MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Characters in the Play

LEONATO, Governor of Messina
HERO, his daughter
BEATRICE, his niece
LEONATO'S BROTHER
MARGARET
URSULA

waiting gentlewomen to Hero

DON PEDRO, Prince of Aragon COUNT CLAUDIO, a young lord from Florence SIGNIOR BENEDICK, a gentleman from Padua BALTHASAR SIGNIOR ANTONIO

DON JOHN, Don Pedro's brother
BORACHIO
CONRADE

Don John's followers

DOGBERRY, Master Constable in Messina VERGES, Dogberry's partner GEORGE SEACOAL, leader of the Watch FIRST WATCHMAN SECOND WATCHMAN SEXTON FRIAR FRANCIS

MESSENGER to Leonato
MESSENGER to Don Pedro
BOY

Musicians, Lords, Attendants, Son to Leonato's brother

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT 1

- 1.1 The army of Don Pedro of Aragon arrives in Messina and is welcomed by Leonato, Messina's governor. Benedick of Padua, a soldier in Don Pedro's army, proclaims his enmity to love and engages in a skirmish of wits with Leonato's niece, Beatrice. Count Claudio, the hero of Don Pedro's just-ended war, falls in love with Leonato's daughter Hero and confesses his love to Don Pedro, who decides to woo Hero for Claudio.
- 0 SD. Enter Leonato: Early editions of the play include an entrance for a character named "Innogen," Leonato's "wife," who plays no part in the dialogue or action. See longer note, page 199.

2. Aragon: a region in northeast Spain; Messina: a port city in Sicily (See pages xiv-xv and xviii-xix.)

3. this: i.e., this time

6. action: battle

7. sort: rank; or, kind; name: fame, reputation

13. remembered: rewarded

14–15. **in . . . lamb:** i.e., while seeming young and weak **figure:** appearance

15-16. better bettered: i.e., more greatly exceeded

18. will: i.e., who will

23. **badge:** sign; **bitterness:** i.e., suffering, anguish of heart

$\lceil ACT \mid 1 \rceil$

「Scene 17

Enter Leonato, Governor of Messina, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his niece, with a Messenger.

LEONATO, \(\sqrt{with a letter} \) I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina.

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

LEONATO How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

MESSENGER But few of any sort, and none of name.

LEONATO A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honor on a young 10 Florentine called Claudio.

MESSENGER Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro. He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion. He hath indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

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

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

- 26. **kind:** (1) natural; (2) warmhearted; **kindness:** (1) kinship; (2) affection
 - 27. truer: more honorable; more sincere
- 30. **Mountanto:** a fencing term (A *montant* is an upright blow or thrust.)
 - 36. pleasant: merry
 - 38. bills: handbills, posters
- 39. **Cupid:** the god of love, whose arrows cause people to fall in love (See pages 16 and 76.); at the **flight:** i.e., to an archery contest (perhaps to show that he could make women fall in love better than Cupid can); **Fool:** a servant who makes his living by amusing his aristocratic patron
- 40. **subscribed for Cupid:** i.e., signed on Cupid's behalf
- 41. **bird-bolt:** a blunt-headed arrow used to shoot birds
 - 42. he: i.e., Benedick
 - 45. tax: i.e., take to task, criticize
 - 46. meet: even
 - 49. hath holp: i.e., has helped
- 50. **trencherman:** eater (also, insultingly, "parasitical dependent")
- 51. **stomach:** Beatrice plays on **stomach** as meaning both "appetite" and "courage."
- 57-58. **stuffed man:** perhaps, a figure stuffed with cotton to resemble a human

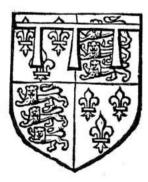
| Much Ado About Nothing Act 1. sc. 1 | |
|---|----|
| LEONATO Did he break out into tears? | |
| MESSENGER In great measure. | 25 |
| LEONATO A kind overflow of kindness. There are no faces truer than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping! | |
| BEATRICE I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned | 20 |
| from the wars or no? | 30 |
| MESSENGER I know none of that name, lady. There | |
| was none such in the army of any sort. | |
| LEONATO What is he that you ask for niece? | |
| HERO My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua | 35 |
| MESSENGER O, he's returned, and as pleasant as ever | 33 |
| ne was. | |
| BEATRICE He set up his bills here in Messina and | |
| challenged Cupid at the flight, and my uncle's Fool | |
| reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid and | 40 |
| challenged him at the bird-bolt. I pray you how | |
| many nath he killed and eaten in these wars? But | |
| how many hath he killed? For indeed I promised to | |
| eat all of his killing. | |
| LEONATO Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too | 45 |
| much, but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not. | |
| MESSENGER He hath done good service, lady, in these wars. | |
| VANOTATION - A | |
| BEATRICE You had musty victual, and he hath holp to | |
| eat it. He is a very valiant trencherman; he hath an excellent stomach. | 50 |
| MESSENGER And a good soldier too, lady. | |
| BEATRICE And a good soldier to a lady, but what is he | |
| to a lord? | |
| | |

MESSENGER A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuffed 55

BEATRICE It is so indeed. He is no less than a stuffed man, but for the stuffing—well, we are all mortal.

with all honorable virtues.

- 61. **skirmish of wit:** i.e., exchange of verbal thrusts
- 64. **five wits:** i.e., the mental faculties of human beings; **halting:** limping
 - 65. with: i.e., by
- 67. a difference: i.e., a mark on a coat of arms that indicates one's rank within a family
- 70–71. **sworn brother:** i.e., brother-in-arms, friend sworn to support one as if one's brother
- 75. **block:** fashion (literally: a mold for shaping a felt hat)
 - 76-77. in your books: i.e., in your favor
 - 78. An: if; study: i.e., library
 - 80. squarer: fighter, quarreler
 - 84. he: i.e., Benedick
 - 86. taker: i.e., victim; presently: immediately
 - 89. hold: i.e., remain
 - 93. is approached: i.e., has come near, has arrived



Coat of arms showing a mark of "difference." (1.1.67) From Ralph Brooke, A catalogue . . . of the kings . . . (1622).

as

LEONATO You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her. They never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEATRICE Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict, four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one, so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse, for it is all the wealth that he hath left to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn 70 brother.

MESSENGER Is 't possible?

BEATRICE Very easily possible. He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

MESSENGER I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEATRICE No. An he were, I would burn my study. But I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with 80 him to the devil?

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

BEATRICE O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease! He is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cured.

MESSENGER I will hold friends with you, lady.

BEATRICE Do, good friend.

LEONATO You will never run mad, niece.

BEATRICE No, not till a hot January.

MESSENGER Don Pedro is approached.

10

96. **cost**: expense (here, the expense of the army's visit, which Leonato, as the Prince's host, must bear); **encounter**: come to meet

101. charge: (1) duty; (2) expense

107. have it full: perhaps, are well answered full: completely

109. fathers herself: i.e., proclaims in her looks who her father is

119. meet: suitable, appropriate

120. convert to: turn into

124. would: wish



At "the flight." (1.1.39)
From Gilles Corrozet, *Hecatongraphie* . . . (1543).

Enter Don Pedro, Prince of Aragon, with Claudio, Benedick, Balthasar, and John the Bastard. PRINCE Good Signior Leonato, are you come to meet your trouble? The fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it. LEONATO Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace, for trouble being gone, comfort should remain, but when you depart from me, sorrow abides and happiness takes his leave. 100 PRINCE You embrace your charge too willingly. \(\tau Turning to Hero. I think this is your daughter. LEONATO Her mother hath many times told me so. BENEDICK Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?. LEONATO Signior Benedick, no, for then were you a 105 child. PRINCE You have it full, Benedick. We may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly the lady fathers herself.—Be happy, lady, for you are like an honorable father Leonato and the Prince move aside. BENEDICK If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is. BEATRICE I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick, nobody marks you. 115 BENEDICK What, my dear Lady Disdain! Are you yet living? BEATRICE Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain if you come 120 in her presence. BENEDICK Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is cer-

tain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted; and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a

hard heart, for truly I love none.

155

127. else: otherwise

128. cold blood: i.e., blood not warmed by passion

128-29. I am . . . that: i.e., in that (i.e., loving no one) you and I agree

131. still: always

132-33. predestinate: i.e., predestined, fated

134-35. an 'twere: if it were'

135. were: i.e., is

136. you . . . parrot-teacher: i.e., you jabber (or, repeat yourself) expertly, as if teaching a parrot to talk

137. of my tongue: perhaps, who speaks like me;

or, perhaps, who is able to speak

137-38. a beast of yours: perhaps, who speaks like you; or, perhaps, who cannot speak (i.e., is a dumb beast); or, perhaps, who speaks hypocritically (i.e., with a "forked tongue")

140. so good a continuer: i.e., was so tireless in

running

142. a jade's trick: i.e., an unfair or foolish conclusion (An untrustworthy horse [a iade] might trick its rider by pulling its neck out of the halter or by stopping suddenly, as Benedick has just done.)

143. of old: i.e., from the past

150-51. shall... forsworn: i.e., will not have sworn falsely, perjured yourself

156. Please it . . . lead: i.e., will you please lead

158. note: notice, pay attention to

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

BENEDICK God keep your Ladyship still in that mind, so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predesti-

nate scratched face.

BEATRICE Scratching could not make it worse an 'twere such a face as yours were. 135

BENEDICK Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

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

BENEDICK I would my horse had the speed of your tongue and so good a continuer, but keep your 140 way. i' God's name. I have done.

BEATRICE You always end with a jade's trick. I know

you of old.

「Leonato and the Prince come forward.] PRINCE That is the sum of all, Leonato.—Signior

Claudio and Signior Benedick, my dear friend 145 Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month, and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer. I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

LEONATO If you swear, my lord, you shall not be 150 forsworn. To Don John. Let me bid you welcome, my lord, being reconciled to the Prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

DON JOHN I thank you. I am not of many words, but I

thank you.

LEONATO Please it your Grace lead on?

PRINCE Your hand, Leonato. We will go together. [All] exit except Benedick and Claudio.

CLAUDIO Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

167. methinks: it seems to me; low: i.e., short

173. in sport: joking

179. sad: serious

179-80. flouting jack: mocking fellow

180. **Cupid** . . . **hare-finder:** Since Cupid is blind, he would not be a good finder of hares.

181. **Vulcan... carpenter:** Vulcan is blacksmith of the gods, not a carpenter.

182. **go...song:** i.e., join with you in singing the tune

187. **possessed with a fury:** i.e., as if under the control of one of the Furies, dread goddesses sent from hell to avenge crimes

194-95. **but . . . suspicion:** i.e., who will refuse to marry because of the fear that his wife will prove unfaithful and make him a cuckold (A cuckold is imaged as growing horns, which his cap may hide. See page 32 and longer note, page 199.)



"Cupid is a good hare-finder." (1.1.180) From Francesco Petrarca, Opera . . . (1508).

BENEDICK I noted her not, but I looked on her. 160 CLAUDIO Is she not a modest young lady? BENEDICK Do you question me as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment? Or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex? CLAUDIO No, I pray thee, speak in sober judgment. BENEDICK Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise. Only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she 170 were unhandsome, and being no other but as she is, I do not like her. CLAUDIO Thou thinkest I am in sport. I pray thee tell me truly how thou lik'st her. BENEDICK Would you buy her that you enquire after 175 her? CLAUDIO Can the world buy such a jewel? BENEDICK Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? Or do you play the flouting jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder and 180 Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you to go in the song? CLAUDIO In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on. BENEDICK I can see yet without spectacles, and I see 185 no such matter. There's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you? 190 CLAUDIO I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife. BENEDICK Is 't come to this? In faith, hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with

suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of three- 195

196. Go to: an expression of impatience

196–98. wilt needs... Sundays: Benedick attacks marriage with the image of the yoke of marriage, the yoke's print (i.e., imprint, impression), and its depressing impact on one's leisure time (sigh away Sundays). See page 174.

206. dumb: mute, speechless

211. **If . . . uttered:** i.e., if this were true, it would be told to you this way

212. **old tale:** Benedick refers to a fairy tale about a "Mr. Fox," in which the refrain Benedick quotes plays a key role.

215. passion: feeling, desire

219. fetch me in: trick me

227-50. opinion . . . faith: Benedick's references to fire and the stake introduce the idea of religious heresy and its punishments, picked up with such words as obstinate heretic and fall from this faith.

Matrimonium:



The marriage yoke. (1.1.197)
From Henry Peacham, Minerua Britanna . . . (1612).

score again? Go to, i' faith, an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays. Look, Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Enter Don Pedro, Prince of Aragon.

PRINCE What secret hath held you here that you followed not to Leonato's?

BENEDICK I would your Grace would constrain me to tell.

PRINCE I charge thee on thy allegiance.

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

CLAUDIO If this were so, so were it uttered.

BENEDICK Like the old tale, my lord: "It is not so, nor 'twas not so, but, indeed, God forbid it should be so."

CLAUDIO If my passion change not shortly, God forbid 215 it should be otherwise.

PRINCE Amen, if you love her, for the lady is very well worthy.

CLAUDIO You speak this to fetch me in, my lord. PRINCE By my troth, I speak my thought.

CLAUDIO And in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

BENEDICK And by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine.

CLAUDIO That I love her, I feel.

PRINCE That she is worthy, I know.

225

220

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

230-31. in the despite of: i.e., in disdaining

232. but in: i.e., except through

236–38. have a recheat...baldrick: i.e., wear the horns of a cuckold recheat: notes of a hunting horn winded: sounded, blown (See page 46.) baldrick: belt for holding bugles, swords, etc. Here the baldrick is invisible because the bugle is the purely imaginary horn of the cuckold. (See longer note to 1.1.194–95, page 199, and picture on page 32.)

241. **fine:** conclusion; **the finer:** i.e., better dressed 245–46. **lose...drinking:** In Elizabethan thinking, sighs draw blood from the heart while wine restores it.

248-49. **for...Cupid:** i.e., in place of a sign-board with a picture of blind Cupid

251. argument: theme of discussion

252. do: i.e., fall from this faith; hang . . . cat: A cat hung in a wicker or leather basket was sometimes used as a target.

254. Adam: The archer Adam Bell was the hero of an old ballad.

255. try: test (Proverb: "Time tries [i.e., tests] all things.")

256. In . . . yoke: proverbial (See page 68.)

259. **let . . . painted:** i.e., have a picture made of me (with my horns)

261. sign: i.e., picture (on the signboard)

264. **horn-mad:** i.e., raving mad (with a pun on his cuckold's horns)

PRINCE Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the 230 despite of beauty.

CLAUDIO And never could maintain his part but in the force of his will.

BENEDICK That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most 235 humble thanks. But that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none. And the 240 fine is, for the which I may go the finer, I will live a bachelor.

PRINCE I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.
BENEDICK With anger, with sickness, or with hunger,
my lord, not with love. Prove that ever I lose more 245
blood with love than I will get again with drinking,
pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen and
hang me up at the door of a brothel house for the
sign of blind Cupid.

PRINCE Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou 250 wilt prove a notable argument.

BENEDICK If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat and shoot at me, and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam.

PRINCE Well, as time shall try. 255
In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.

BENEDICK The savage bull may, but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead, and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write "Here is good 260 horse to hire" let them signify under my sign "Here you may see Benedick the married man."

CLAUDIO If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad.

| 265. | spent | quiver: | used | up | his | quiverful | of |
|--------|-----------|---------|------|----|-----|-----------|----|
| arrows | | | | | | | |
| 266 | Venice: a | city fo | | | .1 | | |

courtesans

266. Venice: a city famous at the time for its

268. temporize: adapt yourself, change

269. repair: go

270. Commend me: offer my respects

271. fail him: i.e., fail (to appear)

273. matter: i.e., subject matter, material

274. embassage: embassy, mission; commit you: a polite phrase at parting, which the Prince and Claudio treat as if it were the complimentary close of a letter

275. tuition: protection

280. guarded: trimmed

281. guards: ornaments, trimmings; but... neither: i.e., only loosely sewn on or connected

282. flout old ends: banter with bits and pieces of conventional language

286. apt: inclined; ready

290. affect: like

292. onward: forward; action: military engagement

296. now: i.e., now that

| PRINCE Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly. BENEDICK I look for an earthquake too, then. | |
|--|---------|
| Well, you will temporize with the k | 20 |
| meantine, good Signior Renedick romaint I | |
| to s. Commend the to him and tell him T - 11 | |
| fail him at supper, for indeed he hath made greater | ot 270 |
| preparation | |
| BENEDICK I have almost matter enough in me for suc | L |
| | |
| CLAUDIO To the tuition of God. From my house, if I ha | J |
| sa Lyanusa | |
| PRINCE The sixth of July. Your loving friend, Bene dick. | |
| BENEDICK Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of you | |
| discourse is sometimes guarded with f | |
| and the gualds are full slightly bested 11 | |
| Lie you nout old ends any further examine very | • |
| Conscience. And so I leave you | 1: : |
| CLAUDIO | • |
| My liege, your Highness now may do me good. | |
| RINCE | |
| My love is thine to teach. Teach it but how, | 285 |
| And thou shalt see how ant it is to learn | 203 |
| Any nard lesson that may do thee good | |
| CLAUDIO | |
| Hath Leonato any son, my lord? | |
| PRINCE | |
| No child but Hero; she's his only heir. | |
| Dost thou affect her, Claudio? | 290 |
| CLAUDIO O, my lord, | 270 |
| When you went onward on this ended action, | |
| 1 looked upon her with a soldier's ave | |
| That liked, but had a rougher task in hand | |
| man to drive liking to the name of love | 295 |
| But now I am returned and that war thoughts | 275 |

301. presently: soon

304. break with: reveal (the matter) to

306. twist: i.e., spin (literally, to form a thread by combining fibers)

308. his complexion: its outward signs

310. salved: i.e., explained; or, smoothed it over; treatise: story

311. What . . . bridge: i.e., why should the bridge be: flood: river

312. fairest grant: best gift: the necessity: i.e., that which is needed

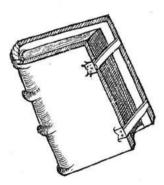
313. Look what: whatever

315. reveling: i.e., masked dancing

318. in her bosom: i.e., privately; unclasp: i.e., open (as if the heart were a book fastened, as books often were at the time, with metal clasps)

321. after: i.e., afterward; break: i.e., speak, reveal (my mind)

323. presently: immediately



A book with clasps. (1.1.318) From Notitia vtraque cum Orientis . . . (1552).

Have left their places vacant, in their rooms Come thronging soft and delicate desires, All prompting me how fair young Hero is, Saying I liked her ere I went to wars. 300 PRINCE Thou wilt be like a lover presently And tire the hearer with a book of words. If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it. And I will break with her and with her father. And thou shalt have her. Was 't not to this end 305 That thou began'st to twist so fine a story? CLAUDIO How sweetly you do minister to love. That know love's grief by his complexion! But lest my liking might too sudden seem, I would have salved it with a longer treatise. 310 PRINCE What need the bridge much broader than the flood? The fairest grant is the necessity. Look what will serve is fit. 'Tis once, thou lovest, And I will fit thee with the remedy. I know we shall have reveling tonight. 315 I will assume thy part in some disguise And tell fair Hero I am Claudio, And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart And take her hearing prisoner with the force And strong encounter of my amorous tale. 320 Then after to her father will I break. And the conclusion is, she shall be thine. In practice let us put it presently.

They exit.

1.2 Leonato is given a garbled account of the conversation between Don Pedro and Claudio, and is led to believe that Don Pedro wishes to marry Hero.

0 SD. **brother to Leonato:** Most editors assume that the **old man** is the same character as the Signior Antonio who appears with the maskers in 2.1. Our reasons for questioning this assumption are explained in the longer note on pages 199–200.

1. **cousin:** i.e., kinsman, nephew (This character is

mentioned only in this scene.)

6. they: i.e., the news (originally a plural noun)

7. **stamps them:** i.e., shows or proves them to be (literally, impresses or prints them)

8. cover: outer binding (as on a book)

9-10. a thick-pleached alley: a walkway bordered with intertwined boughs (See page 223.)

10. orchard: formal garden (See page 74.)

11. man: servant; discovered: revealed

14–15. **take...top:** a proverb meaning "seize the moment" (**Present time**, or Occasion, was often pictured as having a single lock of hair growing from the top of his or her head.)

15-16. break . . . it: reveal (the matter) to you

17. wit: intelligence

22. withal: i.e., with it

23. peradventure: perhaps

25-26. I cry you mercy: a polite phrase of apology

Scene 2 Enter Leonato, meeting an old man, brother to Leonato.

LEONATO How now, brother, where is my cousin, your son? Hath he provided this music?

LEONATO'S BROTHER He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamt not of.

LEONATO Are they good?

they have a good cover; they show well outward. The Prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: the Prince discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance, and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top and instantly break with you of it.

LEONATO Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

LEONATO'S BROTHER A good sharp fellow. I will send for him, and question him yourself.

LEONATO No, no, we will hold it as a dream till it appear itself. But I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you and tell her of it.

Enter Antonio's son, with a Musician and Attendants.

Cousins, you know what you have to do.—O, I cry you mercy, friend. Go you with me and I will use your skill.—Good cousin, have a care this busy time.

They exit.

1.3 Don John, Don Pedro's brother, receives a true account of Don Pedro's plan to woo Hero for Claudio. Resentful of both Don Pedro and Claudio, who have defeated him in the just-ended war, Don John hopes to find a way to block the marriage.

1. What the goodyear: an exclamation of no known meaning

2. out of measure: beyond all limits, excessively

3. measure: limit

4. breeds: causes (it)

9. sufferance: endurance

11. born under Saturn: i.e., born when the planet Saturn was in the ascendant, and thus "saturnine" or gloomy

11-12. apply . . . mischief: i.e., use sayings from moral philosophy to cure a deadly disease

14. stomach: appetite, hunger

16. tend on: take care of, serve

17. claw . . . humor: flatter or fawn upon any man humor: mood. whim

19. controlment: restraint

20. of late: lately; stood out against: opposed

21. grace: favor

24. frame: fashion

25. canker: prickly wild rose (Rosa canina)

26. blood: Blood was considered the seat of emotions and passions.

27. of: i.e., by; fashion a carriage: i.e., assume a manner

31. enfranchised: freed; with a clog: i.e., weighted down as if by a heavy block (See page 158.)

32. decreed: resolved

Scene 37 Enter Sir John the Bastard, and Conrade, his companion.

CONRADE What the goodyear, my lord, why are you thus out of measure sad?

DON JOHN There is no measure in the occasion that breeds. Therefore the sadness is without limit.

CONRADE You should hear reason.

DON JOHN And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

CONRADE If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance.

DON JOHN I wonder that thou, being, as thou sayst thou 10 art, born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am. I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am 15 drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humor.

CONRADE Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself. It is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

DON JOHN I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a 25 rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any. In this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a 30 muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my

- 37. I make . . . only: i.e., I make every use of it, for it is all that I use
 - 42. intelligence: information
 - 45. What . . . fool: i.e., what kind of fool is he
- 47. Marry: i.e., indeed (originally an oath "by the Virgin Mary")
- 50. proper squire: here, a term of contempt proper: fine, handsome
- 54. forward: precocious; March chick: i.e., young
- 56. entertained for: employed as; perfumer: i.e., fumigator
- 57. smoking: i.e., using smoke to fumigate; comes me: i.e., come
 - 58. sad conference: serious conversation
- 59. whipped me: i.e., whipped; arras: a hanging screen of rich tapestry fabric
 - 64. start-up: upstart, parvenu
- 65. cross: impede, thwart (An additional meaning, "to make the sign of the cross," is suggested with the words bless myself in the next line.)



A censer "smoking a musty room." (1.3.57) From Giovanni Ferro, Teatro d'imprese . . . (1623).

mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty. I would do my liking. In the meantime, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me CONRADE Can you make no use of your discontent? DON JOHN I make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here?

Enter Borachio.

What news, Borachio? BORACHIO I came yonder from a great supper. The 40 Prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato, and I can give you intelligence of an

DON JOHN Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to 45 unquietness?

BORACHIO Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

DON JOHN Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

BORACHIO Even he.

intended marriage.

DON JOHN A proper squire. And who, and who? Which 50 way looks he?

BORACHIO Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

DON JOHN A very forward March chick! How came you to this?

BORACHIO Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the Prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference. I whipped me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon that the Prince should woo Hero for 60 himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

DON JOHN Come, come, let us thither. This may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow. If I can cross him any 65

66. sure: i.e., secure, loyal 71. prove: test, check out



A cuckold. (1.1.194-95) From Bagford Ballads (printed 1868-99).

way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

CONRADE To the death, my lord.

DON JOHN Let us to the great supper. Their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were o' 70 my mind! Shall we go prove what stars BORACHIO We'll wait upon your Lordship.

They exit.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT 2

2.1 Don Pedro and his soldiers, disguised in masks, dance with the ladies of Leonato's household. While Don Pedro woos Hero, Beatrice mocks Benedick. After the dance, Don John distresses Claudio by telling him that Don Pedro has won Hero's love. When Claudio learns that Hero has been won in his name, he wants to marry her immediately. Leonato insists that at least a week is needed to prepare for the wedding. Don Pedro proposes that the intervening time be used to trick Benedick and Beatrice into falling in love.

- 3. tartly: sour
- 6. He . . . man: i.e., an excellent man would be one
- 8. image: i.e., statue, picture
- 9. my lady's eldest son: i.e., a pampered boy
- 10. tattling: chattering, talking aimlessly
- 18. By my troth: a mild oath by one's faith
- 19. shrewd: malicious, harsh; of thy tongue: i.e., with what you say
- 20. In faith: a mild oath; curst: a word used to describe women considered quarrelsome, talkative, or sharp-tongued
- 22–23. **God...horns:** a proverb that supposedly illustrates God's providence (In the proverb, **curst** means ill-tempered, vicious.)

「*ACT 2*¬

Scene 17

Enter Leonato, his brother, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his niece, \(\text{with Ursula and Margaret.} \) \(\text{\text{T}} \)

LEONATO Was not Count John here at supper? LEONATO'S BROTHER I saw him not.

BEATRICE How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heartburned an hour after.

HERO He is of a very melancholy disposition.

BEATRICE He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick. The one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

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

BEATRICE With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world if he could get her goodwill.

LEONATO By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

LEONATO'S BROTHER In faith, she's too curst.

BEATRICE Too curst is more than curst. I shall lessen God's sending that way, for it is said "God sends a

20

30-31. **lie in the woolen:** i.e., sleep with a wool blanket next to my skin

32. light on: come upon unexpectedly

35. waiting gentlewoman: a gentlewoman who serves a lady of higher rank

40. **earnest:** a small payment to seal a bargain; **of:** i.e., from; **bearherd:** keeper of a performing bear

40-41. lead his apes into hell: Proverbial: "Those who die maids do lead apes in hell," meaning that women who do not marry are punished in the afterlife. his apes: Bearherds often had performing apes as well as bears.

47-48. **Saint Peter...sit:** These puzzling lines have the general sense that Saint Peter, in Beatrice's fantasy, will direct her to the bachelors' part of heaven.



A bearherd. (2.1.40)
From Jacobus a. Bruck, Emblemata moralia . . . (1615).

curst cow short horns," but to a cow too curst, he sends none.

LEONATO So, by being too curst, God will send you no 25 horns.

BEATRICE Just, if he send me no husband, for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face. I had rather lie in the woolen!

LEONATO You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

BEATRICE What should I do with him? Dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting gentlewoman?

He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man; and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man, I am not for him. Therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bearherd, and lead his apes into hell.

LEONATO Well then, go you into hell?

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

LEONATO'S BROTHER, to Hero Well, niece, I trust you 50 will be ruled by your father.

BEATRICE Yes, faith, it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy and say "Father, as it please you." But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy and say "Father, as it please me."

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

61. **dust**: See Genesis 2.7: "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground."

63. I'll none: i.e., I'll have no husband

64. match in: i.e., marry

66. in that kind: i.e., in that regard

69. **in good time:** (1) at the proper time; (2) with the proper rhythm

70. **important:** importunate; **measure:** moderation; rhythm

72. repenting: regretting; jig: lively dance

73. **measure:** grave or stately dance, such as a pavan; **cinquepace:** i.e., galliard, a popular lively dance (pronounced "sink-a-pace"); **first suit:** i.e., wooing

74. fantastical: quaint, grotesque

76. **state**: i.e., stateliness; **ancientry**: old-fashioned style; **repentance**: regret

79. passing: surpassingly, extremely

82-83. Make good room: i.e., step aside

83 SD. **Drum:** i.e., a person with a small drum or tabor (See longer note, page 200.); **Signior Antonio:** See longer note to 1.2.0 SD, page 199.

84. walk a bout: i.e., dance a round

than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? To make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none. Adam's sons are my brethren, and truly I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

LEONATO, 「to Hero Daughter, remember what I told 65 you. If the Prince do solicit you in that kind, you

know your answer.

BEATRICE The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time. If the Prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For hear me, Hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinquepace. The first suit is hot and hasty like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly modest as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faster and faster till he sink into his grave.

LEONATO Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

BEATRICE I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church 80 by daylight.

LEONATO The revelers are entering, brother. Make good room. \(^{Leonato}\) and his brother step aside.\(^{\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{Theorem of the content of th

Enter, \(\text{with a Drum,} \) Prince Pedro, Claudio, and Benedick, \(\text{Signior Antonio,} \) and Balthasar, \(\text{all in masks, with Borachio and Don} \) John.

PRINCE, \(\text{to Hero} \cap \) Lady, will you walk a bout with your friend? \(\text{They begin to dance.} \cap \) 85

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

PRINCE With me in your company? HERO I may say so when I please.

92. favor: face; defend: forbid

92-93. **the lute...case:** i.e., your face should resemble your mask

94-95. **My...Jove:** In classical mythology, Jove, king of the Roman gods, was entertained by a poor man, Philemon, in his thatched hut. **visor:** mask

98 SP. Benedick: See longer note, page 201.

98. would: wish

100. ill: bad

108. **clerk:** i.e., parish clerk, who led the responses during church services

112. At a word: i.e., in short, briefly

116. dry hand: supposedly a sign of age or sick-ness

PRINCE And when please you to say so? HERO When I like your favor, for God defend the lute should be like the case. PRINCE My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove. 95 HERO Why, then, your visor should be thatched. PRINCE Speak low if you speak love. They move aside; Benedick and Margaret move forward. BENEDICK, to Margaret Well, I would you did like me. MARGARET So would not I for your own sake, for I have many ill qualities. 100 BENEDICK Which is one? MARGARET I say my prayers aloud. BENEDICK I love you the better; the hearers may cry "Amen." MARGARET God match me with a good dancer. They separate; Benedick moves aside; Balthasar moves forward. BALTHASAR Amen. MARGARET And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done. Answer, clerk. BALTHASAR No more words. The clerk is answered. They move aside: Ursula and Antonio move forward. URSULA I know you well enough. You are Signior 110 Antonio. ANTONIO At a word, I am not. URSULA I know you by the waggling of your head. ANTONIO To tell you true, I counterfeit him. URSULA You could never do him so ill-well unless you 115 were the very man. Here's his dry hand up and down. You are he, you are he. ANTONIO At a word, I am not. URSULA Come, come, do you think I do not know you

by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, 120

121. mum: i.e., hush: Graces: virtues

121-22. there's an end: i.e., that's all there is to it

128. The Hundred Merry Tales: a popular joke book

135. jester: i.e., professional fool, who makes his living by entertaining his aristocratic patron

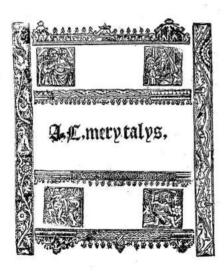
136. only his gift: i.e., his only talent

141. fleet: i.e., company of maskers; boarded: i.e., accosted, spoken to (literally, come alongside or aboard)

144. break a comparison: i.e., hit me with figures of speech as if they were lances in a joust

145. peradventure not marked: i.e., if it is perhaps not noted

151. ill: bad (thing)



From A hundred merry tales (1526; 1887 facs.).

at the next turning.

mum, you are he. Graces will appear, and there's an end. They move aside: Benedick and Beatrice move forward. BEATRICE Will you not tell me who told you so? BENEDICK No, you shall pardon me. BEATRICE Nor will you not tell me who you are? BENEDICK Not now. BEATRICE That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of The Hundred Merry Tales! Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so. BENEDICK What's he? 130 BEATRICE I am sure you know him well enough. BENEDICK Not I, believe me. BEATRICE Did he never make you laugh? BENEDICK I pray you, what is he? BEATRICE Why, he is the Prince's jester, a very dull 135 fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders. None but libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit but in his villainy, for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the 140 fleet. I would he had boarded me. BENEDICK When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say. BEATRICE Do, do. He'll but break a comparison or two on me, which peradventure not marked or not 145 laughed at strikes him into melancholy, and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. Music for the dance. We must follow the leaders. BENEDICK In every good thing. BEATRICE Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them

> Dance. Then exit all except Don John, Borachio, and Claudio.

153. Sure: i.e., surely

154-55. break with: i.e., speak to, reveal his thoughts to

163. birth: inherited social rank

169. the banquet: i.e., dessert and wine

171. these ill news: i.e., this bad news

174. Save: except; office: duties, functions; affairs: pursuits

175. Therefore all: i.e., therefore, let all

178. **faith:** faithfulness, loyalty; **blood:** i.e., sensual appetite, passion

179. accident: occurrence, happening; of hourly proof: i.e., demonstrated every hour

180. mistrusted not: did not suspect or anticipate



Winding a recheat. (1.1.236–37)

From T[homas] F[ella],

A book of diverse devices . . . (1585–98, 1622).

DON JOHN, To Borachio Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it. The ladies follow her, and but one 155 visor remains. BORACHIO And that is Claudio. I know him by his bearing. DON JOHN, To Claudio Are not you Signior Benedick? CLAUDIO You know me well. I am he. DON JOHN Signior, you are very near my brother in his love. He is enamored on Hero. I pray you dissuade him from her. She is no equal for his birth. You may do the part of an honest man in it. CLAUDIO How know you he loves her? 165 DON JOHN I heard him swear his affection. BORACHIO So did I too, and he swore he would marry her tonight. DON JOHN Come, let us to the banquet. They exit. Claudio remains. CLAUDIO, Funmasking Thus answer I in name of Benedick, 170 But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio. 'Tis certain so, the Prince woos for himself. Friendship is constant in all other things Save in the office and affairs of love. Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues. 175 Let every eye negotiate for itself And trust no agent, for beauty is a witch Against whose charms faith melteth into blood. This is an accident of hourly proof, Which I mistrusted not. Farewell therefore, Hero. 180

Enter Benedick.

BENEDICK Count Claudio?
CLAUDIO Yea, the same.
BENEDICK Come, will you go with me?
CLAUDIO Whither?

195

185. willow: Willow garlands signified the grief of unrequited or lost love. (See page 70.)

186. county: i.e., count

186-87. What . . . of: i.e., in what fashion will you wear the garland?

189. one way: i.e., one way or the other

192-93. so . . . bullocks: i.e., cattle drivers (drovers) use such language when selling their oxen (See page 150.)

194. served: treated

196-98. now...post: i.e., you are hitting out blindly, striking the messenger (post) rather than the thief (See longer note, page 201.)

199. If ... be: i.e., if you will not leave me

203-4. but so: perhaps, but in being merry; or, perhaps, in allowing myself to believe that "I go under that title"

205. base: unworthy, despicable

206. puts . . . person: i.e., thinks the whole world sees me as she does

206-7. so gives me out: describes me that way

210. Troth: i.e., in troth, in faith (a mild oath)

211. Lady Fame: Fame (or Rumor) was sometimes personified as a woman. (See page 78.)

212. lodge: perhaps, a solitary house; warren: an enclosed game preserve (There is disagreement about what this phrase might mean.)

216. rod: i.e., a bundle of willow switches

BENEDICK Even to the next willow, about your own 185 business, county. What fashion will you wear the garland of? About your neck like an usurer's chain? Or under your arm like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the Prince hath got your Hero.

CLAUDIO I wish him joy of her.

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

CLAUDIO I pray you, leave me.

BENEDICK Ho, now you strike like the blind man. 'Twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

CLAUDIO If it will not be, I'll leave you. He exits. BENEDICK Alas, poor hurt fowl, now will he creep into 200 sedges. But that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The Prince's fool! Ha, it may be I go under that title because I am merry. Yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong. I am not so reputed! It is the base, though bitter, disposition of Beatrice 205 that puts the world into her person and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

Enter the Prince, Hero, \(\Gamma\) and \(\Gamma\) Leonato.

PRINCE Now, signior, where's the Count? Did you see him?

BENEDICK Troth, my lord, I have played the part of 210 Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren. I told him, and I think I told him true, that your Grace had got the goodwill of this young lady, and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being 215 forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

PRINCE To be whipped? What's his fault?

219. flat: downright

220. shows it: i.e., shows it to

222. a trust: i.e., trusting someone

229. them: i.e., the birds in the nest

231. If ... saying: i.e., if Hero's "song" is in accord with what you say

233. to: i.e., with

235. wronged: slandered

239. scold: quarrel

241. a great thaw: perhaps, a time when muddy roads would make travel impossible and life therefore dull; huddling: piling up

242. conveyance: dexterity

243. mark: archery or musket target

246. **terminations:** perhaps, terms or expressions (literally, the grammatical endings of words)

247. to ... Star: i.e., everything as far as the North Star

248. though . . . endowed with: i.e., even if she possessed

250. **Hercules:** in Greek mythology, a hero of extraordinary strength and courage; **turned spit:** i.e., turn the roasting spit (See longer note, page 201.)

251. his club: Hercules is generally pictured wielding or leaning on a mighty club, which he uses as a weapon. (See page 146.)

252. Ate: Greek goddess of discord (pronounced Ah-tay)

252-56. I would . . . thither: i.e., I devoutly wish she would be conjured back into hell, since her presence on earth makes hell, where she belongs, a place of tranquillity and makes earth a place of discord scholar: i.e., someone who knows how to address evil spirits conjure: i.e., exorcise thither: i.e., to hell

BENEDICK The flat transgression of a schoolboy who, being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it 220 his companion, and he steals it.

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

BENEDICK Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too, for the garland he 225 might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his bird's nest.

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

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

PRINCE The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you. The gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

BENEDICK O, she misused me past the endurance of a block! An oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her. My very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the Prince's jester, that I 240 was duller than a great thaw, huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs. If her breath were as terrible as her 245 terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the North Star. I would not marry her though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed. She would have made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft 250 his club to make the fire, too. Come, talk not of her. You shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her, for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet

261. **Antipodes:** the region on the opposite side of the globe (See page 162.)

262. toothpicker: i.e., toothpick (usually a pointed quill, but sometimes made of gold or silver)

263-64. **Prester John:** in legend, a priest and monarch of a vast empire in Asia or Africa

264. great Cham: i.e., Kublai Khan, Mongol emperor of China

265. **Pygmies:** in legend, a race of very small people living in Ethiopia or India

266. harpy: sharp-tongued woman; monstrous mythological creature with the face and breasts of a woman and the wings and talons of a bird

273-77. **Indeed . . . lost it:** These enigmatic lines suggest a past love relationship between Benedick and Beatrice. **gave him use:** i.e., paid him interest

278. put...down: humiliated; defeated (Beatrice, in her reply, gives the words a literal, sexual, meaning.)

283. wherefore: why



A harpy. (2.1.266)
From Conrad Lycosthenes, *Prodigiorum* . . . (1557).

in hell as in a sanctuary, and people sin upon 255 purpose because they would go thither. So indeed all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

PRINCE Look, here she comes.

BENEDICK Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand 260 now to the Antipodes 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 John's foot, fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard, do you any embassage to the Pygmies, rather 265 than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

PRINCE None but to desire your good company.

BENEDICK O God, sir, here's a dish I love not! I cannot endure my Lady Tongue. He exits. 270

PRINCE, To Beatrice Come, lady, come, you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.

BEATRICE Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gave him use for it, a double heart for his single one. Marry, once before he won it of me with false 275 dice. Therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it.

PRINCE You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

BEATRICE So I would not he should do me, my lord, 280 lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

PRINCE Why, how now, count, wherefore are you sad? CLAUDIO Not sad, my lord.

PRINCE How then, sick?

CLAUDIO Neither, my lord.

BEATRICE The Count is neither sad, nor sick, nor mer-

285

288. civil as an orange: i.e., like a Seville orange. described as "between sweet and sour"

289. something . . . complexion: i.e., he is jealous (The complexion of the orange is close to yellow, a color associated with jealousy.)

290. blazon . . . true: description . . . accurate

291. conceit: notion. idea

293. broke with: i.e., broached (the subject) with

298. all grace: perhaps, may God Himself

307-8. on the windy side of: i.e., out of reach of windy: windward

311. alliance: marriage

311-12. goes everyone to the world: i.e., everyone gets married (a common idiom)

312. sunburnt: perhaps, dark-skinned (and hence unattractive, in Elizabethan eyes); or, perhaps, unprotected by marriage and thus open to the rough effects of wind and sun

313. Heigh-ho for a husband: proverbial (and also the title of a ballad)

316. getting: begetting

317. got: begot

318. come by: acquire

321. costly: valuable

323. no matter: i.e., nothing of significance or substance

rv. nor well, but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

PRINCE I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true, 290 though I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false.—Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won. I have broke with her father and his goodwill obtained. Name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy.

LEONATO Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes. His Grace hath made the match, and all grace say "Amen" to it.

BEATRICE Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

CLAUDIO Silence is the perfectest herald of joy. I were 300 but little happy if I could say how much. - Lady, as you are mine, I am yours. I give away myself for you and dote upon the exchange.

BEATRICE Speak, cousin, or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss and let not him speak neither. 305

PRINCE In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEATRICE Yea, my lord. I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUDIO And so she doth, cousin.

310 BEATRICE Good Lord for alliance! Thus goes everyone to the world but I, and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry "Heigh-ho for a husband!"

PRINCE Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE I would rather have one of your father's 315 getting. Hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

PRINCE Will you have me, lady?

BEATRICE No, my lord, unless I might have another for 320 working days. Your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But I beseech your Grace pardon me. I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

325. out o' question: i.e., beyond dispute

332-33. I cry . . . pardon: Beatrice apologizes to Leonato and excuses herself from Don Pedro's presence

342. out of suit: i.e., out of wooing her

343. were: i.e., would be

346-47. go to church: i.e., get married

349. his: i.e., its

351. a just sevennight: i.e., exactly a week

352. answer my mind: i.e., correspond to my wishes

354. breathing: i.e., pause (literally, a time to breathe or rest); warrant: promise

356. Hercules' labors: Hercules was forced to perform twelve impossible tasks. (See note to line 250.)

359. fain: gladly



"Time goes on crutches." (2.1.348) From Francesco Petrarca, Opera . . . (1508).

PRINCE Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you, for out o' question you were 325 born in a merry hour. BEATRICE No, sure, my lord, my mother cried, but then

there was a star danced, and under that was I born.—Cousins, God give you joy!

LEONATO Niece, will you look to those things I told 330 you of?

BEATRICE I cry you mercy, uncle.—By your Grace's pardon. Beatrice exits.

PRINCE By my troth, a pleasant-spirited ladv.

LEONATO There's little of the melancholy element in 335 her, my lord. She is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then, for I have heard my daughter say she hath often dreamt of unhappiness and waked herself with laughing.

PRINCE She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband. 340 LEONATO O, by no means. She mocks all her wooers out of suit.

345

PRINCE She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

LEONATO O Lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

PRINCE County Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

CLAUDIO Tomorrow, my lord. Time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

LEONATO Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence 350 a just sevennight, and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind.

PRINCE, To Claudio Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing, but I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim 355 undertake one of Hercules' labors, which is to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection, th' one with th' other. I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not but to

- 360. fashion: contrive, manage; minister: provide
- 362. I am for you: i.e., I support you
- 362-63. **ten nights' watchings:** i.e., ten nights without sleep
- 366. do... office: play any small (or, perhaps, tasteful, suitable) part
 - 368. unhopefullest: most unpromising
 - 370. strain: birth; approved: demonstrated
 - 372. that: i.e., so that
 - 373. practice on: play a trick on, deceive
 - 375. queasy stomach: i.e., distaste (for marriage)
 - 376. Cupid . . . archer: See note to 1.1.39.
 - 378. drift: scheme, plan
- 2.2 Don John and his henchman Borachio agree on a plan to disrupt the coming marriage: Borachio will convince Claudio that Hero is unfaithful by staging a meeting with Margaret, Hero's waiting gentlewoman. Margaret will be dressed in Hero's clothes, and Claudio will think that Borachio is Hero's lover.
 - 3. cross: impede, block
- 4. bar: barrier; cross: trouble, misfortune, annoyance
- 5. med'cinable: medicinal, healing
- 6-7. ranges evenly with: i.e., goes in the same direction as

fashion it, if you three will but minister such 360 assistance as I shall give you direction.

LEONATO My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

CLAUDIO And I, my lord.

PRINCE And you too, gentle Hero?

365

HERO I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

PRINCE And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him: he is of a noble strain, of approved valor, and confirmed 370 honesty. I will teach you how to humor your cousin that she shall fall in love with Benedick.—And I, with your two helps, will so practice on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. 375 If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift.

 $\lceil They \rceil$ exit.

「Scene 2⁷ Enter 「Don⁷ John and Borachio.

DON JOHN It is so. The Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

BORACHIO Yea, my lord, but I can cross it.

DON JOHN Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be med'cinable to me. I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

BORACHIO Not honestly, my lord, but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

DON JOHN Show me briefly how.

10

12. since: ago

13. **in the favor of:** i.e., in favor with, in the good graces of

14. waiting gentlewoman: See note to 2.1.35.

16. unseasonable: unsuitable, unseemly

17. appoint her: make an appointment with her

17-18. her lady's chamber window: i.e., the window of Hero's private quarters, perhaps her bedroom

21. temper: compound, produce by mixing ingredients

22. spare not to tell: i.e., go so far as to tell spare: refrain

25. hold up: support; stale: low-class harlot or prostitute

28. misuse: abuse

29. undo: destroy

30. issue: result

31. despite: spite, torment

33. meet: suitable

35. intend: pretend, claim

36. **as in love of:** i.e., as if because of your concern for

38. like: likely; cozened: tricked, cheated

41. trial: i.e., putting it to the test; instances: evidence

43. term: call

44. Claudio: Some editors substitute the word "Borachio" here. See longer note, page 202.

46. fashion: contrive, cleverly plan

BORACHIO I think I told your Lordship a year since, how much I am in the favor of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero. DON JOHN I remember. BORACHIO I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber window. DON JOHN What life is in that to be the death of this marriage? BORACHIO The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the Prince your brother; spare not to tell him that he hath wronged his honor in marrying the renowned Claudio, whose estimation do you mightily hold up, to a contaminated stale, such a 25 one as Hero. DON JOHN What proof shall I make of that? BORACHIO Proof enough to misuse the Prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato. Look you for any other issue? DON JOHN Only to despite them I will endeavor anything. BORACHIO Go then, find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone. Tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal 35 both to the Prince and Claudio, as in love of your brother's honor, who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid, that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without 40 trial. Offer them instances, which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber window, hear me call Margaret "Hero," hear Margaret term me "Claudio," and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding, for in the mean-

time I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be

absent, and there shall appear such seeming truth

distrust
49. **assurance:** certainty; **preparation:** i.e., for the wedding

50. issue: result

52. ducats: gold coins

53. constant: steadfast, firm

55. presently: at once

2.3 Leonato, Claudio, and Don Pedro stage a conversation for Benedick to overhear. They talk about Beatrice's desperate love for Benedick, about their fears that her suffering will destroy her, and about how Benedick would mock Beatrice if he knew of her love. Benedick decides that he must love Beatrice in return.

4. orchard: formal garden (See page 74.)

5. I am here already: i.e., I will return immediately (Benedick pretends that the words have their literal meaning.)

11. argument: subject, theme

14. drum, fife: i.e., military music (See page 215.)

15. **tabor:** small drum, used with a tabor-**pipe** to accompany dancing (See page 102.)

17. armor: i.e., suit of armor

18. carving: i.e., planning; doublet: close-fitting jacket

18-19. was wont to: i.e., used to

19. plain: i.e., simply, straightforwardly

of Hero's disloyalty that jealousy shall be called assurance and all the preparation overthrown.

DON JOHN Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will 50 put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

BORACHIO Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

DON JOHN I will presently go learn their day of mar- 55 riage.

 $\lceil They \rceil$ exit.

5

「Scene 37 Enter Benedick alone.

BENEDICK Boy!

$\lceil Enter\ Boy. \rceil$

BOY Signior?

BENEDICK In my chamber window lies a book. Bring it hither to me in the orchard.

BOY I am here already, sir.

BENEDICK I know that, but I would have thee hence and here again.

| Boy | exits.

I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviors to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love—and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife, and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe; I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot to see a good armor, and now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest

20-21. **turned orthography:** i.e., become a fancy speaker (**Orthography** is, literally, the study of proper spelling.)

27. fair: beautiful; well: i.e., healthy (not "sick"

with love)

29. graces: pleasing qualities

30. grace: favor

31. I'll none: i.e., I'll not have her; cheapen: bid for

32. look on: observe

33. **noble**, **angel**: In addition to their normal meanings, these words were also the names of coins.

34. discourse: i.e., ability to converse

39. harmony: music, pleasing sounds

41. The music ended: i.e., when the music has ended

42. fit . . . pennyworth: This much-debated phrase links Benedick to the kid-fox (perhaps, a young fox) and to some form of punishment. "To get one's pennyworth on" is "to take revenge on"; pennyworth also meant "a reward" or "a bargain." (Some editors print "hid-fox," since Benedick is hiding.)

44. tax: order, challenge



A poniard. (2.1.244)
From Louis de Gaya,
A treatise of the arms . . . (1678).

64

man and a soldier, and now is he turned orthogra- 20 phy; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster, but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an 25 oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; 30 wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what color it please God. Ha! The Prince and 35 Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbor.

「He hides. ¬

Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Balthasar with music.

PRINCE Come, shall we hear this music? CLAUDIO

Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is, As hushed on purpose to grace harmony! PRINCE, \(\Gamma \) aside to Claudio \(\Gamma \)

See you where Benedick hath hid himself? CLAUDIO, 「aside to Prince T

O, very well, my lord. The music ended, We'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth. PRINCE

Come, Balthasar, we'll hear that song again. BALTHASAR

O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice To slander music any more than once.

45

46. witness: sign, token; still: always

47. put a strange face: perhaps, pretend not to know; his: its

48. let me woo: i.e., make me entreat

50-52. **Since . . . loves:** Balthasar compares Don Pedro to a man who courts a woman whom he knows is unworthy.

55. notes: i.e., music

56. Note: take notice of

58. **crotchets:** (1) peculiar ideas; (2) quarter notes in music

59. **nothing:** There is some evidence that "nothing" and "noting" were pronounced alike in Shakespeare's day. If so, this word is yet another pun on "noting," and the title of the play itself could be heard as "Much Ado about Noting."

60. air: melody

61. **sheeps' guts:** used to make strings for lutes and other musical instruments (See page 122.)

62. hale: pull, draw

67. **constant:** faithful

69. bonny: smiling, bright

72. mo: i.e., more

73. **dumps:** (1) fits of melancholy or depression; (2) mournful songs; **dull:** gloomy; **heavy:** sad

75. leavy: filled with leaves

| PRINCE | |
|--|-----|
| It is the witness still of excellency | |
| To put a strange face on his own perfection. | |
| I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more. | |
| BALTHASAR | |
| Because you talk of wooing, I will sing, | |
| Since many a wooer doth commence his suit | 50 |
| To her he thinks not worthy, yet he woos, | 30 |
| Yet will he swear he loves. | |
| PRINCE Nay, pray thee, come, | |
| Or if thou wilt hold longer argument, | |
| Do it in notes. | 55 |
| BALTHASAR Note this before my notes: | |
| There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting. | |
| PRINCE | |
| Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks! | |
| Note notes, forsooth, and nothing. Music plays 7 | |
| BENEDICK, aside Now, divine air! Now is his soul | 60 |
| ravished. Is it not strange that sheeps' guts should | |
| hale souls out of men's bodies? Well, a horn for my | |
| money, when all's done. | |
| BALTHASAR sings | |
| Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more, | |
| Men were deceivers ever, | 65 |
| One foot in sea and one on shore, | |
| To one thing constant never. | |
| Then sigh not so, but let them go, | |
| And be you blithe and bonny, | |
| Converting all your sounds of woe | 70 |
| Into Hey, nonny nonny. | |
| Sing no more ditties, sing no mo, | |
| Of dumps so dull and heavy. | |
| The fraud of men was ever so, | |
| Since summer first was leavy. | 75 |
| THE PERSON AND THE PARTY OF THE | / 7 |

- 81. an ill: i.e., a bad
- 82. faith: a mild oath
- 82-83. **for a shift:** i.e., as a makeshift, for lack of something better
- 86. bode no mischief: i.e., does not prophesy misfortune
 - 86-87. had as lief: i.e., would just as gladly
 - 98. Stalk on: i.e., pursue our prey stealthily
- 99. **sits:** i.e., is roosting or perching (and thus easily caught)
- 105-6. **Sits...corner?:** i.e., does the wind blow from that direction?
 - 109. the infinite of: i.e., the range of
 - 110. counterfeit: pretend
 - 111. like enough: i.e., that is likely



"In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke." (1.1.256) From Philip Ayres, *Emblemata amatoria* . . . (1683).

Then sigh not so, but let them go. And be you blithe and bonny, Converting all your sounds of woe Into Hey, nonny nonny. PRINCE By my troth, a good song. BALTHASAR And an ill singer, my lord. PRINCE Ha, no, no, faith, thou sing'st well enough for a shift. BENEDICK, 「aside] An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him. And 85 I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief. I had as lief have heard the night raven, come what plague could have come after it. PRINCE Yea, marry, dost thou hear, Balthasar? I pray thee get us some excellent music, for tomorrow 90 night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber window. BALTHASAR The best I can, my lord. PRINCE Do so. Farewell. Balthasar exits Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of 95 today, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick? CLAUDIO O, ay. \(\text{Aside to Prince.} \) Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. - I did never think that lady would have loved any man. LEONATO No, nor I neither, but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviors seemed ever to abhor. BENEDICK, \(\sigma aside \) Is 't possible? Sits the wind in that 105 corner? LEONATO By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it, but that she loves him with an enraged affection, it is past the infinite of thought.

PRINCE Maybe she doth but counterfeit.

CLAUDIO Faith, like enough.

114. discovers: reveals, shows

118. **sit you:** i.e., sit

126. gull: trick; but: except

128. **himself:** i.e., itself; **reverence:** a reverend or venerable person

129. ta'en th' infection: i.e., caught the disease (we are spreading) ta'en: taken

130. Hold it up: i.e., keep it up

136. says she: i.e., says Beatrice

140. smock: slip, chemise



A willow. (2.1.185)
From Henry Peacham, Minerua Britanna . . . (1612).

LEONATO O God! Counterfeit? There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it. PRINCE Why, what effects of passion shows she? CLAUDIO, [aside to Leonato] Bait the hook well; this fish will bite. LEONATO What effects, my lord? She will sit you—you heard my daughter tell you how. CLAUDIO She did indeed. 120 PRINCE How, how I pray you? You amaze me. I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection. LEONATO I would have sworn it had, my lord, especially against Benedick. BENEDICK, [aside] I should think this a gull but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it. Knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence. CLAUDIO, [aside to Prince] He hath ta'en th' infection. Hold it up. PRINCE Hath she made her affection known to Benedick? LEONATO No, and swears she never will. That's her torment. CLAUDIO 'Tis true indeed, so your daughter says. "Shall 135 I," says she, "that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?" LEONATO This says she now when she is beginning to write to him, for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ 140 a sheet of paper. My daughter tells us all. CLAUDIO Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told \(\text{us of.} \) \(\text{7} \) LEONATO O, when she had writ it and was reading it over, she found "Benedick" and "Beatrice" be- 145 tween the sheet?

CLAUDIO That.

160

148-49. halfpence: i.e., little pieces

150. **immodest:** forward, impudent; **flout:** mock, scoff at

158. ecstasy: frenzy, madness; overborne her: overcome her

159-60. do . . . herself: harm herself dangerously

162. discover: reveal

163. sport: joke, jest

165. an alms: a good deed

166. out of: i.e., beyond

170. blood: passion

174. dotage: excessive love

175. daffed: i.e., doffed, put aside; respects: considerations

175-76. made . . . myself: i.e., married her

179. she says: i.e., Beatrice says

182. rather than she will bate: i.e., before she will leave off

183. crossness: contrariness

LEONATO O, she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence, railed at herself that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her. "I measure him," says she, "by my own spirit, for I should flout him if he writ to me, yea, though I love him, I should."

CLAUDIO Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses: 155 "O sweet Benedick, God give me patience!"

LEONATO She doth indeed, my daughter says so, and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her that my daughter is sometimes afeared she will do a desperate outrage to herself. It is very true.

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

CLAUDIO To what end? He would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

PRINCE An he should, it were an alms to hang him. 165 She's an excellent sweet lady, and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

CLAUDIO And she is exceeding wise.

PRINCE In everything but in loving Benedick.

LEONATO O, my lord, wisdom and blood combating in 170 so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

PRINCE I would she had bestowed this dotage on me. I would have daffed all other respects and made her 175 half myself. I pray you tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

LEONATO Were it good, think you?

CLAUDIO Hero thinks surely she will die, for she says she will die if he love her not, and she will die ere 180 she make her love known, and she will die if he woo her rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

186. contemptible: contemptuous, scornful

187. proper: handsome; or, fine, respectable

188. good outward happiness: perhaps, an attractive appearance; or, perhaps, the appearance of suitability

193. Hector: a Trojan warrior noted for courage

194. quarrels: hostilities, violent altercations

201. by: i.e., to judge by; large: improper, licentious

209. the while: in the meanwhile

214-15. trust my expectation: i.e., believe that I can predict the future

218. carry: manage; sport: amusement, fun



An orchard. (1.2.10, 2.3.4, 3.1.5) From Octavio Boldoni, Theatrum temporaneum . . . (1636). PRINCE She doth well. If she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it, for the man, 185 as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit. CLAUDIO He is a very proper man.

PRINCE He hath indeed a good outward happiness.

CLAUDIO Before God, and in my mind, very wise.

PRINCE He doth indeed show some sparks that are like 190 wit.

CLAUDIO And I take him to be valiant.

PRINCE As Hector, I assure you, and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise, for either he avoids them with great discretion or undertakes 195 them with a most Christianlike fear.

LEONATO If he do fear God, he must necessarily keep peace. If he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

PRINCE And so will he do, for the man doth fear God, 200 howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick and tell him of her love?

CLAUDIO Never tell him, my lord, let her wear it out with good counsel.

LEONATO Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

PRINCE Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter. Let it cool the while. I love Benedick well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himself to 210 see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

LEONATO My lord, will you walk? Dinner is ready. Leonato, Prince, and Claudio begin to exit. CLAUDIO, \(\sigma aside to Prince and Leonato \) If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expecta-

PRINCE, [aside to Leonato] Let there be the same net spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be when they

205

215

74

221. dumb show: literally, a theatrical scene without speech

224. **conference:** conversation; **sadly borne:** seriously conducted

226. have their full bent: This phrase suggests a bow, in archery, bent to its limit.

232. **their detractions:** i.e., words pointing out their faults

232-33. put . . . mending: i.e., mend the faults

235. reprove: reject

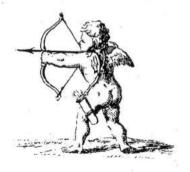
238. some odd quirks: i.e., a few quibbles

241. meat: i.e., food

242. sentences: maxims, sayings

243. awe: constrain or restrain through fear

244. career: course; humor: inclination



Cupid with a bow at "full bent." (2.3.226)

From August Casimir Redel,

Apophtegmata symbolica . . . (n.d.).

hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter. That's the scene that I would see, 220 which will be merely a dumb show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

「Prince, Leonato, and Claudio exit. 7 BENEDICK, Coming forward This can be no trick. The conference was sadly borne; they have the truth of this from Hero; they seem to pity the lady. It seems 225 her affections have their full bent. Love me? Why, it must be requited! I hear how I am censured. They say I will bear myself proudly if I perceive the love come from her. They say, too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think 230 to marry. I must not seem proud. Happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness. And virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot reprove it. And wise, but for loving me; by my troth, 235 it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her! I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me because I have railed so long against marriage, but doth not the appetite alter? A 240 man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humor? No! The world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not 245 think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady. I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter Beatrice.

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

250

BENEDICK Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

255

257. daw: jackdaw, a small kind of crow

258. **stomach:** appetite 264. **pity of:** i.e., pity on

265. **Jew:** From the Middle Ages, when Jews were kept from almost all occupations except moneylending, the word "Jew" was sometimes used as a term of contempt for anyone who (like some moneylenders) was ungenerous or cruel.



"Lady Fame." (2.1.211)
From August Casimir Redel,
Apophtegmata symbolica . . . (n.d.).

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

BENEDICK You take pleasure then in the message?

BEATRICE Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior. Fare you well.

She exits.

BENEDICK Ha! "Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner." There's a double meaning in 260 that. "I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me." That's as much as to say "Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks." If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture. 265

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT 3

3.1 Beatrice is lured into overhearing a staged conversation between Hero and Ursula, a waiting gentlewoman, who talk about Benedick's desperate love for Beatrice and about Beatrice's arrogance. Beatrice decides that she must return Benedick's love.

3. Proposing: talking

4. Whisper her: i.e., whisper in her

7. pleachèd: bordered with intertwined boughs (See page 223.)

9-10. **favorites . . . that advance:** i.e., especially indulged courtiers . . . who display or raise up

11. bred it: brought it forth

13. **listen our propose:** i.e., listen to our discussion; **office:** assigned part

14. Bear thee: i.e., conduct yourself

15. warrant: promise; presently: at once

17. trace: tread; alley: garden path



Honeysuckle or woodbine. (3.1.8, 3.1.31) From John Gerard, *The herball* . . . (1597).

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 $\lceil ACT \mid 3 \rceil$

Scene 17 Enter Hero and two gentlewomen, Margaret and Ursula. HERO Good Margaret, run thee to the parlor. There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice Proposing with the Prince and Claudio. Whisper her ear and tell her I and Ursula Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse Is all of her. Say that thou overheardst us, And bid her steal into the pleached bower Where honeysuckles ripened by the sun Forbid the sun to enter, like favorites Made proud by princes, that advance their pride Against that power that bred it. There will she hide her To listen our propose. This is thy office. Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone. MARGARET I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently. She exits. HERO Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come, As we do trace this alley up and down, Our talk must only be of Benedick. When I do name him, let it be thy part To praise him more than ever man did merit. 20 22. matter: i.e., material

23. Cupid's ... arrow: See note to 1.1.39.

24. only wounds by: i.e., wounds by mere

26. conference: conversation

27-29. The pleasant'st...bait: i.e., the most pleasant moment in fishing is when the fish rushes to take the bait her...oars: i.e., its fins

31. couchèd: hidden; woodbine coverture: i.e., screen of honeysuckle (See page 82.)

32. Fear you not: i.e., don't worry about

36. coy: distant, disdainful; wild: rebellious, not submitting to control

37. haggards: wild female hawks; rock: cliff

44. with affection: i.e., with his emotions



A haggard falcon. (3.1.37)
From George Turberville, *The booke of faulconrie* . . . (1575).

My talk to thee must be how Benedick Is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made. That only wounds by hearsay. Now begin, For look where Beatrice like a lapwing runs 25 Close by the ground, to hear our conference. Enter Beatrice, \(\text{\text{who hides in the bower.}} \) URSULA. \(\text{aside to Hero} \) The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish Cut with her golden oars the silver stream And greedily devour the treacherous bait. So angle we for Beatrice, who even now Is couched in the woodbine coverture. Fear you not my part of the dialogue. HERO, \(\text{raside to Ursula}\) Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it. -They walk near the bower. No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful. 35 I know her spirits are as coy and wild As haggards of the rock. URSULA But are you sure That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely? HERO So says the Prince and my new-trothèd lord. URSULA And did they bid you tell her of it, madam? HERO They did entreat me to acquaint her of it, But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick, To wish him wrestle with affection And never to let Beatrice know of it. URSULA Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman

47. as full: i.e., fully

48. couch: lie down

54. wit: cleverness; ability to speak sharply or amusingly

56. All matter else seems weak: i.e., all other conversation seems worthless

57. project: idea, notion

61. make sport at: i.e., mock, make fun of

63. How: i.e., no matter how; rarely: beautifully; featured: formed

64. **spell him backward:** i.e., describe him perversely; **fair-faced:** of a fair complexion; or, beautifully featured

67. black: i.e., dark-skinned; of an antic: i.e., a grotesque or fantastic figure

69. low: short; an agate: i.e., like a tiny figure carved on an agate-stone ring

70. vane: i.e., weather vane

71. **moved . . . none:** i.e., that cannot be moved by any wind, no matter how strong

74. simpleness: sincerity, integrity

75. commendable: pronounced commendable

76. from all fashions: unlike customary or accepted ways of behaving

| Deserve as full as fortunate a bed As ever Beatrice shall couch upon? | 20 E |
|--|------|
| HERO | |
| O god of love! I know he doth deserve | |
| As much as may be yielded to a man, | =0 |
| But Nature never framed a woman's heart | 50 |
| Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice. | |
| Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes, | |
| Misprizing what they look on, and her wit | |
| Values itself so highly that to her | |
| All matter else seems weak. She cannot love, | 55 |
| Nor take no shape nor project of affection, | |
| She is so self-endeared. | |
| URSULA Sure, I think so, | |
| And therefore certainly it were not good | 60 |
| She knew his love, lest she'll make sport at it. | |
| HERO | |
| Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man, | |
| How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured, | |
| But she would spell him backward. If fair-faced, | |
| She would swear the gentleman should be her | 65 |
| sister; | 03 |
| If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic, | |
| Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed: | |
| It low, an agate very vilely cut; | |
| If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds: | 70 |
| It silent, why, a block moved with none. | 7.0 |
| So turns she every man the wrong side out, | |
| And never gives to truth and virtue that | |
| Which simpleness and merit purchaseth. | |
| URSULA | |
| Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable. | 75 |
| HERO | |
| No, not to be so odd and from all fashions | |
| As Beatrice is cannot be commendable. | |

But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,

81. **press me to death:** an allusion to the torture of a prisoner by loading heavy weights on his chest until the prisoner dies

82. **covered fire:** Proverbial: "Fire that's closest kept burns most of all."

83. Consume away, waste: i.e., be destroyed (Sighs were thought to draw blood from the heart.)

89. honest slanders: perhaps, malicious statements that do not, however, attack her chastity (Honest, when applied to a woman, standardly meant "chaste.")

95. **prized to have:** esteemed as having; or, credited with having

97. the only: i.e., the very best

100. Speaking my fancy: i.e., for expressing my own preference

101. argument: ability to converse

103. name: reputation

105. are you married: i.e., will you be married

106. **every day, tomorrow:** i.e., after tomorrow (I'll be married) all the time

| She would mock me into air. O, she would laugh | 100 |
|--|-------|
| Out of myself, press me to death with wit. | |
| Therefore let Benedick, like covered fire, | |
| Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly. | |
| It were a better death than die with mocks, | |
| Which is as bad as die with tickling. | 8 |
| URSULA | |
| Yet tell her of it. Hear what she will say. | |
| HERO | |
| No, rather I will go to Benedick | - |
| And counsel him to fight against his passion; | |
| And truly I'll devise some honest slanders | |
| To stain my cousin with. One doth not know | ġ |
| How much an ill word may empoison liking. | |
| URSULA | |
| O, do not do your cousin such a wrong! | |
| She cannot be so much without true judgment, | |
| Having so swift and excellent a wit | |
| As she is prized to have, as to refuse | 9 |
| So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick. | 2 |
| HERO | |
| He is the only man of Italy, | |
| Always excepted my dear Claudio. | |
| URSULA | |
| I pray you be not angry with me, madam, | |
| Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedick, | 11202 |
| For shape, for bearing, argument, and valor, | 10 |
| Goes foremost in report through Italy. | |
| HERO | |
| | |
| Indeed, he hath an excellent good name. | |
| URSULA | |
| His excellence did earn it ere he had it. | (*) |
| When are you married, madam? | 10 |
| HERO | |
| Why, every day, tomorrow. Come, go in. | |
| | |

- 107. attires: headdresses
- 109. limed: i.e., trapped like a bird in birdlime
- 111. haps: chance, accident
- 116. such: i.e., contemptuous and proud maidens
- 120. band: i.e., bond
- 122. reportingly: i.e., by report or hearsay
- 3.2 Benedick appears with his beard shaved off and showing other signs of having fallen in love. When he exits with Leonato, Don John tells Don Pedro and Claudio that Hero is unfaithful and that he will show them a man entering her chamber window that very night, the night before the wedding.
 - 1-2. consummate: i.e., consummated, completed
 - 3. bring you thither: i.e., go with you to Aragon
 - 3-4. vouchsafe: allow
 - 5. soil in: i.e., stain on
 - 7-8. be bold with: i.e., take the liberty of asking

| I'll show thee some attires and have thy counsel | |
|--|---------|
| Which is the best to furnish me tomorrow. | |
| They move away from the bower. | |
| IRSULA, aside to Hero | |
| She's limed, I warrant you. We have caught her. | |
| madam. | 110 |
| IERO, \[\side to Ursula \] | 1000000 |
| If it prove so, then loving goes by haps; | |
| Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps. | |
| Hero and Ursula exit | |
| EATRICE, coming forward | |
| What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true? | |
| Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much? | |
| Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adieu! | 115 |
| No glory lives behind the back of such. | 115 |
| And Benedick, love on; I will requite thee. | 4 |
| Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand. | |
| If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee | |
| To bind our loves up in a holy band. | 120 |
| For others say thou dost deserve, and I | 120 |
| Believe it better than reportingly. | |
| She exits. | |

Scene 27 Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedick, and Leonato.

PRINCE I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Aragon.

CLAUDIO I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouch-safe me.

PRINCE Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company, for from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot he is all mirth. He

16. Methinks: it seems to me; sadder: more serious

18. truant: rogue; true: honest, sincere

20. wants: lacks

22. Draw it: i.e., pull (the tooth)

23. Hang it: an exclamation of impatience

24. hang, draw: Criminals were first hanged, then drawn (disemboweled).

26. Where is but a humor or a worm: In Elizabethan thinking, toothache was caused by humors (morbid secretions) descending from the head or rising from the stomach, or by worms invading the tooth.

27. grief: hurt, injury, suffering

30. fancy: love

31. fancy: whim, sudden liking (as also in line 36)

34. slops: wide baggy breeches or hose

37. fool for fancy: i.e., victim of love

42. man: i.e., servant

43. the old ornament of his cheek: i.e., his beard

| hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's 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 thinks, his tongue | 10 |
|---|-----|
| speaks. BENEDICK Gallants, I am not as I have been. LEONATO So say I. Methinks you are sadder. CLAUDIO I hope he be in love. | 15 |
| PRINCE Hang him, truant! There's no true drop of blood in him to be truly touched with love. If he be sad, he wants money. | 20 |
| BENEDICK I have the toothache. | |
| PRINCE Draw it. BENEDICK Hang it! | |
| CLAUDIO You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards. | |
| PRINCE What, sigh for the toothache? | 25 |
| LEONATO Where is but a humor or a worm | |
| BENEDICK Well, everyone can master a grief but he that has it. | |
| CLAUDIO Yet say I, he is in love. | 8 |
| PRINCE There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless | |
| it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to | 30 |
| be a Dutchman today, a Frenchman tomorrow, or | |
| in the shape of two countries at once, as a German | |
| from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard | |
| from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he have a | 35 |
| fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no | |
| fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is. CLAUDIO If he be not in love with some woman, there | |
| is no believing old signs. He brushes his hat o' | |
| mornings. What should that bode? | 40 |
| PRINCE Hath any man seen him at the barber's? | 4.5 |
| CLAUDIO No, but the barber's man hath been seen | |
| with him, and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis balls. | |
| orange terming band. | |

- 47. civet: i.e., perfume
- 47-48. **smell him out:** i.e., discover his secret (with a pun on **smell**)
 - 51. note: indication
- 53. paint himself: i.e., use cosmetics (Wash his face, line 52, may also have this meaning.); the which: i.e., his use of cosmetics
- 55-56. **crept...stops:** i.e., converted to love songs **stops:** the positions on the lute where the fingers are pressed to make particular sounds (with a pun on the **stops** or silences in his speech)
 - 57. heavy: serious, grave
 - 62. ill conditions: i.e., bad qualities
- 63. **dies:** wastes away (The Prince's response in line 64 plays on the Elizabethan use of the word *die* to allude to sexual orgasm.)
 - 65. charm for: i.e., magic spell to cure
 - 68. hobby-horses: i.e., jesters, buffoons
 - 69. For my life: i.e., upon my life
 - 70. by this: i.e., by this time
 - 74. e'en: afternoon (literally, evening)
 - 75. If . . . served: i.e., if you have the time

| ACCRECATION OF | LEONATO Indeed he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard. | 45 |
|----------------|--|---------|
| ALC: NO. | PRINCE Nay, he rubs himself with civet. Can you smell him out by that? | |
| | CLAUDIO That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in | |
| | _ love. | 50 |
| | PRINCE The greatest note of it is his melancholy. | |
| | CLAUDIO And when was he wont to wash his face? | |
| | PRINCE Yea, or to paint himself? For the which I hear | |
| | what they say of him. | |
| | CLAUDIO Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is now crept | 55 |
| | into a lute string and now governed by stops— | |
| | PRINCE Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him. Con- | |
| | clude, conclude, he is in love. | |
| | CLAUDIO Nay, but I know who loves him. | |
| , | PRINCE That would I know, too. I warrant, one that | 60 |
| | knows him not. | 1101100 |
| | CLAUDIO Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of | 0.0 |
| | all, dies for him. | |
| | PRINCE She shall be buried with her face upwards. | |
| | BENEDICK Yet is this no charm for the toothache.— | 65 |
| | Old signior, walk aside with me. I have studied eight | 37.00 |
| | or nine wise words to speak to you, which these | |
| | hobby-horses must not hear. | |
| | 「Benedick and Leonato exit. ¬ | |
| | PRINCE For my life, to break with him about Beatrice! | |
| | CLAUDIO 'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this | 70 |
| | played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two | |
| | bears will not bite one another when they meet. | |
| | Enter John the Bastard. | |
| | DON JOHN My lord and brother, God save you. | |
| | PRINCE Good e'en, brother. | |
| | | |

DON JOHN If your leisure served, I would speak with 75

you.

PRINCE In private?

86-87. discover: reveal

- 89. hereafter: later; aim better at me: judge me more highly or more accurately; by that: i.e., in the light of that which
 - 90. **For:** i.e., as for
 - 90-91. holds you well: i.e., thinks well of you
- 91. dearness of heart: i.e., affection; holp: i.e., helped; effect: bring about
- 95-96. **circumstances shortened:** i.e., to cut out the details
- 97. a-talking of: i.e., in our talking; disloyal: unfaithful, unchaste
 - 102. paint out: i.e., depict, describe
- 105. till . . . warrant: i.e., until you have conclusive proof
 - 112. that you see: i.e., that which you will see
 - 113. that you know: i.e., that which you know

DON JOHN If it please you. Yet Count Claudio may hear, for what I would speak of concerns him. PRINCE What's the matter? DON JOHN, To Claudio Means your Lordship to be married tomorrow? PRINCE You know he does. DON JOHN I know not that, when he knows what I know. 85 CLAUDIO If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it: DON JOHN You may think I love you not. Let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds 90 vou well, and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage-surely suit ill spent and labor ill bestowed. PRINCE Why, what's the matter? DON JOHN I came hither to tell you; and, circum- 95 stances shortened, for she has been too long a-talking of, the lady is disloyal. CLAUDIO Who. Hero? DON JOHN Even she: Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero. 100 CLAUDIO Disloyal? DON JOHN The word is too good to paint out her wickedness. I could say she were worse. Think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant. Go but with me tonight, you 105 shall see her chamber window entered, even the night before her wedding day. If you love her then, tomorrow wed her. But it would better fit your honor to change your mind. CLAUDIO, To Prince May this be so? 110 PRINCE I will not think it.

DON JOHN If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know. If you will follow me, I will

Much Ado About Nothing

ACT 3, SC. 2

97

122. coldly: coolly, calmly

123. issue: result (of what you see); show: reveal

125. mischief: evil, wickedness

126. plague: i.e., calamity

127. the sequel: that which follows

- 3.3 That night, Messina's master constable, Dogberry, and his assistant, Verges, set the night watch, telling the watchmen to pay particular attention to any activity around Leonato's house. Borachio enters, telling his companion, Conrade, about the charade that made Claudio and Don Pedro think that Hero had just allowed him to enter her chamber. Borachio and Conrade are arrested by the watch.
- 0 SD. compartner: copartner, associate; Watch: watchmen (citizens chosen to act as a night patrol)
- 2. it were pity but they: i.e., it would be regrettable if they did not

3. salvation: a mistake for "damnation"

5. allegiance: Dogberry seems to mean "lack of allegiance."

7. charge: i.e., orders

9. most desartless: i.e., least deserving (his mistake for "most deserving")

10. constable: perhaps, chief watchman (Dogberry himself is identified as "master constable" -- officer of the peace—at line 17 and as "the Constable" in the opening stage direction of 3.5.)

show you enough, and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly. CLAUDIO If I see anything tonight why I should not 115 marry her, tomorrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her. PRINCE And as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her. DON JOHN I will disparage her no farther till you are my witnesses. Bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself. PRINCE O day untowardly turned! CLAUDIO O mischief strangely thwarting! DON JOHN O plague right well prevented! So will you say when you have seen the sequel. 「They exit. ¬

「Scene 37 Enter Dogberry and his compartner [Verges] with the Watch.

DOGBERRY Are you good men and true? VERGES Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul. DOGBERRY Nay, that were a punishment too good for them if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Prince's watch. VERGES Well, give them their charge, neighbor Dogberry. DOGBERRY First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable? FIRST WATCHMAN Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal, for they can write and read. DOGBERRY Come hither, neighbor Seacoal. [Seacoal steps forward. God hath blessed you with a good

name. To be a well-favored man is the gift of 15

- 15. well-favored: i.e., handsome
- 19. favor: appearance
- 22. vanity: perhaps, foolishness or worthlessness; or, perhaps, self-conceit; or, perhaps, a mistake for "talent"
 - 23. senseless: a mistake for, perhaps, "sensible"
- 25. **comprehend:** a mistake for "apprehend," arrest; **vagrom:** i.e., vagrant, vagabond
 - 26. bid . . . stand: i.e., order . . . to come to a halt
 - 28. take no note of: i.e., pay no attention to
 - 32. none: i.e., not one
 - 36. tolerable: a mistake for "intolerable"
 - 38. belongs to: i.e., is appropriate for
- 41. bills: long-handled pointed weapons carried by watchmen
- 50. true: honest; for: i.e., as for



A watchman. From Thomas Dekker, *The belman of London* . . . (1616).

fortune, but to write and read comes by nature. 「SEACOAL Both which, master constable DOGBERRY You have. I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favor, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to 25 bid any man stand, in the Prince's name. 「SEACOAL How if he will not stand? DOGBERRY Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go, and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of a knave. VERGES If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Prince's subjects. DOGBERRY True, and they are to meddle with none but the Prince's subjects. - You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and 35 to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured. 「SECOND WATCHMAN We will rather sleep than talk. We know what belongs to a watch. DOGBERRY Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping 40 should offend; only have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the alehouses and bid those that are drunk get them to bed. SEACOAL How if they will not? DOGBERRY Why then, let them alone till they are sober. 45 If they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for. SEACOAL Well, sir. DOGBERRY If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man, and for such 50

75

- 51. meddle or make with: have to do with (a proverbial expression)
 - 52. the more is: i.e., the better it is
 - 54. lay hands on: i.e., seize
 - 56. they . . . defiled: proverbial
 - 62. by my will: i.e., willingly
 - 65. still: i.e., quiet
- 74. present: represent
- 75. stay: stop
- 76. by 'r Lady: an oath "by our Lady" (i.e., the Virgin Mary)
 - 83. An: if
- 84. **there be . . . chances:** i.e., anything important happens
- 85. **Keep . . . counsels:** i.e., keep each other's secrets



Playing a tabor and pipe. (2.3.15)

From William Kemp,

Kempes nine daies wonder (1600; 1884 facs.).

102

3

kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

SEACOAL If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

DOGBERRY Truly, by your office you may, but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled. The most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.

VERGES You have been always called a merciful man, 60 partner.

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

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

SECOND WATCHMAN How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

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

VERGES 'Tis very true.

DOGBERRY This is the end of the charge. You, constable, are to present the Prince's own person. If you meet the Prince in the night, you may stay him.

VERGES Nay, by 'r Lady, that I think he cannot.

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

VERGES By 'r Lady, I think it be so.

DOGBERRY Ha, ah ha!—Well, masters, goodnight. An there be any matter of weight chances, call up me. Keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and goodnight.—Come, neighbor.

Dogberry and Verges begin to exit.

95

110

115

- 92. coil: fuss, turmoil
- 93. vigitant: a mistake for "vigilant"
- 98. Mass: an oath "by the Mass"; my elbow itched: a proverbial warning against bad company
 - 99. scab: (1) crust over a wound; (2) scoundrel
 - 100. answer: return thrust (a fencing term)
 - 102-3. penthouse: canopy; or, overhanging eaves
 - 105. treason: treachery
 - 105-6. Yet stand close: i.e., remain hidden
 - 108. ducats: gold coins
 - 110. dear: expensive, costly
- 112. villainy: perhaps, person who instigates wickedness
- 114. make what price they will: i.e., charge what they wish
 - 115. wonder: i.e., am amazed
 - 116. unconfirmed: ignorant, uninformed
- 117-18. **the fashion...man:** See longer note, page 202. **fashion:** style or cut **doublet:** short, close-fitting jacket

「SEACOAL Well, masters, we hear our charge. Let us go sit here upon the church bench till two, and then all to bed.

DOGBERRY One word more, honest neighbors. I pray you watch about Signior Leonato's door, for the wedding being there tomorrow, there is a great coil tonight. Adieu, be vigitant, I beseech you.

「Dogberry and Verges] exit.

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

BORACHIO What, Conrade!

「SEACOAL, aside Teace, stir not.

BORACHIO Conrade, I say!

CONRADE Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

BORACHIO Mass, and my elbow itched, I thought there would a scab follow.

CONRADE I will owe thee an answer for that. And now 100 forward with thy tale.

BORACHIO Stand thee close, then, under this penthouse, for it drizzles rain, and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

「SEACOAL, aside Some treason, masters. Yet stand 105 close.

BORACHIO Therefore know, I have earned of 「Don John a thousand ducats.

CONRADE Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

BORACHIO Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villainy should be so rich. For when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

CONRADE I wonder at it.

BORACHIO That shows thou art unconfirmed. Thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

121. **the fashion:** perhaps, that which is fashionable; what people are currently wearing

123–24. **this fashion**: i.e., fashion, that which is

fashionable

126-27. up and down: i.e., here and there

132. hot bloods: i.e., hot-blooded young men

133. **fashioning:** dressing; **Pharaoh:** in the Bible, the king of Egypt from whom the Israelites fled

134. reechy: smoky, dirty

134-35. **Bel's priests:** i.e., the priests of Baal in the Apocrypha

135. old . . . window: i.e., stained-glass church window

136. Hercules: See notes to 2.1.250 and 251, and page 146. The reference to Hercules as shaven has not been satisfactorily explained.

137. codpiece: a showy attachment to the front of

a man's breeches; massy: massive, huge

139-40. **fashion . . . man:** i.e., changes in fashion cause clothes to be discarded more than do wear and tear

146. by the name of Hero: i.e., calling her "Hero"; leans me: i.e., leans

150. possessed: given information

151. amiable: amorous

CONRADE Yes, it is apparel. BORACHIO I mean the fashion. 120 CONRADE Yes, the fashion is the fashion. BORACHIO Tush, I may as well say the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is? FIRST WATCHMAN, aside I know that Deformed. He 125 has been a vile thief this seven year. He goes up and down like a gentleman. I remember his name. BORACHIO Didst thou not hear somebody? CONRADE No, 'twas the vane on the house. BORACHIO Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief 130 this fashion is, how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting, sometimes like god Bel's priests in the old church window, sometimes like 135 the shaven Hercules in the smirched worm-eaten tapestry, where his codpiece seems as massy as his club? CONRADE All this I see, and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou 140 thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion? BORACHIO Not so, neither. But know that I have tonight wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentle- 145 woman, by the name of Hero. She leans me out at her mistress' chamber window, bids me a thousand times goodnight. I tell this tale vilely. I should first tell thee how the Prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master 150 Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable

CONRADE And thought they Margaret was Hero?

BORACHIO Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio.

encounter.

156. **possessed:** influenced (but with a sense of demonic possession)

160-61. as he was appointed: i.e., as had been arranged (literally, as he had an appointment to do)

163. o'ernight: the preceding evening

168. recovered: a mistake for "discovered"

169. lechery: perhaps he means "villainy" or, perhaps, "treachery"

172. lock: a long lock of hair

172 SD. Enter Dogberry: See longer note, page 202.

174. made bring: i.e., forced to bring

177. **obey:** perhaps, order (or perhaps he is trying to say, "Obey us and go with us")

178. like: likely

179. **commodity:** parcel of goods; **being taken up:** To "take up a commodity" was to obtain goods on credit and then sell them for cash. **bills:** (1) watchmen's weapons; (2) "bills of parcels" or itemized invoices

180. in question: in dispute; or, in a doubtful state

but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged, swore he would meet her as he was 160 appointed next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'ernight and send her home again without a husband.

FIRST WATCHMAN We charge you in the Prince's name, 165 stand!

SEACOAL Call up the right Master Constable. Second Watchman exits. We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

FIRST WATCHMAN And one Deformed is one of them. I know him; he wears a lock.

「Enter Dogberry, Verges, and Second Watchman.]

DOGBERRY Masters, masters—

FIRST WATCHMAN, to Borachio You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

Speak, we charge you, let us obey you to go with us. BORACHIO, to Conrade We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.

CONRADE A commodity in question, I warrant you.— 180 Come, we'll obey you.

They exit.

3.4 Early the next morning, Hero prepares for the wedding. Beatrice enters, suffering, she says, from a bad cold, but Hero and Margaret tease her about being in love with Benedick.

2. desire: i.e., tell

5. Well: i.e., very well

6. Troth: a mild oath; rebato: a tall, ornamental, stiff collar

8. pray thee: a phrase of apology

9. 's: i.e., it is

13. tire: attire, headdress; within: perhaps, in the next room

14. hair: i.e., hairpiece attached to the headdress; a thought: i.e., a bit

17. that exceeds: i.e., that's wonderful

18. nightgown: dressing gown

18-19. in respect of: i.e., compared to

19. **cloth o' gold:** fabric woven in part from gold thread; **cuts:** slashes in the outer fabric that show off the rich lining

19-20. laced with silver: i.e., trimmed with silver lace

20. down sleeves: tight-fitting long sleeves; side sleeves: long ornamental sleeves hanging from the shoulder

21. **underborne:** trimmed underneath; **tinsel:** rich fabric interwoven with silver or gold

22. quaint: elaborate, elegant

23. on 't: i.e., of it

25. heavy: sad, somber

30. in a beggar: i.e., even in a beggar

(continued)

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Scene 47 Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Ursula.

HERO Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice and desire her to rise.

URSULA I will, lady.

HERO And bid her come hither.

URSULA Well.

MARGARET Troth I think

MARGARET Troth, I think your other rebato were better.

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

MARGARET By my troth, 's not so good, and I warrant your cousin will say so.

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

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

HERO O, that exceeds, they say.

MARGARET By my troth, 's but a nightgown in respect of yours—cloth o' gold, and cuts, and laced with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts round underborne with a bluish tinsel. But for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on 't.

HERO God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy.

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

HERO Fie upon thee! Art not ashamed?

MARGARET Of what, lady? Of speaking honorably? Is not marriage honorable in a beggar? Is not your lord honorable without marriage? I think you would have me say "Saving your reverence, a husband." An bad thinking do not wrest true speaking,

- 32. **Saving your reverence:** a request to be excused for using an indecent word
- 33. An: if; do not wrest: i.e., does not distort or twist the meaning of

36. light: licentious; or, frivolous

37. heavy: serious (with the obvious puns on both words); else: i.e., if you doubt me

41. in the sick tune: i.e., as if you were sick

43. Clap 's into: i.e., let's clap (swing) into; Light o' love: the name of a popular song

44. burden: refrain; or bass accompaniment (The standard meaning of burden picks up the word heavier in line 26 and continues the puns on light and heavy.)

45. **light o' love with your heels:** a double accusation of wantonness (**light** meaning licentious and "light-heeled" meaning "unchaste")

47. barns: contains a pun on "bairns" or children

48. **illegitimate:** inaccurate (with the obvious pun); **construction:** interpretation

48-49. **scorn that with my heels:** proverbial, meaning to reject something with contempt

52-53. Heigh-ho...husband: See note to 2.1.313.

54. **H:** The noun form of *ache* was pronounced like the letter h. The pun on h and *ache* was common.

55. turned Turk: i.e., renounced your old faith

55-56. **there's . . . star:** i.e., there's nothing one can trust (literally, one cannot use the North Star for navigation)

57. trow: i.e., I trow, I wonder

60. they are: i.e., they have

62. I am stuffed: i.e., my nose is stuffed up

(continued)

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I'll offend nobody. Is there any harm in "the heavier for a husband"? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife. Otherwise, 'tis light and not heavy. Ask my lady Beatrice else. Here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

| HERO Good morrow, coz. | |
|--|----|
| BEATRICE Good morrow, sweet Hero. | 40 |
| HERO Why, how now? Do you speak in the sick tune? | |
| BEATRICE I am out of all other tune, methinks. | |
| MARGARET Clap 's into "Light o' love." That goes | |
| without a burden. Do you sing it, and I'll dance it. | |
| BEATRICE You light o' love with your heels! Then, if | 45 |
| your husband have stables enough, you'll see he | |
| shall lack no barns. | |
| MARGARET O, illegitimate construction! I scorn that | |
| with my heels. | |
| BEATRICE 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin. 'Tis time | 50 |
| you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill. | |
| Heigh-ho! | |
| MARGARET For a hawk, a horse, or a husband? | |
| BEATRICE For the letter that begins them all, <i>H</i> . | |
| MARGARET Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no | 55 |
| more sailing by the star. | |
| BEATRICE What means the fool, trow? | |
| MARGARET Nothing, I; but God send everyone their | |
| heart's desire. | |
| HERO These gloves the Count sent me, they are an | 60 |
| excellent perfume. | |
| BEATRICE I am stuffed, cousin. I cannot smell. | |
| MARGARET A maid, and stuffed! There's goodly catch- | |
| ing of cold. | |
| BEATRICE O, God help me, God help me! How long | 65 |
| have you professed apprehension? | |

70

- 63. stuffed: perhaps, pregnant
- 66. **professed apprehension:** i.e., made wittiness your profession
 - 67. it: i.e., apprehension, wit
 - 68. rarely: excellently
 - 71. some of this: i.e., some
- 71–72. **carduus benedictus:** i.e., the herb "blessed thistle," which was claimed to be "a salve for every sore" (Lines 71–76 pun on **carduus**—which means "thistle" and which sounds like the Latin *cordis*, "of the heart"—and on **benedictus**, which means "holy" and which contains Benedick's name.)
 - 73. qualm: sudden illness
 - 76. moral: hidden meaning
 - 80. list: choose
 - 84. such another: i.e., another who refused to love
 - 86. in despite of: i.e., despite the opposition of
- 86-87. eats . . . grudging: perhaps, is content to be like other men
- 91. false gallop: literally, a canter (with a pun on false as "untrue, mistaken")



Blessed thistle (Carduus benedictus). From John Gerard, The herball . . . (1597).

MARGARET Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely?

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

MARGARET Get you some of this distilled *carduus bene-dictus* and lay it to your heart. It is the only thing for a qualm.

HERO There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

BEATRICE Benedictus! Why benedictus? You have some 75 moral in this benedictus?

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

BEATRICE What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

MARGARET Not a false gallop.

Enter Ursula.

URSULA Madam, withdraw. The Prince, the Count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town are come to fetch you to church.

HERO Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good 95 Ursula.

「They exit. ¬

- 3.5 Dogberry and Verges try to tell Leonato about the arrest of Borachio and Conrade, but they are so unintelligible that Leonato impatiently dismisses them, telling them to examine the prisoners. He leaves for the wedding.
- 0 SD. **Headborough:** constable with more limited authority than Dogberry's
- 2. **confidence:** a mistake for "conference, conversation"
- 3. decerns: a mistake for "concerns"; nearly: closely
- 9. **Goodman:** a term of address for a man below the rank of gentleman
 - 10. blunt: a mistake for "sharp"
 - 12. honest . . . brows: proverbial
- 15. **odorous:** Proverbial: "Comparisons are odious." **Palabras:** The Spanish phrase *pocas palabras* means "few words."
- 19. **the poor duke's officers:** a mistake for "the duke's poor officers"
- 20. **tedious as a king:** The following lines indicate that Dogberry thinks **tedious** means "rich."
 - 21. of: i.e., on
 - 23. an 'twere: if it were
- 24. **exclamation on:** probably a mistake for "acclamations of" ("To exclaim on" meant "to accuse loudly, to blame.")
 - 28. fain: gladly
 - 29. tonight: last night

(continued)

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| 「Scene 57 |
|---|
| Enter Leonato, and Dogberry, the Constable, and |
| Verges, the Headborough. |

LEONATO What would you with me, honest neighbor?

DOGBERRY Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that decerns you nearly.

LEONATO Brief, I pray you, for you see it is a busy time with me.

DOGBERRY Marry, this it is, sir.

VERGES Yes, in truth, it is, sir.

LEONATO What is it, my good friends?

DOGBERRY Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter. An old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were, but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

VERGES Yes, I thank God I am as honest as any man living that is an old man and no honester than I.

DOGBERRY Comparisons are odorous. *Palabras*, neighbor Verges.

LEONATO Neighbors, you are tedious.

DOGBERRY It pleases your Worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers. But truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your Worship.

LEONATO All thy tediousness on me, ah?

DOGBERRY Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis, for I hear as good exclamation on your Worship as of any man in the city, and though I be 25 but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

VERGES And so am I.

LEONATO I would fain know what you have to say.

VERGES Marry, sir, our watch tonight, excepting your Worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

DOGBERRY A good old man, sir. He will be talking. As

- 29-30. **excepting...presence**: Dogberry probably intends the complimentary phrase "respecting [showing respect to] your presence." (His words mean, literally, "except for you, the men we have arrested are 'as arrant knaves as any in Messina.'")
 - 30. ha' ta'en: i.e., have taken, have arrested
 - 31. knaves: villains
- 33. **age:** The proverb actually states: "When the ale is in, the wit is out." (The rest of this speech is a collection of proverbs that are more accurately reproduced than this one.)
 - 36. ride of a horse: i.e., ride on one horse
- 40. **he comes too short of you:** i.e., he can't measure up to you
 - 41. Gifts: i.e., my virtues are gifts
- 44. **comprehended:** a mistake for "apprehended"; **aspicious:** a mistake for "suspicious"
 - 50. suffigance: a mistake for "sufficient"
 - 52. stay: i.e., wait
 - 54. wait upon: attend
- 55-56. **Francis Seacoal:** This may be the Sexton who appears in 4.2. The watchman in 3.2 was named George Seacoal.
 - 57. examination: a mistake for "examine"
 - 59. spare for no wit: i.e., not hold back on wisdom
- 60. **noncome:** perhaps a confusion of *non plus* ("a state of perplexity") with *non compos mentis* ("not of sound mind")
- 61-62. **excommunication:** a mistake for "examination"

they say, "When the age is in, the wit is out." God help us, it is a world to see!—Well said, i' faith, neighbor Verges.—Well, God's a good man. An two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul, i' faith, sir, by my troth he is, as ever broke bread, but God is to be worshiped, all men are not alike, alas, good neighbor.

LEONATO Indeed, neighbor, he comes too short of you. 40 DOGBERRY Gifts that God gives.

LEONATO I must leave you.

DOGBERRY One word, sir. Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before 45 your Worship.

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

DOGBERRY It shall be suffigance.

LEONATO Drink some wine ere you go. Fare you well.

「Enter a Messenger. ¬

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

LEONATO I'll wait upon them. I am ready.

He exits, \(\text{with the Messenger.} \) \(\text{7} \)

DOGBERRY Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal. Bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail. We are now to examination these men.

VERGES And we must do it wisely.

DOGBERRY We will spare for no wit, I warrant you.

Here's that shall drive some of them to a noncome.

Only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication and meet me at the jail.

「They exit. ¬

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT 4

4.1 At the wedding, Claudio publicly denounces Hero as a lewd woman. He is supported in his story by Don Pedro and Don John. Hero faints and her accusers depart. The Friar believes in her innocence and proposes that Leonato announce that she has died. This news, the Friar thinks, will make Claudio remember his love for her. After the others depart, Benedick and Beatrice admit they love each other, and Benedick reluctantly agrees to challenge Claudio to a duel.

12. inward: undisclosed

13. charge: command

21–22. **some . . . ha, he:** an echo of Lyly's Latin *Grammar*, where **interjections** are defined



A lute. (2.1.92, 2.3.61) From Silvestro Pietrasanta, Symbola heroica . . . (1682). $\lceil ACT \ 4 \rceil$

Scene 17

Enter Prince, John the Bastard, Leonato, Friar, Claudio, Benedick, Hero, and Beatrice, with Attendants.7 LEONATO Come, Friar Francis, be brief, only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards. FRIAR, To Claudio You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady? CLAUDIO No. LEONATO To be married to her.—Friar, you come to marry her. FRIAR Lady, you come hither to be married to this count? 10 HERO I do. FRIAR If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you on your souls to utter it. CLAUDIO Know you any, Hero? 15 HERO None, my lord. FRIAR Know you any, count? LEONATO I dare make his answer, none. CLAUDIO O, what men dare do! What men may do! What men daily do, not knowing what they do! 20 BENEDICK How now, interjections? Why, then, some

be of laughing, as ah, ha, he!

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23. Stand thee by: i.e., stand aside

30. learn: i.e., teach

33. sign: show or pretense

35. authority: power to inspire belief; show: outward appearance

36. withal: i.e., with

37. modest evidence: i.e., evidence of modesty

38. witness: i.e., act as a witness to

41. luxurious: lascivious, lecherous

45. approvèd: proved, convicted

46. proof: perhaps, experience; or, perhaps, trial or test of her

49. known: had sexual relations with

50. embrace me as a husband: Although the church forbade intercourse before the ritual celebration of marriage, the law allowed intercourse for formally betrothed couples.

CLAUDIO Stand thee by, friar.—Father, by your leave, Will you with free and unconstrained soul Give me this maid, your daughter? 25 LEONATO As freely, son, as God did give her me. CLAUDIO And what have I to give you back whose worth May counterpoise this rich and precious gift? PRINCE Nothing, unless you render her again. CLAUDIO Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.— There, Leonato, take her back again. Give not this rotten orange to your friend. She's but the sign and semblance of her honor. Behold how like a maid she blushes here! O, what authority and show of truth 35 Can cunning sin cover itself withal! Comes not that blood as modest evidence To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear, All you that see her, that she were a maid, By these exterior shows? But she is none. 40 She knows the heat of a luxurious bed. Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty. LEONATO What do you mean, my lord? CLAUDIO Not to be married. Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton. 45 LEONATO Dear my lord, if you in your own proof Have vanquished the resistance of her youth, And made defeat of her virginity-CLAUDIO I know what you would say: if I have known her, You will say she did embrace me as a husband, 50

- 51. **forehand sin:** i.e., the sinfulness of the act committed in anticipation (of the marriage)
 - 53. too large: improper, gross
 - 55. comely: proper, decorous
- 57. Out on thee: i.e., curses on you; seeming: semblance, mere appearance
- 58. **Dian:** i.e., Diana, goddess of chastity and of the moon (here equated with the moon "in her [i.e., its] orb"); **orb:** sphere (In Ptolemaic astronomy, the moon, like the sun and the planets, moved around the earth in its own crystalline sphere.)
 - 59. be blown: i.e., has burst into flower
 - 60. blood: sensual appetites
- 61. **Venus:** goddess of love, often depicted as promiscuous and highly sensual
 - 63. wide: i.e., wide of the mark, wildly
 - 68. common stale: lowest-class prostitute
 - 72. True: an echo of Don John's word at line 70
 - 77. but move: only pose



"Dian in her orb." (4.1.58)
From Vincenzo Cartari,
Le vere e noue Imagini . . . (1615).

And so extenuate the forehand sin. No. Leonato. I never tempted her with word too large, But, as a brother to his sister, showed Bashful sincerity and comely love. 55 **HERO** And seemed I ever otherwise to you? CLAUDIO Out on thee, seeming! I will write against it. You seem to me as Dian in her orb. As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown. But you are more intemperate in your blood 60 Than Venus, or those pampered animals That rage in savage sensuality. HERO Is my lord well that he doth speak so wide? **LEONATO** Sweet prince, why speak not you? PRINCE What should I 65 speak? I stand dishonored that have gone about To link my dear friend to a common stale. LEONATO Are these things spoken, or do I but dream? DON JOHN Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true. 70 BENEDICK This looks not like a nuptial. HERO True! O God! CLAUDIO Leonato, stand I here? Is this the Prince? Is this the Prince's brother? Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own? 75 LEONATO All this is so, but what of this, my lord? CLAUDIO Let me but move one question to your daughter,

78. kindly: lawful

80. charge thee: order you to
86. Marry: an oath "by the Virgin Mary"
87. Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue: See longer note, page 203.

92. Why . . . maiden: Since she does not answer his question by naming the man, she fails his test: "if you are a maid, answer. . . ."

94. grievèd: aggrieved; grief-stricken

97. liberal: plainspoken

104. much misgovernment: great immorality

| And by that fatherly and kindly power That you have in her, bid her answer truly. LEONATO I charge thee do so, as thou art my child. HERO | 80 |
|---|-----|
| O, God defend me, how am I beset!— What kind of catechizing call you this? | |
| CLAUDIO | |
| To make you answer truly to your name. HERO | |
| Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name With any just reproach? | |
| OX IXID | 85 |
| Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue. | |
| What man was he talked with you yesternight | |
| Out at your window betwixt twelve and one? | |
| Now, if you are a maid, answer to this. | |
| HERO | 90 |
| I talked with no man at that hour, my lord. | |
| PRINCE | |
| Why, then, are you no maiden.—Leonato, | |
| I am sorry you must hear. Upon mine honor | |
| myself, my brother, and this grieved count | |
| Did see ner, hear her, at that hour last night | |
| Talk with a ruffian at her chamber window, | 95 |
| Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain, | |
| Confessed the vile encounters they have had | |
| A thousand times in secret. | |
| DON JOHN | |
| Fie, fie, they are not to be named, my lord, Not to be spoke of! | 100 |
| There is not chastity enough in language, | |
| Without offense, to utter them.—Thus, pretty lady, | |
| I am sorry for thy much misgovernment. | |
| CLAUDIO | |
| O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been | 105 |

106. outward graces: external beauties

110. For: i.e., because of

111. conjecture: suspicion

112. **thoughts of harm:** i.e., harmful thoughts; or, perhaps, thoughts about harm

113. gracious: attractive (to me)

115. wherefore: why

117. spirits: vital powers

122. cover: screen, concealment, cloak

130. blood: i.e., blushes

If half thy outward graces had been placed About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart! But fare thee well, most foul, most fair. Farewell, Thou pure impiety and impious purity. For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love 110 And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang, To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm, And never shall it more be gracious. LEONATO Hath no man's dagger here a point for me? 「Hero falls. ¬ BEATRICE Why, how now, cousin, wherefore sink you down? DON JOHN Come, let us go. These things, come thus to light, Smother her spirits up. Claudio, Prince, and Don John exit. BENEDICK How doth the lady? BEATRICE Dead, I think.—Help, uncle!— Hero, why Hero! Uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar! 120 **LEONATO** O Fate, take not away thy heavy hand! Death is the fairest cover for her shame That may be wished for. BEATRICE How now, cousin Hero? Hero stirs. FRIAR, To Hero Have comfort, lady. LEONATO, Tto Hero Dost thou look up? Yea, wherefore should she not? FRIAR LEONATO Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny The story that is printed in her blood?— 130 Do not live, Hero, do not ope thine eyes, For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,

| 134. | on | the | rear | ward | of | reproaches: | i.e., | after |
|--------|------|-------|--------|-------|-----|---------------|-------|-------|
| reproa | chin | ig yo | u; or, | after | thi | s public scan | dal | |

136. **Chid:** i.e., chided, found fault, uttered words of rebuke; **frame:** plan

137. much: i.e., many

140. issue: i.e., infant

141. mired: soiled

145. proud on: i.e., proud of

147. Valuing of: i.e., because I cared so much for

148. that the: i.e., so that the

150-51. **season give / To:** (1) preserve from decay (literally, embalm); (2) restore to soundness (literally, add flavor or relish to)

153. wonder: amazement

155. is belied: i.e., has been lied about

160. before: i.e., already

| Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shame | |
|--|---------|
| Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches, | ٠٥, |
| Strike at thy life. Grieved I I had but one? | 125 |
| Chid I for that at frugal Nature's frame? | 135 |
| O, one too much by thee! Why had I one? | |
| Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes? | |
| Why had I not with charitable hand | |
| Took up a beggar's issue at my gates, | - |
| Who, smirched thus, and mired with infamy, | 140 |
| I might have said "No part of it is mine; | |
| This shame derives itself from unknown loins"? | |
| But mine, and mine I loved, and mine I praised, | |
| And mine that I was proud on, mine so much | 41.4 |
| That I myself was to myself not mine, | 145 |
| Valuing of her—why she, O she, is fall'n | |
| Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea | |
| Hath drops too few to wash her clean again, | |
| And salt too little which may season give | 2.0243 |
| To her foul tainted flesh! | 150 |
| | |
| For my part, I am so attired in wonder | |
| I know not what to say. | |
| BEATRICE | |
| O, on my soul, my cousin is belied! | 8972521 |
| BENEDICK | 155 |
| Lady, were you her bedfellow last night? | |
| BEATRICE | |
| No, truly not, although until last night | |
| I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow. | |
| LEONATO | |
| Confirmed, confirmed! O, that is stronger made | |
| Which was before barred up with ribs of iron! | |
| Would the two princes lie and Claudio lie, | 160 |
| Who loved her so that, speaking of her foulness, | |
| Washed it with tears? Hence from her. Let her die! | |
| EDIAD Hoor man little | |

167. **noting of:** paying attention to; **marked:** noticed

168, 169. blushing apparitions, shames: The Friar describes Hero's alternately red and white face as if it were being visited by supernatural beings.

169. start into: i.e., appear suddenly in

172. burn the errors: an image in which the errors are heretics to be burned at the stake

174. reading: perhaps, reading of Hero's face

175. experimental seal: i.e., the seal of experi-

ence; warrant: guarantee (the truth of)

176. **tenor of my book:** i.e., what I find in my reading (The reference here is either to the books he has read or to Hero's face, which he reads as if it were a book.)

177. **reverence:** perhaps, age, position as a venerable person; **calling:** profession as priest; **divinity:** knowledge of theology

181. grace: goodness, virtue

188. of: i.e., about

189. warrant: sanction, allow

191. Prove you: i.e., if you prove

192. unmeet: unfitting, improper

193. Maintained . . . words: i.e., talked

194. Refuse: reject, abandon

195. misprision: misunderstanding, error

196. have the very bent of honor: i.e., are totally disposed to be honorable

For I have only \(\silent \text{been} \) so long. 165 And given way unto this course of fortune, By noting of the lady. I have marked A thousand blushing apparitions To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames In angel whiteness beat away those blushes, 170 And in her eye there hath appeared a fire To burn the errors that these princes hold Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool, Trust not my reading nor my observations, Which with experimental seal doth warrant 175 The tenor of my book; trust not my age, My reverence, calling, nor divinity, If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here Under some biting error. **LEONATO** Friar, it cannot be. Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left Is that she will not add to her damnation A sin of perjury. She not denies it. Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse That which appears in proper nakedness? 185 FRIAR Lady, what man is he you are accused of? They know that do accuse me. I know none. If I know more of any man alive Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant, Let all my sins lack mercy!-O my father, 190 Prove you that any man with me conversed At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight Maintained the change of words with any creature, Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death! There is some strange misprision in the princes. 195 BENEDICK Two of them have the very bent of honor,

| 197. wisdoms: understanding, good judgment |
|--|
| 198. practice: machination, plotting |
| 199. spirits: vital powers; frame of: i.e., framing |
| contriving |
| 200. but: merely |
| 204. invention: inventiveness, ability to plot or |
| scheme |
| 206. reft: i.e., bereft, deprived |
| 207. kind: manner |
| 208. policy: cunning |
| 210. quit me of: repay, settle the score with; |
| throughly: i.e., thoroughly |
| 215. publish: proclaim |
| 216. mourning ostentation: display or show of |
| mourning |
| 217. monument: sepulcher, burial vault |
| 220. become of: i.e., come from |
| 221. carried: managed |
| 223. dream on: conceive of, think of |
| 224. on this travail: i.e., from this effort (with a |
| pun on travail as childbirth) |
| 225. maintained: declared to be true |
| 228. Of : i.e., by |
| 229. prize: esteem, value; the worth: i.e., its true |
| value |
| |
| * |
| |
| |
| * |
| |
| |
| |

| | And if their wisdoms be misled in this, The practice of it lives in John the Bastard, | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 89 | Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies. | |
| | ONATO | |
| , | I know not. If they speak but truth of her, These hands shall tear her. If they wrong her honor, The proudest of them shall well hear of it. Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine, | 200 |
|] | Nor age so eat up my invention, Nor fortune made such havoc of my means, Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends, But they shall find, awaked in such a kind, | 205 |
|] | Both strength of limb and policy of mind, Ability in means and choice of friends, | |
| | To quit me of them throughly. | 210 |
| | AR Pause awhile, | |
| 1 | And let my counsel sway you in this case. | |
| | Your daughter here the princes left for dead. | |
| | Let her awhile be secretly kept in, | |
| | And publish it that she is dead indeed. | 215 |
| 1 | Maintain a mourning ostentation, | |
| I | And on your family's old monument | |
| I | Hang mournful epitaphs and do all rites | |
| | That appertain unto a burial. | |
| LEC | DNATO | |
| 1 | What shall become of this? What will this do? | 220 |
| FRI | AR | |
| N | Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf | |
| (| Change slander to remorse. That is some good. | |
| I | But not for that dream I on this strange course, | |
| I | But on this travail look for greater birth. | |
| 5 | She, dying, as it must be so maintained, | 225 |
| τ | Jpon the instant that she was accused, | |
| S | Shall be lamented, pitied, and excused | |
| (| Of every hearer. For it so falls out | |
| | That what we have we prize not to the worth | |
| | The same works | |

| 231. | rack | the | value: | i.e., | strain | its | worth | to | the |
|-------|------|-----|--------|-------|--------|-----|-------|----|-----|
| limit | | | | | | | | | |

232. possession: i.e., possessing it

233. fare: happen

236. study of imagination: imaginative reveries

237. every . . . life: i.e., all that gives her life organ: a means of action or operation

238. habit: clothing

240. prospect: range of vision

242. **interest in:** a claim upon, a share in; **liver:** thought to be the seat of the passions

245. **doubt not but:** i.e., do not doubt that; **success:** i.e., that which follows

246. event: outcome

247. lay . . . likelihood: i.e., project as its probable outcome

248. if all... false: i.e., if we miss the mark in everything but this (i.e., the supposition of the lady's death)

251. it sort not: i.e., it does not turn out

253. reclusive: cloistered

254. injuries: insults

256. inwardness: close friendship

261. Being that: i.e., since; flow in: perhaps, am flooded with, or am afloat in

263. Presently: at once

| Whiles we enjoy it, but being lacked and lost, Why then we rack the value, then we find The virtue that possession would not show us Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio. | 230 |
|--|------|
| When he shall hear she died upon his words, | |
| Th' idea of her life shall sweetly creep Into his study of imagination, | 235 |
| And every lovely organ of her life | |
| Shall come appareled in more precious habit, | |
| More moving, delicate, and full of life, | |
| Into the eye and prospect of his soul, | |
| Than when she lived indeed. Then shall he mourn, | 240 |
| If ever love had interest in his liver, | |
| And wish he had not so accused her, | |
| No, though he thought his accusation true. | |
| Let this be so, and doubt not but success | 2.45 |
| Will fashion the event in better shape | 245 |
| Than I can lay it down in likelihood. | |
| But if all aim but this be leveled false, | |
| The supposition of the lady's death | |
| Will quench the wonder of her infamy. | 250 |
| And if it sort not well, you may conceal her, | 250 |
| As best befits her wounded reputation, | |
| In some reclusive and religious life, | |
| Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries. | |
| BENEDICK | |
| Signior Leonato, let the Friar advise you. | 255 |
| And though you know my inwardness and love | 233 |
| Is very much unto the Prince and Claudio, | |
| Yet, by mine honor, I will deal in this | |
| As secretly and justly as your soul | |
| Should with your body. | 260 |
| LEONATO Being that I flow in grief, | 200 |
| The smallest twine may lead me. | |
| FRIAR | |
| 'Tis well consented. Presently away, | |

264. to strange sores: i.e., to heal unusual wounds; strangely: in extraordinary ways

264-65. they strain the cure: i.e., people use extraordinary remedies

267. prolonged: postponed

278. even: direct, straightforward

279. May: i.e., can

280. office: function, job

288. By my sword: a mild oath

289-93. swear and eat it . . . devised to it: The wordplay here is on the two phrases "to eat one's words" (i.e., to recant what one has said) and "to make someone eat one's sword" (i.e., to force someone to submit). devised to it: i.e., provided for it

294. protest: declare (as a formal affirmation or vow)

297. **stayed:** stopped; **in a happy hour:** at a fortunate moment

| For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.— | 265 |
|---|-----|
| Come, lady, die to live. This wedding day Perhaps is but prolonged. Have patience and endure. | |
| FAll but Beatrice and Benedick exit. BENEDICK Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while? | - |
| BEATRICE Yea, and I will weep a while longer. BENEDICK I will not desire that. | 270 |
| BEATRICE You have no reason. I do it freely. | |
| BENEDICK Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged. | |
| BEATRICE Ah, how much might the man deserve of me | 275 |
| that would right her! | |
| BENEDICK Is there any way to show such friendship? | |
| BEATRICE A very even way, but no such friend. | |
| BENEDICK May a man do it? | |
| BEATRICE It is a man's office, but not yours. | 280 |
| BENEDICK I do love nothing in the world so well as | |
| you. Is not that strange? | |
| BEATRICE As strange as the thing I know not. It were as | |
| possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you, | |
| but believe me not, and yet I lie not, I confess | 285 |
| nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin. | |
| | |
| BENEDICK By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me! | |
| BEATRICE Do not swear and eat it. | |
| BENEDICK I will swear by it that you love me, and I will | 290 |
| make him eat it that says I love not you. | |
| BEATRICE Will you not eat your word? | |
| BENEDICK With no sauce that can be devised to it. I protest I love thee. | |
| DEATRICE When the are Co. I for the | 205 |
| BENEDICK What offense, sweet Beatrice? | 295 |
| BEATRICE You have stayed me in a happy hour. I was | |
| about to protest I loved you. | |
| | |

307. **I am gone . . . here:** i.e., I have left you even though you are detaining me

315. approved: proved to be; height: extreme

317-18. bear her in hand: i.e., deceive her, lead her on

319. uncovered: open, undisguised

323-24. proper saying: i.e., a fine story (sarcastic)

327. undone: destroyed

329. counties: i.e., counts

330. a goodly count: a handsome count (with puns on goodly as "fine" and on count as "story" and as "legal charge"); Comfect: comfit or confect, candy

331. for his sake: i.e., because of him

BENEDICK And do it with all thy heart. BEATRICE I love you with so much of my heart that 300 none is left to protest. BENEDICK Come, bid me do anything for thee. BEATRICE Kill Claudio BENEDICK Ha! Not for the wide world. BEATRICE You kill me to deny it. Farewell. She begins to exit. BENEDICK Tarry, sweet Beatrice. BEATRICE I am gone, though I am here. There is no love in you. Nay, I pray you let me go. BENEDICK Beatrice-BEATRICE In faith, I will go. 310 BENEDICK We'll be friends first. BEATRICE You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy. BENEDICK Is Claudio thine enemy? BEATRICE Is he not approved in the height a villain 315 that hath slandered, scorned, dishonored my kinswoman? O, that I were a man! What, bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancor-O God, that I were a man! I would eat his 320 heart in the marketplace. BENEDICK Hear me, Beatrice-BEATRICE Talk with a man out at a window! A proper saying. BENEDICK Nay, but Beatrice-BEATRICE Sweet Hero, she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone. BENEDICK Beat-BEATRICE Princes and counties! Surely a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect, a sweet 330 gallant, surely! O, that I were a man for his sake! Or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake!

But manhood is melted into curtsies, valor into.

- 334. **compliment:** ceremonies of civility or courtesy
- 335. **trim ones:** i.e., fine, elegant talkers; **He:** i.e., any man; **now:** i.e., these days; **Hercules:** See note to 2.1.250.
 - 336. swears it: i.e., swears that it's true
 - 346. engaged: committed, pledged
 - 346-47. challenge him: i.e., to a duel
 - 348. render me a dear account: i.e., pay dearly
- **4.2** Dogberry ineptly questions Borachio and Conrade about the deception of Claudio and Don Pedro. The Sexton has Borachio and Conrade bound and orders them taken to Leonato.
 - 0 SD. gowns: i.e., official black gowns
 - 1. dissembly: a mistake for "assembly"
- 5. exhibition: perhaps a mistake for "commission"

compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones, too. He is now as valiant as Hercules 335 that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing; therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

BENEDICK Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

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

BENEDICK Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

BEATRICE Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

BEATRICE Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

BENEDICK Enough, I am engaged. I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so I leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go comfort your cousin. I must say she is dead, and so farewell.

They exit.

「Scene 2[¬]

Enter the Constables Dogberry and Verges, and the Town Clerk, or Sexton, in gowns, with the Watch, Conrade, and Borachio.

TOOGBERRY Is our whole dissembly appeared?

VERGES O, a stool and a cushion for the Sexton.

The stool is brought in; the Sexton sits.

SEXTON Which be the malefactors?

DOGBERRY Marry, that am I, and my partner.

VERGES Nay, that's certain, we have the exhibition to

examine.

SEXTON But which are the offenders that are to be

examined? Let them come before Master Constable.

- 14. sirrah: a term of address to a male social inferior
 - 21. defend but: forbid but that
 - 24. will go near to be: i.e., will almost be
 - 26. none: i.e., nothing of the kind
 - 27. witty: clever
 - 28. go about with: set to work upon
 - 30. false: treacherous, deceitful
 - 33. both in a tale: i.e., telling the same story
- 38. eftest: perhaps a mistake for "fastest" or "deftest"
 - 44. perjury: a mistake for "treachery"



Hercules. (2.1.250) From Vincenzo Cartari, Le vere e noue Imagini . . . (1615).

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「DOGBERRY Yea, marry, let them come before me. Conrade and Borachio are brought forward. What is your name, friend? BORACHIO Borachio. TDOGBERRY Pray, write down "Borachio." -- Yours, sirrah? CONRADE I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is 15 Conrade. [DOGBERRY] Write down "Master Gentleman Conrade."-Masters. do vou serve God? BORACHIO/CONRADE Yea, sir, we hope. DOGBERRY Write down that they hope they serve 20 God; and write God first, for God defend but God should go before such villains!-Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves? CONRADE Marry, sir, we say we are none. DOGBERRY A marvelous witty fellow, I assure you, but I will go about with him. - Come you hither, sirrah, a word in your ear. Sir, I say to you it is thought you are false knaves. 30 BORACHIO Sir, I say to you we are none. 「DOGBERRY Well, stand aside.—'Fore God, they are both in a tale. Have you writ down that they are none? SEXTON Master constable, you go not the way to 35 examine. You must call forth the watch that are their accusers. 「DOGBERRY Yea, marry, that's the eftest way.—Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you in the Prince's name, accuse these men. FIRST WATCHMAN This man said, sir, that Don John, the Prince's brother, was a villain. TDOGBERRY Write down Prince John a villain. Why,

this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain!

- 56. upon his words: i.e., on the strength of Borachio's accusation
- 59. redemption: a mistake for "damnation"

65. refused: rejected

- 69. opinioned: a mistake for "pinioned" (i.e., bound by the arms)
- 71. coxcomb: i.e., fool (literally, the cap worn by a professional Fool)
 - 72. God's: i.e., may God save

74. naughty: wicked

- 76. suspect: a mistake for "respect"; place: position
 - 77. years: i.e., age



A Fool with his coxcomb. (4.2.71) From Sebastian Brant, Stultifera nauis (1570).

| VERGES Yea, by Mass, that it is. | |
|--|----|
| SEXTON What else, fellow? | |
| FIRST WATCHMAN And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her. | 55 |
| DOGBERRY, to Borachio O, villain! Thou wilt be con- | |
| demned into everlasting redemption for this! | |
| SEXTON What else? | 60 |
| 「SEACOAL」 This is all. | |
| Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away. Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died.—Master constable, let these men be bound | 65 |
| and brought to Leonato's. I will go before and show him their examination. The exits. Toogram Come, let them be opinioned. | |
| VERGES Let them be in the hands— | 70 |
| CONRADE Off, coxcomb! | |
| DOGBERRY God's my life, where's the Sexton? Let | |
| him write down the Prince's officer "coxcomb." | |
| Come, bind them.—Thou naughty varlet! | |
| CONRADE Away! You are an ass you are an ass! | 75 |

「DOGBERRY Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? O, that he were here to

write me down an ass! But masters, remember that

I am an ass, though it be not written down, yet

forget not that I am an ass.—No, thou villain, thou 80

Much Ado About Nothing

DOGBERRY Pray thee, fellow, peace. I do not like thy

SEXTON, to Watch What heard you him say else?

SEACOAL Marry, that he had received a thousand

DOGBERRY Flat burglary as ever was committed.

ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero 50

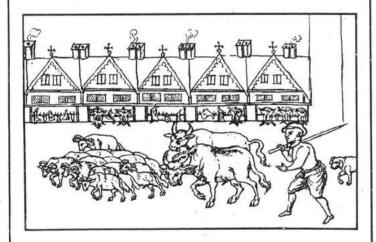
BORACHIO Master constable—

look, I promise thee.

wrongfully.

ACT 4. Sc. 2

81. **piety:** a mistake, perhaps for "impiety" 85, 86. **go to:** an expression of impatience



"So they sell bullocks." (2.1.192–93)
From Hugh Alley, A caveat for the city of London (1598).

art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow and, which is more, an officer and, which is more, a householder and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina, and one that knows the law, go to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns and everything handsome about him.—Bring him away.—O, that I had been writ down an ass!

 $\lceil They \rceil$ exit.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT 5

5.1 Leonato and his brother tell Claudio and Don Pedro of Hero's death, and attempt to challenge them to a duel. Benedick succeeds in issuing his challenge to Claudio. Dogberry and the prisoners enter, and Claudio and Don Pedro learn about the trick that was played on them. They also learn that Don John has fled from Messina. Having been convinced of Hero's innocence, Claudio begs Leonato's forgiveness and is told that he must sing an epitaph at Hero's tomb that night. The next morning, he is to marry Leonato's "niece."

1 SP. Leonato's brother: See note to 1.2.0 SD.

2. second: reinforce, assist the effect of

8. suit with: correspond with, match

10. of her: i.e., in her

12. Measure his woe: i.e., let his grief equal

13. answer...strain: This is primarily a musical metaphor, where one strain or phrase of music answers another. One could paraphrase as "Let his woe match mine in detail or in intensity."

14. such a grief for such: i.e., such a grief match-

ing such another grief

17. wag: depart; hem: i.e., "h'm" or "ahem" (the word used to represent the sound made when clearing the throat, when expressing doubt, or when coughing to attract attention before speaking)

19. Patch . . . with proverbs: mend . . . with proverbial sayings; drunk: i.e., stupefied, insensible

20. With candle-wasters: i.e., through (the words of) those who read and write late into the night

21. of him: i.e., from him

 $\lceil ACT \ 5 \rceil$

Scene 17 Enter Leonato and his brother.

LEONATO'S BROTHER If you go on thus, you will kill yourself, And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief Against yourself. LEONATO I pray thee, cease thy counsel, Which falls into mine ears as profitless As water in a sieve. Give not me counsel. Nor let no comforter delight mine ear But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine. Bring me a father that so loved his child, Whose joy of her is overwhelmed like mine, 10 And bid him speak of patience. Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine. And let it answer every strain for strain. As thus for thus, and such a grief for such, In every lineament, branch, shape, and form. 15 If such a one will smile and stroke his beard, 「Bid sorrow wag, cry "hem" when he should Patch grief with proverbs, make misfortune drunk With candle-wasters, bring him yet to me. 20 And I of him will gather patience.

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But there is no such man. For, brother, men

26. **preceptial med'cine:** i.e., medicinal precepts; **to rage:** i.e., to others' anguish or violent pain

28. Charm: subdue, control (as with a magic spell)

29. office: obligation (said sarcastically)

30. wring: twist in anguish, writhe

31. virtue: strength, power; sufficiency: ability, competency

32. To be so moral: i.e., to moralize in that

manner

34. than advertisement: i.e., than (can be soothed by) instruction or precepts (pronounced advertisement)

35. nothing: not at all

39. However: i.e., however much; writ the style of: i.e., written in a style worthy of

40. a push at: an attack on; sufferance: suffering

41. bend not: i.e., do not direct; upon: against

48. e'en: i.e., afternoon (literally, evening)

| | Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief | |
|----|--|-----|
| | Which they themselves not feel, but tasting it, | |
| | Their counsel turns to passion, which before | 25 |
| | Would give preceptial med'cine to rage, | |
| | Fetter strong madness in a silken thread, | |
| | Charm ache with air and agony with words. | |
| | No, no, 'tis all men's office to speak patience | |
| | To those that wring under the load of sorrow, | 30 |
| | But no man's virtue nor sufficiency | |
| | To be so moral when he shall endure | (6) |
| | The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel. | |
| | My griefs cry louder than advertisement. | |
| | EONATO'S BROTHER | |
| | Therein do men from children nothing differ. | 35 |
| L) | EONATO | |
| | I pray thee, peace. I will be flesh and blood, | |
| | For there was never yet philosopher | |
| | That could endure the toothache patiently, | |
| | However they have writ the style of gods | |
| | And made a push at chance and sufferance. | 40 |
| L | EONATO'S BROTHER | |
| | Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself. | |
| | Make those that do offend you suffer too. | |
| L | EONATO | |
| | There thou speak'st reason. Nay, I will do so. | |
| | My soul doth tell me Hero is belied, | |
| | And that shall Claudio know; so shall the Prince | 45 |
| | And all of them that thus dishonor her | |

Enter Prince and Claudio.

LEONATO'S BROTHER

Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily. PRINCE

Good e'en, good e'en.

CLAUDIO

Good day to both of you.

54. all is one: i.e., it is all the same; it does not matter

56. right: avenge

57. Some of us: i.e., Claudio and Don Pedro; lie low: i.e., lie prostrate or dead

62. beshrew: a mild word for "curse"

63. your age: i.e., you as an old man

64. my . . . sword: perhaps, I had no plan to use my sword

65. fleer: jeer, mock

69. to thy head: i.e., to your face

71. **reverence:** state of being venerated (because of age)

73. trial of a man: i.e., a trial by combat, a duel

79. framed: created



"Enfranchised with a clog." (1.3.31)
From Geoffrey Whitney, *A choice of emblemes* (1586).

Leonato. **LEONATO** Some haste, my lord! Well, fare you well, my lord. Are you so hasty now? Well, all is one. PRINCE Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man. 55 LEONATO'S BROTHER If he could right himself with quarreling, Some of us would lie low. CLAUDIO Who wrongs him? LEONATO Marry, thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou. Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword. I fear thee not. CLAUDIO Marry, beshrew my hand If it should give your age such cause of fear. In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword. LEONATO Tush, tush, man, never fleer and jest at me. 65 I speak not like a dotard nor a fool, As under privilege of age to brag What I have done being young, or what would do Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head, Thou hast so wronged mine innocent child and me 70 That I am forced to lay my reverence by, And with gray hairs and bruise of many days Do challenge thee to trial of a man. I say thou hast belied mine innocent child. Thy slander hath gone through and through her 75 heart. And she lies buried with her ancestors, O, in a tomb where never scandal slept, Save this of hers, framed by thy villainy.

Much Ado About Nothing

We have some haste.

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LEONATO

PRINCE

Hear you, my lords-

| 85. | nice | fence: | i.e., | elegant | fencing | skills; | prac |
|-------|----------|--------|-------|---------|---------|---------|------|
| tice: | i.e., at | sword | olay | | | | |

86. lustihood: vigor, robustness

88. daff: i.e., doff, discard

92. Win me and wear me: proverbial, meaning "defeat me and then boast"

95. **foining fence:** i.e., vigorous swordplay (*To foin* is to pierce or thrust.)

100. answer: fight with

102. apes: counterfeits; jacks: low-born fellows

105. **scruple:** the twenty-fourth part of an ounce (a unit of apothecary weight)

106. **Scambling:** contentious; **outfacing:** i.e., brazen; **fashionmonging:** i.e., foppish

107. **cog**: cheat; or, flatter, wheedle; **deprave**: vilify, disparage

108. anticly: i.e., grotesquely dressed; show outward hideousness: i.e., look terrifying

CLAUDIO My villainy? 80 LEONATO Thine, Claudio, thine, I say, PRINCE You say not right, old man. LEONATO My lord, my lord. I'll prove it on his body if he dare. Despite his nice fence and his active practice. 85 His May of youth and bloom of lustihood. CLAUDIO Away! I will not have to do with you. **LEONATO** Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast killed my child. If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man. LEONATO'S BROTHER He shall kill two of us, and men indeed, 90 But that's no matter. Let him kill one first. Win me and wear me! Let him answer me.-Come, follow me, boy. Come, sir boy, come, follow me. Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence. 95 Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will. LEONATO Brother-LEONATO'S BROTHER Content yourself. God knows I loved my niece, And she is dead, slandered to death by villains That dare as well answer a man indeed 100 As I dare take a serpent by the tongue. -Boys, apes, braggarts, jacks, milksops! LEONATO Brother Anthony— LEONATO'S BROTHER Hold you content. What, man! I know them, yea, And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple— Scambling, outfacing, fashionmonging boys, That lie and cog and flout, deprave and slander, Go anticly and show outward hideousness,

- 115. wake your patience: perhaps, disturb your peace of mind any further (The line is puzzling. It may be an ironic comment; or some editors have suggested that the text may be corrupt.)
 - 122. some of us: i.e., the two of you
 - 128. had like to have had: i.e., nearly had
 - 129. with: i.e., by
 - 131. doubt: suspect
 - 133. false quarrel: perhaps, an unfair fight
- 136. high-proof: i.e., impervious, impenetrable: fain: gladly



Map of the world with the Antipodes. (2.1.261) From Macrobius, In somnium Scipionis . . . (1492).

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And speak off half a dozen dang'rous words How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst, 110 And this is all. LEONATO But brother Anthony-LEONATO'S BROTHER Come, 'tis no matter. Do not you meddle. Let me deal in this. PRINCE Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience. 115 My heart is sorry for your daughter's death, But, on my honor, she was charged with nothing But what was true and very full of proof. LEONATO My lord, my lord-PRINCE I will not hear you. 120 LEONATO No? Come, brother, away. I will be heard. LEONATO'S BROTHER And shall, or some of us will smart for it. Leonato and his brother exit. Enter Benedick. PRINCE

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

CLAUDIO Now, signior, what news?

BENEDICK, To Prince Good day, my lord.

PRINCE Welcome, signior. You are almost come to part almost a fray.

CLAUDIO We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

PRINCE Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? 130 Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

BENEDICK In a false quarrel there is no true valor. I came to seek you both.

CLAUDIO We have been up and down to seek thee, for 135 we are high-proof melancholy and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

141. **beside their wit:** i.e., out of their minds; **draw:** i.e., take out your wit (as you would **draw** your sword)

142. draw: Addressed to minstrels, this might mean "draw your musical instrument from its case."

145. What, courage, man: The word What is used as an interjection introducing an exclamation.

146. care killed a cat: a common expression; mettle: spirit

148. in the career: at full speed (a term from tournaments, as are charge and cross); an: if

149. charge it: i.e., use it as a weapon

150. **subject:** i.e., person to attack; or, perhaps, topic

151. **staff:** i.e., spear shaft (Using the continuing tournament metaphor, Claudio here says that Benedick's wit has failed him.)

152. broke 'cross: i.e., clumsily broken crosswise

153. By this light: a mild oath; changes: i.e., grows pale

155. turn his girdle: Proverbial: "If he be angry, let him turn his girdle." The meaning of the proverb is not known. girdle: a belt for carrying a light weapon or keys

159. make it good: i.e., enforce my accusation through combat; how: i.e., however

160. Do me right: i.e., give me satisfaction

161. protest: announce, proclaim

164. **meet you:** i.e., in a duel (Don Pedro's response suggests he hears this comment, along with the reference to **good cheer**—i.e., hospitable entertainment—and misinterprets it.)

167. bid: invited

(continued)

| BENEDICK It is in my scabbard. Shall I draw it? | |
|--|-----|
| PRINCE Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side? | |
| CLAUDIO Never any did so, though very many have | 140 |
| been beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do | |
| the minstrels: draw to pleasure us. | |
| PRINCE As I am an honest man, he looks pale.—Art | |
| thou sick, or angry? | |
| CLAUDIO, To Benedick What, courage, man! What | 145 |
| though care killed a cat? Thou hast mettle enough | |
| in thee to kill care. | |
| BENEDICK Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an | |
| you charge it against me. I pray you, choose another | |
| subject. | 150 |
| CLAUDIO, To Prince Nay, then, give him another staff. | |
| This last was broke 'cross. | |
| PRINCE By this light, he changes more and more. I | |
| think he be angry indeed. | |
| CLAUDIO If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle. | 155 |
| BENEDICK Shall I speak a word in your ear? | 155 |
| CLAUDIO God bless me from a challenge! | |
| BENEDICK, aside to Claudio You are a villain Liest | |
| not. I will make it good how you dare with what you | |
| | 160 |
| protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet | 100 |
| lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me | |
| hear from you. | |
| CLAUDIO Well, I will meet you, so I may have good | |
| cheer. | 1/5 |
| PRINCE What, a feast, a feast? | 165 |
| CLAUDIO I' faith, I thank him. He hath bid me to a | |
| calf's head and a capon, the which if I do not carve | |
| most curiously, say my knife's naught. Shall I not | |
| find a woodcock too? | 170 |
| BENEDICK Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily. | 170 |
| PRINCE I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the | |
| other day. I said thou hadst a fine wit. "True." said | |
| said mod haust a line wit. True, said | |

185

190

205

168, 170. calf's head, capon, woodcock: Each of these could be an item at a feast (dishes that Claudio is ready to carve), but each also has a symbolic, insulting meaning: calf's head and woodcock mean "simpleton"; capon (a castrated cock) means "eunuch."

169. curiously: elaborately, exquisitely; naught: worthless

174. fine: extremely narrow

176. Just: exactly

178. wise gentleman: perhaps a sarcastic name for a fool

179. tongues: i.e., ability to speak many languages

181. forswore: repudiated, renounced

183. transshape: alter the shape of

185. proper'st: finest, handsomest

188. an if: i.e., if

191-92. God saw him . . . in the garden: In the book of Genesis, after Adam eats the apple forbidden him in the Garden of Eden, he "and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden" (3.8).

193-96. the savage bull's ... married man: a

reference to 1.1.256-62.

198. gossip-like: A gossip was a gossiping or tat-

tling woman. humor: mood

199. braggarts . . . blades: a reference to the way braggarts damage their own weapons and then brag that they broke them in a fight

201. courtesies: kindnesses

205. meet: i.e., in a duel; peace be with him: a phrase used as a greeting or, as here, a farewell

she, "a fine little one." "No," said I, "a great wit." "Right," says she, "a great gross one." "Nay," said I, 175 "a good wit." "Just," said she, "it hurts nobody." "Nay," said I, "the gentleman is wise." "Certain." said she, "a wise gentleman." "Nay," said I, "he hath the tongues." "That I believe," said she, "for he swore a thing to me on Monday night which he 180 forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue, there's two tongues." Thus did she an hour together transshape thy particular virtues. Yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the proper'st man in Italy.

CLAUDIO For the which she wept heartily and said she

cared not

PRINCE Yea, that she did. But yet for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly. The old man's daughter told us all.

CLAUDIO All, all. And, moreover. God saw him when

he was hid in the garden.

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

CLAUDIO Yea, and text underneath: "Here dwells Ben- 195

edick, the married man"?

BENEDICK Fare you well, boy. You know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossip-like humor. You break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not.—My lord, for your many 200 courtesies I thank you. I must discontinue your company. Your brother the Bastard is fled from Messina. You have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet, and till then peace be with him.

「Benedick exits. ¬

PRINCE He is in earnest.

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

212. leaves off his wit: i.e., forgets to wear his intelligence

213-14. **He is...man:** These lines have been variously (and unsatisfactorily) explained. **to an ape:** perhaps, in the eyes of the ape; or, in comparison to an ape; **doctor:** man of learning

215. **soft you:** an exclamation meaning "wait a minute"; **Pluck up:** take courage

216. sad: serious

218. **she shall** . . . **balance**: The image is of Justice with her balance scales; since **reasons** was pronounced like *raisins*, there is a secondary image of a vendor weighing fruit to sell.

219. an: i.e., if; once: i.e., in a word

221. bound: in bonds, tied up

223. Hearken after: i.e., ask about

227. slanders: i.e., slanderers

228. verified: asserted

232. committed: i.e., being sent to prison

232-33. lay to their charge: i.e., charge them with

234. division: i.e., way of enumerating the parts

235. **meaning:** idea, topic; **suited:** perhaps, set out in a sequence; or, perhaps, dressed (in a variety of clothes)

237–38. **bound to your answer:** i.e., tied up, compelled, and on your way to make your legal defense (a triple pun on **bound**)

238. cunning: clever

241. Do you hear me: i.e., listen to me

| PRINCE And hath challenged thee? | |
|---|-----|
| CLAUDIO Most sincerely. | 210 |
| PRINCE What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his | 210 |
| doublet and nose and leaves off his with | |
| CLAUDIO He is then a giant to an ape; but then is an ape | |
| a doctor to such a man. | |
| PRINCE But soft you, let me be. Pluck up, my heart, and be sad. Did he not say my brother was fled? | 215 |
| Enter Constables Dogberry and Verges, and the Watch, with Conrade and Borachio. | |
| DOGBERRY Come you, sir. If justice cannot tame you, | |
| she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance. | |
| Nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must | |
| De looked to. | |
| PRINCE How now, two of my brother's men bound? | 220 |
| Boraciio one! | |
| CLAUDIO Hearken after their offense, my lord. | |
| PRINCE Unicers, what offense have those man 1 | |
| DOGBERRY Marry, sir, they have committed folco | 225 |
| report, moreover, they have enoken untmitted | 225 |
| olidarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly they | |
| have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified univer | |
| unings, and, to conclude they are lying known | |
| FRINCE FIRST, I ask thee what they have done, thin I | 220 |
| ask thee what's their offense sixth and lastly when | 230 |
| they are committed; and, to conclude what you law | |
| to their charge. | |
| CLAUDIO Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; | |
| and, by my from there's one meaning well | 25 |
| Transce, to Borachio and Conrade! Who have you of | .55 |
| refided, masters, that you are thus bound to your | |
| allswer? This learned constable is too cupping to be | |
| understood. What's your offense? | |
| BORACHIO Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine 2 | 40 |
| answer. Do you hear me, and let this count kill me. | 200 |

247. orchard: formal garden

250. seal: i.e., guarantee (the record of my villainy) to be true

258-59. the practice of it: i.e., putting it in practice

260. framed: created, constructed

261. upon: i.e., because of, as a result of

263. semblance: form, image

264. plaintiffs: a mistake for "defendants" or "prisoners"

265. reformed: a mistake for "informed"

I have deceived even your very eyes. What your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light, who in the night overheard me confessing to this man how Don John your 245 brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero, how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments, how you disgraced her when you should marry her. My villainy they have upon record, which I had rather seal with 250 my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation. And, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

PRINCE. Tto Claudio

Runs not this speech like iron through your blood? 255 CLAUDIO

I have drunk poison whiles he uttered it. PRINCE, Tto Borachio

But did my brother set thee on to this? BORACHIO Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

PRINCE

He is composed and framed of treachery, And fled he is upon this villainy. CLAUDIO

Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appear

In the rare semblance that I loved it first.

「DOGBERRY Come, bring away the plaintiffs. By this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of 265 the matter. And, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

TVERGES Here, here comes Master Signior Leonato, and the Sexton too.

Enter Leonato, his brother, and the Sexton.

| | | or 100 april 100 | | | |
|---------|---------|------------------|------|------|-----|
| 277 | beliest | . 11 | 1. | 1 | - 2 |
| 111 | nemest | · Tell | 100 | 2001 | 11 |
| ~ 1 1 . | UCIICSI | . LUII | 1103 | abb | -11 |

282. bravely: (1) courageously; (2) splendidly

283. pray: i.e., beg

285. Impose me to: subject me to, make me undergo; invention: inventiveness

294. Possess: inform

296. aught: at all; invention: composing, devising (here, the writing of a poem or song) 297. **Hang her:** i.e., hang for her

| Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes, That, when I note another man like him, I may avoid him. Which of these is he? BORACHIO If you would know your wronger, look on me. LEONATO | 270 |
|--|-----|
| Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast killed Mine innocent child? BORACHIO Yea, even I alone. LEONATO | 275 |
| No, not so, villain, thou beliest thyself. Here stand a pair of honorable men— A third is fled—that had a hand in it.— I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death. Record it with your high and worthy deeds. 'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it. CLAUDIO | 280 |
| I know not how to pray your patience, Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself. Impose me to what penance your invention Can lay upon my sin. Yet sinned I not But in mistaking. | 285 |
| PRINCE By my soul, nor I, And yet to satisfy this good old man I would bend under any heavy weight That he'll enjoin me to. LEONATO | 290 |
| I cannot bid you bid my daughter live— That were impossible—but, I pray you both, Possess the people in Messina here How innocent she died. And if your love Can labor aught in sad invention, Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb And sing it to her bones. Sing it tonight. Tomorrow morning come you to my house, | 295 |

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301. yet: nevertheless

311. naughty: wicked

313. packed in: i.e., an accomplice to

318. by her: i.e., of her

320. under white and black: i.e., written down; plaintiff: a mistake for "offender"

325-26. the which he hath used: i.e., a habit which he has practiced

333. God save the foundation: i.e., God bless the founder (said at the doors of charitable religious houses)



"And sigh away Sundays." (1.1.197-98) From The whole psalmes in foure partes . . . (1563).

| 8 | |
|--|---------|
| And since you could not be my son-in-law, | 300 |
| Be yet my nephew. My brother hath a daughter, | |
| Almost the copy of my child that's dead, | |
| And she alone is heir to both of us. | |
| Give her the right you should have giv'n her cousin, | |
| And so dies my revenge. | 305 |
| CLAUDIO O, noble sir! | 1700.00 |
| Your overkindness doth wring tears from me. | |
| I do embrace your offer and dispose | |
| For henceforth of poor Claudio. | |
| LEONATO | |
| Tomorrow then I will expect your coming. | 310 |
| Tonight I take my leave. This naughty man | 510 |
| Shall face to face be brought to Margaret. | |
| Who I believe was packed in all this wrong | |
| Hired to it by your brother. | |
| BORACHIO No, by my soul, she was not, | 315 |
| Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me | 313 |
| But always hath been just and virtuous | |
| In anything that I do know by her | |
| DOGBERRY, to Leonato Moreover sir which indeed is | |
| not under white and black, this plaintiff here the | 320 |
| offender, did call me ass. I beseech you, let it be | 320 |
| remembered in his punishment. And also the watch | |
| heard them talk of one Deformed. They say he | |
| wears a key in his ear and a lock hanging by it and | |
| borrows money in God's name, the which he hath | 225 |
| used so long and never paid that now men grow | 325 |
| hardhearted and will lend nothing for God's sake. | |
| Pray you, examine him upon that point. | |
| LEONATO I thank thee for thy care and honest pains. | |
| DOGBERRY Your Worship speaks like a most thankful | 220 |
| and reverent youth, and I praise God for you. | 330 |
| LEONATO, giving him money There's for thy pains. | |
| DOGBERRY God save the foundation. | |
| Cod save the foundation. | |

10

340. **give you leave:** a mistake for "ask your leave" 341. **prohibit:** a mistake for "permit" or "foster"

349. lewd: base, disreputable

5.2 Benedick tells Beatrice that he has challenged Claudio. They are summoned to Leonato's house with the news that Hero's innocence has been proved.

2. to the speech of: i.e., to speak with

7. **come over it**: Benedick plays with the fact that **style** sounds like "stile" (a set of steps built over a fence). **Come over it** can thus mean (1) write in a more elegant style; and (2) climb over the stile.

9. come over me: i.e., make love to me

10. **keep below stairs:** remain in the servants' quarters (There seems to be an implied pun here on **mistress** as "the lady of the house"—and therefore not "below stairs"—and as "a woman with a lover.")

LEONATO Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee 335 「DOGBERRY I leave an arrant knave with your Worship, which I beseech your Worship to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your Worship! I wish your Worship well. God restore you to health. I humbly give you leave to depart, and if a 340 merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it.-Come, neighbor. 「Dogberry and Verges exit. ¬ LEONATO Until tomorrow morning, lords, farewell. LEONATO'S BROTHER Farewell, my lords. We look for you tomorrow. PRINCE We will not fail. 345 Tonight I'll mourn with Hero. CLAUDIO LEONATO, To Watch? Bring you these fellows on.—We'll talk with Margaret. How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow. They exit.

「Scene 2⁷ Enter Benedick and Margaret.

BENEDICK Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

MARGARET Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

BENEDICK In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it, for in most comely truth thou deservest it.

MARGARET To have no man come over me? Why, shall I always keep below stairs?

21. pikes: spikes in the center of bucklers; vice: i.e., vise (a clamp used in carpentry or metalworking)

26-29. The god of love: This stanza is the begin-

ning of a popular old song.

30. Leander: in Greek mythology, a famous lover who drowned swimming across the Hellespont to see his sweetheart (See page 188 and longer note to 4.1.87, especially the final paragraph, page 204.)

31. Troilus: famed for his love for Cressida, whose

uncle Pandarus made their affair possible

- 32. quondam: bygone, former; carpetmongers: i.e., pretend lovers (The word seems to have been constructed by analogy with "carpet knight," a man knighted not on the battlefield but at court, and thus a pretend warrior. The word means literally "sellers of carpets.")
 - 33. even: smooth

37. an innocent: a childish, a silly

38. hard: (1) harsh, unpleasant sounding; (2) referring to the unpleasant idea of cuckoldry

40-41. under a rhyming planet: i.e., under the influence of a planet that bestows poetic gifts

41. festival: joyful, glad

BENEDICK Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth: it catches. MARGARET And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils,

which hit but hurt not.

BENEDICK A most manly wit, Margaret; it will not hurt 15 a woman. And so, I pray thee, call Beatrice. I give thee the bucklers.

MARGARET Give us the swords; we have bucklers of our own.

BENEDICK If you use them, Margaret, you must put in 20 the pikes with a vice, and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

MARGARET Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs.

BENEDICK And therefore will come.

Margaret exits.

\Sings \ The god of love That sits above. And knows me, and knows me.

How pitiful I deserve—

I mean in singing. But in loving, Leander the good 30 swimmer, Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole book full of these quondam carpetmongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self in love. Marry, 35 I cannot show it in rhyme. I have tried. I can find out no rhyme to "lady" but "baby"—an innocent rhyme; for "scorn," "horn"—a hard rhyme; for "school," "fool"—a babbling rhyme; very ominous endings. No, I was not born under a rhyming 40 planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.

Enter Beatrice.

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I called thee?

- 47. that I came: i.e., what I came for
- 55. frighted: i.e., frightened; his: i.e., its
- 58-59. subscribe him: write him down as
- 60. parts: attributes
- 63. politic: (1) judiciously governed; (2) cunning
- 65. suffer: (1) experience; (2) undergo the pains of
- 66. epithet: term, expression; do suffer: am subiected to
- 72. wise: clever (In Beatrice's response, wise has its usual meaning.)
- 73. It appears not: i.e., your wisdom does not reveal itself
- 76. instance: i.e., saying (literally, example or case)
- 77. good neighbors: Proverbial: "He has ill [i.e., badl neighbors who is fain to praise himself."
- 78-79. live no longer in monument: i.e., be memorialized no longer
 - 79. bell: i.e., church bell tolled for funerals



A buckler. (5.2.17) From Louis de Gaya, A treatise of the arms . . . (1678).

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|---|----|
| BEATRICE Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me. O, stay but till then! | 45 |
| BEATRICE "Then" is spoken. Fare you well now. And | |
| yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came, which is, | |
| with knowing what hath passed between you and | |
| Claudio. | |
| BENEDICK Only foul words, and thereupon I will kiss | 50 |
| thee. | |
| BEATRICE Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is | |
| but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome. There- | |
| fore I will depart unkissed. | |
| BENEDICK Thou hast frighted the word out of his right | 55 |
| sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee | |
| plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge, and either | |
| I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe | |
| him a coward. And I pray thee now tell me, for | |
| which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love | 60 |
| with me? | |
| BEATRICE For them all together, which maintained so | |
| politic a state of evil that they will not admit any | |
| good part to intermingle with them. But for which | * |
| of my good parts did you first suffer love for me? | 65 |
| BENEDICK Suffer love! A good epithet. I do suffer love | |
| indeed, for I love thee against my will. | |
| BEATRICE In spite of your heart, I think. Alas, poor | |

heart, if you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours, for I will never love that which my friend 70 hates.

BENEDICK Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably. BEATRICE It appears not in this confession. There's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

BENEDICK An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbors. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

82. **Question:** perhaps, a good question (and here is the answer); **clamor:** i.e., the tolling of the bell

83. quarter: i.e., quarter of an hour; rheum: i.e.,

weeping

84. Don Worm, his conscience: The traditional linking of pangs of conscience with a gnawing worm may derive from the biblical descriptions of the damned as those whose "worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched" (Isaiah 66.24, echoed at Mark 9.44, 46, 48).

90. ill: badly

- 93. mend: get better
- 96. old coil: i.e., all kinds of turmoil
- 98. abused: deceived
- 99. presently: at once
- 101. die: (1) die for love; (2) experience sexual orgasm
- **5.3** Claudio appears at Leonato's family tomb, has a song sung for Hero, and hangs a scroll on the tomb.

BEATRICE And how long is that, think you?

BENEDICK Question: why, an hour in clamor and a quarter in rheum. Therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy. And now tell me, how doth your cousin?

BEATRICE Very ill.

BENEDICK And how do you?

BEATRICE Very ill, too.

BENEDICK Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter Ursula.

URSULA Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil at home. It is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the Prince and Claudio mightily abused, and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently?

BEATRICE Will you go hear this news, signior? 100
BENEDICK I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes—and, moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncle's.

 $\lceil They \rceil exit.$

「Scene 37

Enter Claudio, Prince, and three or four \[\text{Lords} \] with tapers, \[\text{and Musicians.} \]

CLAUDIO Is this the monument of Leonato? FIRST LORD It is, my lord.

5. guerdon: recompense

12. goddess of the night: Diana, goddess of the moon and of chastity (hence the reference to Hero as Diana's virgin knight)

18. Heavily: sadly, mournfully

19. yawn: i.e., open

20. Till death be utterèd: The verb to utter could mean both "to express" and "to vanquish." This much-debated line might therefore mean "till Hero's death be fully expressed" or "until death be vanquished."

24. morrow: morning

25. have preyed: i.e., have finished their preying

26. the wheels of Phoebus: i.e., the chariot of Phoebus, god of the sun

29. several: separate



Phoebus in his chariot. (5.3.26) From Hyginus, Fabularum liber (1549).

「CLAUDIO, reading an Epitaph. Done to death by slanderous tongues Was the Hero that here lies. Death, in guerdon of her wrongs, Gives her fame which never dies, So the life that died with shame Lives in death with glorious fame. THe hangs up the scroll. Hang thou there upon the tomb, Praising her when I am \(dumb. \) 10 Now music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn. Song Pardon, goddess of the night, Those that slew thy virgin knight, For the which with songs of woe, Round about her tomb they go, 15 Midnight, assist our moan. Help us to sigh and groan Heavily, heavily. Graves, yawn and yield your dead, Till death be uttered. 20 Heavily, heavily. CLAUDIO Now, unto thy bones, goodnight. Yearly will I do this rite. PRINCE Good morrow, masters. Put your torches out. The wolves have preyed, and look, the gentle day Before the wheels of Phoebus, round about Dapples the drowsy east with spots of gray. Thanks to you all, and leave us. Fare you well. Good morrow, masters. Each his several way. Lords and Musicians exit.

And then to Leonato's we will go.

Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds,

30

PRINCE

CLAUDIO

30. weeds: clothing

32. **Hymen:** god of marriage (See page 196.); **issue:** result; **speed 's:** i.e., speed us, favor us

5.4 Claudio and Don Pedro appear for the second wedding. The women enter masked. When Claudio takes the hand of Leonato's "niece," agreeing to marry her, she unmasks and he learns that she is Hero. Benedick and Beatrice agree to marry, but only out of pity for each other. Love poems each has written to the other are produced to prove that they do, in fact, love each other. Claudio is forgiven by all, and a double wedding is set to follow the closing dance.

3. Upon: i.e., because of; debated: discussed

5. **against her will:** perhaps, unintentionally (The phrase more commonly means "unwillingly.")

6. question: investigation

7. sorts: turn out

8. else: otherwise; by faith: i.e., through my promise

9. call...to a reckoning: make...give an account of himself

14. office: part

And Hymen now with luckier issue speed 's, Than this for whom we rendered up this woe. They exit. Scene 47 Enter Leonato, Benedick, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula, Leonato's brother, Friar, Hero. FRIAR Did I not tell you she was innocent? LEONATO So are the Prince and Claudio, who accused her Upon the error that you heard debated. But Margaret was in some fault for this, Although against her will, as it appears In the true course of all the question. LEONATO'S BROTHER Well, I am glad that all things sorts so well. BENEDICK And so am I, being else by faith enforced To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it. LEONATO Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all, 10 Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves, And when I send for you, come hither masked. The Prince and Claudio promised by this hour To visit me.—You know your office, brother. You must be father to your brother's daughter, 15 And give her to young Claudio. The ladies exit.

LEONATO'S BROTHER

17. confirmed countenance: i.e., controlled facial expression

18. pains: i.e., help

20. undo: (1) unbind; (2) destroy

28. for: i.e., as for; my will is: i.e., my desire is that

37. attend: await, wait upon; yet: still

39. hold: i.e., not change; Ethiope: Ethiopian, or anyone with black skin (Dark hair and skin were not considered beautiful in Elizabethan England.)



Leander swimming the Hellespont. (5.2.30) From Musaeus, [Hero and Leander] (1538).

Which I will do with confirmed countenance. BENEDICK Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think. FRIAR To do what, signior? BENEDICK To bind me, or undo me, one of them.-20 Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior, Your niece regards me with an eye of favor. LEONATO That eye my daughter lent her; 'tis most true. BENEDICK And I do with an eye of love requite her. LEONATO The sight whereof I think you had from me, From Claudio, and the Prince. But what's your will? BENEDICK Your answer, sir, is enigmatical. But for my will, my will is your goodwill May stand with ours, this day to be conjoined In the state of honorable marriage-In which, good friar, I shall desire your help. LEONATO My heart is with your liking. And my help. Here comes the Prince and Claudio. Enter Prince, and Claudio, and two or three other. Good morrow to this fair assembly. PRINCE 35 LEONATO Good morrow, prince; good morrow, Claudio. We here attend you. Are you yet determined Today to marry with my brother's daughter? CLAUDIO I'll hold my mind were she an Ethiope.

45. horns: (1) of the bull; (2) of the cuckold

46. Europa: Europe

47–48. **Europa...love:** Jove, king of the Roman gods, fell in love with a girl named Europa, transformed himself into a bull and, when she climbed on his back, carried her off to Crete. (See page 192.)

50. leapt: mounted, mated with

51. got: begot

53. I owe you: i.e., I'll pay you back; reck'nings: i.e., matters to be dealt with

55 SP. Leonato: Most editions change this speech prefix, since Leonato's brother had agreed to act as the "niece's" father. However, since the "niece" is really Hero, one can argue that Leonato changes his mind, or that he forgets himself and resumes his fatherly role.

60. like of: i.e., like

LEONATO Call her forth, brother. Here's the Friar ready. Leonato's Brother exits? PRINCE Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what's the matter That you have such a February face. So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness? CLAUDIO I think he thinks upon the savage bull. Tush, fear not, man. We'll tip thy horns with gold. 45 And all Europa shall rejoice at thee. As once Europa did at lusty Jove When he would play the noble beast in love. BENEDICK Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low, And some such strange bull leapt your father's cow And got a calf in that same noble feat Much like to you, for you have just his bleat. CLAUDIO For this I owe you. Here comes other reck'nings. Enter Leonato's brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula, the ladies masked. Which is the lady I must seize upon? LEONATO This same is she, and I do give you her. 55 CLAUDIO Why, then, she's mine.—Sweet, let me see your face. LEONATO No, that you shall not till you take her hand Before this friar and swear to marry her. CLAUDIO, Tto Hero Give me your hand before this holy friar. They take hands. I am your husband, if you like of me. 60

Much Ado About Nothing

ACT 5. SC. 4

69. amazement: a strong word, meaning "bewilderment," "complete confusion" (as if lost in a maze); qualify: mitigate, calm, pacify

70. after that: i.e., after 71. largely: fully, at length

- 72. let wonder seem familiar: i.e., treat these miraculous events as if they were everyday happenings
 - 73. let us presently: i.e., let us go at once
 - 74. Soft and fair: i.e., wait a moment



Europa and "Bull Jove." (5.4.46-48) From Gabriele Simeoni, La vita . . . d'Ouidio (1559). 193 Much Ado About Nothing

ACT 5. SC. 4

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70

75

HERO

And when I lived, I was your other wife,
And when you loved, you were my other husband.

She unmasks?

CLAUDIO

Another Hero!

One Hero died defiled, but I do live,
And surely as I live, I am a maid.

PRINCE

The former Hero! Hero that is dead! LEONATO

She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.

All this amazement can I qualify,

When after that the holy rites are ended,

I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death. Meantime let wonder seem familiar.

And to the chapel let us presently.

BENEDICK

Soft and fair, friar.—Which is Beatrice? BEATRICE, [unmasking]

I answer to that name. What is your will?

Do not you love me?

Do not you love me?

BEATRICE Why no, no more than reason.

BENEDICK

Why then, your uncle and the Prince and Claudio Have been deceived. They swore you did.

BEATRICE

Do not you love me?

BENEDICK Troth, no, no more than reason.

BEATRICE

Why then, my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula Are much deceived, for they did swear you did.

| 86. 'Tis no such matter: i | .e., i | it is | sn't | true |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|------|------|
|----------------------------|--------|-------|------|------|

88. cousin: i.e., niece

91. halting: lame, limping; of . . . brain: i.e., purely or entirely from his own brain

96. hands: i.e., handwriting

96-97. against our hearts: i.e., as evidence to prove our hearts guilty (of love)

97, 99. by this light, by this good day: mild oaths 101. consumption: wasting disease (i.e., lovesickness)

102. stop your mouth: i.e., compel you to be silent (literally, with a gag or muzzle; here, with a kiss)

104. a college: i.e., an (entire) company

105. wit-crackers: i.e., those who make sarcastic remarks; flout: mock, jeer; humor: inclination, state of mind

106. care for: i.e., care about, am bothered by

107. brains: i.e., witticisms

109. do purpose: intend

109-10. to any purpose: i.e., of any use

| BENEDICK | |
|---|-----|
| They swore that you were almost sick for me. | |
| BEATRICE | |
| They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me. | 85 |
| BENEDICK | |
| 'Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me? | |
| BEATRICE | |
| No, truly, but in friendly recompense. | |
| LEONATO | |
| Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman. | |
| CLAUDIO | |
| And I'll be sworn upon 't that he loves her, | |
| For here's a paper written in his hand, | 90 |
| A halting sonnet of his own pure brain, | |
| Fashioned to Beatrice. | |
| HERO And here's another, | |
| Writ in my cousin's hand, stol'n from her pocket, | |
| Containing her affection unto Benedick. | 95 |
| She shows a paper. | |
| BENEDICK A miracle! Here's our own hands against | |
| our hearts. Come, I will have thee, but by this light | |
| I take thee for pity. | |
| BEATRICE I would not deny you, but by this good day, I | |
| yield upon great persuasion, and partly to save your | 100 |
| life, for I was told you were in a consumption. | |
| BENEDICK Peace! I will stop your mouth. | |
| $\lceil They \ kiss. \rceil$ | |
| PRINCE | |
| How dost thou, Benedick, the married man? | |
| BENEDICK I'll tell thee what, prince: a college of | |
| is a large of the | |

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wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humor. 105 Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No. If a man will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it, and 110 114. like: likely

116. denied: i.e., refused to marry

118. single: (1) individual; (2) unmarried; (3) weak, feeble; double-dealer: (1) someone no longer single, but part of a couple; (2) one who acts duplicitously

118-19. out of question: i.e., without any doubt

119-20. look exceeding narrowly to thee: i.e., watch you extremely closely

125. of my word: i.e., on my word

127. staff: (1) i.e., wood or ivory rod carried as a symbol of a position's authority (hence, here, a high-ranking man, like Don Pedro); reverend: worthy of veneration

127-28. tipped with horn: (1) with a tip of ivory or other animal horn; (2) wearing the cuckold's horns (See longer note to 1.1.194-95, page 199.)

132. brave: splendid



Hymen, god of marriage. (5.3.32) From Vincenzo Cartari, Imagines deorum . . . (1581).

therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it. For man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion.-For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

CLAUDIO I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgeled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer, which out of question thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

BENEDICK Come, come, we are friends. Let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels.

LEONATO We'll have dancing afterward.

BENEDICK First, of my word! Therefore play, music.— 125 Prince, thou art sad. Get thee a wife, get thee a wife. There is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn.

Enter Messenger.

MESSENGER, To Prince

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My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight, And brought with armed men back to Messina.

BENEDICK, To Prince Think not on him till tomorrow. 130 I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. - Strike up, pipers! Music plays. They dance. They exit.