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Thomas Pennant Barton

Boston Public Library.
Received, May, 1873.
Not to be taken from the Library.
Much adoe about Nothing.

As it hath been sundrie times publikely acted by the right honourable, the Lord Chamberlaine his servants.

Written by William Shakespeare.

George Stevens

LONDON
Printed by V. S. for Andrew Wise, and William Aspley.
1600.
149.957
May, 1873

Of this play there is no other Edition in Quarto.
Enter Leonato governour of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his niece, with a messenger.

Leonato.

Learne in this letter, that don Peter of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

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

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

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

Leon. A victory is twice it selfe, when the architect brings home ful numbers: I find here, that don Peter hath bestowed much honour on a yong Florentine called Claudio.

Mess. Much deserued on his part, and equally remembred by don Pedro, he hath borne himselfe beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion, he hath indeed better bettered expectation then you must expect of me to tell you how.

Leo. He hath an vnckle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I haue already deliuered him letters, and there appeares much ioy in him, even so much, that ioy could not shew itselfe modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.

Leo. Did he breake out into teares?

Mess. In great measure.
A kind overflow of kindnesse, there are no faces truer then those that are so walsht, how much better is it to weep of joy, then to joy at weeping?

Bear. I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returnt from the warres or no?

Messen. I know none of that name, ladie, there was none fuch in the army of any sort.

Leonato. What is he that you aske for neece?

Hero. My cofen meanes Signior Benedicke of Padua.

Mess. O hee's returnd, and as pleafant as euer he was.

Bear. He fet vp his bills here in Messina, and challengd Cupid at the Flight, and my vnclces foole reading the challenge subscribde for Cupid, and challengd him at the Burbolt; I pray you, how many hath he kild and eaten in these warres? but how many hath he kild? for indeede I promised to eate all of his killing.

Leo. Faith neece you taxe Signior Benedicke too much, but heele be meet with you, I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good service lady in these warres.

Bear. You had myfty vittaille, and he hath holpe to eate it, he is a very valiaunt trencher man, he hath an excellent stomacke.

Mess. And a good fouldier too, lady.

Bear. And a good fouldiour to a Lady, but what is he to a Lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, fustif with all honorable vertues.

Bear. It is so indeed, he is no lesse then a fustif man, but for the fustiffing wel, we are all mortall.

Leo. You muft not, sir, mistake my neece, there is a kind of mery warre betwixt Signior Benedicke and her, they never meet but there's a skirmifh of wit between them.

Bear. Alas he gets nothing by that, in our last conflift, 4 of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governd with one, fo that if he haue witenough to keep himself warm, let him beare it for a difference between himfelf and his horse, for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a rea-
about Nothing.

ble creature, who is his companion now? he hath every month a new sworn brother.

Mess. Is't possible?

Beat. Very easily possible, he weares his faith but as the fa-

Mess. I see lady the gentleman is not in your bookes.

Beat. No, and he were, I would burne my study, but I pray

you who is his companion? is there no yong squarer now that

will make a voyage with him to the diuel?

Mess. He is most in the companie of the right noble Clau-

dio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang vpon him like a disease, he is

fooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs present-

ly madde, God help the noble Claudio, if he haue caught the

Benedict, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a be cured.

Mess. I will holde friends with you Ladie.

Beat. Do good friend.

Leon. You will neuer runne madde niece.

Beat. No, not till a hote January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approacht.

Enter don Pedro, Claudio, Benedicke, Balthasar

and Joan the bastarde.

Pedro Good signior Leonato, are you come to meet your
trouble: the fashion of the world is, to auoyd cost, and you in-
counter it.

Leon. Neuer came trouble to my house, in the likenesse of
your grace, for trouble being gone, comforthe should remaine;
but when you depart from mee, forrow abides, and happines
takes his leaue.

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

Leonato Her mother hath many times tolde me so.

Bened. Were you in doubt for that you askt her?

Leonato Signior Benedicke, no, for then were you a child.

Pedro You haue it full Benedicke, wee may gheffe by this,

what you are, being a man, truely the Lady fathers her selfe:
be happy Lady, for you are like an honourable father.

Beat. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina as like him as he is.

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

Bene. What my deere lady Disdain are you yet living?

Beat. Is it possible Disdain should die, while she hath such meete foode to feede it, as Signior Benedicke? Curtesie it selfe must concert to Disdain, if you come in her presence.

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

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

Bene. God keepe your Ladyship stil in that mind, so some Gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratcht face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worfe, and twere such a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot teacher.

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

Bene. I would my horse had the spede of your tongue, and so good a continuers, but keep your way a Gods name, I haue done.

Beat. You alwayes end with a iades tricke, I knowe you of olde.

Pedro That is the summe of all: Leonato, Signior Claudio, and Signior Benedicke, my deere friend Leonato, hath invited you all, I tell him we shall stay here, at the least a moneth, and he heartily praieth some occasion may detaine vs longer, I dare sweare he is no hypocrite, but praieth from his heart.

Leon. If you sweare, my lord, you shall not be forsworne, let mee bidde you welcome, my lord, being reconciled to the Prince your brother: I owe you all dutie.

John I thanke you, I am not of many wordes, but I thanke you

Leon.
about Nothing.

Leon. Please it your grace leade on?
Pedro Your hand Leonato, we wil go together.

Exeunt. Manent Benedick & Claudio.

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior
Bene. I noted her not, but I lookte on her, (Leonato?
Claud. Is she not a modest young lady?
Bene. Do you question me as an honest man should doe, for
my simple true judgement? or would you have me speake
after my custome, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

Claudio No, I pray thee speake in sober judgement.

Bene. Why yfaith me thinks she is too low for a high praise,
too browne for a faire praise, and too little for a great praise.
So if the commendation I can afford her, that were she other
then she is, she were vnhanlome, and being no other, but as she
is, I do not like her.

Claudio Thou thinkest I am in sport, I pray thee tell mee
truelie how thou likst her.

Bene. Would you buye her that you enquier after her?

Claudio Can the world buye such a iewe?

Bene. Yea, and a cafe to putte it into, but speake you this
with a sad brow? or doe you play the flowinge lache, to tell
vs Cupid is a good Hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare Carpenter:
Come, in what key shall a man take you to go in the song?

Claudio In mine eie, she is the sweetest Ladye that euer I
lookte on.

Bened. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such
matter: theris her cosin, and she were not possed with a fury,
exceedes her as much in beautie, as the first of Mai dooth the
last of December: but I hope you haue no intent to turne hus-
band, haue you?

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

Bened. Ift come to this? in faith hath not the worlde one
man but he will weare his cappe with suspiration? shall I never
see a batcheller of three score againe? go to yfaith, and thou wilt
needes thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and
fly away fundaikes looke, don Pedro is returned to seke you.

Enter 

Much adoe

Enter don Pedro, John the bastard.

Pedro What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonatoes?

Ben. I would your Grace would constraine me to tell.

Pedro I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Ben. You heare, Count Claudio, I can be secret as a dumb man, I would haue you thinke so (but on my allegiance, marke you this, on my allegiance, he is in loue, with who now that is your Graces part: marke how short his answer is, with Hero Leonatoes short daughter.

Claudio If this were so, so were it vertred.

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

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

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

Claudio You speake this to fetch me in, my Lord.

Pedro By my troth I speake my thought.

Claudio And in faith, my Lord, I spoke mine.

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

Claudio That I loue her, I feele.

Pedro That she is worthy, I know.

Bened. That I neither feele how she should be loued, nor know how she should be worthie, is the opinion that fire can not melt out of me, I will die in it at the stake.

Pedro Thou waft euer an obstinate heretique in the despight of Beauty.

Claudio And never could maintaine his part, but in the force of his wil.

Ben. That a woman conceiued me, I thanke her: that she brought me vp, I likewise gieue her most humble thankes: but that I will haue a rechate wined in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisiblie baldricke, all women shal pardon mee: because I will not doe them the wrong to mistrust any, I will doe my selfe the right to trust none: and the fine is, (for the which
about Nothing.

which I may go the fther, I will live a bachelour.

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

Bene. With anger, with sickenesse, or with hunger, my Lord, not with loue: proue that euer I loose more blood with loue then I will get aaine with drinking, picke out mine eyes with a Ballad-makers penne, and hang me vp at the doore of a brothel houfe for the signe of blinde Cupid.

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

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a Cat, and shoote at me, and he that hits me, let him be clapt on the shoulder, and call Adam.

Pedro Well, as time shall trie: in time the faugge bull doth bere the yoake:

Bene. The faugge bull may, but if euer the sensible Benedicke bere it, picke off the bulls hornes, and let them in my forehead, and let me be wildly painted, and in such great letters as they write, here is good horse to byre: let them signifie vnder my signe, here you may see Benedicke the married man.

Claudio If this shoulde euer happen, thou wouldft be horn madde.

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

Bened. I looke for an earthquake too then.

Pedro Well, you will temporize with the howres, in the meane time, good signior Benedicke, repaque to Leonatoes, commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at supper, if indeede he hath made great preparation.

Bened. I haue almost matter enough in mee for suche an Embaflage, and fo I commit you.

Claudio To the tuition of God: from my houfe if I had it.

Pedro The sixt of Iuly: your loyng friend Benedicke.

Bened. Nay mocke not, mocke not, the body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guardes are but slightly baffed on neither, ere you flow old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leaue you. exit.
Claudio. My liege, your Highness now may doe mee good.

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

Claud. Hath Leonato any sonne, my lord?

Pedro. No childe but Hero, she is his onely heire.

Doost thou affect her Claudio?

Claudio. O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I lookt vpon her with a soldiers eie,
That likt but had a rougher taske in hand,
Than to drive liking to the name of loue.
But now I am returnde, and that warre-thoughts,
Haue left their places vacant: in their roomes,
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting mee how faire yong Hero is,
Saying I likt her ere I went to warres.

Pedro. Thou wilt be like a louer presently,
And tire the hearer with a booke of words,
If thou doest loue faire Hero, cherish it,
And I wil breake with hir, and with her father,
And thou shalt haue her:waft not to this end,
That thou beganft to twight so fine a storie?

Claud. How sweetly you do minifter to loue,
That know loues grieft by his complexion!
But left my liking might too sodaine seeme,
I would haue falude it with a longer treatise.

Pedro. What need the bridge much broder then the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessitie:
Looke what wil servce is fit: tus once, thou louest,
And I wil fit thee with the remedie,
I know we shall haue retelling to night,
I wil assume thy part in some disguise,
And telle faire Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosome ile vnclaspe my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force

And
About Nothing.

And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then after, to her father will I break,
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine,
In practice let us put it presently.

Enter Leonato and an old man brother to Leonato

Leo. How now brother, where is my cousin your sonne, hath he proived this musique?

Old. He is very busy about it, but brother, I can tell you strange newes, that you yet dreampt not of.

Leo. Are they good?

Old. As the events stampes them, but they have a good couer: they shew well outward, the prince and Count Claudio walking in a thicke pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus much over-heard by a man of mine: the prince discouered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a daunce, and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly breake with you of it.

Leo. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

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

Leo. No, no, we will hold it as a dreame till it appeare itself: but I will acquaint my daughter withall, that she may bee the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true: go you and tell her of it: cousins, you know what you have to doe, let me cry you mercie friend, go you with me and I will use your shill: good cousin have a care this busy time.

Exeunt.

Enter Sir John the bastard, and Conrade his companion.

Con. What the good yeere my lord, why are you thus out of measure sad?

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

Con. You should heare reason.

John. And when I haue heard it, what blessing brings it?

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

John. I wonder that thou (being as thou saidst thou art, borne under Saturne) goest about to apply a morall medicine, to a
much ado

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 drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour.

Con. Yea but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controllment; you have of late foule out against your brother, and he hath tane you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take true root, but by the faire weather that you make your self, it is needful that you frame the season for your owne harvest.

John I had rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose in his grace, and it better fits my bloud to be disdain'd of all, then to fashion a carriage to rob loue from any: in this (though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man) it must not be denied but I am a plain dealing villain; I am trusted with a muskell, and enfranched with a clogge, therefore I haue decreed, not to sing in my cage: if I had my mouth I would bite; if I had my liberty I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and fecke not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent?
John I make all use of it, for I use it only.

Who comes here? what newes Borachio?

Enter Borachio.

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

John Will it serve for any model to build mischief on; what is he for a foole that betrothes himselfe to vnquietnesse?

Bor. Mary it is your bothers right hand.

John Who, the most exquiste Claudio?

Bor. Even he.

John A proper squier, and who, and who, which way, looks he?

Bor. Mary one Hero the daughter and heire of Leonato.

John A very forward March-chicke, how came you to this?
about Nothing.

Bor Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon, that the prince should wooe Hero for himselfe, and having obtained her, give her to Counte Claudio.

John Come, come, let us thither, this may prove food to my displeasure, that yong start vp hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can crosse him any way, I bless my selfe everie way, you are both sure, and will assist me.

Conr. To the death my Lord.

John Let us to the great supper, their cheere is the greater that I am subdued, would the Cooke were a my mind, shall we go proue whatts to be done?

Bor. Weelee wait vpon your lordship.

exit.

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

Leonato Was not counte Iohn here at supper?

brother I saw him not.

Beatrice How tartely that gentleman lookes, I neuer can see him but I am heart-burn'd an hower after.

Hero He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beatrice He were an excellent man that were made iust in the mid-way between him and Benedick, the one is too like an image and saines nothing, and the other too like my ladies eldest fonne, euermore taling.

Leonato Then halfe signior Benedickes tongue in Counte Iohns mouth, and halfe Counte Iohns melancholy in Signior Benedickes face.

Beatrice With a good legge and a good foote vnckle, and money inough in his purse, such a man would winne any wo-

man in the world if a could get her good will.

Leonato By my troth niece thou wilt neuer get thee a hus-

band, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

brother Infaith thees too curt.

Beatrice Too curt is more then curt, I shall lessen
Gods sending that way, for it is saide, God sends a curt & short hornes, but to a cow too curt, he sends none.

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

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

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

Beatrice What should I do with him, drefle him in my apparel and make him my waiting gentlewoman? he that hath a beard, is more then a youth: and he that hath no beard, is leffe then a man: and he that is more then a youth, is not for me, and he that is leffe then a man, I am not for him, therefore I will euen take sixpence in earnest of the Berord, and leade his apes into hell.

Leonato Well then, go you into hell.

Beatrice No but to the gate, and there will the diuell meete me like an old cuckold with hornes on his head, and fay, get you to heauen Beatrice, get you to heauen, heeres no place for you maids, so deliquer I vp my apes and away to faint Peter: for the heauens, he shewes me where the Batchellers fit, and there liue we as mery as the day is long.

brother Well neece, I trust you will be rulde by your father.

Beatrice Yes faith, it is my cozens duty to make curfie and fay, father, as it pleafe you: but yet for all that cozin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make an other curfie, and fay, father, as it pleafe me.

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

Beatrice Not til God make men of some other mettal then earth, would it not grieue a woman to be ouer-maﬆerd with a peece of valiant dust to make an account of her life to a clod of waiward marle? no vnkle, Ile none: Adams sonses are my brethren, and truely I holde it a sinne to match in my kinred.
about Nothing.

Leonato Daughter, remember what I told you, if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

Beatrice The fault will be in the musique cosin, if you do not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in every thing, and so daunce out the answer, for here me Hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch ijge, a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suite is hot and hafty like a Scotch ijge (and ful as fantastical) the wedding manerly modest (as a measure) full of flate and aun-chentry, and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faster and faster, til he sinke into his grave.

Leonato Cosin you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beatrice I have a good civnckle, I can see a church by day-light.

Leonato The revellers are enting brother, make good roome.

Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedick, and Balthasar, or dumb John.

Pedro Lady will you walke about with your friend?

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

Pedro With me in your company.

Hero I may say so when I please.

Pedro And when please you to say so?

Hero When I like your fauour, for God defend the lute should be like the cafe.

Pedro My visor is Philemons roose, within the house is lone.

Hero Why then your visor should be thatcht.

Pedro Speake low if you speake lone.

Bene Well, I would you did like me.

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

Bene. Which is one?

Mar. I say my praiers alowd.
Much adoe

Bene. I loue you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.
Marg. God match me with a good dauncer.
Balth. Amen.
Marg. And God keepe him out of my fight when the daunce is done: answer Clarke.
Balth. No more words, the Clarke is answered.
Ursula. I know you well enough, you are signior Antho-
Mio.
Ambo. At a word I am not.
Ursula. I know you by the wagling of your head.
Ambo. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.
Ursula. You could not do him so ill well, unless you were the very man: heeres his drie hand vp and downe; you are he, you are he.
Ambo. At a word I am not.
Ursula. Come, come, do you thinke I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can vertue hide it selfe? go to, muttne, you are he, graces will appeare, and theres an end.
Beat. Will you not tell me who tolde you so?
Bened. No, you shall pardon me.
Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?
Bened. Not now.
Beat. That I was disdainfull, and that I had my good wit out of the hundred mery tales: wel, this was signior Benedick that said so.
Bened. What is he?
Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.
Bened. Not I, believe me.
Beat. Did he never make you laugh?
Bened. I pray you what is he?
Beat. Why he is the princes easter, every dulcet fool, only his gift is, in deuiling impossible flaunder, none but Libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villanie, for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him: I am sure he is in the Fleete, I would he had boorded me.
Bene. When I know the Gentleman, Ile tell him what you say.
Beat.
about Nothing.

Beat. Do, do, heele but break a comparison or two on me, which peradventure, (not markt, or not laught at) strikes him into melancholy, and then there a partridge wing fauced, for the foole will eate no supper that night: wee must follow the leaders.

Bene. In euery good thing.

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

Dance

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

Borachio And that is Claudio, I knowe him by his bearing.

John Are not you signior Benedicke?

Claud. You knowe me well, I am he.

John Signior, you are very neere my brother in his loue, he is enamourd on Hero, I pray you dispwe him from her, he is no equall for his birth, you may doe the parte of an honest man in it.

Claudio How know you he loues her?

John I heard him swere his affection.

Borae. So did I too, and he sware he would marry her to night.

John Come let vs to the banquet.

Claud. Thus ansuer I in name of Benedicke,

But heare these ill newes with the eares of Claudio:

This is certaine, the Prince woos for himselfe,

Friendship is constant in all other things,

Save in the office and affaires of loue:

Therefore all hearts in loue vs their owne tongues.

Let euery eie negotiate for it selfe,

And trust no Agent: for Beauty is a witch,

Against whose charmes, faith melteth into blood:

This is an accident of hourely proove,

Which I mistrusted not: farewell therefore Hero. Enter Bene-

Benedicke Count Claudio.

Claudio Yea, the same.
Much adoe

Bene. Come, will you go with me?
Claudio Whither?
Bene. Even to the next willow, about your owne busines, county: what fashion will you weare the garland of? about your necke, like an Vfurers chaine? or vnder your arme, like a Lieutenants scarfe? you must weare it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.
Claudio I wish him joy of her.
Bened. Why thats spoken like an honest Drouier, so they fell bullockes: but did you thinke the Prince would haue servued you thus?
Claudio I pray you leave me.
Benedicke Ho now you strike like the blindman, twas the boy that stole your meate, and youle beate the post.
Claudio If it will not be, ile leave you. exit
Benedicke Alas poore hurt foule, now will hee creep into fedges: but that my Ladie Beatrice should know me, and not know mee: the princes foole! hah, it may be I goe vnder that title, because I am merry: yea but so I am apte to doe my selfe wrong: I am not so reputed, it is the base (though bitter) disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person, and so giues me out: well, ile be reuenged as I may.
Enter the Prince, Hero, Leonato, John and Borachio, and Conrade.
Pedro Now signior, wheres the Counte, did you see him?
Benedicke Troth my lord, I haue played the part of Ladie Fame, I found him heere as melancholy as a Lodge in a Warren, I tolde him, and I thinke I tolde him true, that your grace had got the goodwil of this young Lady, and I offred him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forstaken, or to binde him vp a rod, as being worthie to bee whipt.
Pedro To be whipt, whats his fault?
Benedicke The flatte transgression of a Schoole-boy, who being over-joyed with finding a birds nest, chewes it his companion, and he steales it.
Pedro Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? the transgref-
about Nothing.

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

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

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

Pedro The ladie Beatrice hath a quarrell to you, the Gentleman that daunf with her, told her there is much wrongd by you.

Bened. O shee misusde me past the indurance of a blocke: an oake but with one greene leafe on it, would haue answered her: my very viyor beganne to assume life, and scold with her: she tolde me, not thinking I had beene my selfe, that I was the Princes iefer, that I was duller than a great thawe, huddleing left vpon left, with such impossible conueiance vpon me, that I stooode like a man at a marke, with a whole army shooting at me: she speakes poyynyards, and evry word stabbes: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no luing neere her, shee would infect to the north starre: I would not marry her, though shee were indowed with al that Adam had left him before he transfret, she would haue made Hercules haue turned spit, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too: come, take not of her, you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel, I would to God some scholler would conjure her, for certeynely while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuarie, and people sinne vpon purpose, because they would goe thither, so indeede all disquiet, howrour, and perturbation follows her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

Pedro Looke heere she comes.

Benedicke Will your grace command me any service to the worldes end? I will go on the flightest arrand now to the Antypodes that you can deuise to send me on: I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furthest inch of Asia: bring you
Much ado

the length of Prester John's foot: fetch you a hair off the great Chams beard: doe you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than holde three words conference, with this harpy, you hate no imployment for me?

Pedro None, but to desire your good company.

Benedicke O God sir, heeres a dish I loye not, I cannot endure my Lady Tongue.

Pedro Come Lady, come, you have lost the heart of signior Benedicke.

Beatrice Indeed my Lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gave him vs for it, a double heart for his single one, mary once before he wonne it of me, with false dice, therefore your grace may well say I have lost it.

Pedro You have put him downe Lady, you have put him downe.

Beatrice So I would not he should do me, my Lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools: I have brought Counte Claudio, whom you sent me to seeke.

Pedro Why how now Counte, wherefore are you sad?

Claudio Not sad my Lord.

Pedro How then? sicke?

Claudio Neither, my Lord,

Beatrice The Counte is neither sad, nor sicke, nor merry, nor well: but ciuill Counte, ciuill as an orange, and something of that jealoues complexion.

Pedro Ifaith Lady, I think your blazon to be true, though ille be sworne, if he be so, his conceit is false: here Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and faire Hero is won, I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained, name the day of marriage, and God giue thee joy.

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

Beatrice Speake Counte, tis your Qu.

Claudio Silence is the perfectest Herault of joy, I were but little happy if I could say, how much? Lady, as you are mine, I am yours, I giue away my selfe for you, and doate vpon the exchange.
about Nothing.

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

Pedro In faith lady you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea my lord I thanke it, poore fool it keeps on the windy side of Care, my coofin tells him in his eare that he is in her heart.

Clau. And so the doth coofin.

Beat. Good Lord for alliance: thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am fun-burnt, I may sit in a corner and cry, heigh ho for a husband.

Pedro Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather have one of your fathers getting: that your grace ne're a brother like you? your father got excellent husbands if a maide could come by them.

Prince Will you have me: lady.

Beat. No my lord, vnles I might have another for working: daies, your grace is too costly to weare everyday: but I beleech your grace pardon me, I was born to speake all mirth, and no matter.

Prince Your silence most offends me, and to be merry, best becomes you, for out a question, you were borne in a merry hower.

Beat. No sure my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a starre daunst, and vnnder that was I borne, cousins God give you joy.

Leonato Neece, will you looke to those things I tolde you of?

Beat I cry you mercy uncle, by your graces pardon.

exit Beatrice.

Prince By my troth a pleasant spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her my lord, she is never sad, but when she sleeps, & not euer sad then: for I haue heard my daughter say, she hath often dreampt of unhappines, and wakt her selfe with laughing.

Pedro She cannot indure to heare tell of a husband.

Leonato O by no meanes, she mockes all her wooers out of fute.
Prince She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leonato O Lord, my lord, if they were but a weeke married, they would talk themselfes madde.

Prince Countie Claudio, when meane you to goe to church?

Claud. To morow my lord, Time goes on crutches, til Loue haue all his rites.

Leonato Not til monady, my deare sonne, which is hence a iust seuen night, and a time too briefe too, to haue al things answer my mind.

Prince Come, you shallke the head at so long a breathing, but I warrant thee Claudio, the time shall not go dully by vs, I wil in the interim, 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 faine have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minifter such assistance as I shall giue you direction.

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

Claud. And I my Lord.

Prince And you too gentle Hero?

Hero I wil do any modest office, my lord, to help my cofin to a good husband.

Prince And Benedicke is not the vnhopfullest husband that I know; thus farre can I praise him, he is of a noble strain, of approoued valour, and confirmde honesty, I will teach you how to humour your cofin, that the shall fall in loue with Benedicke, and you, with your two helps, wil so pratife on Benedicke, that in dispight of his quicke wit, and his quaesie stomacke, he shall fall in loue with Beatrice: if we can do this, Cudpid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall bee ours, for we are the onely loue-gods, goe in with mee, and I will tell you my drift.

exit.

Enter John and Borachio.

John It is so, the Counte Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bor. Yea my lord, but I can crosse it.
about Nothing.

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

*Bor.* Not honestly my lord, but so courtely, that no dishonesty shall appeare in me.

*John* Shew me briefly how.

*Bor.* I think I told your lordship a yeere since, how much I am in the fauour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

*John* I remember.

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

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

*Bor.* The poison of that lies in you to temper, goe you to the prince your brother, spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honor in marrying the renowned Claudio, whose estimation you mightily hold vp, to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

*John* What proofe shall I make of that?

*Bor.* Proofe enough, to misuse the prince, to vexe Claudio, to vndoc Hero, and kill Leonato, looke you for any other issue?

*John* Onely to dispright them I will endeuour any thing.

*Bor.* Go then, find me a meet howre, to draw don Pedro and the Counte Claudio alone, tell them that you know that Hero loues me, intend a kind of zeale both to the prince & Claudio (as in louse of your brothers honor who hath made this match) and his friends reputation, who is thus like to bee costen’d with the semblance of a maid, that you have discouer’d thus: they wil scarcely beleue this without triall: offer them instances which shall beare no lesse likelihood, than to see me at her chamber window, heare me call Margaret Hero, heare Marg terme me Claudio, & 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 appeere such seeming truth of Heroses disloyaltie, that jealousie shall be calld affu-
John Grow this to what aduerse issue it can; I will put it in practice: be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducates.

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

John I will presently go learne their day of marriage.  

Enter Benedicke alone.

Bene. Boy.

Boy Signior.

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

Boy. I am here already sir.  

Bene. I know that, but I would have thee hence and here again. I do much wonder, that one man seeing how much another man is a fool, when he dedicates his behauiours to loue, will after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his owne scorne, by falling in loue, and such a man is Claudio, I haue knowne when there was no musique with him but the drumme and the sife, and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe: I haue knowne when he would have walked ten mile afoot, to see a good armour, and now will he lie ten nights awake caruing the fasion of a new doule: he was woont to speake plaine, and to the purpose (like an honest man and a soldiour) and now is he turned ortography, his words are a very fantastical banquet, of so many strange dishes: may I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I wil not be sworne but loue may transforme me to an oyster, but ile take my oath on it, till he have made and oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool: one woman is faire, yet I am well: an other is wife, yet I am well: an other vertuous, yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shal not com in my grace: rich she shal be thats certain, wife, or ile none, vertuous, or ile never cheapen her: faire, or ile never looke on her, mild, or come not neare me, noble, or not I for an angell: of good discourse, an excellent musitian, and her haire
about Nothing.

haire shall be of what colour it please God, hath the prince and monsieur Loue, I wil hide me in the arbor.

Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Musike.

Prince Come shall we heare this musique?
Claud. Yea my good lord: how fill the evening is,
As hauht on purpose to grace harmonie!
Prince See you where Benedicke hath hid himselfe?
Claud. O very wel my lord: the musique ended,
Weele fit the kid-foxe with a penny worth.

Enter Balthasuer with musike.

Prince Come Balthasuer, weele heare that song againe.
Balth. O good my lord, taxe not so bad a voice,
To slaunder musike any more then once.
Prince It is the wittnisse stile of excellencie,
To put a strange face on his owne perfection,
I pray thee singe, and let me woee no more.
Balth. Because you talke of wooing I will sing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his fute,
To her he thinkes not worthy, yet he woees,
Yet will he sweare he loues.
Prince Nay pray thee come,
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.
Balth. Note this before my notes,
Theres not a note of mine thats worth the noting.
Prince Why these are very crotchets that he speakes,
Note notes forsooth, and nothing.
Bene. Now divine aire, now is his soule rauisht, is it not strange that sheepes guts should hale soules out of mens bodies? well a horne for my mony when alls done.

The Sen. Sigh no more ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers euer,
One foote in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant neuer,
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blith and bonnie,
Converting all your soundes of woe,
Into hey nony nony.

Sing no more ditties, sing no more,
Of dums so dull and heauy,
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leauy,
Then sigh not so, &c.

Prince  By my troth a good song.
Balth.  And an ill singer my lord.
Prince  Ha, no no faith, thou singst well enough for a shift.
Ben.  And he had bin a dog that should haue howld thus,
they would haue hanged him, and I pray God his bad voice
bode no mischeefe, I had as hue haue heard the night-rauen,
come what plague could haue come after it.
Prince  Yea marly, doost thou heare Balthasaf? I pray thee
get us some excellent musique:for to morrow night we would
haue it at the ladie Heroes chamber window.
Balth.  The best I can my lord.

Exit Balthasar.

Prince  Do so, farewell. Come hither Leonato, what was
it you told mee of to day, that your niece Beatrice was in loue
with signior Benedicke?
Cla.  O I, talk on, talk on, the foule fits. I did never think
that lady would haue loved any man.
Leo.  No nor I neither, but most wonderful,that she should
so dote on signior Benedicke, whom she hath in all outward
behaviors seemd euer to abhorre.
Bene.  Ift possible? fits the wind in that corner?
Leo.  By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of
it, but that she loves him with an enraged affection, it is past the
infinite of thought.
Prince  May be the doth but counterfeit,
Claud.  Faithlike enough.
Leon.  O God! counterfeit? there was never counterfeit of
passion, came so neare the life of passion as she discovers it.

Prince
about Nothing.

Prince Why what effects of passion fhewes she?
Claud. Baite the hooke wel, this fih will bite.
Leon. What effects my Lord? she will fit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.
Claud. She did indeed.
Prince How, how I pray youf you amaze me, I would haue thought her spirite had bene inuincible againfl all assaults of affection.
Leon. I would haue sworn it had, my lord,especially against Benedicke.
Bene. I should think this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow speakes it: knavery cannot sure hide himself in fuch recurrence.
Claud. He hath take th'infection, hold it vp.
Prince Hath shee made her affection knowne to Benedicke?
Leonato No, and sweares shee neuer will, thats her torment.
Claudio Tis true indeed, so your daughter faies: shall I faies shee, that haue fo oft encountered him with fcorne, write to him that I loue him?
Leon. This faies shee now when she is beginning to write to him, for fheel be vp twenty times a night, and there will shee fit in her smocke, til she haue writ a fheete of paper: my daughter tells vs all.
Claud. Now you talk of a fheet of paper, I remember a pretty left your daughter told of vs.
Leonato O when she had writ it, and was reading it ouer, she found Benedicke and Beatrice betweene the fheete.
Claudio That.
Leon. O she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence, raild at her felf, that she should be fo immodeft to write, to one that she knew would flout her, I meafure him, faies she, by my own spirite, for I should flout him, if he writ to me, yea thogh I loue him I should.
Claud. Then downe vpon her knees she falls, weepes, fobs, beats her heart, teares her hair, prayes, curfes, O sweet Benedicke,
Much ado

dicke, God give me patience.

Leonato She doth indeed, my daughter faies so, and the ex-
tause hath so much ouerborne her, that my daughter is some-
time afeard shee will doe a desperate out-rage to her selle, it is
very true.

Prince It were good that Benedicke knew of it by some o-
ther, if she will not discouer it.

Claudio To what end: he would make but a fport of it, and
torment the poore Lady worse.

Prince And he should, it were an almes to hang him, shees
an excellent sweete lady, and (out of all fufpition,) she is vertu-
ous.

Claudio And the is exceeding wife.

Prince In euerything but in louing Benedicke.

Leonato O my Lord, wisedome and blood combating in
tender a body, we haue ten proofes to one, that bloud hath
the victorie, I am fory for her, as I haue iuft caufe, beeing her
uncle, and her gardian.

Prince I would shee had beftowed this dotage on mee, I
would haue daft al other refpechts, and made her halfe my felf;
I pray you tell Benedicke of it, and heare what a will fay.

Leonato Were it good thinke you?

Claudio Hero thinkes surely she will die, for she fayes shee
will die, if he loue her not, and shee will die ere shee make her
loue knowne, and she will die if he wooe her, rather than shee
will hate one breath of her accustomed croftefe.

Prince She doth well, if shee shoulde make tender of her
loue, tis very poiffible heele foorne it, for the man (as you know
all) hath a contemptible spirite.

Claudio He is a very proper man.

Prince He hath indeede a good outward happines.

Claudio Before God, and in my mind, very wife.

Prince Hee dooth indeede shew some sparkeres that are like
wit.

Claudio And I take him to be valiant.

Prince As Hector, I affure you, and in the managing of
quarrels you may say he is wise, for either hee auoydes them
with
about Nothing.

with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most christi-

anlike fear.

Leonato If he do fear God, a must necessarily keep peace,
if hee breake the peace, hee ought to enter into a quarrel with
fear and trembling.

Prince And so will hee doe, for the man doth fear God,
howsoever it seemes not in him, by some large iestes hee will
make: well I am sorry for your niece, shall we go seek Benedicti-
ce, and tell him of her love?

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

Leonato Nay thats impossible, shee may weare her heart
out first.

Prince Well, we will heare further of it by your daughter,
let it coole the while, I loue Benedicte wel, and I could with
he would modestly examine himselfe, to see how much he is
vnworthy so good a lady.

Leonato My lord, will you walke? dinner is ready.

Claudio If he do not doate on her uupon this, I will neuer
trust my expectation

Prince Let there be the same nette spread for her, and that
muss your daughter and her gentlewomen carry: the spore
will be, when they holde one an opinion of an others dotage,
and no such matter, thats the sceme that I woulde see, which
will be meerely a dumbe shew: let vs send her to call him in to
dinner.

Benedicke This can be no tricke, the conference was sadly
borne, they haue the truth of this from Hero, they seeme to
pittie the Lady; it seemes her affections have their full bent:
love me? why it must be requited: I heare how I am cenforde,
they say I will bear my selfe prouedly; if I perceiue the love
come from her: they say too that she will rather die then giue
anie signe of affection: I did never thinke to marry, I must
not feeme proued, happy are they that haere their detracions,
and can put them to mending: they say the Lady is faiere, us a
truth, I can haere them witnesse: and vertuous, tis so, I can-
not reprooue it, and wife, but for loving me, by my troth it is

D 3 no
Much adoe

no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her follie, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of witte broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meete in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quippes and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the carriage of his humor? No, the world must be peopled. When I faide I woulde die a bachelor, I did not think I should liue til I were married, here comes Beatrice: by this day, shees a faire lady, I doe spie some markes of loue in her.

Enter Beatrice.

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

Bene. Faire Beatrice, I thanke you for your paines.

Beat. I tooke no more paines for those thankes, then you take paines to thanke me, if it had bin painful I would not have come.

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message.

Beat. Yea, as much as you may take upon a kniues point, and choake a daw withall: you haue no stomach signior, fare you well. exit.

Bene. Ha, against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner: there's a double meaning in that: I took no more paines for those thanks the you took paines to thank me, thats as much as to say, any paines that I take for you is as easy as thanks: if I do not take pitty of her I am a villain, if I do not loue her I am a louse, I will go get her picture, exit.

Enter Hero and two Gentlemens, Margaret, and Ursley.

Hero. Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,

There shalt thou find my cousen Beatrice, Proposing with the prince and Claudio, Whisper her care and tell her I and Ursley, Walke in the orchard, and our whole discourse Is all of her, say that thou ouer heards vs, And bid her steale into the pleached bowers, Where bony-fuckles ripened by the sunne, Forbid
about Nothing.

Forbid the sunne to enter: like faourites,
Made proud by princes, that aduance 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 vs alone.

Marg. Ile make her come I warrant you presently.

Hero Now Vrfula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley vp and downe,
Our talke must onely be of Benedicke,
When I do name him let it be thy part,
To praise him more than euer man did merite,
My talke to thee must be how Benedicke,
Is sick in love with Beatrice: of this matter,
Is little Cupids crafty arrow made,
That onely wounds by heare-fay: now begin,
For looke where Beatrice like a Lapwing runs
Close by the ground, to heare our conference.

Enter Beatrice.

Ursula The pleasant angling is to see the sith
Cut with her golden ores the siluer streame,
And greedily deuoure the treacherous baite:
So angle: we for Beatrice, who euen now,
Is couched in the wood-bine couerture,
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

Hero Then go we neare her that her eare loose nothing,
Of the false sweete baite that we lay for it:
No truly Vrfula, she is too disdainfull,
I know her spirits are as coy and wild,
As haggerds of the rocke.

Ursula But are you sure,
That Benedicke loues Beatrice so intirely?

Hero So faires the prince, and my new trothed Lord.

Ursula And did they bid you tel her of it, madame?

Hero They did intreate me to acquaint her of it,
But I perswaded them: if they lou'de Benedicke,
To with him wraatle with affection,
And neuer to let Beatrice know of it.
Muchadoe

Vrulia Why did you so dooth not the gentleman deferue as full as fortunate a bed,
As ever Beatrice shall couch vpon?

Hero O God of love! I know he doth deferue,
As much as may be yeelded to a man:
But nature neuer remade a womans harte,
Of prowder stufte then that of Beatrice:
Dissaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eies,
Misprisning what they looke on, and her wit:
Valewes it selfe so highly, that to her
All matter els seemes weake: she cannot loue,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is to selfe in deare.

Vrulia Sure I thinkse so,
And therefore certainly it were not good,
She knew his loue left sheele make sport at it.

Hero Why you speake truth, I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, yong, how rarely featured,
But she would speel him backward: if faire faced,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an antique,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launce ill headed:
If low, an agot very vildly cut:
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all winds:
If silent, why a blocke moved with none:
So turns the euery man the wrong side out,
And never giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simpelenesse and merite purchaseth.

Vrulia Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable,

Hero No not to be so odde, and from all fashions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable,
But who dare tell her so? If I should speake,
She would mocke me into ayre, O she would laugh me,
Out of my selfe, press me to death with wit,
Therefore let Benedicke like couerd fire,
Consume away in sighes, wast inwardly:
It were a better death, then die with mockes,

Which
about Nothing.

Which is as bad as die with tickling.

_Volumnia_ Yet tell her of it, heare what she will say.

_Hero_ No rather I will go to Benedicke,

And counsaile him to fight against his passion,

And truly Ile deuise some honest fou nders,

To staine my cosin with, one doth not know,

How much an ill word may imposon liking,

_Volumnia_ O do not do your cosin such a wrong,

She cannot be so much without true judgement,

Hauing so swift and excellent a wit,

As she is prilde to haue, as to refuse

So rare a gentleman as signior Benedicke.

_Hero_ He is the onely man of Italy,

Alwaies excepted my deare Claudio.

_Volumnia_ I pray you be not angry with me, madame,

Speaking my fancy; signior Benedicke,

For shape, for bearing argument and valour,

Goes formost in report through Italy.

_Hero_ Indeed he hath an excellent good name.

_Volumnia_ His excellence did earne it, ere he had it:

When are you married madame?

_Hero_ Why every day to morrow, come go in,

Ile shew thee some attyres, and haue thy counsaile,

Which is the best to furnish me to morrow.

_Volumnia_ Shees limed I warrant you,

We haue caught her madame.

_Hero_ If it proue so, then loving goes by haps,

Some Cupid kills with arrowes some with traps.

_Beat._ What fire is in mine cares can this be true?

Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorne so much?

Contempt, farewel, and maiden pride,adew,

No glory liues behind the backe of such.

And Benedicke, love on I will requite thee,

Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:

If thou dost love, my kindnesse shall incite thee

To bind our loues vp in a holy band.

For others say thou dost deserue, and I

_E_ Beleeue
Believe it better then reportingly.

Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedick, and Leonato.

Prince I doe but stay til your marriage be consummated, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. Ile bring you thither my lord, if youe vouchsafe me.

Prince Nay that would be as great a foyle in the new gloss of your marriage, as to shew a child his new coat and forbid him to weare it, I wil only be bold with Benedick for his company, for from the crowne of his head, to the sole of his foot, he is al mirth, he hath twice or thrice cut Cupides bow-string, and the little hang-man dare not shoot at him, he hath a heart as found as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinkes, his tongue speakes.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I haue bin.

Leo. So say I, me thinke you are fadder.

Clau. I hope he be in loue.

Prince Hang him truant, there is no true drop of bloud in him to be truly toucht with loue, if he be saddle, he wantes money.

Bene. I haue the tooth-ach.

Prince Draw it.

Bene. Hang it.

Clau. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

Prince What? sigh for the tooth-ach.

Leon. Where is but a humour or a worme.

Bene. Wel, every one cannot master a griefe, but he that has it.

Clau. Yet say I, he is in loue.

Prince There is no appearence of fancie in him, vntil he hath a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to be a Dutchman to day, a Frenchman to morrow, or in the shape of two counties at once, as a Germaine from the waste downward, all flops, and a Spaniard from the hip vpward, no doubter: vntill he have a fancie to this foolery, as it appeares he hath, he is no foole for fancie, as you would haue it appeare he is.
about Nothing.

Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no be-leauing old signes, a brushes his hat a mornings, what should that bode?

Prince. Hath any man scene him at the Barbers?

Claud. No, but the barbers man hath bin scene with him, and the olde ornament of his cheeke hath already stufft tennis balls.

Leon. Indeed he lookes yonger than he did, by the loffe of a beard.

Prince. Nay a rubs himselfe with ciuit, can you smell him out by that?

Claud. Thats as much as to say, the sweete youthe's in love.

Bene. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he woont to wash his face?

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

Claud. Nay but his iealing spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string, and now governed by stops.

Prince. Indeed that tells a heauy tale for him: conclude, conclude, he is in love.

Claud. Nay but I know who loves him.

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

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions, and in dispight of al, dies for him.

Prince. She shall be buried with her face vpwards.

Bene. Yet is this no charm the tooth-ake, old signior, walke aside with me, I haue studied eight or nine wise wordes to speake to you, which these hobby-horses must not heare.

Prince. For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

Claud. Tis even so, Hero and Margaret haue by this play-ed their parts with Beatrice, and then the two beares will not bite one another when they meete.

Enter John the Bastard.

Bastard. My lord and brother, God laue you.

Prince. Good den brother.
Much adoe

Bastard. If your leisure seru’d, I would speake with you.
Prince. In priuate?
Bastard. If it please you, yet Count Claudio may heare, for what I would speake of, concerns him.
Prince. What the matter?
Bast. Means your Lordship to be married to morrow?
Prince. You know he does.
Bast. I know not that when he knowes what I know.
Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you discouer it.
Bast. You may thinke I loue you not, let that appeare hereafter, and ayme better at me by that I now will manifest, for my brother (I thinke, he holde you well, and in deareness of heart) hath holpe to effect your ensuing mariage: surely fute ill spent, and labor ill bestowed.
Prince. Why what is the matter?
Bast. I came hither to tel you, and circumstances shortned, (for the has bin too long a talking of) the lady is disloyall.
Claud. Who Hero?
Bast. Euen she, Leonatees Hero, your Hero, euery man’s Hero.
Claud. Disloyall?
Bast. The word is too good to paint out her wickednesse, I could say she were worse, thinke you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it: wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to night you shall see her chamber window entred, euen the night before her wedding day, if you loue her, then to morrow wed her: But it would better fite your honour to change your mind.
Claud. May this be so?
Prince. I will not thinke it.
Bast. If you dare not trufl that you see, confesse not that you knowe: if you will follow mee, I will shew you enough, and when you haue scene more, and heard more, proceede accordingly.
Claudio. If I see anie thing to night, why I should not marry her to morrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

Prince
about Nothing.

Prince And as I wooed for thee to obtaine her, I will ioyne with thee, to disgrace her.
Bastard I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witneses, boare it coldely but till midnight, and let the issue shew it selve.

Prince O day vntowardly turned!
Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting!
Bastard O plague right well prevented! so will you say, when you haue scene the sequel.

Enter Dogbery and his compatriot with the Watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verges Yea, or else it were pitty but they should suffer salvation body and soule.

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

Verges Well, giue them their charge; neighbour Dogbery.

Dogbery First, who thinke you the most desartleseman to be Constable?

Watch 1 Hugh Ote-cake sir, or George Sea-cole, for they can write and reade.

Dogbery Come hither neighbor Sea-cole, God hath blest you with a good name: to be a welshauoured man, is the gift of Fortune; but to write and reade, comes by nature.

Watch 2 Both which maizst Constable.

Dogbery You have: I knew it would be your answer: wel, for your favour sir, why giue God thanks, and make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeare when there is no neede of such vanity; you are thought heere to be the most fensitifTe and fit man for the Constable of the watch: therefore boare you the lanthorne: this is your charge, You shall comprehend all vagrom men, you are to bidde any man stand, in the Princes name.

Watch 2 How if a will not stand?

Dogbery Why then take no note of him, but let him goe,
and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thanke
you are ridde of a knaue.

Verges If he wil not stand when he is bidden, he is none of
the Princes subiects.

Dogbery True, and they are to meddle with none but the
Princes subiects: you shall also make no noife in the streets:
for, for the watch to babble and to talk, is most tolerable, and
not to be indured.

Watch We will rather sleepe than talke, we know what be-
longs to a watch.

Dogbery Why you speake like an antient and most quiet
watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping shoulde offend: one-
ly have a care that your billes bee not ftole: well, you are to
call at al the alehouses, and bid those that are drunke get
them to bed.

Watch How if they will not?

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

Watch Well sir.

Dogbery If you meete a thiefe, you may suspect him, by
vertue of your office, to be no true man: and for such kind of
men, the leffe you meddle or make with them, why the more
is for your honesty.

Watch If we know him to be a thiefe, shal we not lay hands
on him?

Dogbery Truely by your office you may, but I thinke they
that touch pitch will be defilde: the moost peaceable way for
you, if you doe take a thiefe, is, to let him thw himselfe what
he is, and steale out of your company.

Verges You haue beene alwayes called a mercifull manne,
partner.

Dog Truely I would nothang a dogge by my will, much
more a man who hath anie honesty in him.

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

Watch How if the nurse be asleepe and will not heare vs.
about Nothing.

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

Verges This is very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge: you constable are to present the prince's own person, if you meete the prince in the night, you may slay him.

Verges Nay birlady that I thinke a cannot.

Dog. Five shillings to one on't with any man that knowes the statutes, he may slay him, may not without the prince be willing, for indeed the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to slay a man against his will.

Verges Birlady I thinke it be so.

Dog. Ha ah ha, well masters good night, and there be any matter of weight chaunces, call up me, keepe your fellowes counskailes, and your owne, and good night, come neighbour.

Watch Well masters, we heare our charge, let vs goe sitte here vpon the church bench till twoo, and then all to bed.

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

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

Bor. What Conrade?

Watch Peace, sir not.

Bor. Conrade I say.

Con. Here man, I am at thy elbow.

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

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

Bor. Stand thee close then vnder this penthoufe, for it driethells raine, and I will, like a true drunckard, vitter all to thee.

Watch Some treason masters, yet stand close.

Bor.
Bor. Therefore know, I haue earned of Dun Iohn a thousand ducates.

Con. Is it possible that any villanie should be so deare?

Bor. Thou shouldest rather aske if it were possible any villanie should be so rich: for when rich villains haue need of poor ones, poore ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bor. That shewes thou art vnconfirm'd, thou knowest that the fashion of a dublet, or a hat, or a cloake, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes it is apparell.

Bor. I meane the fashion.

Con. Yes the fashion is the fashion.

Bor. True, I may as well say the foole's the foole, but seekest thou not what a deformed theefe this fashion is?

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

Bor. Didst thou not heare some body?

Con. No, twas the vane on the house.

Bor. Seest thou not (I say) what a deformed theefe this fashion is, how giddily a turnes about all the Hot-blouds, between fourseneteene and fiue and thirtie, sometymes fashioning them like Pharaohes souldiers in the riche painting; sometyme like god Bels priests in the old church window, sometyme like the shauen Hercules in the smircht worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-pieces seemes as masse as his club.

Con. Al this I see, and I see that the fashion weares out more apparrell then the man, but art not thou thy selfe giddy with the fashion too, that thou haft shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

Bor. Not so neither, but know that I haue to night wooed Margaret the Lady Heroes gentle-woman, by the name of Hero, the leanes me out at her mistresse chamber window, bids me a thousand times good night: I tell this tale vildy. I shoulde first tel thee how the prince Claudio and my master planted, and placed, and postefed, by my master Don Iohn, saw a farr
about Nothing.

off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Conr. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bar. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the duel my master knew she was Margaret and partly by his oaths, which first poslef 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 appointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation shame her, with what he saw o’re night, and send her home again without a husband.

Watch 1 We charge you in the princes name stand.

Watch 2 Call vppe the right master Constable, wee haue here reccord the most dangerous piece of lechery, that euer was knowne in the common wealth.

Watch 1 And one Deformed is one of them, I know him, a weares a Locke.

Conr Masters, masters.

Watch 2 Youle be made bring deformed forth I warrant you.

Conr Masters, never speake, we charge you, let vs obey you to go with vs.

Bor. We are like to proue a goodly commoditie, being taken vp of these mens billes.

Conr A commodity in question I warrant you, come weele obey you.

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Vrfula.

Hero Good Vrfula wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rife.

Vrfula I will lady.

Hero And bid her come hither.

Vrfula Well.

Marg. Troth I thinke your other rebato were better.

Hero No pray thee good Meg, ile weare this.

Marg. By my troth’s not so good, and I warrant your cousin will lay fo.

Hero My cousin’s a foole, and thou art another, ile weare
none but this.

Mar. I like the new tire within excellently, if the haire were thought browner: and your gown's a most rare fashion: y'faith, I saw the Dutchesse of Millaines gowne that they praised.

Hero. O that exceeds they say.

Mar. By my troth's but a night-gown it respect of yours, cloth a gold and cut, and lace with silver, set with pearles, downe fleeces, side fleeces, and skirts, round vnderborne with a blew with tinsell, but for a fine quaint graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

Hero. God giue me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavie.

Mar. T'will be heauier soone by the weight of a man.

Hero. Fie upon thee, art not ashamed?

Mar. Of what lady? of speaking honourably; is not marriage honourable in a beggar? is not your Lord honourable without marriage? I thinke you would have me say, sauing your reverence a husband: & bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, Ile offend no body, is there any harm in the heauier, for a husband? none I thinke, and it be the right husband, and the right wife, otherwise tis light and not heauy, aske my lady Beatrice els, here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Hero. Good morrow coze.

Beat. Good morrow sweete Hero.

Hero. Why how now? do you speake in the sickle tune?

Beat. I am out of all othere tune, me thinkes.

Mar. Clap's into Light aloue, (that goes without a burden;) do you sing it, and ile daunce it.

Beat. Ye Light aloue with your heels, then if your husband have stables enough youe see he shall lacke no barnes.

Mar. O illegitimate construction! I scorne that with my heele.

Beat. Tis almost fite a clocke cousin, tis time you were ready, by my troth I am exceeding ill, hey ho.

Mar. For a hauke, a horse or a husband?

Beat.
about Nothing.

Beat. For the letter that begins thiem al, H.

Mar. Wel, and you be not turned Turk, ther e no more sayling by the starre.

Beat. What meanes the foole trow?

Mar. Nothing I, but God send euery one their hearts desire.

Hero These gloucs the Counte sent me, they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuff cosin, I cannot smell.

Mar. A maide and stuff! ther e goodly catching of colde.

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

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

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

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

Hero There thou prickest her with a thiffel.

Beat. Benedictus, why benedictus? you haue some moral in this benedictus.

Mar. Morall? no by my troth I haue no morall meaning, I meant plaine holy thiffel, you may thinke perchaunce that I think you are in loue, nay birlady I am not such a foole to think what I lift, nor I lift not to thinke what I can, nor indeed I can not think, if I would thinke my heart out of thinking, that you are in loue, or that you will be in loue, or that you can be in loue; yet Benedicke was such another, and now is he become a man, he swore he would neuer marry, and yet now in dispight of his heart he eates his meate without grudging, and how you may be converted I know not, but me thinkes you looke with your eies as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keepes?

Mar: Not a false gallop. Enter Vrsula.

Vrsula Madame withdraw, the prince, the Count, signior Benedicke, Don John, and all the gallants of the towne are come
Come to fetch you to church.

Hero. Help to dress me good coze, good Meg, good Virgula.

Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough.

Leonato. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Conf. Dog. Mary sir I would have some confidence with you, that decernes you nearly.

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

Conf. Dog. Mary this it is sir.

Headb. Yes in truth it is sir.

Leonato. What is it my good friends?

Con. Do. Goodman Verge's sir speaks a little of the matter, an old man sir, and his wittes are not so blunt, as God helpe I would desire they were, but in faith honest, as the skin between his browes.

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

Conf. Dog. Comparisons are odorous, palavras, neighbour Verge's.

Leonato. Neighbors, you are tedious.

Conf. Dog. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poore Dukes officers, but truly for mine owne 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?

Conf. Dog. Yea, and't were a thousand pound more than tis, for I heare as good exclamation on your worshippe as of any man in the citie, and though I be but a poore man, I am glad to heare it.

Head. And so are I.

Leonato. I would faine know what you have to say.

Head. Mary sir our watch to night, excepting your worships presence, ha tane a couple of as arrant knaue as any in Messina.

Conf. Dog. A good old man sir, he will be talking as they say, when the age is in, the wit is out, God help vs, it is a world to
about Nothing.

to see: well said yfaith neighbour Verges, well, God's a good man, and two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind, an honest soule, yfaith sir, by my troth he is, as euer broke bread, but God is to be worshipt, all men are not alike, alas good neighbour.

Leonato Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.

Const. Do, Gifts that God giues.

Leonato I muſt leaue you.

Const. Dog. One word sir, our watch sir haue indeede comprehended two aspitious persons, and wee woulde haue them this morning examined before your worship.

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

Constable It shall be suffigance.

Leonato Drinke some wine ere you goe: fare you well.

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

Leon. Ile wait vpon them, I am ready.

Dogb. Go good partner, goe get you to Francis Sea-cole, bid him bring his penne and inckehorne to the Gaole: we are now to examination these men.

Verges And we must do it wisely.

Dogbery We will spare for no witte I warrant you: heeres that shall drive some of them to a noncome, only get the learned writer to set downe our excommunication, and meet me at the Iaile.

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

Leonato Come Frier Francis, be briefe, onely to the plaine forme of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Frier You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady.

Claudio No.

Leon. To bee married to her: Frier, you come to marry her.

Frier Lady, you come hither to be married to this counte.

Hero I do.

Frier If either of you know any inward impediment why

F 3 you
you should not be conioyned, I charge you on your soules to vter it.

Cladio  Know you any, Hero?
Hero   None, my lord.
Frier  Know you any, Counte?
Leonato I dare make his answer, None.

Clario  O what men dare dot what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do!

Bene. Howe now! interiections? why then, some be of laughing, as, ah, ha, he.

Cladio  Stand thee by Frier, father, by your leaue,
Will you with free and unconstraine foule
Give me this maide your daughter?

Leonato As freely sonne as God did giue her mee.

Cladio  And what haue I to giue you backe whose woorth
May counterpoifie this rich and precious gift?

Princen  Nothing, vnlesse you render her againe.

Cladio  Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulness:

There Leonato, take her backe againe,
Give not this rotten orenge to your friend,
Shee's but the signe and semblance of her honor:
Behold how like a maide she blushes here! 
O what authoritie and shew of truth
Can cunning finne couer it felse withall!
Comes not that blood, as modest euidence,
To witnesse simple Vertue? would you not sweare
All you that see her, that she were a maide,
By these exterior shewes? But she is none:
She knowes the heate of a luxurious bed:
Her blush is guiltiness, not modestie.

Leonato  What do you mean, my lord?

Cladio  Not to be married,
Not to knit my foule to an approoued wanton.

Leonato  Deere my lord, if you in your owne proofe,
Hawe vanquisht the resitance of her youth,
And made defeate of her virginitie.

Cladio  I know what you would say: if I have knowne her,
about Nothing.

You will say, she did imbrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the forehand sinne: No Leonato,
I neuer tempted her with word too large,
But as a brother to his sister, shewed
Bashfull sinceritie, and comelie loue.

Hero And feeme I euer otherwise to you?
Claudio Out on thee seeming, I wil write againft it,
You feeme to me as Diane in her Orbe,
As chaste as is the budde ere it be blowne:
But you are more intertempere in your blood,
Than Venus, or thole pampered animalls,
That rage in saugage sensualitie.

Hero Is my Lord well that he doth speake so wide?
Leonato Sweete prince, why speake not you?
Prince What shoud I speake?
I stand dishonourd that haue gone about,
To lincke my deare friend to a common stale.

Leonato Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
Bafard Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true,
Bened. This lookes not like a nuptiall,
Hero True, O God!

Claud, Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? is this the princes brother?
Is this face Heroes? are our eies our owne?
Leonato All this is so, but what of this my Lord?
Claud. Let me but move one question to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power,
That you haue in her, bid her answer truly.

Leonato I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.
Hero O God defend me how am I beleu,
What kind of catechising call you this?

Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.

Hero Is it not Hero, who can blot that name
With any iust reproch?
Claud, Mary that can Hero,
Hero it selfe can blot out Heroes vertue.
What man was he talkt with yesternight,
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?
Now if you are a maide, answer to this.

**Hero** I talkt with no man at that howre my lord.

**Prince** Why then are you no maide? Leonato, I am sory you must heare: upon mine honor,

My selfe, my brother, and this grieved Counte

Did see her, heare her, at that howre last night,

Talkt with a ruffian at her chamber window,

Who hath indeede most like a liberaill villain,

Confess the vile encounters they haue had

A thousand times in secret.

**John** Fie, fie, they are not to be named my lord,

Not to be spoke of,

There is not chatlilie enough in language,

Without offence to utter them: thus pretty lady,

I am sory for thy much misgovernement.

**Claud.** O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou bin,

If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed,

About thy thoughts and counsailes of thy heart?

But fare thee well, most foule, most faire, farewell

Thou pure impietie, and impious purtie,

For thee Ie locke vp all the gates of Loue,

And on my eie-liddes shall Conie and Conie hang,

To turne all beautie into thoughts of harme,

And neuer shall it more be gracious.

**Leonato** Hath no mans dagger here a point for me.

**Beatrice** Why how now cousin, wherfore sinke you down?

**Bastard** Come let vs go: these things come thus to light,

Smother her spirits vp,

**Benedick** How doth the Lady?

**Beatrice** Dead I thinke, help vncle,

**Hero** why Hero, vncle, signior Benedick, Frier.

**Leonato** O Fate! take not away thy heauy hand,

Death is the fairest couer for her shame

That may be wisht for.

**Beatrice** How now cousin Hero?

**Frier** Haue comfort lady.

**Leonato** Dost thou looke vp?
about Nothing.

Frier Yea, wherefore should she not?

Leonato Wherfore? why doth not every earthly thing,
buy shame upon her? could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?
Do not lure Hero, do not ope thine eyes:
For did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shame?
My selfe would on the reward of reproches
Strike at thy life. Grieued I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal Nature's frame?
O one too much by thee: Why had I one?
Why euer waft thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not with charitable hand,
Tooke vp a beggars issue at my gates,
Who finischad thus, and mired with infamy,
I might haue said, no part of it is mine,
This shame derives it selfe from unknowne loynes,
But mine and mine I loued, and mine I praisde,
And mine that I was pround on mine so much,
That I my selfe was to my selfe not mine:
Valuing of her, why she, O she is false,
Into a pit of incke, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,
And falt too little, which may reason give
To her soule tainted flesh.

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

Beat. O on my soule my cousin is belied.

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No truly, not although vntill last night,
I haue this tweluemonth bin her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirmd, confirmd, O that is stronger made,
Which was before bard vp with ribs of yron,
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who loued her so, that speaking of her foulenesse,
Wash it with tears, thence from her, let her die.

Frier Heare me a little, for I haue only bin silent so long, &
given way vnto this course of fortune, by noting of the lady, I
haue markt,
A thousand blushing apparitions,
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames,
In angel whiteness beate away those blushes,
And in her eye there hath appeared a fire,
To burne the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth: call me a foole,
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,
Which with experimental seale doth warrant
The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinitie,
If this sweete ladie lacke not guiltlesse here,
Vnder some biting error.

Leonato. Frier, it cannot be,
Thou feest that al the grace that she hath left,
It is that she will not add to her damnation,
A sinne of perjury, she not denies it:
Why feekst thou then to couer with excuse,
That which appears in proper nakednesse?

Frier. Lady, what man is he you are accused of?

Hero. They know that do accuse me, I know none,
If I know more of any man alme
Then that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sinnes lacke mercie, O my father,
Proue you that any man with me conuerst,
At houres vnmeete, or that I yesternight
Maintained the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Frier. There is some strange misprision in the princes.

Bene. Two of them have the very bent of honour,
And if their wisedomes be misled in this,
The practive of it lies in John the Bastard,
Whose spirites toyle in frame of villanies.

Leonato. I know not, if they speake but truth of her,
These hands shall teare her, if they wrong her honour,
The proud deff of them that we hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this bloud of mine,
Nor age to eate vp my invention.
about Nothing.

Nor Fortune made such harvest of my means,
Nor my bad life so much of friends,
But they shall find awake in such a kind,
Both strength of limb, and policy of mind,
Ability in means, and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.

Frier Pawse awhile,
And let my counsel sway you in this case,
Your daughter here the prince was (left for dead)
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeed,
Maintain a mourning ostentation,
And on your families old monument,
Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites,
That appertain unto a burial.

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

Frier Mary this well caried, shall on her behalf, change
Flounder to remorse, that is some good,
But not for that draeme I on this strange course,
But on this trauaille looke for greater birth:
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lament'd, pittied, and excuse'd
Of every hearer: for it so falls out,
That what we hate, we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lackt and lost,
Whyle we rack the vale, then we find
The vertue that possession would not shew us
Whyle it was ours, so will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall hear he died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination,
And euy lovely Organ of her life,
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habite,
More mourning delicate, and full of life,
Into the eie and prospect of his soule
Then when she shall indeed: then shall he mourn,
If ever loue had interest in his liuer,
And wish he had not so accused her:
No, though he thought his accusation true:
Let this be so, and doubt not but success
Will fashion the event in better shape,
Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
But if all ayme but this be leueled false,
The supposition of the ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamie.
And if it fort not wel, you may conceale her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusius and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.
Bene. Signior Leonato, let the Frier aduise you,
And though you know my inwardnesse and loue
Is very much vnto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honor, I will deale in this,
As secretly and justly as your soule
Should with your body.
Leon. Being that I flow in grieue,
The smallest twine may leade me.
Frier Tis wel consented, preffently away,
For to strange fores, strangely they straine the cure,
Come lady, die to liue, this wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd, have patience and endure, exit.
Bene. Lady Beatrice, have you wept al this while?
Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.
Bene. I will not defire that.
Beat. You haue no reason, I do it freely.
Bene. Surely I do beleue your faire cousin is wronged.
Beat. Ah, how much might the man descreue of me that
would right her!
Bene. Is there any way to shew such friendship?
Beat. A very even way, but no such friend.
Bene. May a man do it?
Beat. It is a mans office, but not yours.
Bene. I doe loue nothing in the worlde so well as you,
is not that strange?

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

Bened. By my sword Beatrice, thou loue st me.

Beat. Do not sweare and eate it.

Bened. I will sweare by it that you loue me, and I will make him eate it that saies I loue not you.

Beat. Will you not eate your word?

Bened. With no sawce that can be devise to it, I protest I loue thee.

Beat. Why then God forgiue me.

Bened. What offence sweete Beatrice?

Beat. You haue frayed me in a happy houre, I was about to protest I loued you.

Bened. And do it with all thy heart.

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

Bened. Come bid me doe any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bened. Ha, not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it, farewell.

Bened. Tarry sweete Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here, there is no loue in you, nay I pray you let me go.

Bened. Beatrice.

Beat. In faith I will go.

Bened. VVeele be friends first.

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

Bened. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is a not approoved in the height a villaine, that hath so laundered, scorned, dishonored my kinswoman? O that I were a man! what, beare her in hand, vntill they come to take handes, and then with publike accusation vncouerd slander, vnmitigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I woulde G 3 eate
cate his heart in the market place.

Bened. Heare me Beatrice.

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window, a proper saying.

Bened. Nay but Beatrice.

Beat. Sweete Hero, she is wrongd, she is slaundred, she is undone.

Bened. Beat?

Beat. Princes and Counts! surely a princely testimonie, a godly Counte, Counte Comfett, a sweete 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 cursies, valour into complement, and men are only turnd into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and sweete is: I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Bened. Tarry good Beatrice, by this hand I loue thee.

Beatrice Vse it for my loue some other way than swearing by it.

Bened. Thinke you in your soule the Count Claudio hath wrongd Hero?

Beatrice Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soule.

Bened. Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will kiss your hand, and so I leaue you: by this hand, Claudio shall render me a deere account: as you heare of me, so think of me: goe comforte your cousin, I must say she is dead, and so farewell.

Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne cleark in gornes.

Keeper Is our whole dissemblie appeard?

Cowley O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton Which be the malesactors?

Andrew Mary that am I, and my partner.

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

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

Kemp Yea mary, let them come before mee, what is your name.
name, friend?

Bor. Borachio.

Ke. Pray write downe Borachio. Yours sir.

Con. I am a gentleman sir, and my name is Conrade.

Ke. Write downe maister gentlemaun Conrade: maisters, do you ferue God?

Both Yea sir we hope.

Kemp. Write downe, that they hope they ferue God: and write God firft, for God defend but God shoulde goe before such villains: maisters, it is proued alreadie that you are little better than false knaues, and it will go neere to be thought fo shortly, how answer you for your felues?

Con. Mary sir we say, we are none.

Kemp. A maruellous witty fellowe I affure you, but I will go about with him: come you hither sirra, a word in your ear sir, I lay to you it is thought you are false knaues.

Bor. Sir, I lay to you, we are none.

Kemp. Vel, stand aside, for God they are both in a tale: have you writ downe, that they are none?

Sexton. Master constable, you go not the way to examine, you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Kemp. Yea, sirs, thats the esteft way, let the watch come forth: maisters, I charge you in the Princes name accuse these men.

Watch. This man saide sir, that don John the Princes brother was a villain.

Kemp. Write downe, prince John a villain: why this is flat perjuroie, to call a Princes brother villain.

Borachio. Master Constable.

Kemp. Pray thee fellowe peace, I doe not like thy looke I promise thee.

Sexton. What heard you him say else?

Watch. Mary that he had received a thousand ducats of don John, for accusing the Ladie Hero wrongfully.

Kemp. Flat broglarie as ever was committed.

Conf. Yea by maffe that it is.

Sexton. What else fellow?
Watch. And that Counte Claudio did meane vpon his
wordes, to disgrace Hero before the whole assemle, and not
marrie her.
Kemp. O villain! thou wilt be condemnde into euerafting
redemption for this.
Sexton. VVhat else? Watch. This is all.
Sexton. And this is more masters then you can deny, prince
John is this morning secretlie holne awaie: Hero was in this
manner accusde, in this verie manner refusde; and vpon the
griefe of this, sodainlie died: Master Constable, let these men
be bound, and brought to Leonatoes, I will goe before and
shew him their examination.
Constable. Come, let them be opiniond.
Couley. Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.
Kemp. Gods my life, wheres the Sexton? let him write down
the Princes officer Coxcombe: come, bind them, thou naught-
ty varlet.
Couley. Away, you are an affe, you are an affe.
Kemp. Doost thou not suspect my place? doost thou not
suspect my yeeres? O that he were here to write me downe an
affe! but maisters, remember that I am an affe (though it bee
not written downe, yet forget not that I am an affe): No thou
villaine, thou art full of pietie as shal be proude vpon thee by
good witnes; I am a wife fellow, and which is more, an officer,
and which is more, a householder, and which is more, as pret-
ty a peecce of flesh as anie is in Messina, and one that knowes
the Law, goe to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow
that hath had loffe, and on that hath two gownes, and etery
thing hanfome about him: bring him away: O that I had bin
writ downe an affe!
Leonato and his brother.
Brother. If you go on thus, you will kill yourselfe,
And is not wisedome thus to second griefe,
Against yourselfe.
Leonato. I pray thee ceafe thy counsaille,
Which fallles into mine eares as profitlesse,
As water in a syue: giue not me counsaille,
Nor
about Nothing.

Nor let no comforter delight mine care,
But such a one whose wrongs doe suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so lou'd his child,
Whole joy of her is ouer-whelm'd like mine,
And bid him speake of patience,
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer evey straine for straine,
As thus for thus, and such a griefe for such,
In every lineament,branch,shape,and forme:
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
And sorrow,wagge,crie hem, when he should grope,
Patch grieves with proverbs,make misfortune drunke,
With candle-wafters: bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience:
But there is no such man,for brother,men
Can counfaile,and speake comfort to that grieve,
Which they themselves not feel, but tafting it,
Their counfaile turns to passion,which before,
Would give preceptiall medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thred,
Charme ach with ayre,and agony with words,
No, no, tis all mens office, to speake patience
To those that wring vnder the load of sorrow
But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie
To be so morall, when he shall endure
The like himselfe: therefore give me no counfaile,
My grieves cri lowder then advartifement.

Brother Therein do men from children nothing differ.
Leonato I pray thee peace, I wil be fleshe and bloud,
For there was neuer yet Philosopher,
That could endure the tooth-ake patiently,
How euer they haue writ the file of gods,
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

Brother Yet bend not all the harme vpon your selfe,
Make those that do offend you,suffer too.
Leonato There thou speakest reason, nay I will do so,
My soule doth tell me, Hero is belied,
And that shall Claudio know, so shall the prince; And all of them that thus dishonour her.

Enter Prince and Claudio.

Brother Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily.

Prince Good den, good den.

Claudio Good day to both of you.

Leonato Hear you my Lords?

Prince We have some haste Leonato.

Leonato Some haste my lord! Well, are you well my lord.

Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.

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

Brother If he could right himselfe with quarrelling,

Some of vs would lie low.

Claudio Who wrongs him?

Leonato Mary thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou:

Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword, but without man;

I feare thee not.

Claudio Mary beflowed my hand,

If it should giue your age such cause of feare,

Infaith my hand meant nothing to my sword.

Leonato Tush, tush man, never fleer and fret at me:

I spake not like a dotard, not a fool;

As under priviledge of age to bragge,

What I have done being young, or what would doe,

Were I not old, know Claudio to thy head,

Thou hast so, wronged mine innocent child and me,

That I must to lay my reverence by,

And with grey haires and bruise of many daies,

Do challenge thee to triall of a man,

I say thou hast belied mine innocent child.

Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart;

And she lies buried with her ancestors:

O in a toomb where never scandal slept,

Save this of hers, framed by thy villanie.

Claudio My villany?

Leonato Thine Claudio, thine I say.

Prince You say not right old man. Leonato
about Nothing.

Leonato  My Lord, my Lord,

He proves it on his body if he dare,
Dishonours his noble fence, and his active practice,
His Maec of youth, and bloome of lusthhood.

Claudio  Away, I will not have to doe with you.

Leonato  Canst thou so daffe me thou hast kild my child,
If thou killst me, boy, thou shalt kill a man,

Brother  He shall kill two of vs, and men indeed,

But thats no matter, let him kill one first:
Win me and weare me, let him answer me,
Come follow me boy, come sir boy, come follow me

Sir boy, Ile whip you from your foyning fence,
Nay, as I am a gentleman I, will.

Leonato  Brother,

Brother  Content your self, God knowes, I loved my neece,
And she is dead, flanderd to death by villaines,
That dare as well answer a man indeed,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue,
Boyes, apes, braggarts, lackes, milke-fops.

Leonato  Brother Anthony,

Brother  Hold you content, what man! I know them, yea
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boies,
That lie, and cogge, and stout, deprave, and slander,
Go antiquely, and shew outward hideoufneffe,
And speake of halfe a dozen dangrous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,
And this is all.

Leonato  But brother Anthonie.

Brother  Comets is no matter,
Do not you meddle, let me deale in this.

Prince  Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience,
My heart is for your daughters death:
But on my honour he was chargde with nothing
But what was true, and very full of profe.

Leonato  My Lord, my Lord.

Prince  I will not heare you.
Leo. No come brother, away, I wil be heard. 
Bro. And shall, or some of vs wil smart for it. 
Prince. See see, heere comes the man we went to seeke.
Claud. Now signior, what newes?
Bened. Good day my Lord:
Prince. Welcome signior, you are almost come to parte almost a fray.
Claud. Wee had likt to haue had our two noses snapt off with two old men without teeth, 
Prince. Leonato and his brother what thinkst thou? had we fought, I doubt we should haue beeene too yong for them.
Bened. In a fayle quarrell there is no true valour, I came to seeke you both.
Claud. We haue beeene vp and downe to seeke thee, for we are high proofe melancholie, and would faine haue it beaten away, wilt thou wil thy wit?
Bened. It is in my feabberd, shal I drawe it?
Prince. Doest thou weare thy wit by thy side?
Claud. Neuer any did so, though very many haue been beside their wit, I will bid thee drawe, as wee doe the minstrels, draw to pleasure vs.
Prince. As I am an honest man he lookes pale, art thou sicke or angry?
Claud. What, courage man: what though care kild a catte, thou haft mettle enough in thee to kill care.
Bened. Sir, I shall meete your wit in the careere, and you charge it against me, I pray you chuse another subject
Claud. Nay then gibe him another flaffe, this last was broke crosse.
Prince. By this light he changeth more and more, I thinke he be angry indeed.
Claud. If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.
Bened. Shall I speake a word in your ear?
Claud. God bleffe me from a challenge.
Bened. You are a villaine, I leaft not, I will make it good howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: doe mee right, or I will protest your cowardise; you haue kild a sweet
about Nothing.

sweete Lady, and her death shall fall heavie on you, let me heare from you.

_Claud._ Well I wil meet you, so I may haue good cheare.

_Prince._ What, a feast, a feast?

_Claud._ I faith I thanke him he hath bid me to a calves head & a capon, the which if I doe not caree most curiously, say my kniffe's naught, shall I not find a woodcocke too?

_Bened._ Sir your wit ambles well, it goes easilly.

_Prince._ Ile tell thee how Beatrice praiid thy witte the other day: I said thou hadst a fine witte, true said she, a fine little one: no said I, a great wit: right sades she, a great groffe one: nay said I, a good wit, iust said she, it hurts no body: nay said I, the gentleman is wife: certaine said she, a wife gentleman may said I, he hath the tongue: that I beleue said she, for he swore a thing to mee on munday night, which hee forswore on tuesday morning, theres a double tongue theirs two tongues, thus did she an houre together tran-shape thy particular vertues, yet at last she concluded with a figh, thou waft the properst man in Italy.

_Claud._ For the which shee wept heartily and said she ca-red not.

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

_Claud._ All all, and moreouer, God sawe him when he was hid in the garden.

_Prince._ But when shall we set the sauage bulles hornes one the senrible Benedicks head?

_Claud._ Yea and text vnder-neath, here dwells Benedick the married man.

_Bened._ Fare you wel, boy, you know my minde, I wil leaue you now to your gossepy-like humor, you breake efts as brag-gards do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not: my Lord, for your many courtisies I thanke you, I must discontinue your company, your brother the baftard is fled from Messina: you haue among you, kild a sweet and innocent lady: for my Lord Lacke-beard, there hee and I shal meet, and till then peace be with him,
Prince. He is in earnest.

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

Prince. And hath challenged thee.

Claudio. Most sincerely.

Prince. What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his withers.

Enter Constables, Conrade, and Borachio.

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, plucke up my heart, and be sad, did he not say my brother was fled?

Const. Come you sir, if justice cannot tame you, she shall give you more reasons in her balance; nay, and you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be lookt to.


Claudio. Hearken after their offence my Lord.

Prince. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Const. Mary sir, they have committed false report, moreover they have spoken vntruths, secondarily they are flanders, first and lastly, they have belyed a Lady, thirdly they have verified vnjust things, and to conclude, they are lying knaves.

Prince. First I ask thee what they have done, thirdly I ask thee what their offence, first and lastly why they are committed, and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claudio. Rightly reasoned, and in his owne diuision, and by my tooth there is meaning well suited.

Prince. Who haue you offended maisters, that you are thus bound to your answere? this learned Constable is too cunning to be understood, what's your offence?

Bor. Sweete prince, let me goe no farther to mine answere: do you heare me; and let this Counte kill me: I haue deceived your very eyes: what your wisedoms could not discover, these shallowe foolees haue brought to light, who in the night otherheard me confessing to this man, how DoEn John your brother incensed me to flaunder the Lady Hero, howe you were brought
brought into the orchard, and gave me court. Margaret in Heroes garments, how you disgrace her, when you should marry her; my villainy they have upon record, which I had rather scale with my death, then 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 Runnes not this speech, like yon through your bloud?

Claud. I have drunk poison whilst he uttered it.
Prince But did my brother set thee on to this?
Bor. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.
Prince He is compose and framed of treachery,
And fled he is upon this villainy.

Claud. Sweet Hero, how thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I loud it first.

Confl. Come, bring away the plaintiffs, by this time our sexton hath referred Signior Leonato of the matter; and masters, do not forget to specify when time and place shall serve, that I am an affe.

Con. 2 Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

Enter Leonato, his brother, and the Sexton.

Leonato Which is the villain? Let me see his cies,
That when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: which of these is he?
Bor. If you would know your wronger, looke on me.
Leonato Art thou the faire that with thy breath hast kild
Mine innocent child?
Bor. Yea, euen I alone.

Leonato No, not so villain, thou believe thy selfe,
Here stand a paire of honourable men,
A third is fled that had a hand in it:
I thanke you Princes for my daughters death.
Record it with your high and worthy deeds,
Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

Claud. I know not how to pray your patience,
Yet I must speake, choose your revenge your selfe,
Much adoe

Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sinne, yet sinnd I not,
But in mistaking.

Prince By my soule nor I,
And yet to satiſfe this good old man,
I would bend vnder any heauy weight,
That heele enioyne me to.

Leonato I cannot bid you bid my daughter liue,
That were impossible, but I pray you both,
Poffeſſe the people in Messina here,
How innocent she died, and if your loue
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph vpon her toomb,
And sing it to her bones, sing it to night:
To morrow morning come you to my house,
And since you could not be my fon in law,
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copie of my child thats dead,
And she alone is heyre to both of vs,
Glue her the right you shoule haue giuen her cousin,
And so dies my reuenge.

Claudio O noble sir,
Your ouer kindnesse doth wringe teares from me,
I do embrace your offer and dispose,
For henceforth of poore Claudio.

Leonato To morrow then I wil expect your comming,
To night I take my leave, this naughty man
Shal face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I beleue was packt in al this wrong,
Hyred to it by your brother,

Bor. No by my soule she was not,
Nor knew not what she did when she spoked to me,
But alwayes hath bin juſt and vertuous,
In any thing that I do know by her.

Conf. Moreover sir, which indeede is not vnder white and
blacke, this plaintiffe heere, the offendour, did call me asſe, I
beſeech you let it be remembred in his punishment, and also
the
about Nothing.

the watch heard them talk of one Deformed, they say he weares a key in his ear and a locke hanging by it, and borowes monie in Gods name, the which he hath vide so long, & never paiied, that now men grow hard hearted and will lend nothing for Gods sake: praise you examine him upon that point.

Leonato. I thanke thee for thy care and honest paines.

Conf. Your worship speakes like a most thankful and reverent youth, and I praise God for you.

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Conf. God save the foundation.

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

Conf. Ileave an arrant knaue with your worship, which I beseach your worship to correct your selfe, for the example of others: God keepe your worship, I wish your worship well, God restore you to health, I humbly giue you leave to depart and if a merie meeting may be willed, God prohibite it: come neighbour.

Leon. Untill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

Brot. Farewell my lords, we looke for you to morrow.

Prince. We will not faile.

Claud. To night Ile mourne with Hero.

Leonato. Bring you these fellows on, weel talke with Margaret, how her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow. 

Enter Benedicke and Margaret.

Bened. Praise thee sweete mistris Margaret, deferue well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

Mar. Wil you then write me a sonnet in prase of my beautie?

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

Mar. To haue no man come ouer me, why shal I alwaies keep below staires.

Bene. Thy wit is as quicke as the grey-hounds mouth, it catches.

Mar. And your's, as blunt as the Fencers foiles, which hit, but hurt not.
Much adoe

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

Marg. Give vs the swordes, wee haue bucklers of our owne.

Bene. If you use them Margaret, you must putte in the pikes with a vice, and they are daungerous weapons for maides.

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

Exit Margaret.

Bene. And therefore wil come. The God of loue that fits above, and knowes mee, and knowes me, how pittifull I de- ferue. I meane in singing, but in louing, Leander the good swimmer, Toilus the first imployer of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet runne smoothly in the even rode of a blanke verse, why they were never so truly turnd ouer and ouer as my poore selfe in loue: mary I cannot shew it in rime, I haue tried, I can finde out no rime to Ladie but babie, an innocent rime: for scorne, borne, ahard rime: for schoole foole, a babling rime: very ominous endings, no, I was not borne under a riming planmet, nor I cannot wooe in festiuall termes: sweete Beatrice wouldst thou come when I cald thee?

Enter Beatrice.

Beat. Yea signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O stay but till then.

Beat. Then, is spoken: fare you wel now, and yet ere I goe, let me goe with that I came, which is, with knowing what hath past betwene you and Claudio.

Bene. Onely foule words, and thereupon I will kisse thee.

Beat. Foule words is but foule wind, and foule wind is but foule breath, and foule breath is noisome, therefore I wil depart vnkift.

Bene. Thou haft frighted the word out of his right fence, so forcible is thy wit, but I must tel thee plainly, Claudio vndergoes my challenge, and either I must shortly heare from him, or I will subscribe him a coward, and I pray thee now tell me, for
about Nothing.

for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together, which maintain so politic a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them: but for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Bene. Suffer love a good epitaph, I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Beat. In spite of your heart I think, alas poor heart, if you spight it for my sake, I will spight it for yours, for I will never love that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

Beat. It appears not in this confession, there is not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

Bene. An old, an old instance Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours, if a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall lie no longer in monument, then the bell rings, and the widow weeps.

Beat. And how long is that think you?

Bene. Question, why an hour in clamour and a quarter in rue, therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don worme (his conscience) find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to mine self so much for praising mine selfe, who I myselfe will beare witness is praise worthie, and now tell me, how doth your cousin?

Beat. Verie ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Verie ill too.

Bene. 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, yonders old coile at home, it is pronounced my Lady Hero hath bin falsely accuse, the Prince and Claudio mightily abused, and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone; will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go hear this newes signior?

Bene. I will lieue in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncles. exit.

I 2 Enter
Enter Claudio, Prince, and three or foure with tapers.

Claudio Is this the monument of Leonato?
Lord It is my Lord. Epitaph.
Done to death by flauderous tongues,
Was the Hero that heere lies:
Death in guerdon of her wronges,
Gives her fame which neuer dies;
So the life that dyed with shame,
Lives in death with glorious fame.
Hang thou there vpon the toomb,
Praifing hir when I am dead.

Claudio Now musick found & sing your solemne hymne.

Song Pardon goddesse of the night,
Those that flew thy virgin knight,
For the which with songs of woe,
Round about her tombe they goe:
Midnight affift our mone, help vs to sigh & grone.
Heauily heauily.
Graves yawne and yeeld your dead,
Till death be vttered,
Heauily heauily.

Lo. Now vnto thy bones good night, yeerely will I do this

Prince Good morrow maisters, put your torches out,
The wolves haue preyed, and looke, the gentle day
Before the wheeles of Phoebus, round about
Dapples the drowie East with spots of grey:
Thanks to you al, and leaue vs, fare you well.

Claudio Good morrow maisters, each his feueral way.
Prince Come let vs hence, and put on other weedes,
And then to Leonatoes we will goo.

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

Enter Leonato, Benedick, Margaret Ursula, old man, Frier, Hero.

Frier Did I not tell you shee was innocent?
Leo. So are the Prince and Claudio who accusd her,
Vpon the errour that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will as it appeares,
about Nothing.

In the true course of all the question.

Old. Well, I am glad that all things forts so well.

Bened. And so am I, being else by faith enforce

to call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leo. Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,

Withdraw into a chamber by your selves,

And when I send for you come hither masked:

The Prince and Claudio promise by this howre

to visite me, you know your office brother,

You must be father to your brothers daughter,

And give her to young Claudio.

Old. Which I will doe with confirm'd countenance.

Bened. Friar, I must intreate your paines, I thinke.

Friar. To doe what Signior?

Bened. To bind me or undo me, one of them:

Signior. Leonato, truth it is good Signior,

Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

Leo. That eye my daughter lent her, is most true.

Bened. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

Leo. The sight whereof I thinke you had from me,

From Claudio and the Prince, but what is your will?

Bened. Your answer sir is enigmatical,

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

May stand with ours, this day to be conioynd,

In the state of honorable marriage,

In which (good Friar) I shall desire your help.

Leo. My heart is with your liking.

Friar. And my helpe.

Here comes the Prince and Claudio.

Enter Prince, and Claudio, and two or three other.

Prince. Good morrow to this faire assembly.

Leo. Good morrow Prince, good morrow Claudio:

We here destroy you, are you yet determined,

to day to marry with my brothers daughter?

Claud. He hold my mind were she an Ethiope.

Leo. Call her fourth brother, heres the Friar ready.

P. Good morrow Bened, why what is the matter?

That
That you have such a February face,
So full of froth, of storme, and cloudinesse.

Claud. I thinke he thinkes vpon the sauage bull:
Tush feare not man, weele tip thy hornes with gold,
And all Europa shall reioyce at thee,
As once Europa did at lustie love,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

Bene. Bull I loue sir had an amiable love,
And some such strange bull leapt your fathers cowe,
And got a calfe in that same noble feate,
Much like to you, for you have inst his bleate.

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula.

Claud. For this I owe you: here comes other reckonings. Which is the Lady I must seize upon?

Leo. This same is she, and I do owe you her.

Claud. Why then shees mine, sweet, let me see your face.

Leon. No that you shall not till you take her hand,
Before this Frier, and sweare to marry her.

Claud. Give me your hand before this holy Frier, I am your husband if you like of me.

Hero. And when I hu’d I was your other wife.
And when you loued, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero.

Hero. Nothing certainer,
One Hero died deside, but I do liue,
And surely as I liue, I am a maide.

Prince. The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

Leon. She died my Lord, but whiles her flaunder hu’d.

Frier. All this amazement can I qualifie,
When after that the holy rites are ended,
I’ll tell you largelie of faire Heroes death,
Meane time let wonder seeme familiar,
And to the chappell let vs presently.

Bene. Soft and faire Frier, which is Beatrice?
Beat. I anfwer to that name, what is your will?

Bene. Do not you louse me?
Beat. Why no, no more then reason.
about Nothing.

Bene. Why then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio,
Have been deceived, they swore you did.
Beat. Do not you love me?
Bene. Troth no, no more than reason.
Beat. Why then my cousin Margaret and Ursula
Are much deceived, for they did swear you did.
Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me.
Beat. They swore that you were wellnigh dead for me.
Bene. Tis no such matter, then you do not love me.
Beat. No truly, but in friendly recompense.
Leon. Come cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.
Claud. And i' the world, that he loves her,
For hers a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure braine,
Fashioned to Beatrice.
Hero. And hers another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.
Bene. A miracle, hers our own hands against our hearts:
come, I will have thee, but by this light I take thee for pittance.
Beat. I would not deny you but by this good day, I yield
Upon great persuasion, and partly to save your life, for I was
told, you were in a consumption.
Leon. Peace I will stop your mouth.
Prince. How dost thou Benedick the married man?
Bene. I will tell thee what prince: a college of witte-crackers
cannot flout me out of my humour, dost thou think I care for
a Satyre or an Epigramme? no, if a man will be beaten with
braines, a shall wear nothing handsome about him: in briefe,
since I doe purpose to marry, I will think nothing to anie pur-
pose that the world can faile against it, and therefore peuer flout
at me, for what I have said against it: for man is a giddie thing,
and this is my conclusion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke
to have beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman,
lie vnbruised, and love my cousin.
Claud. I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice,
that I might have cudgelld thee out of thy single life, to make
thee
Much adoe

thee a double dealer, which out of question thou wilt be, if my coofin do not looke exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends; lets haue a dance ere we are maried, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wiuers heeles.

Leon. Weele haue dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my word, therefore plaie musicke, Prince, thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife, there is no stiffe

more reverent then one tipt with horn.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. My Lord, your brother John is tane in flight,
And brought with armed men backe to Messina.

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

dance.

FINIS.