*, your loving friend, *Benedick*.

*Bene.* Nay, mock not, mock not; the body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leave you. [Exit.]

*Claud.* My Leige, your Highness now may do me good.

*Pedro.* My love is thine to teach, teach it but how, And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

*Claud.* Hath *Leonato* any son, my lord?

*Pedro.* No child but *Hero*, she's his only heir: Dost thou affect her, *Claudio*?

*Claud.* O my lord,

When you went onward on this ended action, I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye; That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand Than to drive liking to the name of love; But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts Have left their places vacant; in their rooms Come thronging soft and delicate Desires,

All



All prompting me how fair young *Hero* is;  
Saying, I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

*Pedro.* Thon wilt be like a lover presently,  
And tire the hearer with a book of words:  
If thou dost love fair *Hero*, cherish it,  
And I will break with her, 'and with her Father:  
'And thou shalt have her:' was't not to this end,  
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

*Claud.* How sweetly do you minister to love,  
That know love's grief by his complection!  
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,  
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

*Pedro.* What need the bridge much broader than the flood?  
The fairest grant is the necessity;  
Look, what will serve, is fit; 'tis once, thou lov'st it;  
And I will fit thee with a remedy.  
I know, we shall have revelling to-night;  
I will assume thy part in some disguise,  
And tell fair *Hero* I am *Claudio*;  
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,  
And take her hearing prisoner with the force  
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:  
Then, after, to her father will I break;  
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine;  
In practice let us put it presently.

[*Exeunt.*]

' *Re-enter* *Leonato* and *Antonio*.

' *Leo.* How now, Brother, where is my cousin your  
' son? hath he provided this music?  
' *Ant.* He is very busy about it; but brother, I can  
' tell you news that you yet dream'd not of.  
' *Leon.* Are they good?  
' *Ant.* As the event stamps them, but they have a  
' good cover; they show well outward. The Prince and  
' Count *Claudio*, walking in a thick-pleached alley in  
' my orchard, were thus overheard by a man of mine;  
' The Prince discover'd to *Claudio*, that he lov'd my niece  
' your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night  
' in a dance; and if he found her accordant, he meant

' 10

' to take the present time by the top, and instantly break  
' with you of it.

' *Leon.* Hath the fellow any wit, that told you this?

' *Ant.* A good sharp fellow; I will send for him, and  
' question him yourself.

' *Leon.* No, no; we will hold it as a dream, 'till it  
' appear itself: but I will acquaint my daughter withal,  
' that she may be the better prepared for answer, if per-  
' adventure this be true; go you and tell her of it: Cou-  
' sin, you know what you have to do. [*Several cross the*  
' *Stage here.*] O, I cry you mercy, friend, go you with  
' me and I will use your skill; good Cousin, have a care  
' this busy time.' [*Exeunt.*]

' SCENE changes to an Apartment in  
*Leonato's House.*'

*Enter* *Don John* and *Conrade*.

*Conr.* **W**Hat the goo-ger, my lord, why are you  
thus out of measure sad?

*John.* There is no measure in the occasion that breeds  
it, therefore the sadness is without limit.

*Conr.* You should hear reason.

*John.* And when I have heard it, what Blessing  
bringeth it?

*Conr.* If not a present remedy, yet a patient suf-  
ferance.

*John.* I wonder, that thou (being, as thou say'st thou  
art, born under *Saturn*) goest about to apply a moral  
medicine to a mortifying mischief: I cannot hide what  
I am: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at  
no man's jests: eat when I have a stomach, and wait for  
no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on  
no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw  
no man in his humour.

*Conr.* Yea, but you must not make the full show  
of this, 'till you may do it without controlement you  
have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath  
ta'en you newly into his grace, where it is impossible  
you



you should take root, but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

*John.* I had rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose in his grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdain'd of all, than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this, (though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man) it must not be deny'd but I am a plain-dealing villain; I am trusted with a muzzel, and infranchis'd with a clog, therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage: if I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the mean time let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

*Conr.* Can you make no use of your discontent?

*John.* I will make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here? what news, *Borachio*?

*Enter Borachio.*

*Bora.* I came yonder from a great supper; the Prince, your brother, is royally entertain'd by *Leonato*, and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

*John.* Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? what is he for a fool, that betroths himself to unquietness?

*Bora.* Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

*John.* Who, the most exquisite *Claudio*?

*Bora.* Even he.

*John.* A proper Squire! and who? and who? which way looks he?

*Bora.* Marry, on *Hero*, the daughter and heir of *Leonato*.

*John.* A very forward *March* chick! How come you to know this?

*Bora.* Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smocking a musty room, comes me the Prince and *Claudio* hand in hand in sad conference: I whipt behind the Arras, and there heard it agreed upon, that the Prince should woo *Hero* for himself; and having obtained her, give her to Count *Claudio*.

*John.* Come, come, let us thither, this may prove food

food to my displeasure: that young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow; if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way; you are both sure, and will assist me.

*Conr.* To the death, my lord.

*John.* Let us to the great supper; their Cheer is the greater, that I am subdu'd; 'would the cook were of my mind!— 'shall we go prove what's to be done?

*Bora.* We'll wait upon your lordship. [Exeunt.]

A C T II.

SCENE, a Hall in Leonato's House.

*Enter Leonato, Antonio, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret and Ursula.*

LEONATO.

WAS not Count John here at Supper?

*Ant.* I saw him not.

*Beat.* How tartly that gentleman looks? I never can see him, but I am heart-burn'd an hour after.

*Hero.* He is of a very melancholy disposition.

*Beat.* He were an excellent man, that were made just in the mid-way between him and *Benedick*; the one is too like an image, and says nothing and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

*Leon.* Then half Signior *Benedick*'s tongue in Count *John*'s mouth, and half Count *John*'s melancholy in Signior *Benedick*'s face—

*Beat.* With a good leg, and a good foot, Uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if he could get her good Will.

*Leon.* By my truth, Niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be to shrewd of thy tongue.

*Ant.*



*Ant.* In faith, she's too curst.

*Beat.* Too curst is more than curst; I shall lessen God's sending that way; for it is said, God sends a curst Cow short horns; but to a Cow too curst he sends none.

*Leon.* So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

*Beat.* 'Just, if he send me no husband;' for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening: Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face, I had rather lye in woollen.

*Leon.* You may light upon a husband, that hath no beard.

*Beat.* What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? he that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man; and he that is more than a youth, is not for me; and he that is less than a man, I am not for him; therefore I will even take six-pence in earnest of the bear-herd, and lead his apes into hell.

*Leon.* Well then, go you into hell,——

*Beat.* No, but to the gate: and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with the horns on his head, and say, "get you to heaven, *Beatrice*, get you to heav'n, here's no place for you maids." So deliver I up my apes, and away to *St. Peter*, for the heav'ns; 'he shews me' where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

*Ant.* Well, Niece, I trust, you will be rul'd by your father. [To *Hero*.

*Beat.* Yes, faith, it is my Cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, *Father as it pleases you*; but yet for all that, Cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, *Father as it pleases me*.

*Leon.* Well, Niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

*Beat.* Not 'till God make men of some other metal than earth; would it not grieve a woman to be over-master'd

master'd with a piece of valiant dust? to make account of her life to a clod of way-ward marle? no, uncle, I'll none; *Adam's* sons are my brethren, and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

*Leon.* Daughter, remember what I told you; if the Prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

*Beat.* The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not woo'd in good time; If the Prince be too importunate, tell him, there is measure in every thing, and so dance out the Answer; for, hear me, *Hero*, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a *Scotch* jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace; the first suit is hot and hasty, like a *Scotch* jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and anchentry; and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, 'till he sinks into his grave.

*Leon.* Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

*Beat.* I have a good eye, uncle, I can see a church by day-light. [Music plays.

*Leon.* The revellers are entering, brother; make good room. Music again.

Enter *Don Pedro*, *Claudio*, *Benedick*, *Balthazar*, and others in Masquerade.

*Pedro.* Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

*Hero.* So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk, and especially when I walk away.

*Pedro.* With me in your company?

*Hero.* I may say so, when I please.

*Pedro.* And when please you to say so?

*Hero.* When I like your favour; for God defend, the lute should be like the case!

*Pedro.* (4) My visor is *Philemon's* roof; within the house is *Love*.

*Hero.*

(4) *My Visor is Philemon's Roof, within the House is Love.] Thus the whole Stream of the Copies, from the first downwards.*



*Hero.* Why then your Vifor should be thatch'd.

*Pedro.* Speak low, if you speak love.

*Balth.* Well; I would, you did like me. (5)

*Marg.* So would not I for your own sake, for I have many ill qualities.

*Balth.* Which is one?

I must own, this Passage for a long while appear'd very obscure to me, and gave me much trouble in attempting to understand it. *Hero* says to *Don Pedro*, God forbid, the lute should be like the Case! i. e. that your Face should be as homely and as coarse as your Mask. Upon this, *Don Pedro* compares his Vifor to *Philemon's* Roof. 'Tis plain, the Poet alludes to the Story of *Baucis* and *Philemon* from *OVID*: And this old Couple, as the *Roman* Poet describes it, liv'd in a thatch'd Cottage;

— *Stipulis & canna. tecta palustris.*

But why, *Within the House is Love?* *Baucis* and *Philemon*, 'tis true had lived to old Age together, in a comfortable State of Agreement. But Piety and Hospitality are the top Parts of their Character. Our Poet unquestionably goes a little deeper into the Story. Though this old Pair lived in a Cottage, this Cottage received two stragling Gods, (*Jupiter* and *Mercury*,) under its Roof. So, *Don Pedro* is a Prince; and though his Vifor is but ordinary, he would insinuate to *Hero*, that he has something god-like within: alluding either to his Dignity, or the Qualities of his Person and Mind. By these Circumstances, I am sure, the Thought is mended: as, I think verily, the Text is too by the Change of a single Letter.

— *within the House of Jove.*

Nor is this Emendation a little confirmed by another Passage in our Author, in which he plainly alludes to the same Story, *As you like it.*

Clown. I am here with thee and thy Goats as the most capricious Poet, honest Ovid, was amongst the Goths.

*Jaq.* O Knowledge ill inhabited, worse than Jove in a thatch'd House!

(5) *Balth.* Well; I would you did like me.] This and the two following little Speeches, which I have plac'd to *Balthazar*, are in all the printed Copies given to *Benedick*. But 'tis clear, the Dialogue here ought to be betwixt *Balthazar* and *Margaret*: *Benedick*, a little lower, converses with *Beatrice*: and so every Man talks with his Woman once round.

*Marg.*

*Marg.* I say my Prayers aloud.

*Balth.* I love you the better, the heavens may cry Amen.

*Marg.* God match me with a good dancer!

*Balth.* Amen.

*Marg.* And God keep him out of my fight when the dance is done! answer, clerk.

*Balth.* No more words, the clerk is answer'd.

[*a Dance by the Masqueraders*

*Urf.* I know you well enough; you are Signior Antonio.

*Ant.* At a word, I am not.

*Urf.* I know you by the wagling of your head.

*Ant.* To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

*Urf.* You could never do him so ill-will, unless you were the very man: here's his dry hand up and down; you are he, you are he.

*Ant.* At a word, I am not.

*Urf.* Come, come, do you think, I do not know you by your excellent wit? can virtue hide itself? go to, mum, you are he; graces will appear, and there's an end.

*Beat.* Will you not tell me, who told you so?

*Bene.* No, you shall pardon me.

*Beat.* Nor will you not tell me, who you are?

*Bene.* Not now.

*Beat.* That I was disdainful, and that I had my good Wit out of the Hundred merry Tales; well this was Signior *Benedick* that said so.

*Bene.* What's he?

*Beat.* I am sure, you know him well enough.

*Bene.* Not I, believe me.

*Beat.* Did he never make you laugh?

*Bene.* I pray you, what is he?

*Beat.* Why, he is the Prince's jester; a very dull fool, only his gift is in devising possible slanders: none but libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany; for he both pleaseth men and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him; I am sure, he is in the fleet; I would, he had boarded me.

*Bene.*



*Bene.* When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

*Beat.* Do, do, he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure, not mark'd, or not laugh'd at, strikes him into melancholy, and then there's a partridge wing sav'd, for the fool will eat no supper that night. We must follow the leaders. [*Music within.*]

*Bene.* In every good thing.

*Beat.* Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning. [*Exeunt.*]

Manent John, Borachio, and Claudio.

*John.* Sure, my brother is amorous on *Hero*, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it: the ladies follow her, and but one visor remains.

*Bora.* And that is *Claudio*; I know him by his Bearing.

*John.* Are you not Signior *Benedick*?

*Claud.* You know me well, I am he.

*John.* Signior, you are very near my brother in his love, he is enamour'd on *Hero*; I pray you, dissuade him from her, she is no equal for his birth; you may do the part of an honest man in it.

*Claud.* How know ye, he loves her?

*John.* I heard him swear his affection.

*Bora.* So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.

*John.* Come, let us to the banquet.

[*Exeunt John and Bora.*]

*Claud.* Thus answer I in name of *Benedick*,  
But hear this ill news with the ears of *Claudio*.

'Tis certain so, the Prince wooes for himself.

Friendship is constant in all other things,

Save in the office and affairs of love;

Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues,

Let every eye negotiate for itself,

And trust no agent; beauty is a witch,

Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.

This is an accident of hourly proof,

Which I mistrusted not. Farewell then, *Hero*!

[*Enter*

*Enter Benedick.*

*Bene.* Count *Claudio*?

*Claud.* Yea, the same.

*Bene.* Come, will you go with me?

*Claud.* Whither?

*Bene.* Even to the next willow, about your own business, Count. What fashion will you wear the garland of? about your neck, like an Usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a Lieutenant's scarf? you must wear it one way, for the Prince hath got your *Hero*.

*Claud.* I wish him joy of her.

*Bene.* Why, that's spoken like an honest drover; so they sell bullocks: but did you think, the Prince would have served you thus?

*Claud.* I pray you, leave me.

*Bene.* Ho! now you strike like the blind man; 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

*Claud.* If it will not be, I'll leave you. [*Exit.*]

*Bene.* Alas, poor hurt fowle! now will he creep into fedges. But, that my Lady *Beatrice* should know me, and not know me! the Prince's fool! ha? it may be, I go under that title, because I am merry; yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong: I am not so reputed. It is the base (tho' bitter) disposition of *Beatrice*, that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out; well, I'll be reveng'd as I may.

*Enter Don Pedro.*

*Pedro.* Now, Signior, where's the Count? did you see him?

*Bene.* Troth, my lord, I have play'd the part of lady *Fame*. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren, I told him (and I think, told him true) that your Grace had got the will of this young lady, and I offer'd him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipt.

*Pedro.* To be whipt! what's his fault?

*Bene.* The flat transgression of a school boy; who, being



being overjoy'd with finding a bird's nest, shews it his companion, and he steals it.

*Pedro.* Wilt thou make a trust, a transgression? the transgression is in the stealer.

*Bene.* Yet it had not been amiss, the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestow'd on you, who (as I take it) have stol'n his bird's nest.

*Pedro.* I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

*Bene.* If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

*Pedro.* The lady *Beatrice* hath a quarrel to you; the gentleman, that danc'd with her, told her she is much wrong'd by you.

*Bene.* O, she misus'd me past the indurance of a block; an oak, but with one green leaf on it, would have answer'd her; my very visor began to assume life, and scold with her; she told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the Prince's jester, and that I was duller than a great thaw; (6) huddling jest upon jest, with such impassable conveyance upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me; she speaks *Poyiards*, and every word stabs; if her breath were as terrible as her terminations; there were no living near her, she would infect to the North-Star; I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that *Adam* had left him before he transgress'd; she would have made *Hercules* have turn'd *Spit*, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her, you shall find her the infernal *Ass* in good apparel: I would to God, some scholar would conjure

(6)—huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyances upon me.) Thus all the printed Copies; but I freely confess, I cannot possibly understand the Phrase. I have ventured to substitute *impassable*. To make *Pass* (in *Fencing*) is to thrust, push; and by *impassable*, I presume, the Poet meant, that she pushed her jests upon him with such *Swiftness*, that it was impossible for him to pass them off, to parry them.

her

her; for, certainly, while she is here a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary, and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so indeed, all disquiet, horror and perturbation follow her.

*Enter Claudio, Beatrice, Leonato and Hero.*

*Pedro.* Look, here she comes.

*Bene.* Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the *Antipodes*, that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the farthest inch of *Asia*; bring you the length of *Prester John's* foot; fetch you a hair off the great *Cham's* beard; do you any ambassage to the pigmies, rather than hold three words conference with this harpy; you have no employment for me?

*Pedro.* None, but to desire your good company.

*Bene.* O God, Sir, here's a dish I love not. I cannot indure this Lady Tongue.

*Pedro.* Come, Lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior *Benedick*.

*Beat.* Indeed, my Lord, he lent it me a while, and I gave him use for it, a double heart for a single one; marry, once before he won it of me with false dice, therefore your Grace may well say, I have lost it.

*Pedro.* You have put him down, Lady, you have put him down.

*Beat.* So I would not he should do me, my Lord; lest I should prove the mother of fools: I have brought Count *Claudio*, whom you sent me to seek.

*Pedro.* Why, how now, Count, wherefore are you sad?

*Claud.* Not sad, my Lord.

*Pedro.* How then? sick?

*Claud.* Neither, my Lord.

*Beat.* The Count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil, Count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

*Pedro.* I'faith, Lady, I think your blazon to be true: though I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false.

B

Here,



Here, *Claudio*, I have wooed in thy name, and fair *Hero* is won; I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained; name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy.

*Leon.* Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his Grace hath made the match, and all grace say, Amen, to it.

*Beat.* Speak, Count, 'tis your cue. —

*Claud.* Silence is the perfectest herald of joy; I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and doat upon the exchange.

*Beat.* Speak Cousin, or (if you cannot) stop his mouth with a kiss, and let him not speak neither.

*Pedro.* In faith, Lady you have a merry heart.

*Beat.* Yea, my Lord, I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care; my cousin tells him in his ear, that he is in her heart.

*Claud.* And so she doth, cousin.

*Beat.* Good Lord, for alliance! thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burn'd; I may fit in a corner, and cry *heigh ho!* for a husband.

*Pedro.* Lady *Beatrice*, I will get you one.

*Beat.* I would rather have one of your Father's getting: hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? your Father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

*Pedro.* Will you have me, Lady?

*Beat.* No, my Lord, unless I might have another for working days; your Grace is too costly to wear every day: but, I beseech your Grace, pardon me, I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

*Pedro.* Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

*Beat.* No, sure, my Lord, my mother cry'd; but then there was a star danc'd, and under that I was born. Cousins, God give you joy.

*Leon.* Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

*Beat.*

*Beat.* I cry you mercy, Uncle: by your Grace's pardon. [Exit *Beatrice*.]

*Pedro.* By my troth a pleasant-spirited Lady.

*Leon.* There's little of the melancholy element in her my Lord; she is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then; (7) for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dream'd of an happiness, and wak'd herself with laughing.

*Pedro.* She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

*Leon.* O, by no means, she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

*Pedro.* She were an excellent wife for *Benedick*.

*Leon.* O Lord, my Lord, if they were but a week marry'd, they would talk themselves mad.'

*Pedro.* Count *Claudio*, when mean you to go to church?

*Claud.* To-morrow, my Lord; time goes on crutches, 'till love have all his rites.

*Leon.* Not 'till *Monday*, my dear son, 'which is hence a just seven-night,' and a time too brief too, to have all things answer my mind.

*Pedro.* Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, *Claudio*, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the *Interim* undertake one of *Hercules's* labours, which is, to bring Signior *Benedick* and the Lady *Beatrice* into a mountain of affection the one with the other; I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

*Leon.* My Lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights watchings.

(7) For I have heard my daughter say, She hath often dreamed of unhappiness, and wak'd herself with laughing.] Tho' all the Impressions agree in this Reading, surely, 'tis absolutely repugnant to what *Leonato* intends to say, which is this; "*Beatrice* is never sad, but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then; for she hath often dream'd of something merry, (an happiness, as the Poet phrases it,) and wak'd herself with laughing."



*Claud.* And I, my Lord.

*Pedro.* And you too, gentle *Hero*?

*Hero.* I will do any modest office, my Lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

*Pedro.* And *Benedick* is not the unhopelullest husband that I know: thus far I can praise him, he is of a noble strain, of approv'd valour, and confirm'd honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with *Benedick*; and I, with your two helps, will so practise on *Benedick*, that in despite of his quick wit, and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with *Beatrice*. If we can do this, *Cupid* is no longer an archer, his glory shall be ours, for we are the only Love-Gods; go in with me, and I will tell you my drift.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to another Apartment in  
Leonato's House.

Enter Don John and Borachio.

*John.* IT is so, the Count *Claudio* shall marry the Daughter of *Leonato*.

*Bora.* Yea, my Lord, but I can cross it.

*John.* Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me; I am sick in displeasure to him; and whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

*Bora.* Not honestly, my Lord, but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

*John.* Shew me briefly how.

*Bora.* I think, I told your lordship a year since, how much I am in the favour of *Margaret*, the waiting-gentlewoman to *Hero*.

*John.* I remember.

*Bora.* I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her Lady's chamber window.

*John.*

*John.* What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

*Bora.* The poison of That lies in you to temper; go you to the Prince your brother, spare not to tell him, that he hath wrong'd his Honour in marrying the renown'd *Claudio*, (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated State, such a one as *Hero*.

*John.* What proof shall I make of that?

*Bora.* Proof enough to misuse the Prince, to vex *Claudio*, to undo *Hero*, and kill *Leonato*; look you for any other issue?

*John.* Only to despise them, I will endeavour any thing.

(8) *Bora.* Go then find me a meet hour, to draw Don *Pedro*,

(8) *Bora.* Go then, find me a meet hour to draw on *Pedro* and the Count *Claudio*, alone; tell them that you know *Hero* loves me;— Offer them Instances, which shall bear no less Likelihood than to see me at her Chamber-window; hear me call *Margaret*, *Hero*; hear *Margaret* term me *Claudio*; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended Wedding.] Thus the whole Stream of the Editions in in the first Quarto downwards. I am obliged here to give a short Account of the Plot depending, that the Emendation I have made may appear the more clear and unquestionable. The Business stands thus: *Claudio*, a Favourite of the *Aragon* Prince, is, by his Intercessions with her Father, to be married to fair *Hero*; *Don John*, natural Brother of the Prince, and a hater of *Claudio*, is in his Spleen zealous to disappoint the Match. *Borachio*, a rascally Dependant on *Don John*, offers his Assistance, and engages to break off the Marriage by this Stratagem. "Tell the Prince and *Claudio* (says He) that *Hero* is in Love with Me; they wont believe it; offer them Proofs, as that they shall see me converse with her in her Chamber-window. I am in the good Graces of her Waiting-woman *Margaret*; and I'll prevail with *Margaret* at a dead Hour of Night to perfonate her Mistress *Hero*; do you then bring the Prince and *Claudio* to overhear our Discourse: and they shall have the Torment to hear me address *Margaret* by the Name of *Hero*, and her say sweet things to me by the name of *Claudio*."—This is the Substance of *Borachio's* Device: to make *Hero* suspected of Disloyalty, and to break off her Match with *Claudio*. But in the name of common Sense, could it displease *Claudio* to hear his Mistress making Use of his Name



*Pedro*, and the Count *Claudio*, alone; tell them, that you know, *Hero* loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the Prince and *Claudio*, as in a love of your brother's honour who hath made this match; and his friend's reputation, (who is thus like to be cozen'd with the semblance of a maid), that you have discover'd thus; they will hardly believe this without trial: offer them instances, which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window; hear me call *Margaret*, *Hero*; hear *Margaret* term me *Borachio*; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding; for in the mean time I will so fashion the matter, that *Hero* shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truths of *Hero's* disloyalty, that jealousy shall be called assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

*John*. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice: be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

*Bora*. Be thou constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

*John*. I will presently go learn their day of marriage.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to* Leonato's Orchard.

*Enter* Benedick, 'and a Boy.'

' *Bene*. BOY,——  
Boy. Signior.

tenderly? If he saw another Man with her, and heard her call him *Claudio*, he might reasonably think her betrayed, but not have the same Reason to accuse her of Disloyalty. Besides, how could her naming *Claudio* make the Prince and *Claudio* believe that she lov'd *Borachio*, as he desires Don *John* to insinuate to them that she did? The Circumstances weigh'd, there is no Doubt but the Passage ought to be reformed, as I have settled in the Text.

——hear me call *Margaret*, *Hero*; hear *Margaret* term me  
BORACHIO.

*Bene*.

' *Bene*. In my chamber-window lies a book, bring it hither to me in the orchard.

*Boy*. I am here already, Sir.' [Exit *Boy*.]

*Bene*. 'I know that, but I would have thee hence, and here again'——I do much wonder, that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool, when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laugh'd at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn, by falling in love! and such a man is *Claudio*. I have known, when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe; I have known, when he would have walk'd ten mile a-foot, to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turn'd orthographer, his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, 'till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool: one woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well. But 'till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the Prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour.

[*Withdraws.*]

*Enter* Don *Pedro*, Leonato, *Claudio*, and *Balthazar*.

*Pedro*. Come, shall we hear this music?

*Claud*. Yea, my good lord; how still the evening is, As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

*Pedro*. See you where *Benedick* hath hid himself?

' *Claud*. O very well, my lord; the music ended,

B. 4.

We'll



- ' We'll fit the kid-fox with a penny-worth.'  
*Pedro.* Come, *Balthazar*, we'll hear that Song again.  
*Balth.* O good my lord, tax not so bad a voice  
 To slander music any more than once.  
*Pedro.* It is the witness still of excellency,  
 To put a strange face on his own perfection;  
 I pray thee, sing; and let me woo no more.  
 ' *Balth.* Because you talk of wooing, I will sing;  
 ' Since many a wooer doth commence his suit  
 ' To her he thinks not worthy yet he woos;  
 ' Yet will he swear, he loves.  
 ' *Pedro.* Nay, pray thee, come;  
 ' Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,  
 ' Do it in notes.  
 ' *Balth.* Note this before my notes,  
 ' There's not a note of mine, that's worth the noting.  
 ' *Pedro.* Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks,  
 ' Note, notes, forsooth, and noting.'  
*Bene.* Now, divine air; now is his soul ravish'd! is  
 it not strange, that sheeps guts should hale souls out  
 of men's bodies? well, a horn for my money, when all's  
 done.

## The S O N G.

*Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,  
 Men were deceivers ever;  
 One foot in sea, and one on shore,  
 To one thing constant never:*

*Then sigh not so, but let them go,  
 And be you blith and bonny;  
 Converting all your sounds of woe  
 Into hey nony, nony.*

*Sing no more ditties, sing no mo,  
 Of dumps so dull and heavy;  
 The frauds of men were ever so,  
 Since summer was first leasy:  
 Then sigh not so, &c.*

*Pedro.*

- Pedro.* By my troth, a good Song.  
*Balth.* And an ill finger, my lord.  
 ' *Pedro.* Ha, no; no, faith; thou sing'st well enough  
 ' for a shift.'  
*Bene.* If he had been a dog, that should have howl'd  
 thus, they would have hang'd him; and, I pray God,  
 his bad voice bode no mischief! I had as lief have  
 heard the night-raven, ' come what plague could have  
 ' come after it.'  
*Pedro.* Yea, marry, dost thou hear, *Balthazar*? I  
 pray thee, get us some excellent music; for to mor-  
 row night we would have it at the lady *Hero's* chamber-  
 window.  
*Balth.* The best I can, my lord. [Exit *Balthazar*.  
*Pedro.* Do so: farewell. Come hither, *Leonato*; what  
 was it you told me of to day, that your Niece *Beatrice*  
 was in love with Signior *Benedick*?  
*Claud.* O, ay; ——— stalk on, stalk on, the fowl  
 fits. I did never think, that lady would have loved any  
 man.  
*Leon.* No, nor I neither; but most wonderful, that  
 she should so doat on Signior *Benedick*, whom she hath  
 in all outward behaviour seem'd ever to abhor.  
*Bene.* Is't possible, fits the wind in that corner?

[*Afide.*

*Leon.* By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to  
 think of it; but that she loves him with an enraged af-  
 fection, it is past the infinite of thought.

*Pedro.* May be, she doth but counterfeit.

*Claud.* Faith, like enough.

*Leon.* O God! counterfeit? there was never counter-  
 feit of passion came so near the life of passion, as she  
 discovers it.

*Pedro.* Why, what effects of passion shews she?

*Claud.* Bait the hook well, this fish will bite. [*Afide.*

*Leon.* What effects, my lord? she will fit you, you  
 heard my daughter tell you how.

*Claud.* She did, indeed.

*Pedro.* How, how, I pray you? you amaze me: I

B 5

would



would have thought, her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

*Leon.* I would have sworn, it had, my lord; especially against *Benedick*.

*Bene.* [*Aside.*] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it; knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

*Claud.* He hath ta'en th' infection, hold it up. [*Aside.*]

*Pedro.* Hath she made her affection known to *Benedick*?

*Leon.* No, and swears she never will; that's her torment.

*Claud.* 'Tis true, indeed, so your daughter says: shall I, says she, that have so oft encounter'd him with scorn, write to him that I love him?

*Leon.* This says she now, when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock, 'till she have writ a sheet of paper; my daughter tells us all.

*Claud.* Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

*Leon.* O,——when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found *Benedick* and *Beatrice* between the sheet.

*Claud.* That——

*Leon.* (9) O, she tore the letter into a thousand half-pence; rail'd at herself, that she should be so modest, to write to one that, she knew, would flout her: I measure him says she, by my own Spirit, for I should flout him if he writ to me; yea though I love him, I should.

(9) O, she tore the Letter into a thousand half-pence;] i. e. into a thousand pieces of the same bigness. This is farther explained by a Passage in *As you like it*.

There were none principal; they were all like one another as half-pence are.

In both places the Poet alludes to the old Silver Penny which had a Crease running *Cross-wise* over it, so that it might be broke into two or four equal pieces, half-pence, or farthings.

*Claud.*

*Claud.* Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses; O sweet *Benedick*! God give me patience!

*Leon.* She doth indeed, my daughter says so; and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometimes afraid, she will do desperate outrage to herself; 'it is very true.'

*Pedro.* It were good that *Benedick* knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

*Claud.* To what end? he would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

*Pedro.* If he should, it were an alms to hang him; she's an excellent sweet lady, and (out of all suspicion) she is virtuous.

*Claud.* And she is exceeding wise.

*Pedro.* In every thing, but in loving *Benedick*.

*Leon.* O my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one, that blood hath the victory; I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

*Pedro.* I would, she had bestow'd this dotage on me; I would have dast all other respects, and made her half myself; I pray you tell *Benedick* of it; and hear what he will say.

*Leon.* Were it good, think you?

*Claud.* *Hero* thinks, surely she will die; for she says, she will die if he love her not, and she will die ere she make her love known; and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

*Pedro.* She doth well; if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible, he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit.

*Claud.* He is a very proper man.

*Pedro.* He hath, indeed, a good outward happiness.

*Claud.* Fore God, and, in my mind, very wise.

*Pedro.* He doth, indeed, shew some sparks that are like wit.

*Leon.* And I take him to be valiant.

*Pedro.* As *Hector*, I assure you; and in the managing of



' of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he  
' avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them  
' with a christian-like fear.

' *Leon.* If he do fear God, he must necessarily keep  
' peace; if he break the peace, he ought to enter into  
' a quarrel with fear and trembling.

' *Pedro.* And so will he do, for the man doth fear  
' God, howsoever it seems not in him, by some large jests  
' he will make. Well, I am sorry for your Niece; shall  
' we go seek *Benedick*, and tell him of her love?

*Claud.* Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out  
with good counsel.

*Leon.* Nay, that's impossible, she may wear her heart  
out first.

*Pedro.* Well, we will hear further of it by your  
daughter; let it cool the while. I love *Benedick* well;  
and I could wish he would modestly examine himself,  
to see how much he is unworthy to have so good a  
lady.

*Leon.* My Lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

*Claud.* If he do not dote on her upon this, I will  
never trust my expectation. [*Aside.*]

*Pedro.* Let there be the same net spread for her, and  
that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry;  
the sport will be, when they hold an opinion of one  
another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the Scene  
that I would see, 'which will be merely a dumb Show;' let  
us send her to call him to dinner. [*Aside.*] *Exeunt.*

*Benedick advances from the Arbour.*

*Bene.* This can be no trick, the conference was sadly  
borne; they have the truth of this from *Hero*; they seem  
to pity the lady; it seems, her affections have the full  
bent. Love me! why, it must be requited: I hear,  
how I am censur'd; they say, I will bear myself  
proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they  
say too, that she will rather die than give any sign of  
affection——I did never think to marry——I  
must not seem proud——happy are they that hear  
their detractions, and can put them to mending: they  
say,

say, the lady is fair; 'tis a truth I can bear them wit-  
ness: and virtuous;——'tis so, I cannot reprove it:  
and wise, but for loving me——by my troth, it is no  
addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly;  
for I will be horribly in love with her.——I may  
chance to have some odd quirks and remnants of wit  
broken on me, because I have rail'd so long against mar-  
riage; but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the  
meat in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age.  
Shall quipps and sentences, and these paper-bullets of the  
brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? no:  
the world must be peopled. When I said, I would die a  
bachelor, I did not think I should live 'till I were mar-  
ry'd. Here comes *Beatrice*: by this day, she's a fair  
lady; I do spy some marks of love in her.

*Enter Beatrice.*

*Beat.* Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in  
to dinner.

*Bene.* Fair *Beatrice*, I thank you for your pains.

*Beat.* I took no more pains for those thanks, than  
you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I  
would not have come.

*Bene.* You take pleasure then in the message.

*Beat.* Yea, just so much as you may take upon a  
knife's point, and choak a daw withal: you have no  
stomach, Signior; fare you well. [*Exit.*]

*Bene.* Ha! against my will I am sent to bid you come  
in to dinner:——there's a double meaning in that. I  
took no more pains for those thanks, than you took pains to  
thank me;——that's as much as to say, any pains that  
I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take  
pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am  
a Jew; I will go get her Picture. [*Exit.*]







## ACT III.

SCENE continues in the Orchard.

Enter Hero, Margaret, and Ursula.

## HERO.

GOOD Margaret, run thee into the parlour,  
There shalt thou find my Cousin Beatrice,  
‘ Proposing with the Prince and Claudio ;’  
Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula  
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse  
Is all of her ; say, that thou overheard’st us ;  
And bid her steal into the pleached Bower,  
‘ Where honey-suckles, ripen’d by the Sun,  
‘ Forbid the Sun to enter ; like to Favourites,  
‘ Made proud by Princes, that advance their pride  
‘ Against that power that bred it: there will she hide her,  
To listen our purpose ; this is thy office,  
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

Marg. I’ll make her come, I warrant, presently. [Exit.

Hero. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,  
As we do trace this alley up and down,  
Our talk must only be of Benedick ;  
When I do name him, let it be thy part  
To praise him more than ever man did merit.  
My talk to thee must be, how Benedick  
Is sick in love with Beatrice ; of this matter  
Is little Cupid’s crafty arrow made,  
That only wounds by hear-say : now begin.

Enter Beatrice, running towards the Arbour.

For look, where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs  
Close by the ground to hear our conference.  
The pleasant’st angling is to see the fish

Cut

Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,  
And greedily devour the treacherous bait ;  
‘ So angle we for Beatrice, who e’en now  
‘ Is couched in the woodbine coverture.

Urs. Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero. Then go we near her, that her ear loose nothing  
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it. —  
No, truly, Ursula, she’s too disdainful ;  
I know, her spirits are as coy and wild  
As haggards of the rock.

Urs. But art sure,

That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely ?

Hero. So says the Prince, and my new-trothed lord.

Urs. And did they bid you tell her of it, Madam ?

Hero. They did intreat me to acquaint her of it ;  
But I persuaded them, if they lov’d Benedick,  
To wish him wrestle with affection,  
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Urs. Why did you so? doth not the Gentleman  
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed,  
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon ?

Her. O God of love! I know, he doth deserve  
As much as may be yielded to a man :  
But Nature never fram’d a woman’s heart  
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice.  
Dissdain and Scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,  
Mis-prizing what they look on ; and her wit  
Values itself so highly, that to her  
All matter else seems weak ; she cannot love,  
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,  
She is so self-indear’d.

Urs. Sure, I think so ;

And therefore certainly it were not good  
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

Hero. Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,  
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur’d,  
But she would spell him backward ; if fair-fac’d,  
She’d swear, the gentleman should be her sister ;  
If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,  
Made a foul blot ; if tall, a lance ill-headed ;

16



If low, an Aglet very vilely cut; (10)  
 If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;  
 If silent, why, a block moved with none.  
 So turns she every man the wrong side out,  
 And never gives to truth and virtue that,  
 Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

*Urf.* Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

*Hero.* 'No; for to be so odd, and from all fashions,

'As *Beatrice* is, cannot be commendable.'  
 But who dare tell her so? if I should speak,  
 She'd mock me into air; O, she would laugh me  
 Out of myself, pres me to death with wit.

Therefore let *Benedick*, like cover'd fire,  
 Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly;

It were a better death than die with mocks,  
 'Which is as bad as 'tis to die with tickling.'

*Urf.* Yet tell her of it; hear what she will say.

*Hero.* No, rather I will go to *Benedick*,  
 And counsel him to fight against his passion.  
 And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders  
 To stain my Cousin with; one doth not know,  
 How much an ill word may impoison liking.

*Urf.* O, do not do your Cousin such a wrong.  
 She cannot be so much without true judgment,  
 (Having so swift and excellent a wit,  
 As she is priz'd to have) as to refuse.

(10) *If low, an Agat very vilely cut;* But why an *Agat*, if low?  
 And what Shadow of Likeness between a *little Man* and an *Agat*?  
 The Ancients, indeed, used this Stone to cut in, and upon; but  
 most exquisitely. I make no question but the Poet wrote;

— an Aglet very vilely cut;

An *Aglet* was the Tag of those Points, formerly so much in Fashion.  
 These Tags were either of Gold, Silver, or Bra's, according to the  
 Quality of the Wearer; and were commonly in the Shape of little  
 Images; or at least had a head cut at the Extremity, as is seen at  
 the end of the *Stap* of old-fashion'd Spoons. And as a tall Man is be-  
 fore compared to a *Lance ill-headed*; so, by the same Figure, a *little*  
*Man* is very aptly liken'd to an *Aglet ill-cut*.

Mr. Warburton.  
 So

So rare a gentleman as *Benedick*.

'*Hero.* He is the only man of *Italy*,

'Always excepted my dear *Claudio*,

'*Urf.* I pray you, be not angry with me, Madam,

'Speaking my fancy; Signior *Benedick*,

'For shape, for bearing, argument and valour,

'Goes foremost in report through *Italy*.'

*Hero.* Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

*Urf.* His excellence did earn it, 'ere he had it.

When are you marry'd, Madam?

*Hero.* Why, every day; to-morrow; come, go in,  
 I'll shew thee some attires, and have thy counsel  
 Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

*Urf.* She's lim'd, I warrant you; we have caught her,  
 Madam?

*Hero.* If it prove so, then loving goes by haps;  
 Same *Cupids* kill with arrows, some with traps.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Beatrice, advancing.*

*Beat.* What fire is in my ears? can this be true?

Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?  
 Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!

No glory lives behind the back of such.  
 And, *Benedick*, love on, I will requite thee;  
 Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand;  
 If thou dost love, thy kindness shall incite thee  
 To bind our loves up in a holy band.

'For others say, thou dost deserve; and I

'Believe it better than reportingly.'

[*Exit.*]

## SCENE *Leonato's House.*

*Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick and Leonato.*

*Pedro.* I DO but stay 'till your marriage be consummate,  
 and then go I toward *Arragon*.

*Claud.* I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll  
 vouchsafe me.

*Pedro.* Nay, 'that would be as great a foil in the new  
 gloss.



‘gloss of your marriage, as to shew a child his new coat  
‘and forbid him to wear it.’ I will only be bold with  
*Benedick* for his company; for, from the crown of his  
head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth; he hath  
twice or thrice cut *Cupid’s* bow-string, and the little  
hangman dare not shoot at him; he hath a heart as  
found as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper; for what  
his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.

*Bene.* Gallants, I am not as I have been.

*Leon.* So say I; methinks, you are fadder.

*Claud.* I hope, he is in love.

*Pedro.* Hang him, truant, there’s no true drop of  
blood in him, to be truly touched with love; if he be  
sad, he wants money.

*Bene.* I have the tooth-ach.

*Pedro.* Draw it.

*Bene.* Hang it.

‘*Claud.* You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.’

*Pedro.* What? sigh for the tooth-ach!

*Leon.* Which is but a humour, or a worm.

*Bene.* Well, every one can master a grief but he that  
has it.

*Claud.* Yet say I, he is in love.

‘*Pedro.* There is no appearance of fancy in him, un-  
‘less it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to  
‘be a *Dutch* man to day, a *French* man to-morrow; or in  
‘the shape of two countries at once, a *German* from the  
‘waist downward, all fops; and a *Spaniard* from the hip  
‘upward, no doublet: Unless he have a fancy to this  
‘foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy,  
‘as you would have it to appear he is.’

*Claud.* If he be not in love with some woman, there  
is no believing old signs; he brushes his hat o’ morn-  
ings; what should that bode?

‘*Pedro.* Hath any man seen him at the barber’s?’

‘*Claud.* No, but the barber’s man hath been seen with  
‘him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already  
‘stuffed tennis-balls.’

‘*Leon.* Indeed, he looks younger than he did by the  
‘loss of a beard.’

*Pedro.*

*Pedro.* Nay, he rubs himself with civet; can you  
smell him out by that?

*Claud.* That’s as much as to say, the sweet youth’s in  
love.

*Pedro.* The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

‘*Claud.* And when was he wont to wash his face?’

‘*Pedro.* Yea, or to paint himself? for the which, I  
‘hear what they say of him.’

*Claud.* Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is now crept  
into a lute string ‘and now govern’d by stops——’

*Pedro.* Indeed that tells a heavy tale for him. Con-  
clude, he is in love.

*Claud.* Nay, but I know who loves him.

*Pedro.* That would I know too: I warrant, one that  
knows him not.

*Claud.* Yes, and his ill conditions, and in despite of  
all, dies for him.

*Pedro.* She shall be bury’d with her heels upwards. (11)

*Bene.* Yet is this no charm for the tooth-ach. Old  
Signior, walk aside with me, I have study’d eight or  
nine wise words to speak to you which these hobby-horses  
must not hear. [Exit *Benedick* and *Leonato*.]

*Pedro.* For my life, to break with him about *Beatrice*.

*Claud.* ’Tis even so. *Hero* and *Margaret* have by this  
play’d their parts with *Beatrice*; and then the two bears  
will not bite one another, when they meet.

Enter *Don John*.

*John.* My Lord and brother, God save you.

*Pedro.* Good den, brother.

*John.* If your leisure serv’d, I would speak with you.

*Pedro.* In private.

(11) She shall be buried with her Face upwards.) Thus the  
whole Set of Editions: But what is there any ways particular in  
this? Are not all Men and Women buried so? Sure, the Poet  
means, in Opposition to the general Rule, and by way of Dis-  
tinction, with her heels upwards, or face downwards. I have chose  
the first Reading, because I find it the expression in Vogue in our  
Author’s time.

*John.*



*John.* If it please you; yet Count *Claudio* may hear; for, what I would speak of, concerns him.

*Pedro.* What's the matter?

*John.* Means your lordship to be marry'd to-morrow?  
[To *Claudio*.]

*Pedro.* You know, he does.

*John.* I know not that, when he knows what I know.

*Claud.* If there be any impediment, I pray you, discover it.

*John.* You may think, I love you not; let that appear hereafter; and aim better at me by that I now will manifest; for my brother, I think, he holds you well, and in dearness of heart hath help to affect your ensuing marriage; surely, suit ill spent, and labour ill bestow'd!

*Pedro.* Why, what's the matter?

*John.* I came hither to tell you, and circumstances shortn'd, (for she hath been too long a talking of) the Lady is disloyal.

*Claud.* Who? *Hero*?

*John.* Even she; *Leonato's Hero*, your *Hero*, every man's *Hero*.

*Claud.* Disloyal?

*John.* The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say, she were worse; think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it; wonder not 'till further warrant; go but with me to night, you shall see her chamber window enter'd, even the night before her wedding-day; if you love her, then to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

*Claud.* May this be so?

*Pedro.* I will not think it.

*John.* If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know; if you will follow me, I will shew you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly.

*Claud.* If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow; in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

*Pedro.*

*Pedro.* And as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

*John.* I will disparage her no farther, 'till you are my witness; bear it coldly but 'till night, and let the issue shew itself.

' *Pedro.* O day untowardly turned!

' *Claud.* O mischief strangely thwarting!

' *John.* O plague right well prevented!

' So you will say, when you have seen the sequel.'

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE *changes to the Street.*

*Enter Dogberry and Verges, with the Watch.*

*Dogb.* ARE you good men and true?

*Verg.* Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

*Dogb.* Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Prince's watch.

*Verg.* Well, give them their charge, neighbour *Dogberry*.

*Dogb.* First, who think you the most defartless man to be constable?

1 *Watch.* *Hugh Outcake*, Sir, or *George Seacole*; for they can write and read.

*Dogb.* Come hither, neighbour *Seacole*: God hath blest you with a good name; and to be a well-favour'd man is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature.

2 *Watch.* Both which, master constable—

*Dogb.* You have: I knew, it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, Sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity: you are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the Constable of the Watch, therefore bear you the lanthorn; this is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the Prince's name.

2 *Watch.*



2 *Watch*. How if he will not stand?

*Dogb*. Why, then take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the Watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

*Verg*. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Prince's subjects.

*Dogb*. True, and they are to meddle with none but the Prince's subjects; you shall also make no noise in the streets; for, the Watch to babble and talk, is most tolerable, and not to be endur'd.

2 *Watch*. We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a Watch.

*Dogb*. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend; only have a care that your bills be not stolen: well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid them that are drunk get them to bed.

2 *Watch*. How if they will not?

*Dogb*. Why, then let them alone 'till they are sober; if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, they are not the men you took them for.

*Watch*. Well, Sir.

*Dogb*. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him by virtue of your office to be no true man; and for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

2 *Watch*. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

*Dogb*. Truly, by your office you may; but, I think, they that touch pitch, will be defil'd: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is, to let him shew himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

*Verg*. You have been always call'd a merciful man, Partner.

*Dogb*. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

*Verg*. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse and bid her still it.

2 *Watch*. How if the nurse be asleep, and will not hear us?

*Dogb*.

*Dogb*. Why, then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying: for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes, will never answer a calf when he bleats.

*Verg*. 'Tis very true.

*Dogb*. This is the end of the charge: you, constable, are to present the Prince's own person; if you meet the Prince in the night, you may stay him.

*Verg*. Nay, bi'r lady, that, I think, he cannot.

*Dogb*. Five shillings to one on't with any man that knows the statutes, he may stay him; marry, not without the Prince be willing: for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

*Verg*. Bi'r lady, I think, it be so.

*Dogb*. Ha, ha, ha! well, masters, good night; an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me; keep your fellow's counsels and your own, and good night; come neighbour.

2 *Watch*. Well, masters, we hear our charge; let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

*Dogb*. One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior *Leonato's* door, for the Wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to night; adieu; be vigilant, I beseech you.

[*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges.*]

*Enter Borachio and Conrade.*

*Bora*. What! *Conrade*——

*Watch*. Peace, stir not.

[*Afide.*]

*Bora*. *Conrade*, I say!

*Conr*. Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

' *Bora*. Mass, and my elbow itch'd, I thought there ' would a scab follow.

' *Conr*. I will owe thee an answer for that, and now ' forward with thy tale.

*Bora*. Stand thee close then ' under this pent house, for it drizzles rain,' and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

*Watch.*



*Watch.* Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

*Bora.* Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

*Conr.* Is it possible that any villany should be so dear?

*Bora.* Thou should'st rather ask, if it were possible any villany should be so cheap? for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

*Conr.* I wonder at it.

*Bora.* That shews, thou art unconfirm'd; thou knowest, that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak is nothing to a man.

*Conr.* Yes, it is apparel.

*Bora.* I mean the fashion.

*Conr.* Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

*Bora.* Tush, I may as well say, the fool's the fool; but see'st thou not, what a deformed thief this fashion is?

*Watch.* I know that *Deformed*; he has been a vile thief these seven years; he goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

*Bora.* Didst thou not hear some body?

*Conr.* No, 'twas the vane on the house.

*Bora.* See'st thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot-bloods between fourteen and five and thirty; 'sometimes fashioning them like *Pharao's* soldiers in the ready painting; sometimes, like the God *Bel's* priests in the old church-window; sometimes, like the shaven *Hercules* in the smirch'd worm-eaten tapestry, where his codpiece seems as massy as his club.

*Conr.* 'All this I see, and see, that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man;' but art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

*Bora.* Not so, neither; but know that I have to-night wooed *Margaret*, the Lady *Hero's* gentlewoman, by the name of *Hero*; she leans me out at her mistress's chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night—

I tell

I tell this tale vilely——I should first tell thee, how the Prince, *Claudio*, and my master, planted and placed, and possessed by my master *Don John*, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

*Conr.* And thought they, *Margaret* was *Hero*?

*Bora.* Two of them did, the Prince and *Claudio*; but the devil my master knew, she was *Margaret*; 'and partly by his oaths, which first posselt them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villany, which did confirm any slander that *Don John* had made,' away went *Claudio* enraged; swore, he would meet her as he was appointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole Congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er night, and send her home again without a husband.

*1 Watch.* We charge you in the Prince's name, stand.

*2 Watch.* Call up the right master constable; we have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the common-wealth.

*1 Watch.* And one *Deformed* is one of them; I know him, he wears a lock.

*Conr.* Masters, masters,——(12)

*2 Watch.* You'll be made bring *Deformed* forth, I warrant you.

*Conr.* Masters,——

*1 Watch.* Never speak; we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.

*Bora.* We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these mens bills.

(12) *Conr. Masters, Masters,——*

*2 Watch. You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.*

*Conr. Masters, never speak, we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.]* The different Regulation which I have made in this last Speech, tho' against the Authority of all the printed Copies, I flatter myself, carries its Proof with it. *Conrade* and *Borachio* are not designed to talk absurd Nonsense (that is the distinguishing Characteristic of the *Constable* and *Watch*.) It is evident therefore, that *Conrade* is attempting his own Justification; but is interrupted in it by the Impertinence of the Men in Office.

VOL. II.

C

*Conr.*



' *Count.* A commodity in question, I warrant you: come,  
' we'll obey you.' [Exeunt.]

SCENE, *Hero's Apartment in Leonato's House.*

*Enter* Hero, Margaret, and Ursula.

' *Hero.* GOOD Ursula, wake my cousin *Beatrice*, and  
' desire her to rise.

' *Urs.* I will, lady.

' *Hero.* And bid her come hither.

' *Urs.* Well.'

*Marg.* Troth, I think, your other Rebato were better.

*Hero.* No, pray thee, good *Meg*, I'll wear this.

*Marg.* By my troth, it's not so good; and I warrant,  
your cousin will say so.

*Hero.* My cousin's a fool, and thou art another. I'll  
wear none but this.

*Marg.* I like the new tire within excellently, ' if the  
' hair were a thought browner;' and your gown's a most  
rare fashion, i'faith. I saw the Dutchess of *Milan's* gown,  
that they praise so.

' *Hero.* O, that exceeds, they say.

' *Marg.* By my troth, it's but a night-gown in respect  
' of yours; cloth of gold and cuts, and lac'd with silver,  
' set with pearls down-sleeves, side sleeves and skirts, round  
' underborne with a blueish tinsel;' but for a fine quaint,  
graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

*Hero.* God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is  
exceeding heavy!

*Marg.* 'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

*Hero.* Fie upon thee, art not ashamed?

' *Marg.* Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? is  
' not marriage honourable in a beggar? is not your Lord  
' honourable without marriage? I think you would have  
' me say (saying your reverence) a husband. If bad  
' thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend no body;  
' is there any harm in the heavier for a husband? none,  
' I think, if it be the right husband, and the right wife,  
' otherwise 'tis light and not heavy; ask my lady *Beatrice*  
' else, here she comes.

*Enter*

*Enter* *Beatrice*.

*Hero.* Good-morrow, coz.

*Beat.* Good-morrow, sweet *Hero*.

*Hero.* Why, how now? do you speak in the sick  
tune?

*Beat.* I am out of all other tune, methinks.

' *Marg.* Clap us into *Light o' love*; that goes without  
' a burden? do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

' *Beat.* Yes, *Light o' love* with your heels; then if  
' your husband have stables enough, you'll look he shall  
' lack no barns.

' *Marg.* O illegitimate construction! I scorn that  
' with my heels.'

*Beat.* 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin? 'tis time you  
were ready: by my troth, I am exceeding ill; hey ho!

*Marg.* For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

' *Beat.* For the letter that begins them all, H.

' *Marg.* Well, if you be not turn'd *Turk* there's no  
' more failing by the star.

' *Beat.* What means the fool, trow?

' *Marg.* Nothing I, but God send every one their  
' heart's desire!

' *Hero.* These gloves the Count sent me, they are an  
' excellent perfume.

' *Beat.* I am stuf, cousin, I cannot smell.

' *Marg.* A maid, and stuf! there's goodly catching  
' of cold.

' *Beat.* O God help me, God help me, how long have  
' you profest apprehension.

' *Marg.* Ever since you left it; doth not my wit be-  
' come me rarely?

' *Beat.* It is not seen enough, you should wear it in  
' your cap.' By my troth, I am sick.

*Marg.* Get you some of this distill'd *Carduus Bene-*  
*dictus*, and lay it to your heart; it is the only thing  
for a qualm.

' *Hero.* There thou prick'st her with a thistle.'

*Beat.* *Benedictus*? why *Benedictus*? you have some  
moral in this *Benedictus*.

C 2

*Marg.*



*Marg.* Moral? no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning, I meant plain holy-thistle: you may think, perchance, that I think you are in love; nay, bi'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out with thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love: yet *Benedick* was such another, and now he is become a man; he swore, he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging; and how you may be converted, I know not; but, methinks, you look with your eyes as other women do.

*Beat.* What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

*Marg.* Not a false gallop.

*Enter Ursula.*

*Urs.* Madam, withdraw; the Prince, the Count, Signior *Benedick*, Don *John*, and all the Gallants of the town are come to fetch you to church.

*Hero.* Help to dress me, good coz, good *Meg*, good *Ursula*.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, another Apartment in Leonato's House.

*Enter Leonato, with Dogberry and Verges.*

*Leon.* **W**HAT would you with me, honest neighbour?

*Dogb.* Marry, Sir, I would have some confidence with you, that discerns you nearly.

*Leon.* Brief, I pray you; for, you see, 'tis a busy time with me.

*Dogb.* Marry, this it is, Sir.

*Verg.* Yes, in truth it is, Sir.

*Leon.* What is it, my good friends?

*Dogb.* Goodman *Verges*, Sir, speaks a little of the matter: an old man, Sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, as honest as the skin between his brows.

*Verg.*

*Verg.* Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honestier than I.

*Dogb.* Comparisons are odorous; *palabras*, neighbour *Verges*.

*Leon.* Neighbours, you are tedious.

*Dogb.* It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor Duke's officers; but, truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a King, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

*Leon.* All thy tediousness on me, ha?

*Dogb.* Yea, and 'twere a thousand times more than 'tis, for I hear as good exclamation on your worship as of any man in the city; and tho' I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

*Verg.* And so am I.

*Leon.* I would fain know what you have to say.

*Verg.* Marry, Sir, our Watch to-night excepting your worship's presence, hath ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in *Messina*.

*Dogb.* A good old man, Sir; he will be talking, as they say; when the age is in, the wit is out; God help us, it is a world to see: well said, i'faith, neighbour *Verges*, well, he's a good man; an two men ride an horse, one must ride behind; an honest soul, i'faith, Sir, by my troth he is, as ever broke bread, but God is to be worship'd; all men are not alike, alas, good neighbour!

*Leon.* Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

*Dogb.* Gifts, that God gives.

*Leon.* I must leave you.

*Dogb.* One word, Sir; our Watch have, indeed, comprehended two auspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examin'd before your worship.

*Leon.* Take their examination yourself, and bring it me; I am now in great haste, as may appear unto you.

*Dogb.* It shall be suffigance.

*Leon.* Drink some wine ere you go: fare you well.



*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

*Leon.* I'll wait upon them. I am ready.' [*Ex. Leon.*

*Dogb.* Go, good Partner, go get you to *Francis Seacoale*, bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail; we are now to examine those men.

*Verg.* And we must do it wisely.

*Dogb.* We will spare for no wit, I warrant; here's that shall drive some of them to a non-come. Only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the Jail. [*Exeunt.*



## ACT IV.

## SCENE, a CHURCH.

*Enter D. Pedro, D. John, Leonato, Friar, Claudio, Benedick, Hero, and Beatrice.*

LEONATO.

COME, friar *Francis*, be brief, only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

*Friar.* You come hither my Lord, to marry this lady?

*Claud.* No.

*Leon.* To be marry'd to her, friar; you come to marry her.

*Friar.* Lady, you come hither to be marry'd to this Count?

*Hero.* I do.

*Friar.* If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoin'd, I charge you on your souls to utter it.

*Claud.*

*Claud.* Know you any, *Hero*?

*Hero.* None, my Lord.

*Friar.* Know you any, Count?

*Leon.* I dare make his answer, none.

*Claud.* O what men dare do! what men may do! what Men daily do! 'not knowing what they do!'

*Bene.* How now! Interjections? 'why, then some be 'of laughing, as ha, ha, he!'

*Claud.* Stand thee by, friar; father, by your leave; Will you with free and unconstrained soul Give me this maid your daughter?

*Leon.* As freely, son, as God did give her me.

*Claud.* And what have I to give you back, whose worth May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

*Pedro.* Nothing, unless you render her again.

*Claud.* Sweet Prince, you learn me noble thankfulness:

There, *Leonato*, take her back again;

'Give not this rotten orange to your friend.'

She's but the sign and semblance of her honour:

Behold, how like a maid she blushes here!

O, what authority and shew of truth

Can cunning sin cover itself withal!

'Comes not that blood, as modest evidence,

'To witness simple virtue? would you not swear,

'All you that see her, that she were a maid,

'By these exterior shows? but she is none.'

She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;

Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

*Leon.* What do you mean, my Lord?

*Claud.* Not to be marry'd,

Not knit my soul to an approved Wanton.

*Leon.* Dear, my Lord, if you 'in your own approof' (13)

'Have

(13) Dear, my Lord, if you in your own Proof,] I am surpriz'd, the Poetical Editors did not observe the Lameness of this Verse. It evidently wants a Syllable in the last Foot, which I have restor'd by a Word, which, I presume the first Editors might hesitate at; though it is a very proper one, and a Word elsewhere used by our Author. Besides, in the Passage under Examination,



‘ Have vanquish’d the resistance of her youth,  
 ‘ And made defeat of her virginity ———  
 ‘ *Claud.* I know what you would say: if I have known her,  
 ‘ You’ll say, she did embrace me as a husband,  
 ‘ And so extenuate the forehead sin.’

No, *Leonato*,  
 I never tempted her with word too large;  
 But, as a brother to his sister, shew’d  
 Bathful sincerity, and comely love.

*Hero.* And seem’d I ever otherwise to you?

*Claud.* Out on thy Seeming! I will write against it:  
 You seem to me as a *Dian* in her orb,  
 As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown:  
 But you are more intemperate in your blood  
 Than *Venus*, or those pamper’d animals  
 That rage in savage sensuality.

*Hero.* Is my Lord well, that he doth speak so wide?

*Leon.* Sweet Prince, why speak not you?

*Pedro.* What should I speak?

I stand dishonour’d, that have gone about  
 To link my dear friend to a common Stale.

*Leon.* Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

*John.* Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

*Bene.* This looks not like a Nuptial.

*Hero.* True! O God!

*Claud.* *Leonato*, stand I here?

Is this the Prince? Is this the Prince’s Brother?

Is this face *Hero*’s? are our eyes our own?

*Leon.* All this is so: but what of this, my lord?

*Claud.* Let me but move one question to your daughter,  
 And, by that fatherly and kindly power  
 That you have in her, bid her answer truly.

*Leon.* I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

*Hero.* O God defend me, how am I beset!  
 What kind of catechizing call you this?

Examination, this Word comes in almost necessarily, as *Claudio* had  
 said in the Line immediately preceding;

*Not knit my Soul to an approved Wanton.*

*Claud.*

*Claud.* To make you answer truly to your name.

*Hero.* Is it not *Hero*? who can blot that name  
 With any just reproach?

*Claud.* Marry, that can *Hero*:

*Hero* herself can blot out *Hero*’s virtue.  
 What man was he talk’d with you yesternight,  
 Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?  
 Now, if you are a maid answer to this.

*Hero.* I talk’d with no man at that hour, my lord.

*Pedro.* ‘Why then you are no maiden.’ *Leonato*,  
 I am sorry, you must hear: upon mine Honour,  
 Myself, my Brother, and this grieved Count  
 Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night  
 Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;  
 Who, hath, indeed, most like a liberal villain,  
 Confess’d the vile encounters they have had  
 A thousand times in secret.

*John.* Fie, fie, they are not to be nam’d, my Lord,  
 Not to be spoken of;  
 There is not chastity enough in language,  
 Without offence, to utter them: thus, pretty lady,  
 I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

*Claud.* O *Hero*! what a *Hero* hadst thou been,  
 If half thy outward graces had been plac’d  
 About the thoughts and counsels of thy heart?  
 But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! ‘farewell,  
 ‘ Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!’  
 For thee I’ll lock up all the gates of love,  
 And on my eyelids shall Conjecture hang,  
 To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm;  
 And never shall it be more gracious.

*Leon.* Hath no man’s dagger here a point for me?

[*Hero faints.*]

*Beat.* Why, how now, Cousin, wherefore sink you down?

*John.* Come, let us go; these things, come thus to light,  
 Smother her spirits up.

[*Exe. D. Pedro, D. John and Claud.*]

*Bene.* How doth the Lady?

*Beat.* Dead, I think, help, uncle.

*Hero!* why, *Hero!* uncle! Signior *Benedick!* friar!

C 5

*Leon.*



*Leon.* O fate! take not away thy heavy hand;  
Death is the fairest cover for her shame,  
That may be wish'd for.

*Beat.* How now, Cousin *Hero*?

*Friar.* Have comfort, Lady.

*Leon.* Dost thou lock up?

*Friar.* Yea, wherefore should she not?

*Leon.* Wherefore? why, doth not every earthly thing  
Cry shame upon her? could she here deny  
The story that is printed in her blood?

• Do not live, *Hero*, do not ope thine eyes:  
• For did I think, thou wouldst not quickly die,  
• Thought I, thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,  
• Myself would on the reward of reproaches  
• Strike at thy life.' Griev'd I, I had but one?

Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?  
I've one too much by thee. Why had I one?

• Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?  
• Why had I not, with charitable hand,  
• Took up a beggar's issue at my Gates?  
• Who smeered thus, and mir'd with infamy,  
• I might have said, no part of it is mine;  
• This shame derives itself from unknown loins:  
• But mine, and mine I lov'd; and mine I prais'd,  
• And mine that I was proud on, mine so much,  
• That I myself was to myself not mine,  
• Valuing of her; why, she, — O, she is fall'n.

Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea  
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again;  
• And salt too little, which may season give  
• To her foul tainted flesh!

*Bene.* Sir, Sir, be patient;  
For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder,  
I know not what to say.

*Beat.* O, on my soul, my cousin is bely'd.

*Bene.* Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

*Beat.* No, truly, not; altho' until last night  
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

*Leon.*

*Leon.* Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made,  
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron.  
Would the two Princes lie? and *Claudio* lie?  
Who lov'd her so, that, speaking of her foulness,  
Wash'd it with tears? hence from her, let her die.

*Friar.* Hear me a little,  
For I have only been silent so long,  
And given way unto this course of fortune,  
By noting of the lady. I have mark'd  
A thousand blushing apparitions  
To start into her face; a thousand innocent shames  
In angel whiteness bear away those blushes;  
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,  
To burn the errors that these princes hold  
Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool,  
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,  
• Which with experimental seal do warrant  
The tenor of my book; trust not my age,  
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,  
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here  
Under some biting error.

*Leon.* Friar, it cannot be;  
Thou seest, that all the grace, that she hath left,  
Is, that she will not add to her damnation  
A sin of perjury; she not denies it:  
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse  
That, which appears in proper nakedness?

*Friar.* Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?

*Hero.* They know, that do accuse me; I know none:  
If I know more of any man alive,  
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,  
Let all my sins lack mercy! O my father,  
Prove you that any man with me convers'd  
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight  
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,  
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

*Friar.* There is some strange misprision in the Princes.

*Bene.* Two of them have the very bent of honour,  
And if their wisdoms be misl'd in this,  
The practice of it lives in *John* the bastard,

Whose



Whose spirits toil in frame of villanies.

*Leon.* I know not: if they speak but truth of her,  
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,  
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.

'Time hath not yet so dry'd this blood of mine,  
'Nor age so eat up my invention,  
'Nor fortune made such havock of my means,  
'Nor my bad life 'rest me so much of friends,  
'But they shall find awak'd, in such a kind,  
'Both strength of limb, and policy of mind,  
'Ability in means, and choice of friends  
'To quit me of them thoroughly.'

*Friar.* Pause a while,

And let my counsel sway you in this case.  
Your daughter here the Princes left for dead; (14)  
Let her awhile be secretly kept in.

And publish it, that she is dead, indeed:

'Maintain a mourning ostentation,  
'And on your family's old Monument  
'Hang mournful Epitaphs, and do all rites  
'That appertain unto a burial.'

*Leon.* What shall become of this? what will this do?

*Friar.* Marry, this, well carry'd, shall on her behalf  
Change slander to remorse; 'that is some good':  
But not for that dream I on this strange course,  
But on this travel look for greater birth:  
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd  
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,  
Shall be lamented, pity'd, and excus'd,  
Of every hearer: for it so falls out

(14) *Your daughter here the Princes (left for dead)]* But how comes *Hero* to start up a *Princes* here? We have no intimation of her Father being a Prince; and this is the first and only Time that She is complimented with this Dignity. The Retraction of a single Letter, and of the *Parenthesis*, will bring her to her own Rank, and the Place to its true Meaning.

*Your Daughter here the Princes left for dead:*

i. e. *Don Pedro*, Prince of *Arragon*; and his Bastard Brother who is likewise called a Prince.

That

'That what we have we prize not to the worth,  
'Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,  
'Why, then we rack the value; then we find  
'The virtue that possession would not shew us  
'Whilst it was ours; so will it fare with *Claudio*:  
'When he shall hear she dy'd upon his words,  
'Th' idea of her Life shall sweetly creep  
'Into his study of imagination,  
'And every lovely organ of her life  
'Shall come apparel'd in more precious habit;  
'More moving, delicate, and full of life  
'Into the eye and prospect of his soul,  
'Than when she liv'd indeed. Then shall he mourn,  
'If ever love had interest in his liver,  
'And wish, he had not so accus'd her;  
'No, though he thought his accusation true:  
'Let this be so, and doubt not, but success  
'Will fashion the event in better shape  
'Than I can lay it down in likelihood.  
'But if all Aim but this be levell'd false,  
'The supposition of the lady's death  
'Will quench the wonder of her infamy.  
'And, if it fort not well, you may conceal her,  
'As best befits her wounded reputation,  
'In some reclusive and religious life,  
'Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.'

*Bene.* Signior *Leonato*, let the Friar advise you:  
And though, you know, my inwardness and love  
Is very much unto the Prince and *Claudio*,  
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this  
As secretly and justly as your soul  
Should with your body.

*Leon.* Being that I flow in grief,  
The smallest twine may lead me.

*Friar.* 'Tis well consented, presently away;  
For to strange sores, strangely they strain the cure.  
Come, lady, die to live; this wedding day,  
Perhaps, is but prolong'd: have patience and endure,

[*Exeunt.*]

*Manent*



*Manent* Benedick and Beatrice.

*Bene.* Lady *Beatrice*, have you wept all this while?

*Beat.* Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

*Bene.* I will not desire that.

*Beat.* You have no reason, I do it freely.

*Bene.* Surely, I do believe, your fair cousin is wrong'd.

*Beat.* Ah, how much might the man deserve of me, that would right her!

*Bene.* Is there any way to shew such friendship?

*Beat.* A very even way, but no such friend.

*Bene.* May a man do it?

*Beat.* It is a man's office, but not yours.

*Bene.* I do love nothing in the world so well as you; is not that strange?

*Beat.* As strange as the thing I know not; it were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you; but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

*Bene.* By my sword, *Beatrice*, thou lov'st me.

*Beat.* Do not swear by it, and eat it.

*Bene.* I will swear by it, that you love me; and I will make him eat it, that says, I love not you.

*Beat.* Will you not eat your word?

*Bene.* With no fauce that can be devis'd to it; I protest, I love thee.

*Beat.* Why then, God forgive me.

*Bene.* What offence, sweet *Beatrice*?

*Beat.* You have stay'd me in a happy hour; I was about to protest, I lov'd you.

*Bene.* And do it with all thy heart.

*Beat.* I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

*Bene.* Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

*Beat.* Kill *Claudio*.

*Bene.* Ha! not for the wide world.

*Beat.* You kill me to deny; farewell.

*Bene.* Tarry, sweet *Beatrice*.

*Beat.* I am gone, tho' I am here; there is no love in you; nay, I pray you, let me go.

*Bene.*

*Bene.* *Beatrice*, ———

*Beat.* In faith, I will go.

*Bene.* We'll be friends first.

*Beat.* You dare easier be friends with me, than fight with mine enemy.

*Bene.* Is *Claudio* thine enemy?

*Beat.* Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slander'd, scorn'd, dishonour'd my kinswoman! O, that I were a man! what! bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then with public accusation, uncover'd slander, unmitigated rancour—— O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

*Bene.* Hear me, *Beatrice*.

*Beat.* Talk with a man out at a window?—a proper saying!

*Bene.* Nay, but *Beatrice*.

*Beat.* Sweet *Hero*! she is wrong'd, she is slander'd, she is undone.

*Bene.* *Beat.* ———

*Beat.* Princes and Counts! surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count-comfest, a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! Or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! but manhood is melted into curtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too; he is now as valiant as *Hercules*, that only tells a lye, and swears it: I cannot be man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

*Bene.* Tarry, good *Beatrice*; by this hand, I love thee.

*Beat.* Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

*Bene.* Think you in your soul, the Count *Claudio* hath wrong'd *Hero*?

*Beat.* Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

*Bene.* Enough, I am engag'd; I will challenge him, I will kiss your hand, and so leave you; by this hand, *Claudio* shall render me a dear account; as you hear of me, so think of me; go comfort your cousin; I must say, she is dead, and so farewell.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE



## SCENE changes to a Prison.

Enter Dogberry, Verges, Borachio, Conrade, the  
Town Clerk, and Sexton, in Gowns.

To. Cl. IS our whole difsembly appear'd?

Dogb. O, a fool and a cushion for the sexton!

Sexton. Which be the malefactors?

Verg. Marry, that am I and my Partner,

Dogb. Nay, that's certain, we have the exhibition to  
examine.

Sexton. But which are the offenders that are to be  
examin'd? let them come before master constable.

To. Cl. Yea, marry, let them come before me; what  
is your name, friend?

Bora. Borachio.

To. Cl. Pray, write down, Borachio. Yours, Sirrah?

Conr. I am a gentleman, Sir, and my name is Conrade.

To. Cl. Write down, master gentleman Conrade;  
masters, do you serve God?

Both. Yea, Sir, we hope. (15)

To. Cl. Write down, that they hope they serve God:  
and write God first: for God defend, but God should go  
before such villains.—Masters, it is proved already that  
you are little better than false knaves, and it will go  
near to be thought so shortly; how answer you for  
yourselves?

Conr. Marry, Sir, we say, we are none.

To. Cl. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you, but  
I will go about with him, Come you hither, sirrah, a  
word in your ear, Sir; I say to you, it is thought you  
are both false knaves.

(15) Both. Yea, Sir, we hope.

To. Cl. Write down that they hope they serve God: and write  
God first; for God defend, but God should go before such Villains;—]  
This short Passage, which is truly humorous and in character, I  
have added from the old Quarto. Besides, it supplies a Defect: for,  
without it, the Town Clerk asks a Question of the Prisoners, and  
goes on without staying for any Answer to it.

Bora.

Bora. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

To. Cl. Well stand aside; 'fore God, they are both in  
a tale; have you writ down, that they are none?

Sexton. Master town-clerk, you go not the way to  
examine, you must call the watch that are their ac-  
cusers.

(16) To. Cl. Yea, marry, that's the deffest way, let  
the Watch come forth; masters, I charge you in the  
Prince's name accuse these men.

Enter Watchmen.

1 Watch. This man said, Sir, that Don John the  
Prince's brother was a villain.

To. Cl. Write down, Prince John a villain; why this  
is flat perjury to call a Prince's brother villain.

Bora. Master town clerk—

To. Cl. Pray thee, fellow, Peace; I do not like thy  
look, I promise thee.

Sexton. What heard you him say else?

2 Watch. Marry, that he had receiv'd a thousand  
ducats of Don John, for accusing the lady Hero wrong-  
fully.

To. Cl. Flat burglary, as ever was committed.

(16) To. Cl. Yea, marry that's the easiest Way, let the Watch  
come forth.] This, easiest, is a Sophistication of our modern Editors,  
who were at a Loss to make out the corrupted Reading of the old  
Copies. The Quarto, in 1600, and the first and second Editions in  
Folio all concur in reading;

Yea, marry, that's the estest way, &c.

A Letter happen'd to slip out at Press in the first Edition; and  
twas too hard a Task for the subsequent Editors to put it in or guess  
at the Word under this accidental Depravation. There is no doubt,  
but the Author wrote, as I have restor'd the Text;

Yea, marry that's the deffest way, &c.

i. e. the readiest most commodious Way. The Word is pure Saxon  
Dealþlice, debite, congrue, duely, fitly. Lebæþlice, opportune,  
commode, fitly, conveniently, seasonably, in good time, commodi-  
ously. Vid. Spelman's Saxon Glois.

Dogb.



*Dogb.* Yea, by th' mass, that it is.

*Sexton.* What else, fellow?

1 *Watch.* And that Count *Claudio* did mean, upon his words, to disgrace *Hero* before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

*To. Cl.* O villain! thou wilt be condemn'd into everlasting redemption for this.

*Sexton.* What else!

2 *Watch.* This is all.

*Sexton.* And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince *John* is this morning secretly stol'n away: *Hero* was in this manner accus'd, and in this very manner refus'd, and upon the grief of this suddenly dy'd. Master *Conitable*, let these men be bound and brought to *Leonato*; I will go before, and shew him their examination. [Exit.]

*Dogb.* Come let them be opinion'd.

*Conr.* Let them be in the hands of *Coxcomb*!

*Dogb.* God's my life, where's the *Sexton*? let him write down the Prince's officer *Coxcomb*: 'come, bind them, thou-naughty varlet.

*Conr.* Away! you are an ass, you are an ass——

*Dogb.* Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my years? O, that he were here to write me down an ass! but, masters, remember, that I am an ass though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass; no, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be prov'd upon thee by good witness; I am a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer; and which is more, an householder, and which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any in *Messina*, and one that knows the law; go to, and a rich fellow enough; go to, and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him; bring him away; O that I had been writ down an ass!—— [Exeunt.]

ACT



## ACT V.

SCENE, *before Leonato's House.**Enter Leonato and Antonio.*

ANTONIO.

IF you go on thus, you will kill yourself;  
And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief  
Against yourself.

*Leon.* I pray thee, cease thy counsel,  
'Which falls into mine ears as profitless  
'As water in a sieve;' give not me counsel,  
Nor let no Comforter delight mine ear,  
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.  
Bring me a father, that so lov'd his child,  
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,  
And bid him speak of patience;  
'Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,  
'And let it answer every strain for strain:  
'As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,  
'In every lineament, branch, shape and form.  
'If such a one will smile and stroke his beard, (17)

(17) *If such a One will smile, and stroke his Beard,  
And hallow, wag, cry hem when he should groan,*

Mr. *Rowe* is the first Authority that I can find for this Reading. But what is the Intention, or how are we to expound-it? "If a Man will halloo and whoop and fidget and wriggle about to shew a Pleasure when He should groan," &c. This does not give much *Decorum* to the Sentiment. The old *Quarto* and the first and second *Folio* Editions all read,

*And sorrow, wagge, cry hem, &c.*

We don't, indeed, get much by this Reading; though, I flatter myself, by a slight Alteration it has led me to the true one,

*And Sorrow wage; cry hem! when he should groan;*

i. e. If such a one will combat with, strive against Sorrow, &c. Nor is this Word infrequent with our Author in these Significations.

And



' And Sorrow wage; cry hem! when he should groan;  
 ' Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk  
 ' With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,  
 ' And I of him will gather patience.  
 ' But there is no such man; for, brother, men  
 ' Can counsel, and give comfort to that grief  
 ' Which they themselves not feel; but tasting it,  
 ' Their counsel turns to passion, which before  
 ' Would give preceptual medicine to rage;  
 ' Better strong madness in silken thread;  
 ' Charmach with air, and agony with words.  
 No, no; 'tis all mens office to speak patience  
 To those that wring under the load of sorrow;  
 But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,  
 To be so moral, when he shall endure  
 The like himself; therefore give me no counsel;  
 ' My griefs cry louder than advertisement.'

*Ant.* Therein do men from children nothing differ.

*Leon.* I pray thee, peace; I will be flesh and blood;  
 For there was never yet philosopher,  
 That could endure the tooth ach patiently:  
 However they have writ the style of Gods,  
 And made a pish at chance and sufferance.

*Ant.* Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself:  
 Make those, that do offend you, suffer too,

*Leon.* There thou speak'st reason; nay, I will do so.  
 My foul doth tell me, *Hero* is bely'd;  
 And that shall *Claudio* know, so shall the Prince:  
 And all of them, that thus dishonour her.

*Enter Don Pedro and Claudio.*

*Ant.* Here comes the Prince and *Claudio* hastily.

*Pedro.* Good den, good den.

*Claud.* Good day to both of you.

*Leon.* Hear you my lords?

*Pedro.* We have some haste, *Leonato*.

*Leon.* Some haste, my lord! well, fare you well, my lord.  
 Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.

*Pedro.* Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

*Ant.*

*Ant.* If he could right himself with quarrelling,  
 Some of us would lie low.

*Claud.* Who wrongs him?

*Leon.* Marry, thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou!  
 Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword,  
 I fear thee not.

*Claud.* Marry, beshrew my hand,  
 If it should give your age such cause of fear;  
 In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

*Leon.* Tush, tush, man, never flee and jest at me;  
 I speak not like a dotard, nor a fool;  
 As, under privilege of age, to brag  
 What I have done being young, or what would do,  
 Were I not old: know, *Claudio*, to thy head,  
 Thou hast so wrong'd my innocent child and me,  
 That I am forc'd to lay my rev'rence by;  
 And, with grey hairs, and bruise of many days,  
 Do challenge thee to trial of a man;  
 I say, thou hast bely'd mine innocent child,  
 Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,  
 And she lies bury'd with her ancestors,  
 O, in a tomb where never scandal slept,  
 Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villany;

*Claud.* My villany?

*Leon.* Thine, *Claudio*; thine, I say.

*Pedro.* You say not right, old man.

*Leon.* My lord, my lord,  
 I'll prove it on his body, if he dare;  
 Despight his nice fence and his active practise,  
 His *May* of youth, and bloom of lustyhood.

*Claud.* Away, I will not have to do with you.

(18) *Leon.* Canst thou so daffe me? thou hast kill'd  
 my child;

(18) *Canst thou so daffe me? ———*] This is a Country Word,  
*Mr. Pope* tells us, signifying, *daunt*. It may be so; but that is not  
 the Exposition here: To *daffe*, and *dasse* are synonymous Terms, that  
 mean, to *put off*: which is the very Sense required here, and what  
*Leonato* would reply, upon *Claudio's* saying, he would have nothing  
 to do with him.

If



If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

*Ant.* He shall kill two of us, and men indeed ;  
But that's no matter, let him kill one first ;  
Win me and wear me, let him answer me ;  
Come, follow me, boy ; come, boy, follow me ;  
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence ;  
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

*Leon.* Brother, —

*Ant.* Content yourself ; God knows, I lov'd my Niece ;  
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,  
That dare as well answer a man indeed,  
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue ;  
Boys, apes, braggarts, jacks, milkfops !

*Leon.* Brother *Anthony* —

*Ant.* Hold your content ; what, man ? I know them, yea,  
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple :  
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-mongring boys,  
That lye, and cog, and flout, deprave and slander,  
' Go antickly, and show an outward hideousness,'  
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words, (19)  
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst ;  
And this is all.

*Leon.* But, brother *Anthony*, —

*Ant.* Come, 'tis no matter ;  
Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

*Pedro.* Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience.  
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death ;  
But, on my Honour, she was charg'd with nothing  
But what was true, and very full of proof.

*Leon.* My lord, my lord —

*Pedro.* I will not hear you.

(19) *And speak of half a dozen dangerous Words,*] These Editors are Persons of unmatchable Indolence, that cannot afford to add a single Letter to retrieve common Sense. To *speak off*, as I have reformed the Text, is to throw out boldly, with an Ostentation of Bravery, &c. So in *Twelfth-night* ;

*A terrible Oath, with a swaggering Accent sharply twang'd off.*

*Leon.*

*Leon.* No ! come, brother, away, I will be heard.

*Ant.* And shall, or some of us will smart for it.

[*Exe. ambo.*]

*Enter Benedick.*

*Pedro.* See, see, here comes the man we went to seek.

*Claud.* Now, Signior, what news ?

*Bene.* Good day, my lord.

*Pedro.* Welcome, Signior ; you are almost come to part almost a fray.

*Claud.* We had like to have our two noses snapt off with two old men without teeth.

*Pedro.* *Leonato* and his brother ; what think'st thou ? had we fought, I doubt, we should have been too young for them.

*Bene.* In a false quarrel there is no true valour ; I came to seek you both.

*Claud.* We have been up and down to seek thee ; for we are high proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away : wilt thou use thy wit ?

*Bene.* It is in my scabbard ; shall I draw it ?

*Pedro.* Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side ?

*Claud.* ' Never any did so, though very many have ' been beside their wit.' I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels ; draw to pleasure us.

*Pedro.* As I am an honest man, he looks pale : art thou sick or angry ?

*Claud.* What ! courage, man : what tho' care kill'd a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

*Bene.* Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, if you charge it against me. — I pray you, chuse another subject.

*Claud.* Nay, then give him another staff ; this last was broke cross.

*Pedro.* By this light, he changes more and more : I think, he be angry, indeed.

*Claud.* If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

*Bene.* Shall I speak a word in your ear ?

*Claud.* God bless me from a challenge!

*Bene.*



*Bene.* You are a villain; I jest not. I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have kill'd a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

*Claud.* Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

*Pedro.* What, a feast?

*Claud.* I faith, I thank him: he hath bid me to a calve's head and a capon, the which if I do not carve most curiously, say, my knife's naught. 'Shall I not find a woodcock too?'

*Bene.* Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

*Pedro.* I'll tell thee, how *Beatrice* prais'd thy wit the other day: I said, thou hadst a fine wit; right, says she, a fine little one; no, said I, a great wit; just, said she, a great gross one; nay, said I, a good wit; just, said she, it hurts nobody; nay, said I, the gentleman is wife; certain, said she, a wife gentleman; nay said I, he hath the tongues; that I believe said she, for he swore a thing to me on *Monday* night, which he swore on *Tuesday* morning; there's a double tongue, there's two tongues. Thus did she an hour together trans-shape thy particular virtues; yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in *Italy*.

*Claud.* For the which she wept heartily, and said, she car'd not.

*Pedro.* Yea, that she did; but yet for all that, and if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly; the old man's daughter told us all.

*Claud.* All, all; and moreover, *God saw him when he was hid in the garden.*

*Pedro.* But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible *Benedick's* head?

*Claud.* Yea, and text underneath. Here dwells *Benedick* the married man.

*Bene.* Fare you well, boy, you know my mind; I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour; you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thank'd

thank'd, hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you; I must discontinue your company; your brother, the bastard, is fled from *Messina*: you have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my lord lack-beard there, he and I shall meet; and 'till then, peace be with him! [Exit Benedick.]

*Pedro.* He is in earnest.

*Claud.* In most profound earnest, and, I'll warrant you, for the love of *Beatrice*.

*Pedro.* And hath challeng'd thee?

*Claud.* Most sincerely.

*Pedro.* What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!

*Enter Dogberry, Verges, Conrade and Borachio guarded.*

*Claud.* He is then a giant to an ape; but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.'

*Pedro.* But, soft you, 'let me see, pluck up my heart and be sad;' did he not say, my brother was fled?

*Dogb.* Come, you, Sir; if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance; nay, and you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be look'd to.

*Pedro.* How now, two of my brother's men bound? *Borachio*, one?

*Claud.* Hearken after their offence, my lord.

*Pedro.* Officers, what offence have these men done?

*Dogb.* Marry, Sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have bely'd a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things; and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

*Pedro.* First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge?

*Claud.* Rightly reason'd, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.'

*Pedro.* Whom have you offended, masters, that you

D are



are thus bound to your answer? This learned constable is too cunning to be understood. What's your offence?

*Bora.* Sweet Prince, let me go no further to mine answer: do you hear me, and let this Count kill me: I have deceiv'd even your very eyes; what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light, who in the night overheard me confessing to this man, how Don *John* your brother incens'd me to slander the lady *Hero*; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court *Margaret* in *Hero's* garments; how you disgrac'd her, when you should marry her; my villany they have upon record, which I had rather seal with my death, than repeat over to my shame; the lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

*Pedro.* Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

*Claud.* I have drank poison, while he utter'd it.

*Pedro.* But did my brother set thee on to this?

*Bora.* Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

*Pedro.* He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery; and fled he is upon this villany.

*Claud.* Sweet *Hero*! now thy image doth appear in the rare semblance that I lov'd it first.

*Dogb.* Come, bring away the plaintiffs; by this time, our Sexton hath reform'd Signior *Leonato* of the matter; and masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

*Verg.* Here, here comes master Signior *Leonato*, and the Sexton too.

*Enter Leonato, and Sexton, and Servants,*

*Leon.* Which is the villain? let me see his eyes; That when I note another man like him, I may avoid him; which of these is he?

*Bora.* If you would know your wronger, look on me.

*Leon.* Art thou, art thou the slave, that with thy breath hast kill'd mine innocent child?

*Bora.* Yea, even I alone.

*Leon.* No, not so, villain; thou bely'st thyself;

Here

Here stand a pair of honourable men,  
A third is fled, that had a hand in it:  
I thank you, Princes, for my daughter's death;  
Record it with your high and worthy deeds;  
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

*Claud.* I know not how to pray your patience,  
Yet I must speak: chuse your revenge yourself;  
Impose me to what penance your invention  
Can lay upon my sin; yet sinn'd I not,  
But in mistaking.

*Pedro.* By my soul, nor I;  
And yet to satisfy this good old man,  
I would bend under any heavy weight,  
That he'll enjoin me to.

*Leon.* You cannot bid my daughter live again,  
That were impossible; but, I pray you both,  
Possess the People in *Messina* here  
How innocent she dy'd; 'and if your love  
'Can labour aught in sad invention,  
'Hang her an Epitaph upon her tomb,  
'And sing it to her bones; sing it to-night:  
'To-morrow morning' come you to my house,  
And since you could not be my son-in-law,  
Be yet my nephew; my brother hath a daughter,  
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,  
And she alone is heir to both of us;  
Give her the right you should have given her Cousin,  
And so dies my revenge.

*Claud.* O noble Sir!  
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me:  
I do embrace your offer; and dispose  
For henceforth of poor *Claudio*.

*Leon.* 'To-morrow then' I will expect your Coming,  
[Exit *Pedro* and *Claud*.]

'To-night I take my leave.' This naughty man  
Shall face to face be brought to *Margaret*,  
Who, I believe, was pack'd in all this wrong,  
Hir'd to it by your brother.

*Bora.* No, by my soul, she was not;  
Nor knew not what she did, when she spoke to me.

D 2

But



But always hath been just and virtuous,  
In any thing that I do know by her.

*Dogb.* Moreover, Sir, which indeed is not under white and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me afs: I beseech you, let it be remembred in his punishment; and also the watch heard them talk of one *Deformed*: 'they say, he wears a key in his ear, and a lock hanging by it; and borrows money in God's name, the which he hath us'd so long, and never paid, that now men grow hard hearted, and will lend no-thing for God's sake.' Pray you, examine him upon that point.

*Leon.* I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

*Dogb.* Your Worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise God for you.

*Leon.* There's for thy pains.

*Dogb.* God save the foundation!

*Leon.* Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner; and I thank thee.

*Dogb.* I leave an errant knave with your Worship, which, I beseech your Worship, to correct yourself, for the example of others, God keep your Worship; I wish your Worship well: God restore you to health; I humbly give you leave to depart; and if a merry meeting may be wish'd, God prohibit it. Come, neighbour.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Leon.* Until to-morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

*Ant.* Farewel, my Lords; we look for you to-morrow.

*Pedro.* We will not fail.

*Claud.* To-night I'll mourn with *Hero*.'

*Leon.* Bring you these fellows on, we'll talk with *Margaret*,

How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

### SCENE changes to Leonato's House.

Enter *Benedick*, and *Margaret*.

*Bene.* PRAY thee, sweet Mistress *Margaret*, deserve well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of *Beatrice*.

*Marg.*

*Marg.* Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

*Bene.* In so high a stile, *Margaret* that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

(20) *Marg.* To have no Man come over me? why, shall I always keep above stairs?

*Bene.* Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth, it catches.

*Marg.* And your's as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

*Bene.* A most manly wit, *Margaret*, it will not hurt a woman; and so, I pray thee, call *Beatrice*; 'I give thee the bucklers..

*Marg.* Give us the swords; we have bucklers of our own.

*Bene.* If you use them, *Margaret*, you must put in the pikes with a vice, and they are dangerous weapons for maids.'

*Marg.* Well, I will call *Beatrice* to you, 'who, I think, hath legs.'

[*Exit Margaret.*]

*Bene.* 'And therefore will come.' [*Sings.*] *The God of love, that sits above, and knows me, and knows me, how pitiful I deserve, ——— I mean, in singing; but in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of pandars, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse; why, they were never so truly turn'd over and over, as my poor self, in love; marry, I cannot shew it in rhyme; I have try'd; I can find out no rhyme to lady but baby, an innocent's rhyme; for scorn, horn, a hard rhyme; for school, fool, a babling rhyme; very ominous endings; no, I was not born under a rhiming planet, for I cannot woo in festival terms.*

(20) *To have no Man come over me? why, shall I always keep below Stairs?*] Thus all the printed Copies, but, sure, erroneously: for all the Jest, that can lie in the Passage, is destroy'd by it. Any Man might come over her, literally speaking, if she always kept below Stairs. By the Correction I have ventured to make, *Margaret*, as I presume, must mean, What! shall I always keep above Stairs? i. e. Shall I for ever continue a Chambermaid?



*Enter Beatrice.*

Sweet *Beatrice*, would'st thou come when I call thee?

*Beat.* Yea, Signior, and depart when you bid me.

*Bene.* O, stay but 'till then.

*Beat.* Then, is spoke; fare you well now; and yet are I go, let me go with that I came for, which is, with knowing what hath past between, you and *Claudio*.

*Bene.* Only foul words, and thereupon I will kiss thee.

*Beat.* Foul words are but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkiss'd.

*Bene.* Thou hast frighted the word out of its right sense, so forcible is thy wit; but, I must tell thee plainly, *Claudio* undergoes my challenge; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward; and, I pray thee, now tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

*Beat.* For them all together; which maintain'd so politic a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them: but for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

*Bene.* Suffer love! a good epithet; I do suffer love, indeed, for I love thee against my will.

*Beat.* In spight of heart, I think; alas! poor heart, if you spight it for my sake, I will spight it for yours; for I will never love that, which my friend hates.

*Bene.* Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

*Beat.* It appears not in this confession; there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

*Bene.* An old, an old instance, *Beatrice*, that liv'd in the time of good neighbours; if a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monuments, than the bells ring, and the widow weeps.

*Beat.* And how long is that, think you?

*Bene.* 'Question?'—why, an hour in clamour, and a quarter in rheum; therefore it is most expedient for the wife, if Don worm (his conscience) find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trampet of his own virtues, as I am to myself; so much for praising myself; who, I myself will bear witness, is praise-worthy; and now tell me, how doth your Cousin?

*Beat.* Very ill.

*Bene.*

*Bene.* And how do you?

*Beat.* Very ill too.

'*Bene.* Serve God, love me, and mend; there will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.'

*Enter Ursula.*

*Urs.* Madam, you must come to your uncle; 'yonder's old coil at home;' it is proved, my lady *Hero* hath been falsely accus'd; the Prince and *Claudio* mightily abus'd; and Don *John* is the author of all, who is fled and gone: 'will you come presently?'

*Beat.* Will you go hear this news, Signior?

*Bene.* I will live in thy eyes, die in thy lap, and be bury'd in thy heart; and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle. [Exit

SCENE changes to a CHURCH.

'Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, and Attendants with tapers.'

'*Claud.* IS this the monument of *Leonato*?

'*Atten.* It is, my lord.'

EPI T A P H.

'Done to death by slanderous tongues  
'Was the *Hero*, that here lies:  
'Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,  
'Gives her fame which never dies.  
'So the life, that dy'd with shame,  
'Lives in death with glorious fame.  
'Hang thou there upon the tomb,  
'Praising her when I am dumb.'

'*Claud.* Now music sound, and sing your solemn hymn.'

S O N G.

'Pardon, Goddess of the night,  
'Those that slew thy virgin knight,  
'For, which, with songs of woe,  
'Round about her tomb they go.  
'Midnight, assist our moan;  
'Help us to sigh and groan

D 4

'Heavenly,



' Heavenly, heavenly :  
' Graves, yawn and yield your dead,  
' Till death be uttered,  
' Heavenly, heavenly.

' *Claud.* Now unto thy bones good night !  
' Yearly will I do this Rite.  
' *Pedro.* Good-morrow, masters, put your torches out ;  
' The wolves have prey'd ; and, look, the gentle day,  
' Before the wheels of *Phœbus*, round about  
' Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey :  
' Thanks to you all, and leave us ; fare you well.  
' *Claud.* Good-morrow, masters ; each his several way.  
' *Pedro.* Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds ;  
' And then to *Leonato's* we will go.  
' *Claud.* And *Hymen* now with luckier issue speed's, (21)  
' Than this, for whom we render'd up this woe! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to *Leonato's House.*

Enter *Leonato*, *Benedick*, *Margaret*, *Ursula*,  
*Antonio*, *Friar* and *Hero*.

*Friar.* DID I not tell you, she was innocent ?  
*Leon.* So are the Prince and *Claudio*, who  
accus'd her,

Upon the error that you heard debated.  
But *Margaret* was in some fault for this ;  
Although against her will, as it appears,  
' In the true course of all the question.'

*Ant.* Well ; I am glad, that all things sort so well.

*Bene.* And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd  
To call young *Claudio* to a reckoning for it.

*Leon.* Well, Daughter, and you gentlewomen all ;  
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,  
And when I send for you, come hither masked :

(21) *And Hymen now with luckier Issue speeds,  
Than this, for whom we render'd up this Woe]* *Claudio*  
could not know, without being a Prophet, that this new-propos'd  
Match should have any luckier Event than That design'd with  
*Hero*. Certainly, therefore, this should be a Wish in *Claudio*; and,  
to this End, the Poet might have wrote, *speed's*; i. e. *speed us* :  
and so it becomes a Prayer to *Hymen*.

*Dr. Thirby.*  
The

The Prince and *Claudio* promis'd by this hour  
To visit me ; you know your office, brother,  
You must be father to your brother's daughter,  
And give her to young *Claudio*. [*Exeunt Ladies.*]

*Ant.* Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

*Bene.* Friar, I must intreat your pains, I think.

*Friar.* To do what, Signior ?

*Bene.* To bind me or undo me, one of them ;  
Signior *Leonato*, truth it is, good Signior,  
Your Niece regards me with an eye of favour.

*Leon.* That eye my daughter lent her, 'tis most true.

*Bene.* And I do with an eye of love requite her.

*Leon.* The sight whereof, I think, you had from me,  
From *Claudio* and the Prince ; but what's your will ?

*Bene.* Your answer, Sir is enigmatical ;  
But for my will, my will is, your good will  
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd  
I' th' state of honourable marriage ;  
In which, good Friar, I shall desire your help.

*Leon.* My heart is with your liking.

*Friar.* And my help.

Enter *Don Pedro* and *Claudio*, with Attendants.

*Pedro.* Good morrow to this fair assembly.

*Leon.* ' Good-morrow, Prince ; good-morrow, *Claudio*.  
We here attend you ; are you yet determin'd  
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter ?

*Claud.* I'll hold my mind, where she an *Ethiope*.

*Leon.* Call her forth, brother, here's the Friar ready.  
[*Exit Antonio.*]

*Pedro.* Good-morrow, *Benedick* ; why what's the matter,  
That you have such a *February* face,  
So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness ?

*Claud.* I think, he thinks upon the savage bull :  
Tush, fear not, man, we'll tip thy horns with gold,  
And so all *Europa* shall rejoice at thee ;  
As once *Europa* did at lusty *Jove*  
When he would play the noble beast in love.

*Bene.* Bull *Jove*, Sir, had an amiable low,  
And some such strange bull leapt your father's cow ;  
And got a calf, in that same noble feat,  
Much like to you ; for you have just his bleat.

Enter



Enter Antonio, with Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, and Ursula, mask'd.

Claud. For this I owe you; here come other reck'nings.\*  
Which is the lady I must seize upon?

Ant. This same is she, and I do give you her.

Claud. Why, then she's mine; Sweet, let me see your face.

Leon. No, that you shall not, 'till you take her hand  
Before this Friar, and swear to marry her.

Claud. Give me your hand; before this holy Friar,  
I am your husband if you like of me.

Hero. And when I liv'd, I was your other wife.

[Unmasking.]

And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero? (22)

Hero. Nothing certainer.

One Hero dy'd defil'd, but I do live;  
And, surely, as I live, I am a maid.

Pedro. The former Hero! Hero, that is dead!

Leon. She dy'd, my lord, but whiles her slander liv'd.

Friar. All this amazement can I qualify,

When, after that the holy rites are ended,  
I'll tell thee largely of fair Hero's death:

Mean time let wonder seem familiar,

And to the chapel let us presently.

Bene. Soft and fair, friar. Which is Beatrice?

Beat. I answer to that name; what is your will?

Bene. Do not you love me?

Beat. Why, no, no more than reason.

Bene. Why, then your Uncle, and the Prince, and  
Claudio, have been deceiv'd; they swore, you did.

Beat. Do not you love me?

(22) Claud. Another Hero!

Hero. ——— Nothing certainer:

One Hero dy'd; but I do live.

And surely as I live I am a Maid.] Besides that the last  
Line but One wants a whole Foot in Measure, it is as defective  
in the Meaning: For how are the Words made out? One Hero  
dy'd, and yet that Hero lives, but how is she then another Hero?  
The Supplement, which I have restor'd from the old Quarto, solves  
all the Difficulty, and makes the last Line reasonable.

Bene.

Bene. Troth, no, no more than reason.

Beat. Why, then my Cousin, Margaret and Ursula,  
Have been deceiv'd; for they did swear, you did.

Bene. They swore, you were almost sick for me.

Beat. They swore, you were well-nigh dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis no matter; then you do not love me?

Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompence.

Leon. Come, Cousin, I am sure, you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't, that he loves her;

For here's a paper written in his hand,

A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,

Fashion'd to Beatrice.

Hero. And here's another,

Writ in my Cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,

Containing her affection unto Benedick.

Bene. A miracle! here's our own hands against our  
hearts; come, I will have thee: but, by the light I,  
take thee for pity.

(23) Beat. I would yet deny you; but by this good  
day, I yield upon great persuasion, and partly to save  
your life; for as I was told you were in a consumption.

(24) Bene. Peace, I will stop your mouth.

[Kissing her.]

Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

Bene. I'll tell the what, Prince; a College of wit-  
crackers cannot flout me out of my humour: dost thou  
think, I care for a satire, or an epigram? no: if a man

(23) I would not deny you, but by this good day I yield upon  
great persuasion, &c.] Is not this strange Mock-reasoning in Bea-  
trice? She would not deny him, but that she yields upon great  
Persuasion——By changing the Negative, I make no doubt but  
I have retriev'd the Poets Humour.

(24) Leon. Peace, I will stop your Mouth.] What can Leonato  
mean by This? "Nay, pray, piece, Niece; don't keep up this  
"Obstinacy of Profections, for I have Proofs to stop your Mouth."  
The ingenious Dr. Thirlby agreed with me, that this ought to be  
given to Benedick, who upon saying it, kisses Beatrice: and this  
being done before the whole Company, how natural is the Reply  
which the Prince makes upon it?

How dost thou, Benedick, the married Man?

Besides, this Mode of Speech, preparatory to a Salute, is familiar to  
our Poet in common with other Stage-Writers.

will



will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him; in brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me, for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion; for thy part, *Claudio*, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruis'd, and love my cousin.

*Claud.* I had well hoped, thou wouldst have denied *Beatrice*, that I might have cudgell'd the 'out of thy 'single life, to make thee a double dealer; which, out 'of question, thou wilt be, if my Cousin do not look 'exceeding narrowly to thee.'

*Bene.* Come, come, we are friends; let's have a Dance ere we are marry'd, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wives heels.

*Leon.* We'll have dancing afterwards.

*Bene.* First, o' my word; therefore, play music. Prince, thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife; there is no staff more reverend than one tipt with horn.

*Enter* Messenger.

*Mess.* My Lord, your brother *John* is ta'en in flight, And brought with armed men back to *Messina*.

*Bene.* Think not on him 'till to morrow: I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. Strike up, Pipers.

[Dance.]

[Exeunt omnes.]

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