

Much Adoe about Nothing from Mr. William Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies. Published according to the true originall copies. Mr. VWilliam Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies Bodleian First Folio, Arch. G c.7

Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616.

First publication edition. 23 April 2014

Much adoe about Nothing.

Actus primus, Scena prima.

Enter Leonato Governour of Messina, Innogen his wife, He ro his daughter, and Beatrice his Neece, with a messenger.

rem

remLeonato.

I *Learne in this Letter, that Don Peter of Arra gon, comes this night to Messina.*

rem

remMess.

He is very neere by this: he was not three Leagues off when I left him.

rem

remLeon.

How many Gentlemen haue you lost in this action?

rem

remMess.

But few of any sort, and none of name.

rem

remLeon.

A victorie is twice it selfe, when the atchieuer brings home full numbers: I finde heere, that Don Pe ter hath bestowed much honor on a yong Florentine, cal led Claudio.

rem

remMess.

Much deseru'd on his part, and equally remem bred by Don Pedro, he hath borne himselfe beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a Lambe, the feats of a Lion, he hath indeede better bettred expecta tion, then you must expect of me to tell you how.

rem

remLeo.

He hath an Vnckle heere in Messina, wil be very much glad of it.

rem

remMess.

I haue alreadie deliuered him letters, and there appeares much ioy in him, euen so much, that ioy could not shew it selfe modest enough, without a badg of bit ternesse.

rem

remLeo.

Did he breake out into teares?

rem

remMess.

In great measure.

rem

remLeo.

A kinde ouerflow of kindnesse, there are no fa ces truer, then those that are so wash'd, how much bet ter is it to weepe at ioy, then to ioy at weeping?

rem

remBea.

I pray you, is Signior Mountanto return'd from the warres, or no?

rem

remMess.

I know none of that name, Lady, there was none such in the armie of any sort.

rem

remLeon.

What is he that you aske for Neece?

rem

remHero.

My cousin meanes Signior Benedick of Padua

rem

remMess.

O he's return'd, and as pleasant as euer he was.

rem

remBeat.

He set vp his bils here in Messina, & challeng'd Cupid at the Flight: and my Vnckles foole reading the Challenge, subscrib'd for Cupid, and challeng'd him at the Burbolt. I pray you, how many hath hee kil'd and eaten in these warres? But how many hath he kil'd? for indeed, I promis'd to eate all of his killing.

rem

remLeon.

'Faith Neece, you taxe Signior Benedicke too much, but hee'l be meet with you, I doubt it not.

rem

remMess.

He hath done good seruice Lady in these wars.

rem

remBeat.

You had musty victuall, and he hath holpe to ease it: he's a very valiant Trencherman, hee hath an excellent stomacke.

rem

remMess.

And a good souldier too Lady.

rem

remBeat.

And a good souldier to a Lady. But what is he to a Lord?

rem

remMess.

A Lord to a Lord, a man to a man, stuft with all honourable vertues.

rem

remBeat.

It is so indeed, he is no lesse then a stuft man: but for the stuffing well, we are all mortall.

rem

remLeon.

You must not (sir) mistake my Neece, there is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick, & her: they neuer meet, but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

rem

remBea.

Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last con flict, foure of his fiue wits went halting off, and now is the whole man gouern'd with one: so that if hee haue wit enough to keepe himselfe warme, let him beare it for a difference betweene himselfe and his horse: For it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be knowne a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath euey month a new sworne brother.

rem

remMess.

I'tIs't possible?

rem

remBeat.

Very easily possible: he weares his faith but as the fashion of his hat, it euer changes with y next block.

rem

remMess.

I see (Lady) the Gentleman is not in your bookes.

rem

remBea.

No, and he were, I would burne 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 diuell?

rem

remMess.

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

rem

remBeat.

O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught then the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God helpe the noble Claudio, if hee haue caught the Benedict, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cur'd.

rem

remMess.

I will hold friends with you Lady.

rem

remBea.

Do good friend.

rem

remLeo.

You'l ne're run mad Neece.

rem

remBea.

No, not till a hot January.

rem

remMess.

Don Pedro is approach'd.

Enter don Pedro, Claudio, Benedicke, Balthasar, and Iohn the bastard.

rem

remPedro.

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

rem

remLeon.

Neuer came trouble to my house in the likenes of your Grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remaine: but when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happinesse takes his leaue.

rem

remPedro.

You embrace your charge too willingly: I thinke this is your daughter.

rem

remLeonato.

Her mother hath many times told me so.

rem

remBened.

Were you in doubt that you askt her?

rem

remLeonato.

Signior Benedicke, no, for then were you a childe.

rem

remPedro.

You haue it full Benedicke, we may ghesse by this, what you are, being a man, truely the Lady fathers her selfe: be happie Lady, for you are like an honorable father.

rem

remBen.

If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not haue his head on her shoulders for al Messina, as like him as she is.

rem

remBeat.

I wonder that you will still be talking, signior Benedicke, no body markes you.

rem

remBen.

What my deere Ladie Disdaine! are you yet liuing?

rem

remBeat.

Is it possible Disdaine should die, while shee hath such meete foode to feede it, as Signior Benedicke? Curtesie it selfe must conuert to Disdaine, if you come in her presence.

rem

remBene.

Then is curtesie a turnecoate, but it is cer taine I am loued of all Ladies, onely you excepted: and I would I could finde in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truely I loue none.

rem

remBeat.

A deere happinesse to women, they would else haue beene troubled with a pernitiuous Suter, I thanke God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that, I had rather heare my Dog barke at a Crow, than a man sweare he loues me.

rem

remBene.

God keepe your Ladiship still in that minde, so1 some Gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratcht face.

rem

remBeat.

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

rem

remBene.

Well, you are a rare Parrat teacher.

rem

remBeat.

A bird of my tongue, is better than a beast of your.

rem

remBen.

I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer, but keepe your way a Gods name, I haue done.

rem

remBeat.

You alwaies end with a Iades tricke, I know you of old.

rem

remPedro.

This is the summe of all: Leonato, signior Clau dio, and signior Benedicke; my deere friend Leonato, hath invited you all, I tell him we shall stay here, at the least

a moneth, and he heartily praies some occasion may de taine vs longer: I dare sweare hee is no hypocrite, but praies from his heart.

rem

remLeon.

If you sweare, my Lord, you shall not be for sworne, let mee bid you welcome, my Lord, being re conciled to the Prince your brother: I owe you all duetie.

rem

remIohn.

I thanke you, I am not of many words, but I thanke you.

rem

remLeon.

Please it your grace leade on?

rem

remPedro.

Your hand Leonato, we will goe together.

Exeunt. Manet Benedicke and Claudio.

rem

remClau.

Benedicke, didst thou note the daughter of sig nior Leonato?

rem

remBene.

I noted her not, but I lookt on her.

rem

remClaud.

Is she not a modest yong Ladie?

rem

remBene.

Doe you question me as an honest man should doe, for my simple true iudgement? or would you haue me speake after my custome, as being a professed tyrant to their sexe?

rem

remClau.

No, I pray thee speake in sober iudgement.

rem

remBene.

Why yfaith me thinks shee's too low for a hie praise, too browne for a faire praise, and too little for a great praise, onely this commendation I can affoord her, that were shee other then she is, she were vnhandsome, and being no other, but as she is, I doe not like her.

rem

remClau.

Thou think'st I am in sport, I pray thee tell me truely how thou lik'st her.

rem

remBene.

Would you buie her, that you enquier after her?

rem

remClau.

Can the world buie such a ieuell?

rem

remBen.

Yea, and a case to put it into, but speake you this with a sad brow? Or doe you play the flowting iacke, to tell vs Cupid is a good Harefinder, and Vulcan a rare Carpenter: Come, in what key shall amana man take you to goe in the song?

rem

remClau.

In mine eie, she is the sweetest Ladie that euer I lookt on.

rem

remBene.

I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her cosin, and she were not possest with a furie, exceedes her as much in beautie, as the first of Maie doth the last of December: but I hope you haue no intent to turne husband, haue you?

rem

remClau.

I would scarce trust my selfe, though I had sworne the contrarie, if Hero would be my wife.

rem

remBene.

Ist come to this? in faith hath not the world one man but he will weare his cap with suspition? shall I ne uer see a batcheller of three score againe? goe to yfaith, and thou wilt needes thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and sigh away sundaies: looke, don Pedro is returned to seeke you.

Enter don Pedro, Iohn the bastard.

rem

remPedr.

What secret hath held you here, that you fol lowed not to Leonatoes?

rem

remBened.

I would your Grace would constraine mee to tell.

rem

remPedro.

I charge thee on thy allegeance.

rem

remBen.

You heare, Count Claudio, I can be secret as a dumbe man, I would haue you thinke so (but on my al legiance, marke you this, on my allegiance) hee is in loue, With who? now that is your Graces part: marke how short his answeere is, with Hero, Leonatoes short daughter.

rem

remClau.

If this were so, so were it vttred.

rem

remBened.

Like the old tale, my Lord, it is not so, nor 'twas not so: but indeede, God forbid it should be so.

rem

remClau.

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

rem

remPedro.

Amen, if you loue her, for the Ladie is verie well worthie.

rem

remClau.

You speake this to fetch me in, my Lord.

rem

remPedr.

By my troth I speake my thought.

rem

remClau.

And in faith, my Lord, I spoke mine.

rem

remBened.

And by my two faiths and troths, my Lord, I speake mine.

rem

remClau.

That I loue her, I feele.

rem

remPedr.

That she is worthie, I know.

rem

remBened.

That I neither feele how shee should be lo ued, nor know how shee should be worthie, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me, I will die in it at the stake.

rem

remPedr.

Thou wast euer an obstinate heretique in the de spight of Beautie.

rem

remClau.

And neuer could maintaine his part, but in the force of his will.

rem

remBen.

That a woman conceiued me, I thanke her: that she brought mee vp, I likewise giue her most humble thanks: but that I will haue a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an inuisible baldricke, all women shall pardon me: because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will doe my selfe the right to trust none: and the fine is, (for the which I may goe the finer) I will liue a Batchellor.

rem

remPedro.

I shall see thee ere I die, looke pale with loue.

rem

remBene.

With anger, with sicknesse, or with hunger, my Lord, not with loue: proue that euer I loose more blood with loue, then I will get againe with drinking, picke out mine eyes with a Balletmakers penne, and hang me vp at the doore of a brothelhouse for the signe of blinde Cupid.

rem

remPedro.

Well, if euer thou doost fall from this faith, thou wilt proue a notable argument.

rem

remBene.

If I do, hang me in a bottle like a Cat, & shoot at me, and he that hit's me, let him be clapt on the shoul der, and cal'd Adam.

rem

remPedro.

Well, as time shall trie: In time the sauage Bull doth beare tnethe yoake.

rem

remBene.

The sauage bull may, but if euer the sensible Benedicke beare it, plucke off the bulles hornes, and set them in my forehead, and let me be vildely painted, and in such great Letters as they write, heere is good horse to hire: let them signifie vnder my signe, here you may see Benedicke the married man.

rem

remClau.

If this should euer happen, thou wouldst bee horne mad.

rem

remPedro.

Nay, if Cupid haue not spent all his Quiuer in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

rem

remBene.

I looke for an earthquake too then.

rem

remPedro.

Well, you will temporize with the houres, in the meane time, good Signior Benedicke, repaire to Leo natoes, commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at supper, for indeede he hath made great prepara tion.

rem

remBene.

I haue almost matter enough in me for such an Embassage, and so I commit you.

rem

remClau.

To the tuition of God. From my house, if I had it.

rem

remPedro.

The sixth of Iuly. Your louing friend, Benedick.

rem

remBene.

Nay mocke not, mocke not; the body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guardes are but slightly basted on neither, ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leaue you.

Exit.

rem

remClau.

My Liege, your Highnesse now may doe mee good.

rem

remPedro.

*My loue is thine to teach, teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learne
Any hard Lesson that may do thee good.*

rem

remClau.

Hath Leonato any sonne my Lord?

rem

remPedro.

No childe but Hero, she's his onely heire.

Dost thou affect her Claudio?

rem

remClau.

O my Lord,

When you went onward on this ended action, An ink mark follows the end of this line.

*I look'd vpon her with a souldiers eie,
That lik'd, but had a rougher taske in hand,
Than to driue liking to the name of loue:
But now I am return'd, and that warrethoughts
Haue left their places vacant: in their roomes,
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting mee how faire yong Hero is,
Saying I lik'd her ere I went to warres.*

rem

remPedro.

Thou wilt be like a louer presently,

And tire the hearer with a booke of words:

If thou dost loue faire Hero, cherish it,

And I will breake with her: wast not to this end,

That thou beganftst to twist so fine a story?

rem

remClau.

*How sweetly doe you minister to loue,
That know loues grieffe by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sodaine seeme,
I would haue salu'd it with a longer treatise.*

rem

remPed.

*What need y bridge much broder then the flood?
The fairest graunt is the necessitie:
Looke what will serue, is fit: 'tis once, thou louest,
And I will fit thee with the remedie,
I know we shall haue reuelling to night,
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell faire Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosome Ile vnclaspe my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong incounter of my amorous tale:
Then after, to her father will I breake,
And the conclusion is, shee shall be thine,
In practise let vs put it presently.*

Exeunt.

Enter Leonato and an old man, brother to Leonato.

rem

remLeo.

How now brother, where is my cosen your son: hath he provided this musicke?

rem

remOld.

He is very busie about it, but brother, I can tell you newes that you yet dreamt not of.

rem

remLo.

Are they good?

rem

remOld.

As the euent stamps them, but they haue a good couer: they shew well outward, the Prince and Count Claudio walking in a thick pleached alley in my orchard, were thus ouerheard by a man of mine: the Prince dis couered to Claudio that hee loued my niece your daugh ter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and if hee found her accordant, hee meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly breake with you of it.

rem

remLeo.

Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

rem

remOld.

A good sharpe fellow, I will send for him, and question him your selfe.

rem

remLeo.

No, no; wee will hold it as a dreame, till it ap peare it selfe: but I will acquaint my daughter withall, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if per aduerture this bee true: goe you and tell her of it: coo sins, you know what you haue to doe, O I crie you mer cie friend, goe you with mee and I will use your skill, good cosin haue a care this busie time.

Exeunt.

Enter Sir Iohn the Bastard, and Conrade his companion.

rem

remCon.

What the good yeere my Lord, why are you thus out of measure sad?

rem

remIoh.

There is no measure in the occasion that breeds, therefore the sadnesse is without limit.

rem

remCon.

You should heare reason.

rem

remIohn.

And when I haue heard it, what blessing brin geth it?

rem

remCon.

If not a present remedy, yet a patient sufferance.

rem

remIoh.

I wonder that thou (being as thou saist thou art, borne vnder Saturne) goest about to apply a morall me dicine, to a mortifying mischiefe: I cannot hide what I am: I must bee sad when I haue cause, and smile at no mans iests, eat when I haue stomacke, and wait for no mans leisure: sleepe when I am drowsie, and tend on no mans businesse, laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humor.

rem

remCon.

Yea, but you must not make the ful show of this, till you may doe it without controllment, you haue of late stood out against your brother, and hee hath tane you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take root, but by the faire weather that you make your selfe, it is needful that you frame the season for your owne haruest.

rem

remIohn.

I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rose in his grace, and it better fits my bloud to be disdain'd of all, then to fashion a carriage to rob loue from any: in this (though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man) it must not be denied but I am a plaine dealing villaine, I am trusted with a mussell, and enfranchisde with a clog, therefore I haue 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 meane time, let me be that I am, and seeke not to alter me.

rem

remCon.

Can you make no use of your discontent?

rem

remIohn.

I will make all use of it, for I vse it onely. Who comes here? what newes Borachio?

Enter Borachio.

rem

remBor.

I came yonder from a great supper, the Prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato, and I can giue you intelligence of an intended marriage.

rem

remIohn.

Will it serue for any Modell to build mischief on? What is hee for a foole that betrothes himselfe to vnquietnesse?

rem

remBor.

Mary it is your brothers right hand.

rem

remIohn.

Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

rem

remBor.

Euen he.

rem

remIohn.

A proper squier, and who, and who, which way lookes he?

rem

remBor.

Mary on Hero, the daughter and Heire of Leo nato.

rem

remIohn.

A very forward Marchchicke, how came you to this?

rem

remBor.

Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoa king a musty roome, comes me the Prince and Claudio, hand in hand in sad conference: I whipt behind the Ar ras, and there heard it agreed vpon, that the Prince should wooe Hero for himselfe, and hauing obtain'd her, giue her to Count Claudio.

rem

remIohn.

Come, come, let vs thither, this may proue food to my displeasure, that young startvp hath all the glorie of my ouerthrow: if I can crosse him any way, I blesse my selfe euery way, you are both sure, and will assist mee?

rem

remConr.

To the death my Lord.

rem

remIohn.

Let vs to the great supper, their cheere is the greater that I am subdued, would the Cooke were of my minde: shall we goe proue whats to be done?

rem

remBor.

Wee'll wait vpon your Lordship.

Exeunt.

Actus Secundus.

Enter Leonato, his brother, his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, and a kinsman.

rem

remLeonato.

Was not Count Iohn here at supper?

rem

remBrother.

I saw him not.

rem

remBeatrice.

How tartly that Gentleman lookes, I neuer can see him, but I am heartburn'd an howre after.

rem

remHero.

He is of a very melancholy disposition.

rem

remBeatrice.

Hee were an excellent man that were made iust in the midway betweene him and Benedicke, the one is too like an image and saies nothing, and the other too like my Ladies eldest sonne, euermore tatling.

rem

remLeon.

Then halfe signior Benedicks tongue in Count Iohns mouth, and halfe Count Iohns melancholy in Sig nior Benedicks face.

rem

remBeat.

With a good legge, and a good foot vnckle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would winne any woman in the world, if he could get her good will.

rem

remLeon.

By my troth Neece, thou wilt neuer get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

rem

remBrother.

Infaith shee's too curst.

rem

remBeat.

Too curst is more then curst, I shall lessen Gods sending that way: for it is said, God sends a curst Cow short hornes, but to a Cow too curst he sends none.

rem

remLeon.

So, by being too curst, God will send you no hornes.

rem

remBeat.

Iust, if he send me no husband, for the which blessing, I am at him vpon my knees euery morning and euening: Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face, I had rather lie in the woollen.

rem

remLeonato.

You may light vpon a husband that hath no beard.

rem

remBeatrice.

What should I doe with him? Dresse him in my apparell, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? he that hath a beard, is more then a youth: and he that hath no beard, is lesse then a man: and hee that is more then a youth, is not for mee: and he that is lesse then a man, I am not for him: therefore I will euen take sixepence in ear nest of the Berrord, and leade his Apes into hell.

rem

remLeon.

Well then, goe you into hell.

rem

remBeat.

No, but to the gate, and there will the Deuill meete mee like an old Cuckold with hornes on his head, and say, get you to heauen Beatrice, get you to heauen, heere's no place for you maids, so deliuer I vp my Apes, and away to Saint¹S. Peter: for the heauens, hee shewes mee where the Batchellers sit, and there liue wee as merry as the day is long.

rem

remBrother.

Well neece, I trust you will be rul'd by your father.

rem

¹S.

remBeatrice.

Yes faith, it is my cosens dutie to make curt sie, and say, as it please you: but yet for all that cosin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make an other cursie, and say, father, as it please me.

rem

remLeonato.

Well neece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

rem

remBeatrice.

Not till God make men of some other met tall then earth, would it not grieue a woman to be ouer mastred with a peece of valiant dust? to make account of her life to a clod of waiward marle? no vnckle, ile none: Adams sonnes are my brethren, and truly I hold it a sinne to match in my kinred.

rem

remLeon.

Daughter, remember what I told you, if the Prince doe solicit you in that kinde, you know your an swere.

rem

remBeatrice.

The fault will be in the musicke cosin, if you be not woed in good time: if the Prince bee too impor tant, tell him there is measure in euey thing, & so dance out the answere, for heare me Hero, wooing, wedding, & repenting, is as a Scotch jigge, a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suite is hot and hasty like a Scotch ijgge (and full as fantastical) the wedding manerly modest, (as a measure) full of state & aunchentry, and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinque pace faster and faster, till he sinkes into his graue.

rem

remLeonato.

Cosin you apprehend passing shrewdly.

rem

remBeatrice.

I haue a good eye vnckle, I can see a Church by daylight.

rem

remLeon.

The reuellers are entring brother, make good roome.

Enter Prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthasar, or dumbe Iohn, Maskers with a drum.

rem

remPedro.

Lady, will you walke about with your friend?

rem

remHero.

So you walke softly, and looke sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walke, and especially when I walke away.

rem

remPedro.

With me in your company.

rem

remHero.

I may say so when I please.

rem

remPedro.

And when please you to say so?

rem

remHero.

When I like your fauour, for God defend the Lute should be like the case.

rem

remPedro.

My visor is Philemons roofe, within the house is Loue.

rem

remHero.

Why then your visor should be thatcht.

rem

remPedro.

Speake low if you speake Loue.

rem

remBene.

Well, I would you did like me.

rem

remMar.

So would not I for your owne sake, for I haue manie ill qualities.

rem

remBene.

Which is one?

rem

remMar.

I say my prayers alowd.

rem

remBen.

I loue you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.

rem

remMar.

God match me with a good dauncer.

rem

remBalt.

Amen.

rem

remMar.

And God keepe him out of my sight when the daunce is done: answer Clarke.

rem

remBalt.

No more words, the Clarke is answered.

rem

remVrsula.

I know you well enough, you are Signior An thonio.

rem

remAnth.

At a word, I am not.

rem

remVrsula.

I know you by the wagling of your head.

rem

remAnth.

To tell you true, I counterfet him.

rem

remVrsu.

You could neuer doe him so ill well, vnlesse you were the very man: here's his dry hand vp & down, you are he, you are he.

rem

remAnth.

At a word I am not.

rem

remVrsula.

Come, come, doe you thinke I doe not know you by your excellent wit? can vertue hide it selfe? goe to, mumme, you are he, graces will appeare, and there's an end.

rem

remBeat.

Will you not tell me who told you so?

rem

remBene.

No, you shall pardon me.

rem

remBeat.

Nor will you not tell me who you are?

rem

remBened.

Not now.

rem

remBeat.

That I was disdainfull, and that I had my good wit out of the hundred merry tales: well, this was Signi or Benedicke that said so.

rem

remBene.

What's he?

rem

remBeat.

I am sure you know him well enough.

rem

remBene.

Not I, beleue me.

rem

remBeat.

Did he neuer make you laugh?

rem

remBene.

I pray you what is he?

rem

remBeat.

Why he is the Princes ieaster, a very dull foole, onely his gift is, in deuising impossible slanders, none but Libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his witte, but in his villanie, for hee 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.

rem

remBene.

When I know the Gentleman, Ile tell him what you say.

rem

remBeat.

Do, do, hee'l but breake a comparison or two on me, which peradventure (not markt, or not laugh'd at) strikes him into melancholly, and then there's a Par tridge wing saued, for the foole will eate no supper that night. We must follow the Leaders.

rem

remBen.

In euery good thing.

rem

remBea.

Nay, if they leade to any ill, I will leaue them at the next turning.

Exeunt.

Musicke for the dance.

rem

remIohn.

Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawne her father to breake with him about it: the Ladies follow her, and but one visor remaines.

rem

remBorachio.

And that is Claudio, I know him by his bea ring.

rem

remIohn.

Are not you signior Benedicke?

rem

remClau.

You know me well, I am hee.

rem

remIohn.

Signior, you are verie neere my Brother in his loue, he is enamor'd on Hero, I pray you disswade him from her, she is no equall for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

rem

remClaudio.

How know you he loues her?

rem

remIohn.

I heard him sweare his affection,

rem

remBor.

So did I too, and he swore he would marrie her to night.

rem

remIohn.

Come, let vs to the banquet.

Ex. manet Clau.

rem

remClau.

Thus answere I in name of Benedicke,

But heare these ill newes with the eares of Claudio:

'Tis certaine so, the Prince woes for himselfe:

Friendship is constant in all other things,

Saue in the Office and affaires of loue:

Therefore all hearts in loue use their owne tongues.

Let euerie eye negotiate for it selfe,

And trust no Agent: for beautie is a witch,

Against whose charmes, faith melteth into blood:

This is an accident of hourelly prooffe,

Which I mistrusted not. Farewell therefore Hero.

Enter Benedicke.

rem

remBen.

Count Claudio.

rem

remClau.

Yea, the same.

rem

remBen.

Come, will you goe with me?

rem

remClau.

Whither?

rem

remBen.

Euen to the next Willow, about your own bu sinesse, Count. What fashion will you weare the Gar land off? About your necke, like an Vsurers chaine? Or vnder your arme, like a Lieutenants scarfe? You must weare it one way, for the Prince hath got your Hero.

rem

remClau.

I wish him ioy of her.

rem

remBen.

Why that's spoken like an honest Drouier, so they sel Bullockes: but did you thinke the Prince wold haue serued you thus?

rem

remClau.

I pray you leaue me.

rem

remBen.

Ho now you strike like the blindman, 'twas the boy that stole your meate, and you'l beat the post.

rem

remClau.

If it will not be, Ile leaue you.

Exit.

rem

remBen.

Alas poore hurt fowle, now will he creepe into sedges: But that my Ladie Beatrice should know me, & not know me: the Princes foole! Hah? It may be I goe vnder that title, because I am merrie: yea but so I am apt to do my selfe wrong: I am not so reputed, it is the base (though bitter) disposition of Beatrice, that putt's the world into her person, and so giues me out: well, Ile be reuenged as I may.

Enter the Prince.

rem

remPedro.

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

rem

remBene.

Troth my Lord, I haue played the part of Lady Fame, I found him heere as melancholy as a Lodge in a Warren, I told him, and I thinke, told him true, that your grace had got the will of this young Lady, and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to binde him a rod, as be ing worthy to be whipt.

rem

remPedro.

To be whipt, what's his fault?

rem

remBene.

The flat transgression of a Schooleboy, who being ouerioyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companion, and he steales it.

rem

remPedro.

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

rem

remBen.

Yet it had not been amisse the rod had beene made, and the garland too, for the garland he might haue worne himselfe, and the rod hee might haue bestowed on you, who (as I take it) haue stolne his birds nest.

rem

remPedro.

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

rem

remBene.

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

rem

remPedro.

The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrell to you, the Gentleman that daunst with her, told her shee is much wrong'd by you.

rem

remBene.

O she misusde me past the indurance of a block: an oake but with one greene leafe on it, would haue an swered her: my very visor began to assume life, and scold with her: shee told mee, not thinking I had beene my selfe, that I was the Princes Iester, and that I was duller then a great thaw, hudling iest vpon iest, with such im possible conueiance vpon me, that I stood like a man at a marke, with a whole army shooting at me: shee speakes poynyards, and euery word stabbes: if her breath were as terrible as terminations, there were no liuing neere her, she would infect to the north starre: I would not marry her, though she were indowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgrest, she would haue made Hercules haue turnd spit, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too: come, talke not of her, you shall finde her the infernall Ate in good apparell. I would to God some scholler would coniure her, for certainly while she is heere, a man may liue as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuary, and people sinne vpon purpose, because they would goe thither, so indeed all disquiet, horror, and perturbation followes her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice, Leonato, Hero.

rem

remPedro.

Looke heere she comes.

rem

remBene.

Will your Grace command mee any seruice to the worlds end? I will goe on the slightest arrand now to the Antypodes that you can devise to send me on: I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia: bring you the length of

*Prester Iohns foot: fetch you a hayre off the great Chams beard: doe you any em
bassage to the Pigmies, rather then hould three words conference, with this Harpy:
you haue no employment for me?*

rem

remPedro.

None, but to desire your good company.

rem

remBene.

O God sir, heeres a dish I loue not, I cannot in dure this Lady tongue.

Exit.

rem

remPedr.

Come Lady, come, you haue lost the heart of Signior Benedicke.

rem

remBeatr.

*Indeed my Lord, hee lent it me a while, and I gaue him use for it, a double heart for
a single one, marry once before he wonne it of mee, with false dice, therefore your
Grace may well say I haue lost it.*

rem

remPedro.

You haue put him downe Lady, you haue put him downe.

rem

remBeat.

*So I would not he should do me, my Lord, lest I should prooue the mother of fooles:
I haue brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seeke.*

rem

remPedro.

Why how now Count, wherfore are you sad?

rem

remClaud.

Not sad my Lord.

rem

remPedro.

How then? sicke?

rem

remClaud.

Neither, my Lord.

rem

remBeat.

*The Count is neither sad, nor sicke, nor merry, nor well: but ciuill Count, ciuill as
an Orange, and some thing of a iealous complexion.*

rem

remPedro.

*Ifaith Lady, I thinke your blazon to be true, though Ile be sworne, if hee be so, his
conceit is false: heere Claudio, I haue wooed in thy name, and faire Hero is won, I*

haue broke with her father, and his good will obtained, name the day of marriage, and God giue thee ioy.

rem

remLeona.

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

rem

remBeatr.

Speake Count, tis your Qu.

rem

remClaud.

Silence is the perfectest Herault of ioy, I were but little happy if I could say, how much? Lady, as you are mine, I am yours, I giue away my selfe for you, and doat vpon the exchange.

rem

remBeat.

Speake cosin, or (if you cannot) stop his mouth with a kisse, and let not him speake neither.

rem

remPedro.

Infaieth Lady you haue a merry heart.

rem

remBeatr.

Yea my Lord I thanke it, poore foole it keepes on the windy side of Care, my coosin tells him in his eare that he is in my heart.

rem

remClau.

And so she doth coosin.

rem

remBeat.

Good Lord for alliance: thus goes euery one to the world but I, and I am sunburn'd, I may sit in a cor ner and cry, heigh ho for a husband.

rem

remPedro.

Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

rem

remBeat.

I would rather haue one of your fathers getting: hath your Grace ne're a brother like you? your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

rem

remPrince.

Will you haue me? Lady.

rem

remBeat.

No, my Lord, vnlesse I might haue another for workingdaies, your Grace is too costly to weare euerie day: but I beseech your Grace pardon mee, I was borne to speake all mirth, and no matter.

rem

remPrince.

Your silence most offends me, and to be mer ry, best becomes you, for out of question, you were born in a merry howre.

rem

remBeatr.

No sure my Lord, my Mother cried, but then there was a starre daunst, and vnder that was I borne: co sins God giue you ioy.

rem

remLeonato.

Neece, will you looke to those things I told you of?

rem

remBeat.

I cry you mercy Vncle, by your Graces pardon.

Exit Beatrice.

rem

remPrince.

By my troth a pleasant spirited Lady.

rem

remLeon.

There's little of the melancholy element in her my Lord, she is neuer sad, but when she sleepes, and not euer sad then: for I haue heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamt of unhappinesse, and wakt her selfe with laughing.

rem

remPedro.

Shee cannot indure to heare tell of a husband.

rem

remLeonato.

O, by no meanes, she mocks all her wooers out of suite.

rem

remPrince.

She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

rem

remLeonato.

O Lord, my Lord, if they were but a weeke married, they would talke themselues madde.

rem

remPrince.

Counte Claudio, when meane you to goe to Church?

rem

remClau.

To morrow my Lord, Time goes on crutches, till Loue haue all his rites.

rem

remLeonata.

Not till monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a iust seuen night, and a time too briefe too, to haue all things answer minde.

rem

remPrince.

Come, you shake the head at so long a brea thing, but I warrant thee Claudio, the time shall not goe dully by vs, I will in the interim, vndertake one of Hercules labors, which is, to bring Signior Benedicke and the Lady Beatrice into a mountaine of affection, th'one with th'other, I would faine haue it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assi stance as I shall giue you direction.

rem

remLeonata.

My Lord, I am for you, though it cost mee ten nights watchings.

rem

remClaud.

And I my Lord.

rem

remPrin.

And you to gentle Hero?

rem

remHero.

I will doe any modest office, my Lord, to helpe my cosin to a good husband.

rem

remPrin.

And Benedick is not the vnhopefullest husband that I know: thus farre can I praise him, hee is of a noble straine, of approued valour, and confirm'd honesty, I will teach you how to humour your cosin, that shee shall fall in loue with Benedicke, and I, with your two helpes, will so practise on Benedicke, that in despite of his quicke wit, and his queasie stomacke, hee shall fall in loue with Beatrice: if wee can doe this, Cupid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall be ours, for wee are the onely loue gods, goe in with me, and I will tell you my drift.

Exit.

Enter Iohn and Borachio.

rem

remIoh.

It is so, the Count Claudio shal marry the daugh ter of Leonato.

rem

remBora.

Yea my Lord, but I can crosse it.

rem

remIohn.

Any barre, any crosse, any impediment, will be medicinable to me, I am sicke in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges euenly with mine, how canst thou crosse this marriage?

rem

remBor.

Not honestly my Lord, but so couertly, that no dishonesty shall appeare in me.

rem

remIohn.

Shew me breefely how.

rem

remBor.

I thinke I told your Lordship a yeere since, how much I am in the fauour of Margaret, the waiting gentle woman to Hero.

rem

remIohn.

I remember.

rem

remBor.

I can at any vnseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to looke out at her Ladies chamber window.

rem

remIohn.

What life is in that, to be the death of this mar riage?

rem

remBor.

The poyson of that lies in you to temper, goe you to the Prince your brother, spare not to tell him, that hee hath wronged his Honor in marrying the renowned Claudio, whose estimation do you mightily hold vp, to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

rem

remIohn.

What prooffe shall I make of that?

rem

remBor.

Prooffe enough, to misuse the Prince, to vexe Claudio, to vndoe Hero, and kill Leonato, looke you for a ny other issue?

rem

remIohn.

Onely to despight them, I will endeauour any thing.

rem

remBor.

Goe then, finde me a meete howre, to draw on Pedro and the Count Claudio alone, tell them that you know that Hero loues me, intend a kinde of zeale both to the Prince and Claudio (as in a loue of your brothers honor who hath made this match) and his friends repu tation, who is thus like to be cosen'd with the semblance of a maid, that you haue discover'd thus: they will scarce ly beleeeue this without triall: offer them instances which shall beare no lesse likelihood, than to see mee at her chamber window, heare me call Margaret, Hero; heare Margaret terme me Claudio, and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding, for in the meane time, I will so fashion the matter, that Hero shall be absent, and there shall appeare such

seeming truths of Heroes disloyaltie, that ieaalousie shall be cal'd assurance, and all the preparation ouerthrowne.

rem

remIohn.

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

rem

remBor.

Be thou constant in the accusation, and my cun ning shall not shame me.

rem

remIohn.

I will presentlie goe learne their day of marri age.

Exit.

Enter Benedicke alone.

rem

remBene.

Boy.

rem

remBoy.

Signior.

rem

remBene.

In my chamber window lies a booke, bring it hither to me in the orchard.

rem

remBoy.

I am heere already sir.

Exit.

rem

remBene.

I know that, but I would haue thee hence, and heere againe. I doe much wonder, that one man seeing how much another man is a foole, when he dedicates his behaiours to loue, will after hee hath laught at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his owne scorne, by falling in loue, & such a man is Claudio, I haue known when there was no musicke with him but the drum and the fife, and now had hee rather heare the taber and the pipe: I haue knowne when he would haue walkt ten mile afoot, to see a good armor, and now will he lie ten nights awake caruing the fashion of a new dub let: he was wont to speake plaine, & to the purpose (like an honest man & a souldier) and now is he turn'd ortho graphy, his words are a very fantastical banquet, iust so many strange dishes: may I be so conuerted, & see with these eyes? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I will not bee sworne, but loue may transforme me to an oyster, but Ile take my oath on it, till he haue made an oyster of me, he shall neuer make me such a foole: one woman is faire, yet I am well: another is wise, yet I am well: another vertu ous, yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace: rich shee shall be, that's certaine: wise, or Ile

none: vertuous, or Ile ne uer cheapen her: faire, or Ile neuer looke on her: milde, or come not neere me: Noble, or not for an Angell: of good discourse: an excellent Musitian, and her haire shal be of what colour it please God, hah! the Prince and Monsieur Loue, I will hide me in the Arbor.

Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Iacke Wilson.

rem

remPrin.

Come, shall we heare this musicke?

rem

remClaud.

*Yea my good Lord: how still the euening is,
As husht on purpose to grace harmonie.*

rem

remPrin.

See you where Benedicke hath hid himselfe?

rem

remClau.

*O very well my Lord: the musicke ended,
Wee'll fit the kidfoxe with a penny worth.*

rem

remPrince.

Come Balthasar, wee'll heare that song again.

rem

remBalth.

*O good my Lord, taxe not so bad a voyce,
To slander musicke any more then once.*

rem

remPrin.

*It is the witnesse still of excellency,
To slander Musicke any more then once.*

rem

remPrince.

*It is the witnesse still of excellencie,
To put a strange face on his owne perfection,
I pray thee sing, and let me woe no more.*

rem

remBalth.

*Because you talke of wooing, I will sing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit,
To her he thinkes not worthy, yet he wooes,
Yet will he sweare he loues.*

rem

remPrince.

*Nay pray thee come,
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,*

Doe it in notes.

rem

remBalth.

Note this before my notes,

Theres not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

rem

remPrince.

Why these are very crotchets that he speaks,

Note notes forsooth, and nothing.

rem

remBene.

*Now diuine aire, now is his soule rauisht, is it not strange that sheepes guts should
hale soules out of mens bodies? well, a horne for my money when all's done.*

The Song.

Sigh no more Ladies, sigh no more,

Men were deceiuers euer,

One foote in Sea, and one on shore,

To one thing constant neuer,

Then sigh not so, but let them goe,

And be you blithe and bonnie,

Conuerting all your sounds of woe,

Into hey nony nony.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,

Of dumps so dull and heauy,

The fraud of men were euer so,

Since summer first was leauy,

Then sigh not so, &c.

rem

remPrince.

By my troth a good song.

rem

remBalth.

And an ill singer, my Lord.

rem

remPrince.

Ha, no, no faith, thou singst well enough for a shift.

rem

remBen.

*And he had been a dog that should haue howld thus, they would haue hang'd him, and
I pray God his bad voyce bode no mischiefe, I had as liefe haue heard the nightrauen,
come what plague could haue come af ter it.*

rem

remPrince.

Yea marry, dost thou heare Balthasar? I pray thee get vs some excellent musick: for to morrow night we would haue it at the Lady Heroes chamber window.

rem

remBalth.

The best I can, my Lord.

Exit Balthasar.

rem

remPrince.

Do so, farewell. Come hither Leonato, what was it you told me of to day, that your Niece Beatrice was in loue with signior Benedicke?

rem

remCla.

O I, stalke on, stalke on, the foule sits. I did ne uer thinke that Lady would haue loued any man.

rem

remLeon.

No, nor I neither, but most wonderful, that she should so dote on Signior Benedicke, whom shee hath in all outward behaiours seemed euer to abhorre.

rem

remBene.

Is't possible? sits the winde in that corner?

rem

remLeo.

By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of it, but that she loues him with an intraged affe ction, it is past the infinite of thought.

rem

remPrince.

May be she doth but counterfeit.

rem

remClaud.

Faith like enough.

rem

remLeon.

O God! counterfeit? there was neuer counter feit of passion, came so neere the life of passion as she dis couers it.

rem

remPrince.

Why what effects of passion shewes she?

rem

remClaud.

Baite the hooke well, this fish will bite.

rem

remLeon.

What effects my Lord? shee will sit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

rem

remClau.

She did indeed.

rem

remPrince.

How, how I pray you? you amaze me, I would haue thought her spirit had beene inuincible against all assaults of affection.

rem

remLeo.

I would haue sworne it had, my Lord, especially against Benedicke.

rem

remBene.

I should thinke this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow speakes it: knauery cannot sure hide himselfe in such reuerence.

rem

remClaud.

He hath tane th'infection, hold it vp.

rem

remPrince.

Hath shee made her affection known to Bene dicke?

rem

remLeonato.

No, and sweares she neuer will, that's her torment.

rem

remClaud.

'Tis true indeed, so your daughter saies: shall I, saies she, that haue so oft encountred him with scorne, write to him that I loue him?

rem

remLeo.

This saies shee now when shee is beginning to write to him, for shee'll be vp twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smocke, till she haue writ a sheet of paper: my daughter tells vs all.

rem

remClau.

Now you talke of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty iest your daughter told vs of.

rem

remLeon.

O when she had writ it, & was reading it ouer, she found Benedicke and Beatrice betweene the sheete.

rem

remClau.

That.

rem

remLeon.

O she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence, raild at her self, that she should be so immodest to write, to one that shee knew would flout her: I measure him, saies she, by my owne spirit, for I should flout him if hee writ to mee, yea though I loue him, I should.

rem

remClau.

Then downe vpon her knees she falls, weepes, sobs, beates her heart, teares her hayre, praies, curses, O sweet Benedicke, God giue me patience.

rem

remLeon.

She doth indeed, my daughter saies so, and the extasie hath so much ouerborne her, that my daughter is sometime afeard she will doe a desperate outrage to her selfe, it is very true.

rem

remPrince.

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

rem

remClau.

To what end? he would but make a sport of it, and torment the poore Lady worse.

rem

remPrin.

And he should, it were an almes to hang him, shee's an excellent sweet Lady, and (out of all suspition,) she is virtuous.

rem

remClaudio.

And she is exceeding wise.

rem

remPrince.

In euery thing, but in louing Benedicke.

rem

remLeon.

O my Lord, wisdome and bloud combating in so tender a body, we haue ten proofes to one, that bloud hath the victory, I am sorry for her, as I haue iust cause, being her Vncle, and her Guardian.

rem

remPrince.

I would shee had bestowed this dotage on mee, I would haue daft all other respects, and made her halfe my selfe: I pray you tell Benedicke of it, and heare what he will say.

rem

remLeon.

Were it good thinke you?

rem

remClau.

Hero thinkes surely she wil die, for she saies she will die, if hee loue her not, and shee will die ere shee make her loue knowne, and she will die if hee wooe her, rather than shee will bate one breath of her accustomed crossenesse.

rem

remPrince.

She doth well, if she should make tender of her loue, 'tis very possible hee'l scorne it, for the man (as you know all) hath a contemptible spirit.

rem

remClau.

He is a very proper man.

rem

remPrin.

He hath indeed a good outward happines.

rem

remClau.

'Fore God, and in my minde very wise.

rem

remPrin.

He doth indeed shew some sparkes that are like wit.

rem

remLeon.

And I take him to be valiant.

rem

remPrin.

As Hector, I assure you, and in the managing of quarrels you may see hee is wise, for either hee auoydes them with great discretion, or vndertakes them with a Christianlike feare.

rem

remLeon.

If hee doe feare God, a must necessarilie keepe peace, if hee breake the peace, hee ought to enter into a quarrell with feare and trembling.

rem

remPrin.

And so will he doe, for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seemes not in him, by some large ieasts hee will make: well, I am sorry for your niece, shall we goe see Benedicke, and tell him of her loue.

rem

remClaud.

Neuer tell him, my Lord, let her weare it out with good counsell.

rem

remLeon.

Nay that's impossible, she may weare her heart out first.

rem

remPrin.

Well, we will heare further of it by your daugh ter, let it coole the while, I loue Benedicke well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himselfe, to see how much he is vnworthy to haue so good a Lady.

rem

remLeon.

My Lord, will you walke? dinner is ready.

rem

remClau.

If he do not doat on her vpon this, I wil neuer trust my expectation.

rem

remPrin.

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 one an opinion of ano ther's dotage, and no such matter, that's the Scene that I would see, which will be meereely a dumbe shew: let vs send her to call him into dinner.

Exeunt.

rem

remBene.

This can be no tricke, the conference was sadly borne, they haue the truth of this from Hero, they seeme to pittie the Lady: it seemes her affections haue the full bent: loue me? why it must be requited: I heare how I am censur'd, they say I will beare my selfe proudly, if I perceiue the loue come from her: they say too, that she will rather die than giue any signe of affection: I did ne uer thinke to marry, I must not seeme proud, happy are they that heare their detractions, and can put them to mending: they say the Lady is faire, 'tis a truth, I can beare them witnesse: and vertuous, tis so, I cannot re prooue it, and wise, but for louing me, by my troth it is no addition to her witte, nor no great argument of her folly; for I wil be horribly in loue with her, I may chance haue some odde quirkes and remnants of witte broken on mee, because I haue rail'd so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loues the meat in his youth, that he cannot indure in his age. Shall quips and sentences, and these paper bullets of the braine awe a man from the careere of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a batcheler, I did not think I should liue till I were married, here comes Beatrice: by this day, shee's a faire Lady, I doe spie some markes of loue in her.

Enter Beatrice.

rem

remBeat.

Against my wil I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

rem

remBene.

Faire Beatrice, I thanke you for your paines.

rem

remBeat.

I tooke no more paines for those thankes, then you take paines to thanke me, if it had been painefull, I would not haue come.

rem

remBene.

You take pleasure then in the message.

rem

remBeat.

Yea iust so much as you may take vpon a kniues point, and choake a daw withall: you haue no stomacke signior, fare you well.

Exit.

rem

remBene.

Ha, against my will I am sent to bid you come into dinner: there's a double meaning in that: I tooke no more paines for those thanks then you took paines to thanke me, that's as much as to say, any paines that I take for you is as easie as thanks: if I do not take pittie of her I am a villaine, if I doe not loue her I am a Iew, I will goe get her picture.

Exit.

Actus Tertius.

Enter Hero and two Gentlemen, Margaret, and Vrsula.

rem

remHero.

*Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,
There shalt thou finde my Cosin Beatrice,
Proposing with the Prince and Claudio,
Whisper her eare, and tell her I and Vrsula,
Walke in the Orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her, say that thou ouerheardst vs,
And bid her steale into the pleached bower,
Where honysuckles ripened by the sunne,
Forbid the sunne to enter: like fauourites,
Made proud by Princes, that aduance their pride,
Against that power that bred it, there will she hide her,
To listen our purpose, this is thy office,
Beare thee well in it, and leaue vs alone.*

rem

remMarg.

Ile make her come I warrant you presently.

rem

remHero.

*Now Vrsula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley vp and downe,
Our talke must onely be of Benedicke,
When I doe name him, let it be thy part,
To praise him more then euer man did merit,
My talke to thee must be how Benedicke
Is sicke in loue with Beatrice; of this matter,
Is little Cupids crafty arrow made,
That onely wounds by hearesay: now begin,*

Enter Beatrice.

For looke where Beatrice like a Lapwing runs

Close by the ground, to heare our conference.

rem

remVrs.

The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish

Cut with her golden ores the siluer streame,

And greedily deuoure the treacherous baite:

So angle we for Beatrice, who euen now,

Is couched in the woodbine couerture,

Feare you not my part of the Dialogue.

rem

remHer.

Then go we neare her that her eare loose nothing,

Of the false sweete baite that we lay for it:

No truly Vrsula, she is too disdainfull,

I know her spirits are as coy and wilde,

As Haggerds of the rocke.

rem

remVrsula.

But are you sure,

That Benedicke loues Beatrice so intirely?

rem

remHer.

So saies the Prince, and my new trothed Lord.

rem

remVrs.

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

rem

remHer.

They did intreate me to acquaint her of it,

But I perswaded them, if they lou'd Benedicke,

To wish him wrastle with affection,

And neuer to let Beatrice know of it.

rem

remVrsula.

Why did you so, doth not the Gentleman

Deserue as full as fortunate a bed,

As euer Beatrice shall couch vpon?

rem

remHero.

O God of loue! I know he doth deserue,

As much as may be yeelded to a man:

But Nature neuer fram'd a womans heart,

Of prowder stufte then that of Beatrice:

*Disdaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprizing what they looke on, and her wit
Values it selfe so highly, that to her
All matter else seemes weake: she cannot loue,
Nor take no shape nor proiect of affection,
Shee is so selfe indeared.*

rem

remVrsula.

Sure I thinke so,

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

rem

remHero.

Why you speake truth, I neuer yet saw man,

*How wise, how noble, yong, how rarely featur'd.
But she would spell him backward: if faire fac'd,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an anticke,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launce ill headed:
If low, an agot very vildlie cut:
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all windes:
If silent, why a blocke moued with none.
So turnes she euery man the wrong side out,
And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simplenesse and merit purchaseth.*

rem

remVrsu.

Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

rem

remHero.

No, not to be so odde, and from all fashions,

*As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable,
But who dare tell her so? if I should speake,
She would mocke me into ayre, O she would laugh me
Out of my selfe, presse me to death with wit,
Therefore let Benedicke like couered fire,
Consume away in sighes, waste inwardly:
It were a better death, to die with mockes,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.*

rem

remVrsu.

Yet tell her of it, heare what shee will say.

rem

remHero.

*No, rather I will goe to Benedicke,
And counsaile him to fight against his passion,
And truly Ile devise some honest slanders,
To staine my cosin with, one doth not know,
How much an ill word may impoison liking.*

rem

remVrsu.

*O doe not doe your cosin such a wrong,
She cannot be so much without true iudgement,
Hauing so swift and excellent a wit
As she is prisde to haue, as to refuse
So rare a Gentleman as signior Benedicke.*

rem

remHero.

*He is the onely man of Italy,
Alwaies excepted, my deare Claudio.*

rem

remVrsu.

*I pray you be not angry with me, Madame,
Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedicke,
For shape, for bearing argument and valour,
Goes formost in report through Italy.*

rem

remHero.

Indeed he hath an excellent good name.

rem

remVrsu.

*His excellence did earne it ere he had it:
When are you married Madame?*

rem

remHero.

*Why euerie day to morrow, come goe in,
Ile shew thee some attires, and haue thy counsell,
Which is the best to furnish me to morrow.*

rem

remVrsu.

*Shee's tane I warrant you,
We haue caught her Madame?*

rem

remHero.

If it proue so, then louing goes by haps,

Some Cupid kills with arrowes, some with traps.

Exit.

rem

remBeat.

*What fire is in mine eares? can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorne so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adew,
No glory liues behinde the backe of such.
And Benedicke, loue on, I will requite thee,
Taming my wilde heart to thy louing hand:
If thou dost loue, my kindnesse shall incite thee
To binde our loues vp in a holy band.
For others say thou dost deserue, and I
Beleeue it better then reportingly.*

Exit.

Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedicke, and Leonato.

rem

remPrince.

I doe but stay till your marriage be consum mate, and then go I toward Arragon.

rem

remClau.

Ile bring you thither my Lord, if you'l vouch safe me.

rem

remPrin.

Nay, that would be as great a soyle in the new glosse of your marriage, as to shew a childe his new coat and forbid him to weare it, I will onely bee bold with Benedicke for his companie, for from the crowne of his head, to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth, he hath twice or thrice cut Cupids bowstring, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him, he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinkes, his tongue speakes.

rem

remBene.

Gallants, I am not as I haue bin.

rem

remLeo.

So say I, methinkes you are sadder.

rem

remClaud.

I hope he be in loue.

rem

remPrin.

Hang him truant, there's no true drop of blood in him to be truly toucht with loue, if he be sad, he wants money.

rem

remBene.

I haue the toothach.

rem

remPrin.

Draw it.

rem

remBene.

Hang it.

rem

remClaud.

You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

rem

remPrin.

What? sigh for the toothach.

rem

remLeon.

Where is but a humour or a worme.

rem

remBene.

Well, euery one cannot master a grieffe, but hee that has it.

rem

remClau.

Yet say I, he is in loue.

rem

remPrin.

There is no appearance of fancie in him, vnlesse it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to bee a Dutchman to day, a Frenchman to morrow: vnlesse hee haue a fancy to this foolery, as it appeares hee hath, hee is no foole for fancy, as you would haue it to appeare he is.

rem

remClau.

If he be not in loue vvithwith some vvomanwoman, there is no beleeuing old signes, a brushes his hat a mornings, What should that bode?

rem

remPrin.

Hath any man seene him at the Barbers?

rem

remClau.

No, but the Barbers man hath beene seen with him, and the olde ornament of his cheeke hath already stuft tennis balls.

rem

remLeon.

Indeed he lookes yonger than hee did, by the losse of a beard.

rem

remPrin.

Nay a rubs himselfe vwithwith Ciuit, can you smell him out by that?

rem

remClau.

That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in loue.

rem

remPrin.

The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

rem

remClau.

And vwhenwhen vvaswas he vvontwont to vvashwash his face?

rem

remPrin.

Yea, or to paint himselfe? for the which I heare vwhatwhat they say of him.

rem

remClau.

Nay, but his iesting spirit, vwhichwhich is now crept into a lutestring, and now gouern'd by stops.

rem

remPrin.

Indeed that tels a heavy tale for him: conclude, he is in loue.

rem

remClau.

Nay, but I know who loues him.

rem

remPrince.

That would I know too, I warrant one that knowes him not.

rem

remCla.

Yes, and his ill conditions, and in despight of all, dies for him.

rem

remPrin.

Shee shall be buried with her face vpwards.

rem

remBene.

Yet is this no charme for the toothake, old sig nior, walke aside with mee, I haue studied eight or nine wise words to speake to you, which these hobbyhorses must not heare.

rem

remPrin.

For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

rem

remClau.

'Tis euen so, Hero and Margaret haue by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two Beares will not bite one another when they meete.

Enter Iohn the Bastard.

rem

remBast.

My Lord and brother, God saue you.

rem

remPrin.

Good den brother.

rem

remBast.

If your leisure seru'd, I would speake with you.

rem

remPrince.

In priuate?

rem

remBast.

If it please you, yet Count Claudio may heare, for what I would speake of, concernes him.

rem

remPrin.

What's the matter?

rem

remBasta.

Meanes your Lordship to be married to mor row?

rem

remPrin.

You know he does.

rem

remBast.

I know not that when he knowes what I know.

rem

remClau.

If there be any impediment, I pray you disco uer it.

rem

remBast.

You may thinke I loue you not, let that appeare hereafter, and ayme better at me by that I now will ma nifest, for my brother (I thinke, he holds you well, and in dearenesse of heart) hath holpe to effect your ensuing marriage: surely sute ill spent, and labour ill bestowed.

rem

remPrin.

Why, what's the matter?

rem

remBastard.

I came hither to tell you, and circumstances shortned, (for she hath beene too long a talking of) the Lady is disloyall.

rem

remClau.

Who Hero?

rem

remBast.

Euen shee, Leonatoes Hero, your Hero, euery mans Hero.

rem

remClau.

Disloyall?

rem

remBast.

The word is too good to paint out her wicked nesse, I could say she were worse, thinke you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it: wonder not till further war rant: goe but with mee to night, you shal see her cham ber window entred, euen the night before her wedding day, if you loue her, then to morrow wed her: But it would better fit your honour to change your minde.

rem

remClaud.

May this be so?

rem

remPrinc.

I will not thinke it.

rem

remBast.

If you dare not trust that you see, confesse not that you know: if you will follow mee, I will shew you enough, and when you haue seene more, & heard more, proceed accordingly.

rem

remClau.

If I see any thing to night, why I should not marry her to morrow in the congregation, where I shold wedde, there will I shame her.

rem

remPrin.

And as I wooed for thee to obtaine her, I will ioyne with thee to disgrace her.

rem

remBast.

I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witnesses, beare it coldly but till night, and let the issue shew it selfe.

rem

remPrin.

O day vntowardly turned!

rem

remClaud.

O mischiefe stranglie thwarting!

rem

remBastard.

O plague right well preuented! so will you say, when you haue seene the sequele.

Exit.

Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the watch.

rem

remDog.

Are you good men and true?

rem

remVerg.

Yea, or else it were pittie but they should suffer saluation body and soule.

rem

remDogb.

Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should haue any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Princes watch.

rem

remVerges.

Well, giue them their charge, neighbor Dogbery.

rem

remDog.

First, who thinke you the most desartlesse man to be Constable?

rem

remWatch. 1.

Hugh Otecake sir, or George Seacoale, for they can write and reade.

rem

remDogb.

Come hither neighbour Seacoale, God hath blest you with a good name: to be a welfauoured man, is the gift of Fortune, but to write and reade, comes by Nature.

rem

remWatch 2.

Both which Master Constable

rem

remDogb.

You haue: I knew it would be your answere: well, for your fauour sir, why giue God thanks, & make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeare when there is no need of such vanity, you are thought heere to be the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch: therefore beare you the lan thorne: this is your charge: You shall comprehend all vagrom men, you are to bid any man stand in the Prin ces name.

rem

remWatch 2.

How if a will not stand?

rem

remDogb.

Why then take no note of him, but let him go, and presently call the rest of the Watch together, and thanke God you are ridde of a knaue.

rem

remVerges.

If he will not stand when he is bidden, hee is none of the Princes subiects.

rem

remDogb.

True, and they are to meddle with none but the Princes subiects: you shall also make no noise in the streetes: for, for the Watch to babble and talke, is most tollerable, and not to be indured.

rem

remWatch.

We will rather sleepe than talke, wee know what belongs to a Watch.

rem

remDogb.

Why you speake like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only haue a care that your bills be not stolne: well, you are to call at all the Alehouses, and bid them that are drunke get them to bed.

rem

remWatch.

How if they will not?

rem

remDogb.

Why then let them alone till they are sober, if they make you not then the better ansuere, you may say, they are not the men you tooke them for.

rem

remWatch.

Well sir.

rem

remDogb.

If you meet a theefe, you may suspect him, by vertue of your office, to be no true man: and for such kinde of men, the lesse you meddle or make with them, why the more is for your honesty.

rem

remWatch.

If wee know him to be a thiefe, shall wee not lay hands on him.

rem

remDogb.

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 doe take a theefe, is, to let him shew him selfe what he is, and steale out of your company.

rem

remVer.

You haue bin alwaies cal'd a merciful man² partner.

rem

remDogb.

Truely I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath anie honestie in him.

rem

remVerges.

²m

If you heare a child crie in the night you must call to the nurse, and bid her still it.

rem

remWatch.

How if the nurse be asleepe and will not heare vs?

rem

remDog.

Why then depart in peace, and let the childe wake her with crying, for the ewe that will not heare her Lambe when it baes, will neuer answeere a calfe when he bleates.

rem

remVerges.

'Tis verie true.

rem

remDog.

This is the end of the charge: you constable are to present the Princes owne person, if you meete the Prince in the night, you may staie him.

rem

remVerges.

Nay birladie that I thinke a cannot.

rem

remDog.

Fiue shillings to one on't with anie man that knowes the Statutes, he may staie him, marrie not with out 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.

rem

remVerges.

Birladie I thinke it be so.

rem

remDog.

Ha, ah ha, well masters good night, and there be anie matter of weight chances, call vp me, keepe your fellowes counsailes, and your owne, and good night, come neighbor.

rem

remWatch.

Well masters, we heare our charge, let vs go sit here vpon the Church bench till two, and then all to bed.

rem

remDog.

One word more, honest neighbors. I pray you watch about signior Leonatoes doore, for the wedding be ing there to morrow, there is a great coyle to night, adiew, be vigitant I beseech you.

Exeunt.

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

rem

remBor.

What, Conrade?

rem

remWatch.

Peace, stir not.

rem

remBor.

Conrade I say.

rem

remCon.

Here man, I am at thy elbow.

rem

remBor.

Mas and my elbow itcht, I thought there would a scabbe follow.

rem

remCon.

I will owe thee an answere for that, and now forward with thy tale.

rem

remBor.

Stand thee close then vnder this penthouse, for it drissels raine, and I will, like a true drunkard, vtter all to thee.

rem

remWatch.

Some treason masters, yet stand close.

rem

remBor.

Therefore know, I haue earned of Don Iohn a thousand Ducates.

rem

remCon.

Is it possible that anie villanie should be so deare?

rem

remBor.

Thou should'st rather aske if it were possible a nie villanie should be so rich? for when rich villains haue neede of poore ones, poore ones may make what price they will.

rem

remCon.

I wonder at it.

rem

remBor.

That shewes thou art vnconfirm'd, thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloake, is no thing to a man.

rem

remCon.

Yes, it is apparel.

rem

remBor.

I meane the fashion.

rem

remCon.

Yes the fashion is the fashion.

rem

remBor.

Tush, I may as well say the foole's the foole, but seest thou not what a deformed theefe this fashion is?

rem

remWatch.

I know that deformed, a has bin a vile theefe, this vii. yeares, a goes vp and downe like a gentle man: I remember his name.

rem

remBor.

Did'st thou not heare some bodie?

rem

remCon.

No, 'twas the vaine on the house.

rem

remBor.

Seest thou not (I say) what a deformed thiefe this fashion is, how giddily a turnes about all the Hot blouds, betweene foureteene & fiue & thirtie, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoes souldiours in the rechie painting, sometime like god Bels priests in the old Church window, sometime like the shauen Hercules in the smircht wormeaten tapestrie, where his codpeece seemes as massie as his club.

rem

remCon.

All this I see, and see that the fashion weares out more apparrell then the man; but art not thou thy selfe giddie with the fashion too that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

rem

remBor.

Not so neither, but know that I haue to night wooed Margaret the Lady Heroes gentlewoman, by the name of Hero, she leanes me out at her mistris chamber vindowwindow, bids me a thousand times good night: I tell this tale vildly. I should first tell thee how the Prince Claudio and my Master planted, and placed, and possessed by my Master Don Iohn, saw a far off in the Orchard this amiable incounter.

rem

remCon.

*And thought thy Margaret*A line of ink runs through part of this word. *was Hero?*

rem

remBor.

Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio, but the diuell my Master knew she was Margaret and partly by his oathes, which first possest them, partly by the darke night which did deceiue them, but chiefly, by my villa nie, which did confirme any slander that Don Iohn had made, away vventwent Claudio enraged, swore hee vwouldwould meete her as he was apointed next morning at the Tem ple, and there, before the

whole congregation shame her with vwhatwhat he saw o're night, and send her home againe vvithoutwithout a husband.

rem

remWatch. 1.

We charge you in the Princes name stand.

rem

remWatch. 2.

Call vp the right master Constable, vvewe haue here recouered the most dangerous peece of lechery, that euer vvaswas knowne in the Commonwealth.

rem

remWatch. 1.

And one Deformed is one of them, I know him, a vvearesweares a locke.

rem

remConr.

Masters, masters.

rem

remWatch. 2.

Youle be made bring deformed forth I war rant you,

rem

remConr.

Masters, neuer speake, vvewe charge you, let vs o bey you to goe vvithwith vs.

rem

remBor.

We are like to proue a goodly commoditie, be ing taken vp of these mens bils.

rem

remConr.

A commoditie in question I warrant you, come vveeleweele obey you.

Exeunt.

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Vrsula.

rem

remHero.

Good Vrsula wake my cosin Beatrice, and de sire her to rise.

rem

remVrsu.

I will Lady.

rem

remHer.

And bid her come hither.

rem

remVrs.

Well.

rem

remMar.

Troth I thinke your other rebato were better.

rem

remBero.

No pray thee good Meg, Ile vveareweare this.

rem

remMarg.

By my troth's not so good, and I vvarrantwarrant your cosin vwillwill say so.

rem

remBero.

My cosin's a foole, and thou art another, ile vveareweare none but this.

rem

remMar.

I like the new tire vwithinwithin excellently, if the haire vverewere a thought browner: and your gown's a most rare fashion yfaith, I saw the Dutchesse of Millaines gowne that they praise so.

rem

remBero.

O that exceedes they say. An ink mark follows the end of this line.

rem

remMar.

By my troth's but a nightgowne in respect of yours, cloth a gold and cuts, and lac'd with siluer, set with pearles, downe sleeues, side sleeues, and skirts, round vn derborn with a blewish tinsel, but for a fine queint grace full and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

rem

remHero.

God giue mee ioy to weare it, for my heart is exceeding heavy.

rem

remMarga.

'Twill be heauier soone, by the waight of a man.

rem

remHero.

Fie vpon thee, art not asham'd? An ink mark follows the end of this line.

rem

remMarg.

Of what Lady? of speaking honourably? is not marriage honourable in a beggar? is not your Lord honourable without marriage? I thinke you would haue me say, sawing your reuerence a husband: and bad thin king doe not wrest true speaking, Ile offend no body, is there any harme in the heauier for a husband? none I thinke, and it be the right husband, and the right wife, otherwise 'tis light and not heavy, aske my Lady Beatrice else, here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

rem

remHero.

Good morrow Coze.

rem

remBeat.

Good morrow sweet Hero.

rem

remHero.

Why how now? do you speake in the sick tune?

rem

remBeat.

I am out of all other tune, me thinkes.

rem

remMar.

Claps into Light a loue, (that goes without a burden,) do you sing it and Ile dance it.

rem

remBeat.

Ye Light aloue with your heeles, then if your husband haue stables enough, you'll looke he shall lacke no barnes.

rem

remMar.

O illegitimate construction! I scorne that with my heeles.

rem

remBeat.

'Tis almost fiue a clocke cosin, 'tis time you were ready, by my troth I am exceeding ill, hey ho.

rem

remMar.

For a hauke, a horse, or a husband?

rem

remBeat.

For the letter that begins them all, H.

rem

remMar.

Well, and you be not turn'd Turke, there's no more sayling by the starre.

rem

remBeat.

What meanes the foole trow?

rem

remMar.

Nothing I, but God send euery one their harts desire.

rem

remHero.

These gloues the Count sent mee, they are an excellent perfume.

rem

remBeat.

I am stuft cosin, I cannot smell.

rem

remMar.

A maid and stuft! there's goodly catching of colde.

rem

remBeat.

O God helpe me, God help me, how long haue you profest apprehension?

rem

remMar.

Euer since you left it, doth not my wit become me rarely?

rem

remBeat.

It is not seene enough, you should weare it in your cap, by my troth I am sicke.

rem

remMar.

Get you some of this distill'd carduus benedictus and lay it to your heart, it is the onely thing for a qualm.

rem

remHero.

There thou prickst her with a thissell.

rem

remBeat.

Benedictus, why benedictus? you haue some mo rall in this benedictus.

rem

remMar.

Morall? no by my troth, I haue no morall mea ning, I meant plaine holy thissell, you may thinke per chance that I thinke you are in loue, nay birlady I am not such a foole to thinke what I list, nor I list not to thinke what I can, nor indeed, I cannot thinke, if I would thinke my hart out of thinking, that you are in loue, or that you will be in loue, or that you can be in loue: yet Benedicke was such another, and now is he become a man, he swore hee would neuer marry, and yet now in despite of his heart he eates his meat without grudging, and how you may be conuerted I know not, but me thinkes you looke with your eies as other women doe.

rem

remBeat.

What pace is this that thy tongue keepes.

rem

remMar.

Not a false gallop.

Enter Vrsula.

rem

remVrsula.

Madam, withdraw, the Prince, the Count, sig nior Benedicke, Don Iohn, and all the gallants of the towne are come to fetch you to Church.

rem

remHero.

Helpe me to dresse mee good coze, good Meg, good Vrsula.

Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough.

rem

remLeonato.

What would you with mee, honest neigh bour?

rem

remConst. Dog.

Mary sir I would haue some confidence with you, that decernes you nearly.

rem

remLeon.

Briefe I pray you, for you see it is a busie time with me.

rem

remConst. Dog.

Mary this it is sir.

rem

remHeadb.

Yes in truth it is sir.

rem

remLeon.

What is it my good friends?

rem

remCon. Do.

Goodman Verges sir speakes a little of the matter, an old man sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as God helpe I would desire they were, but infaith honest as the skin betweene his browes.

rem

remHead.

Yes I thank God, I am as honest as any man li uing, that is an old man, and no honester then I.

rem

remCon. Dog.

Comparisons are odorous, palabras, neigh bour Verges.

rem

remLeon.

Neighbours, you are tedious.

rem

remCon. Dog.

It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poore Dukes officers, but truely for mine owne part, if I were as tedious as a King I could finde in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

rem

remLeon.

All thy tediousnesse on me, ah?

rem

remConst. Dog.

Yea, and 'twere a thousand times more than 'tis, for I heare as good exclamation on your Wor ship as of any man in the Citie, and though I bee but a poore man, I am glad to heare it.

rem

remHead.

And so am I.

rem

remLeon.

I would faine know what you haue to say.

rem

remHead.

Marry sir our watch to night, excepting your worships presence, haue tane a couple of as arrant knaues as any in Messina.

rem

remCon. Dog.

A good old man sir, hee will be talking as they say, when the age is in the wit is out, God helpe vs, it is a world to see: well said yfaith neighbour Verges, well, God's a good man, and two men ride of a horse, one must ride behinde, an honest soule yfaith sir, by my troth he is, as euer broke bread, but God is to bee wor shipt, all men are not alike, alas good neighbour.

rem

remLeon.

Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.

rem

remCon. Do.

Gifts that God giues.

rem

remLeon.

I must leaue you.

rem

remCon. Dog.

One word sir, our watch sir haue indeed comprehended two aspitious persons, & we would haue them this morning examined before your worship.

rem

remLeon.

Take their examination your selfe, and bring it me, I am now in great haste, as may appeare vnto you.

rem

remConst.

It shall be suffigance.

rem

remLeon.

Drinke some wine ere you goe: fare you well. (Exit.

rem

remMessenger.

My Lord, they stay for you to giue your daughter to her husband.

rem

remLeon.

Ile wait vpon them, I am ready.

rem

remDogb.

Goe good partner, goe get you to Francis Sea coale, bid him bring his pen and inke-horne to the Gaole: we are now to examine those men.

rem

remVerges.

And we must doe it wisely.

rem

remDogb.

Wee will spare for no witte I warrant you: heere's that shall driue some to a non-come, on ly get the learned writer to set downe our excommuni cation, and meet me at the Iaile.

Exeunt.

Actus Quartus.

Enter Prince, Bastard, Leonato, Frier, Claudio, Benedicke, Hero, and Beatrice.

rem

remLeonato.

Come Frier Francis, be briefe, onely to the plaine forme of marriage, and you shal recount their par ticular duties afterwards.

rem

remFran.

You come hither, my Lord, to marry this Lady.

rem

remClau.

No.

rem

remLeo.

To be married to her: Frier, you come to mar rie her.

rem

remFrier.

Lady, you come hither to be married to this Count.

rem

remHero.

I doe.

rem

remFrier.

If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conioyned, I charge you on your soules to utter it.

rem

remClaud.

Know you anie, Hero?

rem

remHero.

None my Lord.

rem

remFrier.

Know you anie, Count?

rem

remLeon.

I dare make his answer, None.

rem

remClau.

O what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do!

rem

remBene.

How now! interiections? why then, some be of laughing, as ha, ha, he.

rem

remClau.

Stand thee by Frier, father, by your leaue,

Will you with free and vnconstrained soule

Giue me this maid your daughter?

rem

remLeon.

As freely sonne as God did giue her me.

rem

remCla.

And what haue I to giue you back, whose worth

May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

rem

remPrin.

Nothing, vnlesse you render her againe.

rem

remClau.

Sweet Prince, you learn me noble thankfulness:

There Leonato, take her backe againe,

Giue not this rotten Orenge to your friend,

Shee's but the signe and semblance of her honour:

Behold how like a maid she blushes heere!

O what authoritie and shew of truth

Can cunning sinne couer it selfe withall!

Comes not that bloud, as modest euidence,

To witnesse simple Vertue? would you not sweare

All you that see her, that she were a maide,

By these exterior shewes? But she is none:

She knowes the heat of a luxurious bed:

Her blush is guiltinesse, not modestie.

rem

remLeonato.

What doe you meane, my Lord?

rem

remClau.

Not to be married,

Not to knit my soule to an approued wanton.

rem

remLeon.

Deere my Lord, if you in your owne 1roofe,

Haue vanquisht the resistance of her youth,

And made defeat of her virginitie.

rem

remClau.

I know what you would say: if I haue knowne (her,

You will say, she did imbrace me as a husband,

And so extenuate the forehand sinne: No Leonato,

I neuer tempted her with word too large,

But as a brother to his sister, shewed

Bashfull sinceritie and comely loue.

rem

remHero.

And seem'd I euer otherwise to you?

rem

remClau.

Out on thee seeming, I will write against it,

You seeme to me as Diane in her Orbe,

As chaste as is the budde ere it be blowne:

But you are more intemperate in your blood,

Than Venus, or those pampred animalls,

That rage in sauage sensualitie.

rem

remHero.

Is my Lord well, that he doth speake so wide?

rem

remLeon.

Sweete Prince, why speake not you?

rem

remPrin.

What should I speake?

I stand dishonour'd that haue gone about,

To linke my deare friend to a common stale.

rem

remLeon.

Are these things spoken, or doe I but dreame?

rem

remBast.

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

rem

remBene.

This lookes not like a nuptiall.

rem

remHero.

True, O God!

rem

remClau.

Leonato, stand I here?

Is this the Prince? is this the Princes brother?

Is this face Heroes? are our eies our owne?

rem

remLeon.

All this is so, but what of this my Lord?

rem

remClau.

Let me but moue one question to your daugh (ter,

And by that fatherly and kindly power,

That you haue in her, bid her answer truly.

rem

remLeo.

I charge thee doe, as thou art my childe.

rem

remHero.

O God defend me how am I beset,

What kinde of catechizing call you this?

rem

remClau.

To make you answer truly to your name.

rem

remHero.

Is it not Hero? who can blot that name

With any iust reproach?

rem

remClaud.

Marry that can Hero,

Hero it selfe can blot out Heroes vertue.

What man was he, talkt with you yesternight,

Out at your window betwixt twelue and one?

Now if you are a maid, answer to this.

rem

remHero.

I talkt with no man at that howre my Lord.

rem

remPrince.

*Why then you are no maiden. Leonato,
I am sorry you must heare: vpon mine honor,
My selfe, my brother, and this grieued Count
Did see her, heare her, at that howre last night,
Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window,
Who hath indeed most like a liberall villaine,
Confest the vile encounters they haue had
A thousand times in secret.*

rem

remIohn.

*Fie, fie, they are not to be named my Lord,
Not to be spoken of,
There is not chastitie enough in language,
Without offence to vtter them: thus pretty Lady
I am sorry for thy much misgouernment.*

rem

remClaud.

*O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou beene
If halfe thy outward graces had beene placed
About thy thoughts and counsailes of thy heart?
But fare thee well, most foule, most faire, farewell
Thou pure impiety, and impious puritie,
For thee Ile locke vp all the gates of Loue,
And on my eielids shall Coniecture hang,
To turne all beauty into thoughts of harme,
And neuer shall it more be gracious.*

rem

remLeon.

Hath no mans dagger here a point for me?

rem

remBeat.

Why how now cosin, wherfore sink you down?

rem

remBast.

*Come, let vs go: these things come thus to light,
Smother her spirits vp.*

rem

remBene.

How doth the Lady?

rem

remBeat.

Dead I thinke, helpe vncke,

Hero, why Hero, Vncle, Signor Benedicke, Frier.

rem

remLeonato.

O Fate! take not away thy heavy hand,

Death is the fairest couer for her shame

That may be wisht for.

rem

remBeatr.

How now cosin Hero?

rem

remFri.

Haue comfort Ladie.

rem

remLeon.

Dost thou looke vp?

rem

remFrier.

Yea, wherefore should she not?

rem

remLeon.

Wherefore? Why doth not euery earthly thing

Cry shame vpon her? Could she heere denie

The storie that is printed in her blood?

Do not liue Hero, do not ope thine eyes:

For did I thinke thou wouldst not quickly die,

Thought I thy spirits were stronger then thy shames,

My selfe would on the reward of reproaches

Strike at thy life. Grieu'd I, I had but one?

Chid I, for that at frugal Natures frame?

O one too much by thee: why had I one?

Why euer was't thou louelie in my eies?

Why had I not with charitable hand

Tooke vp a beggars issue at my gates,

Who smeered thus, and mir'd with infamie,

I might haue said, no part of it is mine:

This shame deriues it selfe from vnknowne loines,

But mine, and mine I lou'd, and mine I prais'd,

And mine that I was proud on mine so much,

That I my selfe, was to my selfe not mine:

Valewing of her, why she, O she is falne

Into a pit of Inke, that the wide sea

Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,

*And salt too little, which may season giue
To her foule tainted flesh.*

rem

remBen.

Sir, sir, be patient: for my part, I am so attired in wonder, I know not what to say.

rem

remBea.

O on my soule my cosin is belied.

rem

remBen.

Ladie, were you her bedfellow last night?

rem

remBea.

No, truly: not although vntill last night,

I haue this tweluemonth bin her bedfellow.

rem

remLeon.

Confirm'd, confirm'd, O that is stronger made

Which was before barr'd vp with ribs of iron.

Would the Princes lie, and Claudio lie,

Who lou'd her so, that speaking of her foulnesse,

Wash'd it with teares? Hence from her, let her die.

rem

remFri.

*Heare me a little, for I haue onely bene silent so long, and giuen way vnto this course
of fortune, by no ting of the Ladie, I haue markt.*

A thousand blushing apparitions,

To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames,

In Angel whitenesse beare away those blushes,

And in her eie there hath appear'd a fire

To burne the errors that these Princes hold

Against her maiden truth. Call me a foole,

Trust not my reading, nor my obseruations,

Which with experimental sele doth warrant

The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,

My reuerence, calling, nor diuinitie,

If this sweet Ladie lye not guiltlesse heere,

Vnder some biting error.

rem

remLeo.

Friar, it cannot be:

Thou seest that all the Grace that she hath left,

Is, that she wil not adde to her damnation,

*A sinne of periury, she not denies it:
Why seek'st thou then to couer with excuse,
That which appeares in proper nakednesse?*

rem

remFri.

Ladie, what man is he you are accus'd of?

rem

remHero.

They know that do accuse me, I know none:

*If I know more of any man aliue
Then that which maiden modestie doth warrant,
Let all my sinnes lacke mercy. O my Father,
Proue you that any man with me conuerst,
At houres vnmeete, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.*

rem

remFri.

There is some strange misprision in the Princes.

rem

remBen.

Two of them haue the verie bent of honor,

*And if their wisdomes be misled in this:
The practise of it liues in Iohn the bastard,
Whose spirits toile in frame of villanies.*

rem

remLeo.

I know not: if they speake but truth of her,

*These hands shall teare her: If they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall wel heare of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this bloud of mine,
Nor age so eate vp my inuention,
Nor Fortune made such hauocke of my meanes,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall finde, awak'd in such a kinde,
Both strength of limbe, and policie of minde,
Ability in meanes, and choise of friends,
To quit me of them thoroughly.*

rem

remFri.

Pause awhile:

And let my counsell sway you in this case,

*Your daughter heere the Princesse (left for dead)
 Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
 And publish it, that she is dead indeed:
 Maintaine a mourning ostentation,
 And on your Families old monument,
 Hang mournfull Epitaphes, and do all rites,
 That appertaine vnto a buriall.*

rem

remLeon.

What shall become of this? What wil this do?

rem

remFri.

*Marry this wel carried, shall on her behalfe,
 Change slander to remorse, that is some good,
 But not for that dreame I on this strange course,
 But on this trauaile looke for greater birth:
 She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
 Vpon the instant that she was accus'd,
 Shal be lamented, pittied, and excus'd
 Of euery hearer: for it so fals out,
 That what we haue, we prize not to the worth,
 Whiles we enioy it; but being lack'd and lost,
 Why then we racke the value, then we finde
 The vertue that possession would not shew vs
 Whiles it was ours, so will it fare with Claudio:
 When he shal heare she dyed vpon his words,
 Th'Idea of her life shal sweetly creepe
 Into his study of imagination.
 And euery louely Organ of her life,
 Shall come apparel'd in more precious habite:
 More mouing delicate, and ful of life,
 Into the eye and prospect of his soule
 Then when she liu'd indeed: then shal he mourne,
 If euer Loue had interest in his Liuer,
 And wish he had not so accused her:
 No, though he thought his accusation true:
 Let this be so, and doubt not but successe
 Wil fashion the euent in better shape,
 Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
 But if all ayme but this be leuelld false,*

*The supposition of the Ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamie.
And if it sort not well, you may conceale her
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusiue and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, mindes and iniuries.*

rem

remBene.

*Signior Leonato, let the Frier aduise you,
And though you know my inwardnesse and loue
Is very much vnto the Prince and Claudio.
Yet, by mine honor, I will deale in this,
As secretly and iustlie, as your soule
Should with your bodie.*

rem

remLeon.

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

rem

remFrier.

*'Tis well consented, presently away,
For to strange sores, strangely they straine the cure,
Come Lady, die to liue, this wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd, haue patience & endure.*

Exit.

rem

remBene.

Lady Beatrice, haue you wept all this while?

rem

remBeat.

Yea, and I will weepe a while longer.

rem

remBene.

I will not desire that.

rem

remBeat.

You haue no reason, I doe it freely.

rem

remBene.

Surelie I do beleeeue your fair cosin is wrong'd.

rem

remBeat.

Ah, how much might the man deserue of mee that would right her!

rem

remBene.

Is there any way to shew such friendship?

rem

remBeat.

A verie euen way, but no such friend.

rem

remBene.

May a man doe it?

rem

remBeat.

It is a mans office, but not yours.

rem

remBene.

I doe loue nothing in the world so well as you, is not that strange?

rem

remBeat.

As strange as the thing I know not, it were as possible for me to say, I loued nothing so well as you, but beleeeue me not, and yet I lie not, I confesse nothing, nor I deny nothing, I am sorry for my cousin.

rem

remBene.

By my sword Beatrice thou lou'st me.

rem

remBeat.

Doe not sweare by it and eat it.

rem

remBene.

I will sweare by it that you loue mee, and I will make him eat it that sayes I loue not you.

rem

remBeat.

Will you not eat your word?

rem

remBene.

With no sawce that can be deuised to it, I pro test I loue thee.

rem

remBeat.

Why then God forgiue me.

rem

remBene.

What offence sweet Beatrice?

rem

remBeat.

You haue stayed me in a happy howre, I was a bout to protest I loued you.

rem

remBene.

And doe it with all thy heart.

rem

remBeat.

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

rem

remBened.

Come, bid me doe any thing for thee.

rem

remBeat.

Kill Claudio.

rem

remBene.

Ha, not for the wide world.

rem

remBeat.

You kill me to denie, farewell.

rem

remBene.

Tarrie sweet Beatrice.

rem

remBeat.

I am gone, though I am heere, there is no loue in you, nay I pray you let me goe.

rem

remBene.

Beatrice.

rem

remBeat.

Infaith I will goe.

rem

remBene.

Wee'll be friends first.

rem

remBeat.

You dare easier be friends with mee, than fight with mine enemy.

rem

remBene.

Is Claudio thine enemies?

rem

remBeat.

Is a not approued in the height a villaine, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! what, beare her in hand untill they come to take hands, and then with publike accusation vncouered slander, vnmittigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the marketplace.

rem

remBene.

Heare me Beatrice.

rem

remBeat.

Talke with a man out at a window, a proper saying.

rem

remBene.

Nay but Beatrice.

rem

remBeat.

Sweet Hero, she is wrong'd, shee is slandered, she is vndone.

rem

remBene.

Beat?

rem

remBeat.

Princes and Counties! surelie a Princely testi monie, a goodly Count, Comfect, a sweet Gallant sure lie, 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 mel ted into cursies, valour into complement, and men are onelie turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and swears it: I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a wo man with grieuing.

rem

remBene.

Tarry good Beatrice, by this hand I loue thee.

rem

remBeat.

Vse it for my loue some other way then swea ring by it.

rem

remBened.

Thinke you in your soule the Count Claudio hath wrong'd Hero?

rem

remBeat.

Yea, as sure as I haue a thought, or a soule.

rem

remBene.

Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will kisse your hand, and so leaue you: by this hand Clau dio shall render me a deere account: as you heare of me, so thinke of me: goe comfort your coosin, I must say she is dead, and so farewell.

Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne Clerke in gounes.

rem

remKeeper.

Is our whole dissembly appeard?

rem

remCowley.

O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

rem

remSexton.

Which be the malefactors?

rem

remAndrew.

Marry that am I, and my partner.

rem

remCowley.

Nay that's certaine, wee haue the exhibition to examine.

rem

remSexton.

But which are the offenders that are to be examined, let them come before master Constable.

rem

remKemp.

Yea marry, let them come before mee, what is your name, friend?

rem

remBor.

Borachio.

rem

remKem.

Pray write downe Borachio. Yours sirra.

rem

remCon.

I am a Gentleman sir, and my name is Conrade.

rem

remKee.

Write downe Master gentleman Conrade: mai sters, doe you serue God: maisters, it is proued already that you are little better than false knaues, and it will goe neere to be thought so shortly, how answer you for your selues?

rem

remCon.

Marry sir, we say we are none.

rem

remKemp.

A maruellous witty fellow I assure you, but I will goe about with him: come you hither sirra, a word in your eare sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaues.

rem

remBor.

Sir, I say to you, we are none.

rem

remKemp.

Well, stand aside, 'fore God they are both in a tale: haue you writ downe that they are none?

rem

remSext.

Master Constable, you goe not the way to ex amine, you must call forth the watch that are their ac cusers.

rem

remKemp.

Yea marry, that's the eftest way, let the watch come forth: masters, I charge you in the Princes name, accuse these men.

rem

remWatch 1.

This man said sir, that Don Iohn the Princes brother was a villaine.

rem

remKemp.

Write down, Prince Iohn a villaine: why this is flat periurie, to call a Princes brother villaine.

rem

remBora.

Master Constable.

rem

remKemp.

Pray thee fellow peace, I do not like thy looke I promise thee.

rem

remSexton.

What heard you him say else?

rem

remWatch 2.

Mary that he had receiued a thousand Du kates of Don Iohn, for accusing the Lady Hero wrong fully.

rem

remKemp.

Flat Burglarie as euer was committed.

rem

remConst.

Yea by th'masse that it is.

rem

remSexton.

What else fellow?

rem

remWatch 1.

And that Count Claudio did meane vpon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

rem

remKemp.

O villaine! thou wilt be condemn'd into euer lasting redemption for this.

rem

remSexton.

What else?

rem

remWatch.

This is all.

rem

remSexton.

And this is more masters then you can deny, Prince Iohn is this morning secretly stolne away: Hero was in this manner accus'd, in this very manner refus'd, and vpon the grieffe of this sodainely died: Master Con stable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato, I will goe before, and shew him their examination.

rem

remConst.

Come, let them be opinion'd.

rem

remSex.

Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.

rem

remKem.

Gods my life, where's the Sexton? let him write downe the Princes Officer Coxcombe: come, binde them thou naughty varlet.

rem

remCouley.

Away, you are an asse, you are an asse.

rem

remKemp.

Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my yeeres? O that hee were heere to write mee downe an asse! but masters, remember that I am an asse: though it be not written down, yet forget not yt I am an asse: No thou villaine, yu art full of piety as shall be prou'd vpon thee by good witnesse, I am a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a houshoul der, and which is more, as pretty a peece of flesh as any in Messina, and one that knowes the Law, goe to, & a rich fellow enough, goe to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gownes, and euery thing hand some about him: bring him away: O that I had been writ downe an asse!

Exit.

Actus Quintus.

Enter Leonato and his brother.

rem

remBrother.

If you goe on thus, you will kill your selfe,

And 'tis not wisdome thus to second grieffe,

Against your selfe.

rem

remLeon.

I pray thee cease thy counsaile,

Which falls into mine eares as profitlesse,

*As water in a siue: giue not me counsaile,
 Nor let no comfort delight mine eare,
 But such a one whose wrongs doth sute with mine.
 Bring me a father that so lou'd his childe,
 Whose ioy of her is ouerwhelmed like mine,
 And bid him speake of patience,
 Measure his woe the length and bredth of mine,
 And let it answere euery straine for straine,
 As thus for thus, and such a griefe for such,
 In euery lineament, branch, shape, and forme:
 If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
 And sorrow, wagge, crie hem, when he should grone,
 Patch griefe with prouerbs, make misfortune drunke,
 With candlewasters: bring him yet to me,
 And I of him will gather patience:
 But there is no such man, for brother, men
 Can counsaile, and speake comfort to that griefe,
 Which they themselues not feele, but tasting it,
 Their counsaile turnes to passion, which before,
 Would giue preceptiall medicine to rage,
 Fetter strong madnesse in a silken thred,
 Charme ache with ayre, and agony with words,
 No, no, 'tis all mens office, to speake patience
 To those that wring vnder the load of sorrow:
 But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie
 To be so morall, when he shall endure
 The like himselfe: therefore giue me no counsaile,
 My griefs cry lowder then aduertisement.*

rem

remBroth.

Therein do men from children nothing differ.

rem

remLeonato.

*I pray thee peace, I will be flesh and bloud,
 For there was neuer yet Philosopher,
 That could endure the toothake patiently,
 How euer they haue writ the stile of gods,
 And made a push at chance and sufferance.*

rem

remBrother.

Yet bend not all the harme vpon your selfe,

Make those that doe offend you, suffer too.

rem

remLeon.

*There thou speak'st reason, nay I will doe so,
My soule doth tell me, Hero is belied,
And that shall Claudio know, so shall the Prince,
And all of them that thus dishonour her.*

Enter Prince and Claudio.

rem

remBrot.

Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily.

rem

remPrin.

Good den, good den.

rem

remClau.

Good day to both of you.

rem

remLeon.

Heare you my Lords?

rem

remPrin.

We haue some haste Leonato.

rem

remLeo.

*Some haste my Lord! wel, fareyouwel my Lord,
Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.*

rem

remPrin.

Nay, do not quarrel with vs, good old man.

rem

remBrot.

*If he could rite himselfe with quarrelling,
Some of vs would lie low.*

rem

remClaud.

Who wrongs him?

rem

remLeon.

*Marry yu dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou:
Nay, neuer lay thy hand vpon thy sword,
I feare thee not.*

rem

remClaud.

Marry beshrew my hand,

*If it should giue your age such cause of feare,
Infaith my hand meant nothing to my sword.*

rem

remLeonato.

*Tush, tush, man, neuer fleere and iest at me,
I speake not like a dotard, nor a foole,
As vnder priuiledge of age to bragge,
What I haue done being yong, or what would doe,
Were I not old, know Claudio to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd my innocent childe and me,
That I am forc'd to lay my reuerence by,
And with grey haire and bruise of many daies,
Doe challenge thee to triall of a man,
I say thou hast belied mine innocent childe.
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors:
O in a tombe where neuer scandall slept,
Saue this of hers, fram'd by thy villanie.*

rem

remClaud.

My villany?

rem

remLeonato.

Thine Claudio, thine I say.

rem

remPrin.

You say not right old man.

rem

remLeon.

My Lord, my Lord,

*Ile proue it on his body if he dare,
Despight his nice fence, and his actiue practise,
His Maie of youth, and bloome of lustihood.*

rem

remClaud.

Away, I will not haue to do with you.

rem

remLeo.

*Canst thou so daffe me? thou hast kild my child,
If thou kilst me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.*

rem

remBro.

He shall kill two of vs, and men indeed,

*But that's no matter, let him kill one first:
Win me and weare me, let him answeare me,
Come follow me boy, come sir boy, come follow me
Sir boy, ile whip you from your foyning fence,
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.*

rem

remLeon.

Brother.

rem

remBrot.

*Content your self, God knows I lou'd my neece,
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villaines,
That dare as well answer a man indeede,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue.
Boyes, apes, braggarts, Iackes, milkesops.*

rem

remLeon.

Brother Anthony.

rem

remBrot.

*Hold you content, what man? I know them, yea
And what they weigh, euen to the vtmost scruple,
Scambling, outfacing, fashionmonging boyes,
That lye, and cog, and flout, depraue, and slander,
Goe antiquely, and show outward hidiousnesse,
And speake of halfe a dozen dang'rous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst.
And this is all.*

rem

remLeon.

But brother Anthonie.

rem

remAnt.

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

rem

remPri.

*Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience
My heart is sorry for your daughters death:
But on my honour she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true, and very full of prooffe.*

rem

remLeon.

My Lord, my Lord.
rem
remPrin.
I will not heare you.

Enter Benedicke.

rem
remLeo.
No come brother, away, I will be heard.

Exeunt ambo.

rem
remBro.
And shall, or some of vs will smart for it.
rem
remPrin.
See, see, here comes the man we went to seeke.
rem
remClau.
Now signior, what newes?
rem
remBen.
Good day my Lord.
rem
remPrin.
Welcome signior, you are almost come to part almost a fray.
rem
remClau.
Wee had likt to haue had our two noses snapt off with two old men without teeth.
rem
remPrin.
Leonato and his brother, what think'st thou? had wee fought, I doubt we should haue beene too yong for them.
rem
remBen.
In a false quarrell there is no true valour, I came to seeke you both.
rem
remClau.
We haue beene vp and downe to seeke thee, for we are high prooffe melancholly, and would faine haue it beaten away, wilt thou use thy wit?
rem
remBen.
It is in my scabberd, shall I draw it?
rem
remPrin.
Doest thou weare thy wit by thy side?
rem

remClau.

Neuer any did so, though verie many haue been beside their wit, I will bid thee drawe, as we do the min strels, draw to pleasure vs.

rem

remPrin.

As I am an honest man he lookes pale, art thou sicke, or angrie?

rem

remClau.

What, courage man: what though care kil'd a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

rem

remBen.

Sir, I shall meete your wit in the careere, and you charge it against me, I pray you chuse another sub iect.

rem

remClau.

Nay then giue him another staffe, this last was broke crosse.

rem

remPrin.

By this light, he changes more and more, I thinke he be angrie indeede.

rem

remClau.

If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.

rem

remBen.

Shall I speake a word in your eare?

rem

remClau.

God blesse me from a challenge.

rem

remBen.

You are a villaine, I iest 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 cowardise: you haue kill'd a sweete Ladie, and her death shall fall heauie on you, let me heare from you.

rem

remClau.

Well, I will meete you, so I may haue good cheare.

rem

remPrin.

What, a feast, a feast?

rem

remClau.

I faith I thanke him, he hath bid me to a calues head and a Capon, the which if I doe not carue most cu riously, say my knife's naught, shall I not finde a wood cocke too?

rem

remBen.

Sir, your wit ambles well, it goes easily.

rem

remPrin.

Ile tell thee how Beatrice prais'd thy wit the o ther day: I said thou hadst a fine wit: true saies she, a fine little one: no said I, a great wit: right saies shee, a great grosse one: nay said I, a good wit: iust said she, it hurts no body: nay said I, the gentleman is wise: certaine said she, a wise gentleman: nay said I, he hath the tongues: that I beleuee said shee, for hee swore a thing to me on munday night, which he forswore on tuesday morning: there's a double tongue, there's two tongues: thus did shee an howre together transshape thy particular ver tues, yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the proprest man in Italie.

rem

remClau.

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

rem

remPrin.

Yea that she did, but yet for all that, and if shee did not hate him deadlie, shee would loue him dearely, the old mans daughter told vs all.

rem

remClau.

All, all, and moreouer, God saw him vwhenwhen he was hid in the garden.

rem

remPrin.

But when shall we set the sauage Bulls hornes on the sensible Benedicks head?

rem

remClau.

Yea and text vnderneath, heere dwells Bene dicke the married man.

rem

remBen.

Fare you well, Boy, you know my minde, I will leaue you now to your gosseplike humor, you breake iests as braggards do their blades, which God be thank ed hurt not: my Lord, for your manie courtesies I thank you, I must discontinue your companie, your brother the Bastard is fled from Messina: you haue among you, kill'd a sweet and innocent Ladie: for my Lord Lacke beard there, he and I shall meete, and till then peace be with him.

rem

remPrin.

He is in earnest.

rem

remClau.

In most profound earnest, and Ile warrant you, for the loue of Beatrice.

rem

remPrin.

And hath challeng'd thee.

rem

remClau.

Most sincerely.

rem

remPrin.

What a prettie thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaues off his wit.

Enter Constable, Conrade, and Borachio.

rem

remClau.

He is then a Giant to an Ape, but then is an Ape a Doctor to such a man.

rem

remPrin.

But soft you, let me be, plucke vp my heart, and be sad, did he not say my brother was fled?

rem

remConst.

Come you sir, if iustice cannot tame you, shee shall nere weigh more reasons in her ballance, nay, and you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be lookt to.

rem

remPrin.

How now, two of my brothers men bound? Bo rachio one.

rem

remClau.

Ha1ken after their offence my Lord.

rem

remPrin.

Officers, what offence haue these men done?

rem

remConst.

Marrie sir, they haue committed false report, moreouer they haue spoken vntruths, secondarily they are slanders, sixt and lastly, they haue belyed a Ladie, thirdly, they haue verified vniust things, and to conclude they are lying knaues.

rem

remPrin.

First I aske thee what they haue done, thirdlie I aske thee vwhat'swhat's their offence, sixt and lastlie why they are committed, and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

rem

remClau.

Rightlie reasoned, and in his owne diuision, and by my troth there's one meaning vvellwell suted.

rem

remPrin.

Who haue you offended masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned Constable is too cunning to be vnderstood, vwhat'swhat's your offence?

rem

remBor.

Sweete Prince, let me go no farther to mine an swere: do you heare me, and let this Count kill mee: I haue deceiued euen your verie eies: vwhatwhat your wise domes could not discouer, these shallow fooles haue brought to light, vhowho in the night ouerheard me con fessing to this man, how Don Iohn your brother incensed me to slander the Ladie Hero, how you were brought into the Orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Heroes garments, how you disgrace'd her vwhenwhen you should marrie her: my villanie they haue vpon record, vwhichwhich I had rather seale with my death, then repeate ouer to my shame: the Ladie is dead vpon mine and my masters false accusation: and briefelie, I desire nothing but the reward of a villaine.

rem

remPrin.

Runs not this speech like yron through your bloud?

rem

remClau.

I haue drunke poison whiles he vtter'd it.

rem

remPrin.

But did my Brother set thee on to this?

rem

remBor.

Yea, and paid me richly for the practise of it.

rem

remPrin.

*He is compos'd and fram'd of treacherie,
And fled he is vpon this villanie.*

rem

remClau.

*Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appeare
In the rare semblance that I lou'd it first.*

rem

remConst.

Come, bring away the plaintiffes, by this time our Sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter: and masters, do not forget to specifie when time & place shall serue, that I am an Asse.

rem

remCon. 2.

Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the Sexton too.

Enter Leonato.

rem

remLeon.

*Which is the villaine? let me see his eies,
That when I note another man like him,
I may auoide him: vwhichwhich of these is he?*

rem

remBor.

If you would know your wronger, looke on me.

rem

remLeon.

Art thou the slaue that with thy breath hast kild mine innocent childe?

rem

remBor.

Yea, euen I alone.

rem

remLeo.

No, not so villaine, thou beliest thy selfe,

Here stand a paire of honourable men,

A third is fled that had a hand in it:

I thanke you Princes for my daughters death,

Record it with your high and worthie deedes,

'Twas brauely done, if you bethinke you of it.

rem

remClau.

I know not how to pray your patience,

Yet I must speake, choose your reuenge your selfe,

Impose me to what penance your inuention

Can lay vpon my sinne, yet sinn'd I not,

But in mistaking.

rem

remPrin.

By my soule nor I,

And yet to satisfie this good old man,

I ould bend vnder anie heauie vvaightwaight,

That heele enioyne me to.

rem

remLeon.

I cannot bid you bid my daughter liue,

That were impossible, but I praie you both,

Possesse the people in Messina here,

How innocent she died, and if your loue

Can labour aught in sad inuention,

Hang her an epitaph vpon her toomb,

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 sonne in law,

Be yet my Nephew: my brother hath a daughter,

Almost the copie of my childe that's dead,

And she alone is heire to both of vs,

*Giue her the right you should haue giu'n her cosin,
And so dies my reuenge.*

rem

remClau.

O noble sir!

*Your ouerkindnesse doth wring teares from me,
I do embrace your offer, and dispose
For henceforth of poore Claudio.*

rem

remLeon.

*To morrow then I will expect your comming,
To night I take my leaue, this naughtie man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I beleeeue was packt in all this wrong,
Hired to it by your brother.*

rem

remBor.

*No, by my soule she was not,
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me,
But alwaies hath bin iust and vertuous,
In anie thing that I do know by her.*

rem

remConst.

*Moreouer sir, which indeede is not vnder white and black, this plaintiffe here, the
offendour did call mee asse, I beseech you let it be remembred in his punish ment,
and also the vwatchwatch heard them talke of one Defor med, they say he weares a
key in his eare and a lock hang ing by it, and borrowes monie in Gods name, the
which he hath vs'd so long, and neuer paied, that now men grow hardharted and will
lend nothing for Gods sake: praie you examine him vpon that point.*

rem

remLeon.

I thanke thee for thy care and honest paines.

rem

remConst.

*Your vvorshipworship speakes like a most thankefull and reuerend youth, and I praise
God for you.*

rem

remLeon.

There's for thy paines.

rem

remConst.

God saue the foundation.

rem

remLeon.

Goe, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thanke thee.

rem

remConst.

I leaue an arrant knaue vvithwith your vvorshipworship, which I beseech your worship to correct your selfe, for the example of others: God keepe your vvorshipworship, I wish your worship vwellwell, God restore you to health, I humblie giue you leaue to depart, and if a mer rie meeting may be wisht, God prohibite it: come neighbour.

rem

remLeon.

Vntill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

Exeunt.

rem

remBrot.

Farewell my Lords, vvewe looke for you to mor row.

rem

remPrin.

We will not faile.

rem

remClau.

To night ile mourne with Hero:

rem

remLeon.

Bring you these fellowes on, weel talke vvithwith Margaret,How her acquaintance grew vvithwith this lewd fellow.

Exeunt.

Enter Benedicke and Margaret.

rem

remBen.

Praie thee sweete Mistris Margaret, deserue vwellwell at my hands, by helping mee to the speech of Bea trice.

rem

remMar.

Will you then write me a Sonnet in praise of my beautie?

rem

remBene.

In so high a stile Margaret, that no man liuing shall come ouer it, for in most comely truth thou deser uest it.

rem

remMar.

To haue no man come ouer me, why, shall I al waies keepe below staires?

rem

remBene.

Thy wit is as quicke as the greyhounds mouth, it catches.

rem

remMar.

And yours, as blunt as the Fencers foiles, which hit, but hurt not.

rem

remBene.

A most manly wit Margaret, it will not hurt a woman: and so I pray thee call Beatrice, I giue thee the bucklers.

rem

remMar.

Giue vs the swords, wee haue bucklers of our owne.

rem

remBene.

If you use them Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice, and they are dangerous weapons for Maides.

rem

remMar.

Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I thinke hath legges.

Exit Margarite.

rem

remBen.

And therefore will come. The God of loue that sits aboue, and knowes me, and knowes me, how pittie full I deserue. I meane in singing, but in louing, Lean der the good swimmer, Troilous the first imploier of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam car petmongers, whose name yet runne smoothly in the e uen rode of a blanke verse, why they were neuer so true ly turned ouer and ouer as my poore selfe in loue: mar rie I cannot shew it rime, I haue tried, I can finde out no rime to Ladie but babie, an innocent rime: for scorne, horne, a hard timerime: for schoole foole, a babling timerime: verie ominous endings, no, I was not borne vnder a riming Plannet, for I cannot wooe in festiuall tearmes:

Enter Beatrice.

sweete Beatrice would'st thou come when I cal'd thee?

rem

remBeat.

Yea Signior, and depart when you bid me.

rem

remBene.

O stay but till then.

rem

remBeat.

Then, is spoken: fare you well now, and yet ere I goe, let me goe with that I came, which is, with know ing what hath past betweene you and Claudio.

rem

remBene.

Onely foule words, and thereupon I will kisse thee.

rem

remBeat.

Foule words is but foule wind, and foule wind is but foule breath, and foule breath is noisome, there fore I will depart vnkist.

rem

remBene.

Thou hast frightened the word out of his right sence, so forcible is thy wit, but I must tell thee plainely, Claudio vndergoes my challenge, and either I must short ly heare 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 loue with me?

rem

remBeat.

For them all together, which maintain'd so politique a state of ewill, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them: but for which of my good parts did you first suffer loue for me?

rem

remBene.

Suffer loue! a good epithite, I do suffer loue in deede, for I loue thee against my will.

rem

remBeat.

In spite of your heart I think, alas poore heart, if you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours, for I will neuer loue that which my friend hates.

rem

remBened.

Thou and I are too wise to wooe peacea blie.

rem

remBea.

It appeares not in this confession, there's not one wise man among twentie that will praise himselfe.

rem

remBene.

An old, an old instance Beatrice, that liu'd in the time of good neighbours, if a man doe not erect in this age his owne tombe ere he dies, hee shall liue no longer in monuments, then the Bels ring, & the Widdow weepes.

rem

remBeat.

And how long is that thinke you?

rem

remBen.

Question, why an hower in clamour and a quar ter in rhewme, therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don worme (his conscience) finde no impediment to the contrarie, to be the trumpet of his owne vertues, as I am to my selfe so much for praising my selfe, who I my selfe will beare witnesse is praise worthie, and now tell me, how doth your cosin?

rem

remBeat.

Verie ill.

rem

remBene.
 And how doe you?
 rem
 remBeat.
 Verie ill too.

Enter Vrsula.

rem
 remBene.
 Serue God, loue me, and mend, there will I leaue you too, for here comes one in haste.
 rem
 remVrs.
 Madam, you must come to your Vncle, yon ders old coile at home, it is prooued my Ladie He ro hath bin falselie accusde, the Prince and Claudio mightilie abusde, and Don Iohn is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presentlie?
 rem
 remBeat.
 Will you go heare this newes Signior?
 rem
 remBene.
 I will liue in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be bu ried in thy eies: and moreouer, I will goe with thee to thy Vncles.

Exeunt.

Enter Claudio, Prince, and three or foure with Tapers.

rem
 remClau.
 Is this the monument of Leonato?
 rem
 remLord.
 It is my Lord.

Epitaph.

*Done to death by slanderous tongues,
 Was the Hero that here lies:
 Death in gurdon of her wrongs,
 Giues her fame which neuer dies:
 So the life that dyed with shame,
 Liues in death with glorious fame.
 Hang thou there vpon the tombe,
 Praising her when I am dombe.*

rem
 remClau.

Now musick sound & sing your solemn hymne

Song.

*Pardon goddesse of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight,
For the which with songs of woe,
Round about her tombe they goe:
Midnight assist our mone, helpe vs to sigh and grone.
Heauily, heauily.
Graues yawne and yeelde your dead,
Till death be vttered,
Heauenly, heauenly.*

rem

remLo.

Now unto thy bones good night, yeerely will I do (this right.

rem

remPrin.

*Good morrow masters, put your Torches out,
The wolues haue preied, and looke, the gentle day
Before the wheelles of Phoebus, round about
Dapples the drowsie East with spots of grey:
Thanks to you all, and leaue vs, fare you well.*

rem

remClau.

Good morrow maftersmasters, each his seuerall way.

rem

remPrin.

*Come let vs hence, and put on other weedes,
And then to Leonatoes we will goe.*

rem

remClau.

*And Hymen now with luckier issue speeds,
Then this for whom we rendred vp this woe.*

Exeunt.

Enter Leonato, Bene. Marg. Vrsula, old man, Frier, Hero.

rem

remFrier.

Did I not tell you she was innocent?

rem

remLeo.

*So are the Prince and Claudio who accus'd her,
Vpon 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.*

rem

remOld.

Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

rem

remBene.

And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd

To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

rem

remLeo.

Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,

Withdraw into a chamber by your selues,

And when I send for you, come hither mask'd:

The Prince and Claudio promis'd by this howre

To visit me, you know your office Brother,

You must be father to your brothers daughter,

And giue her to young Claudio.

Exeunt Ladies.

rem

remOld.

Which I will doe with confirm'd countenance.

rem

remBene.

Frier, I must intreat your paines, I thinke.

rem

remFrier.

To doe what Signior?

rem

remBene.

To binde me, or vndoe me, one of them:

Signior Leonato, truth it is good Signior,

Your neece regards me with an eye of fauour.

rem

remLeo.

That eye my daughter lent her, 'tis most true.

rem

remBene.

And I doe with an eye of loue requite her.

rem

remLeo.

The sight whereof I thinke you had from me,

From Claudio, and the Prince, but what's your will?

rem

remBened.

Your answer sir is Enigmaticall,

But for my will, my will is, your good will

May stand with ours, this day to be conioyn'd,

In the state of honourable marriage,

In which (good Frier) I shall desire your helpe.

rem

remLeon.

My heart is with your liking.

rem

remFrier.

And my helpe.

Enter Prince and Claudio, with attendants.

rem

remPrin.

Good morrow to this faire assembly.

rem

remLeo.

Good morrow Prince, good morrow Claudio:

We heere attend you, are you yet determin'd,

To day to marry with my brothers daughter?

rem

remClaud.

Ile hold my minde were she an Ethiope.

rem

remLeo.

Call her forth brother, heres the Frier ready.

rem

remPrin.

Good morrow BenedikeBenedicke, why what's the matter?

That you haue such a Februarie face,

So full of frost, of storme, and cloudinesse.

rem

remClaud.

I thinke he thinkes vpon the sauage bull:

Tush, feare not man, wee'll tip thy hornes with gold,

And all Europa shall reioyce at thee,

As once Europa did at lusty Ioue,

When he would play the noble beast in loue.

rem

remBen.

*Bull Ioue sir, had an amiable low,
 And some such strange bull leapt your fathers Cow,
 A got a Calfe in that same noble feat,
 Much like to you, for you haue iust his bleat.*

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Vrsula.

rem

remCla.

For this I owe you: here comes other recknings.

Which is the Lady I must seize vpon?

rem

remLeo.

This same is she, and I doe giue you her.

rem

remCla.

Why then she's mine, sweet let me see your face.

rem

remLeon.

No that you shal not, till you take her hand,

Before this Frier, and sweare to marry her.

rem

remClau.

Giue me your hand before this holy Frier,

I am your husband if you like of me.

rem

remHero.

And when I liu'd I was your other wife,

And when you lou'd, you were my other husband.

rem

remClau.

Another Hero?

rem

remHero.

Nothing certainer.

One Hero died, but I doe liue,

And surely as I liue, I am a maid.

rem

remPrin.

The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

rem

remLeon.

Shee died my Lord, but whiles her slander liu'd.

rem

remFrier.

All this amazement can I qualifie,

When after that the holy rites are ended,

Ile tell you largely of faire Heroes death:

Meane time let wonder seeme familiar,

And to the chappell let vs presently.

rem

remBen.

Soft and faire Frier, which is Beatrice?

rem

remBeat.

I answer to that name, what is your will?

rem

remBene.

Doe not you loue me?

rem

remBeat.

Why no, no more then reason.

rem

remBene.

Why then your Vncle, and the Prince, & Clau dio, haue beene deceiued, they swore you did.

rem

remBeat.

Doe not you loue mee?

rem

remBene.

Troth no, no more then reason.

rem

remBeat.

Why then my Cosin Margaret and Vrsula

Are much deceiu'd, for they did sweare you did.

rem

remBene.

They swore you were almost sicke for me.

rem

remBeat.

They swore you were welnye dead for me.

rem

remBene.

'Tis no matter, then you doe not loue me?

rem

remBeat.

No truly, but in friendly recompence.

rem

remLeon.

Come Cosin, I am sure you loue the gentleman³.

rem

³gentlem

remClau.

*And Ile be sworne vpon't, that he loues her,
For heres a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his owne pure braine,
Fashioned to Beatrice.*

rem

remHero.

*And heeres another,
Writ in my cosins hand, stolne from her pocket,
Containing her affection vnto Benedicke.*

rem

remBene.

*A miracle, here's our owne hands against our hearts: come I will haue thee, but by
this light I take thee for pittie.*

rem

remBeat.

*I would not denie you, but by this good day, I yeeld vpon great perswasion, & partly
to saue your life, for I was told, you were in a consumption.*

rem

remLeon.

Peace I will stop your mouth.

rem

remPrin.

How dost thou Benedicke the married man?

rem

remBene.

*Ile tell thee what Prince: a Colledge of witte crackers cannot flout mee out of my
humour, dost thou think I care for a Satyre or an Epigram? no, if a man will be
beaten with braines, a shall weare nothing handsome about him: in briefe, since I
do purpose to marry, I will thinke nothing to any purpose that the world can say a
gainst it, and therefore neuer flout at me, for I haue said against it: for man is a
giddy thing, and this is my con clusion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke to haue
beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, liue vn bruis'd, and loue my
cousin.*

rem

remCla.

*I had well hop'd yu wouldst haue denied Beatrice, yt I might haue cudgel'd thee out
of thy single life, to make thee a double dealer, which out of question⁴ thou wilt be,
if my Cousin do not looke exceeding narrowly to thee.*

rem

remBene.

*Come, come, we are friends, let's haue a dance ere we are married, that we may
lighten our own hearts, and our wiues heeles.*

rem

⁴questi

remLeon.

Wee'll haue dancing afterward.

rem

remBene.

First, of my vvordword, therfore play musick. Prince, thou art sad, get thee a vvifewife, get thee a vvifewife, there is no staff more reuerend then one tipt with horn.

Enter. Mes.

rem

remMessen.

My Lord, your brother Iohn is tane in flight,

And brought with armed men backe to Messina.

rem

remBene.

Thinke not on him till to morrow, ile devise thee braue punishments for him: strike vp Pipers. Dance.

FINIS.