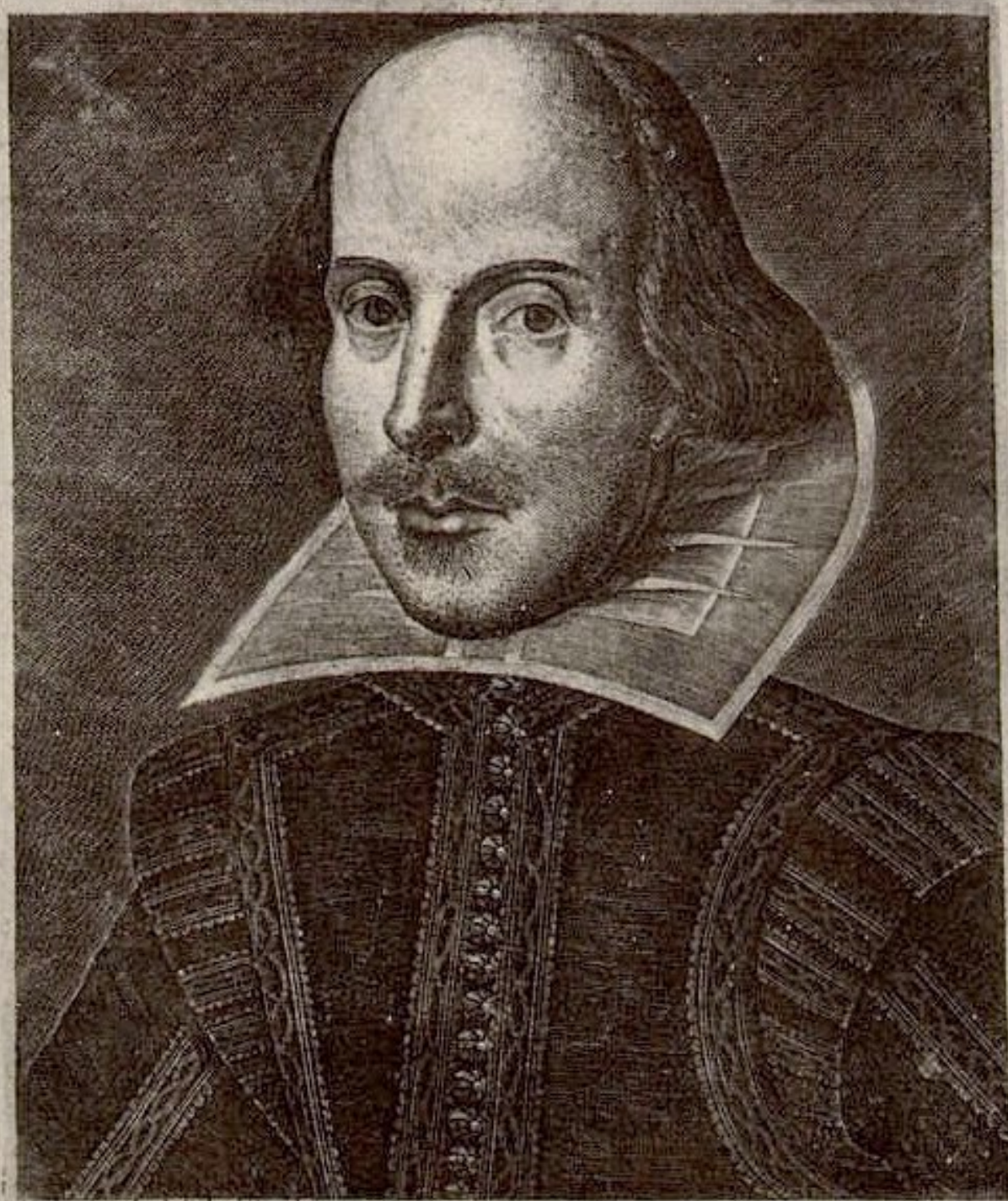


MR. WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARES
COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, and
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the true Originall Copies.

The second Impression.



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Clark F. Holloway



Much adoe about Nothing.

Actus Primus, Scena Prima.

Enter Leonato Governour of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his Neece, with a Messenger.

Leonato.

Learne in this Letter, that Don Peter of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

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

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

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

Leon. A victory is twice it selfe, when the achiever brings home full numbers: I find heere, that Don Peter hath bestowed much honour on a yong Florentine, called Claudio.

Mess. Much deserv'd on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro, he hath borne himselfe beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a Lambe, the feates of a Lyon, he hath indeed better betted expectation, than you must expect of me to tell you how.

Leon. He hath an Vnckle here in Messina, will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him Letters, and there appeares much joy in him, even so much that joy could not shew it selfe modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.

Leon. Did he breake out into teares?

Mess. In great measure.

Leon. A kinde overflow of kindenesse: there are no faces truer, then those that are so wash'd, how much better is it to weepe at joy, then to joy at weeping?

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

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

Leon. What is he that you aske for Neece?

Hero. My Cousin meanes Signior Benedicke of Padua.

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

Bea. He set up his bills heere in Messina, and challeng'd Cupid at the Flight: and my Vncles foole reading the Challenge, subscrib'd for Cupid, and challeng'd him at the Burbolt. I pray you, how many hath hee kill'd and eaten in these warres? But how many hath he kill'd? for indeed, I promis'd to eate all of his killing.

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

Mess. He hath done good service Lady in those wars.

Mess. You had musty victuall, and hee hath holpe to eate it: hee's a very valiant Trencher-man; hee hath an excellent stomacke.

Mess. And a good souldier too Lady.

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

Mess. A Lord to a Lord, a Man to a Man, stufte with all honourable vertues.

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

Leon. You must not (sir) mistake my Neece, there is a kinde of merry War betwixt Signior Benedicke and her: they never meet, but there's a skirmish of wit betweene them.

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

Mess. I st possible?

Bea. Very easily possible: he weares his faith but as the fashion of his hat, it ever changes with the next blocke.

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

Bea. No, and he were, I would burne my study. But I pray you who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now, that will make a voyage with him to the Divell?

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

Bea. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught then the Pestilence, and the taker runnes presently madde. God helpe the noble Claudio, if he have caught the Benedicke, it will cost him a thousand pound ere it becur'd.

Mess. I will hold friends with you Lady.

Bea. Doe good friend.

Leon. You'll ne're run mad Neece.

Bea. No, not till a hot January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approach'd.

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedicke, Balhazar, and Iohn the bastard.

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

Leon. Never came trouble to my house in the likenesse of your Grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remaine: but when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happinesse takes his leave.

Pedro. You imbrace your charge more willingly: I thinke this is your daughter.

Leo. Her mother hath many times told me so.

Ben. Were you in doubt that you askt her?

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

Pedro. You have it full *Benedicke*, wee may ghesse by this, what you are, being a man, truely the Lady fathers her selfe: be happy Lady, for you are like an honourable father.

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

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

Ben. What my deare Lady *Disdaine*! are you yet living?

Beat. Is it possible *Disdaine* should die, while shee hath such meet food to feed it, as Signior *Benedicke*? Courtesie it selfe must convert to *Disdaine*, if you come in her presence.

Ben. Then is Courtesie a turne-coat, but it is certaine I am loved 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 love none.

Beat. A deere happinesse to women, they would else have beene troubled with a pernicious Sutor, I thanke God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that, I had rather heare my Dog barke at a Crow, then a man sweare he loves me.

Ben. God keepe your Ladiship still in that minde, so some Gentleman or other shall scape a Predestinate scratcht face.

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

Ben. Well, you are a rare Parrat-teacher.

Beat. A Bird of my tongue, is better then a beast of yours.

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

Beat. You alwayes end with a Iades trick, I know you of old.

Pedro. This is the summe of all: *Leonato*, Signior *Claudio*, and Signior *Benedicke*; my deare friend *Leonato*, hath invited you all, I tell him we shall stay here, at the least a moneth, and he heartily prayes some occasion may detain us longer: I dare sweare hee is no hypocrite, but prayes from his heart.

Leon. If you sweare, my Lord, you shall not bee forsworne, let me bid 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 words, but I thanke you.

Leon. Please it your Grace leade on?

Pedro. Your hand *Leonato*, we will goe together.

Exeunt. Manet Benedicke and Claudio.

Claudio. *Benedicke*, didst thou note the daughter of Signior *Leonato*?

Ben. I noted her not, but I lookt on her.

Claudio. Is she not a modest yong Ladie?

Ben. Doe 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 sexe?

Claudio. No, I prethee speake in sober judgement.

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

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

Ben. Would you buy her, that you enquier after her?

Claudio. Can the world buy such a Jewell?

Ben. Yea, and a case to put it into, but speake you this with a sad brow? Or doe you play the flowting Iacke, to tell us Cupid is a good Hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare Carpenter: Come, in what Key shall a man take you to goe in the song?

Claudio. In mine eye, she is the sweetest Ladie that ever I lookt on.

Ben. I can see yet without Spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her Cosin, and she were not posselt with a fury, exceeds her as much in beautie, as the first of May doth the last of December: but I hope you have no intent to turne husband, have you?

Claudio. I would scarce trult my selfe, though I had sworne the contrary, if *Hero* would be my wife.

Ben. Ist come to this? in faith hath not the world one man but he will weare his cap with suspition? shall I never see a Batchellor of threescore againe? goe to yfaith, and thou wilt needes thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and sigh away Sundayes: looke *Don Pedro* is returned to seeke you.

Enter Don Pedro, John the Bastard.

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

Benedicke. I would your Grace would constraine mee to tell.

Pedro. I charge thee on thy alleageance.

Ben. You heare, Count *Claudio*, I can be secret as a dumbe man, I would have you thinke so (but on my alleageance, marke you this, on my alleageance) hee is in love, With whom? 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 uttred.

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

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

Pedro. Amen, if you love 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.

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

Claudio. That I love her, I feele;

Pedro. That she is worthy, I know.

Ben. That I neither feele how shee should bee loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me, I wil die in it, the stake.

Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate Heretique in the despiht of Beauty.

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

Ben. That

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thanke her : that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks : but that I will have a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invifible baldricke, all women shall pardon me : because I will not doe them the wrong to mistrust any, I will doe my felfe the right to trust none : and the fine is, (for the which I may goe the finer) I will live a Batchellor.

Pedro. I shall see thee ere I dye, looke pale with love.

Bene. With anger, with sickenesse, or with hunger, my lord, not with love : prove that ever I loose more blood with love, then I will get againe with drinking, picke out mine eyes with a Ballet-makers penne, and hang me up at the doore of a brothel-house for the signe of blind Cupid.

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

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

Pedro. Well, as time shall try : In time the savage Bull doth beare the yoake.

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

Claudio. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst bee horne mad.

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

Bene. I looke for an earth quake too then.

Pedro. Well, you will temporize with the houres, in the meane time, good Signior *Benedicke*, repaire to *Leonatos*, commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at supper, for indeed he hath made great preparation.

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

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

Pedro. The sixt of July. Your loving friend, *Benedicke*.

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

Claudio. My Leige, your Highnesse now may doe mee good.

Pedro. My love is thine to teach, teach it but how, And thou shalt see how apt it is to learne Any hard Lesson that may doe thee good.

Claudio. Hath *Leonato* any sonne my lord ?

Pedro. No child but *Hero*, she's his onely heire. Dost thou affect her *Claudio* ?

Claudio. O my lord, When you went onward on this ended action, I look'd upon her with a souldierseye, That lik'd, but had a rougher taske in hand, Than to drive liking to the name of love : But now I am return'd, and that warre-thoughts Have left their places vacant : in their roomes, Come thronging soft and delicate desires, All prompting me how faire yong *Hero* is, Saying I lik'd her ere I went to warres.

Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently, And tire the hearer with a booke of words : If thou dost love faire *Hero*, cherish it, And I will breake with her : wast not to this end, That thou beganst to twist so fine a story ?

Claudio. How sweetly doe you minister to love, That know loves griefe by his complexion ! But lest my liking might too sodaine seeme, I would have salu'd it with a longer treatise.

Pedro. What need the bridge much broder then the The fairest grant is the necessity : *(Hood?)*

Looke what will serve, is fit : tis once, thou lovest, And I will fit thee with the remedy,

I know we shall have revelling to night, I will assume thy part in some disguise,

And tell faire *Hero* I am *Claudio*,

And in her bosome Ile unclasp my heart,

And take her hearing prisoner with the force

And strong incounter of my amorous tale :

Then after, to her father will I breake,

And the conclusion is, she shall be thine,

In practise let us put it presently. *Exeunt.*

Enter Leonato and an old man, brother to Leonato.

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

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

Leo. Are they good ?

Old. As the event stampes them, but they have a good cover : they shew well outward ; the Prince and Count *Claudio* walking in a thicke pleached alley in my orchard, were thus over-heard by a man of mine : the Prince discovered to *Claudio* that he loved my neece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance, and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly breake with you of it,

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

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

Leo. No, no : we will hold it as a dreame, till it appeare it selfe : but I will acquaint my daughter withall, that she may be the better prepared for answer, if peradventure this be true : goe you and tell her of it : cosins, you know what you have to doe, O I cry you mercy friend, goe you with me and I will use your skill, good cosin have a care this busie 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 sadnesse is without limit.

Con. You should heare reason.

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

Con. If not a present remedy, yet a patient sufferance.

John. I wonder that thou (being as thou saist thou art, borne under *Saturnus*) goest about to apply a mortall medicine, to a mortifying mischeife : I cannot hide what I am : I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no mans jests ; eate when I have stomacke, and wait for no mans leisure : sleepe when I am drowsie, and tend on no mans businesse ; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour.

Con. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may doe it without controllment, you have of late

late stood out against your brother, and he hath tane you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take root, but by the faire weather that you make your selfe, it is needfull that you frame the season for your owne harvest.

John. I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rose in his grace, and it better fits my bloud to be disdain'd of all, then to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this (though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man) it must not be denyed but I am a plaine dealing villaine, I am trusted with a muffle, and enfranchis'd with a clog, therefore I have decreed, not to sing in my cage: if I had my mouth, I would bite: if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the meane time, let me be that I am, and seeke not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent?

John. I will make all use of it, for I use it onely.

Who comes heere? what newes *Borachio.*

Enter Borachio.

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

John. Will it serve for any Modell to build mischeife on? What is he for a foole that betrothes himselfe to unquietnesse?

Bor. Marry it is your brothers right hand.

John. Who, the most exquisite *Claudio*?

Bor. Even he.

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

Bor. Marry on *Hero*, the daughter and Heire of *Leonato*.

John. A very forward March-chicke, how come you to this?

Bor. Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoaking a musty roome, comes me the Prince and *Claudio*, hand in hand in sad conference: I whipt behind the Ar-ras, and there heard it agreed upon, that the Prince should wooe *Hero* for himselfe, and having obtained'd her, give her to Count *Claudio*.

John. Come, come, let us thither, this may prove food to my displeasure, that young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can crosse him any way, I blesse my selfe every way; you are both sure, and will assist me?

Con. 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 of my mind: shall we goe prove what's to be done?

Bor. We'll wait upon your lordship.

Exeunt.

Actus Secundus.

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

Leona. Was not Count *John* here at supper?

Brot. I saw him not.

Beat. How tartly that Gentleman lookes, I never can see him, but I am heart-burn'd an houre after.

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man that were made just in the mid-way betweene him and *Benedicke*, the one is too like an image and sayes nothing, and the other too like my Ladies eldest sonne, evermore tatling.

Leon. Then halfe Signior *Benedickes* tongue in Count *Iohns* mouth, and halfe Count *Iohns* melancholy in Signior *Benedickes* face.

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

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

Brot. Infaith she's too curst.

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

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

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

Leona. You may light upon a husband that hath no beard.

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

Leon. Well then, goe you into hell.

Beat. No, but to the gate, and there will the Devill meete me like an old Cuckold with hornes on his head, and say, get you to heaven *Beatrice*, get you to heaven, heere's no place for you maids, so deliver I up my Apes, and away to Saint *Peter*: for the heavens, he shewes me where the Batchellers sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

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

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

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

Beat. Not till God make men of some other mettall then earth, would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a peece of valiant dust? to make account of her life to a clod of wayward marle? no uncle, ile none: *Adams* sonnes are my brethren, and truly I hold it a sinne to match in my kinred.

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

Beat. The fault will be in the musicke cosin, if you be not wood in good time: if the Prince be too important, tell him there is measure in every thing, and so dance out the answer, for heare me *Hero*, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jigge, a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suite is hot and hasty like a Scotch jigge (and full as fantastical) the wedding mannerly modest, (as a measure) ful of state and aunchentry, and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faster and faster, till he sinkes into his grave.

Leona.

Leonata. Cofin you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beatrice. I have a good eye unckle, I can see a Church by day light.

Leon. The revellers are entring brother, make good roomc.

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

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 walke away.

Pedro. With me in your company.

Hero. I may say so when I please.

Pedro. And when please you to say so?

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

Pedro. My visor is *Philemons* rooffe, within the house is love.

Hero. Why then your visor should be thatcht.

Pedro. Speake low if you speake Love.

Bene. Well, I would you did like me.

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

Bene. Which is one?

Mar. I say my prayers aloud.

Bene. I love you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.

Mar. God match me with a good dancer.

Balt. Amen.

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

Balt. No more words, the Clarke is answered.

Vrsula. I know you well enough, you are Signior *Antonio*.

Anth. At a word, I am not.

Vrsula. I know you by the wagling of your head.

Anth. To tell you true, I counterfet him.

Vrsu. You could never doe him so ill well, unlesse you were the very man: here's his dry hand up and downe, you are he, you are he.

Antho. At a word I am not.

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

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

Bene. No, you shall pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you tell me who you are?

Bene. Not now.

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

Bene. What's he?

I am sure you know him well enough.

Bene. Not I, beleve me.

Beat. Did he never make you laugh?

Bene. I pray you what is he?

Beat. Why he is the Princes jester, a very dull foole, onely his gift is, in deuising impossible slanders, none but Libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany, for hee both pleaseth men and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him; I am sure he is in the Fleet, I would he had boarded me.

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

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

Bene. In every good thing.

Bea. Nay, if they leade to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning. *Exeunt.*

Musicke for the dance.

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

Bora. And that is *Claudio*, I know him by his bearing.

Iohn. Are not you signior *Benedicke*?

Clau. You know me well, I am he.

Iohn. Signior, you are very neere my brother in his love, he is enamor'd on *Hero*, I pray you disswade him from her, she is no equall for his birth: you may doe the part of an honest man in it.

Clau. How know you he loves her?

Iohn. I heard him sweare his affection:

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

Iohn. Come, let us to the banquet. *Exit. manet. Clau.*

Clau. Thus answer I in name of *Benedicke*,

But heare these ill newes with the eares of *Claudio*:

'Tis certaine so, the Prince wooes for himselfe:

Friendship is constant in all other things,

Save in the Office and affaires of love:

Therefore all hearts in love use their owne tongues,

Let every eye 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 houely proofe,

Which I mistrusted not. Farewell therefore *Hero*.

Enter Benedicke.

Bene. Count *Claudio*.

Clau. Yea the same.

Bene. Come, will you goe with me?

Clau. Whither?

Bene. Even to the next Willow, about your owne business, Count. What fashion will you weare the Garland off? About your necke, like an *Vsurers* chaine? Or under your arme, like a *Lieutenants* scarf? You must weare it one way, for the Prince hath got your *Hero*.

Clau. I wish him joy of her.

Bene. Why that's spoken like an honest *Drovier*, so they sell *Bullockes*: but did you thinke the Prince would have served you thus?

Clau. I pray you leave me.

Bene. Ho no! you strike like the blindman, 'twas the boy that stole your meate, and you'll beat the post.

Clau. If it will not be, Ile leave you. *Exit.*

Bene. Alaspoore hurt soule, now will he creepe into sedges: but that my Lady *Beatrice* should know me, and not know mee: the Princes foole! Ha? It may be I goe under that title, because I am merry: you but so I am apt to doe my selfe wrong: I am not so reputed, it is the base (though bitter) disposition of *Beatrice*, that put's the world into her person, and so gives me out: well, Ile be revenged as I may.

Enter the Prince.

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

Bene.

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

Pedro. To be whipt, what's his fault?

Bene. The flat transgression of a Schoole-boy, who being over-joyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companion, and he steales it.

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

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

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

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

Pedro. The Lady *Beatrice* hath a quarrell to you, the Gentleman that danst with her, told her she is much wrong'd by you.

Bene. O she misusde me past the indurance of a blocke: an oake but with one greene leafe on it, would have answered her: my very visor began to assume life, and scold with her: she told mee, not thinking I had beene my selfe, that I was the Princes Iester, and that I was duller then a great thaw, hudling jest upon jest; with such impossible conveiance upon me, that I stood like a man at a marke, with a whole army shooting at me: she speakes poynyards, and every word stabbes: if her breath were as terrible as terminations, there were no living neere her, she would infect to the north starre: I would not marry her, though she were indowed with all that *Adam* had left him before he transgressed, she would have made *Hercules* have turnd spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too: come, talke not of her, you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparell. I would to God some scholler would conjure her, for certainly while she is heere, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuary, and people sinne upon purpose, because they would goe thither, so indeed all disquiet, horror, and perturbation followes her.

Enter Claudio, and Beatrice, Leonato, Hero.

Pedro. Looke heere she comes.

Bene. Will your Grace command me any service to the worlds end? I will goe on the slightest arrand now to the Antypodes that you can devise to send me on: I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furthest inch of Asia: bring you the length of *Prestor Johns* foot: fetch you a haire off the great *Chams* beard: doe you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words conference, with this Harpy: you have no employment for me?

Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God sir, heeres a dish I love not, I cannot indure this Ladyes tongue. *Exit.*

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

Beat. Indeed my lord, he lent it me a while, and I gave him use for it, a double heart for a single one, marry once before he 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.

Beat. So I would not he should doe me, my lord, lest I should proove the mother of fooles: I have brought Count *Claudio*, whom you sent me to seeke.

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

Claudio. Not sad my lord.

Pedro. How then? sicke?

Claudio. Neither, my lord.

Beat. The Count is neither sad, nor sicke, nor merry, nor well: but civill Count, civill as an Orange, and something of a jealous complexion.

Pedro. Ifaith Lady, I thinke your blazon to be true, though I be sworne, if he bee so, his conceit is false: heere *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 give thee joy.

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

Beat. Speake Count, tis your Qu.

Claudio. Silence is the perfectest Herauld of joy, I were but little happy if I could say, how much? Lady, as you are mine, I am yours, I give away my selfe for you, and doat upon the exchange.

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

Pedro. Ifaith Lady you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea my lord I thanke it, poore foole it keepes on the windy side of care, my cosin tells him in his care that he is in my heart.

Claudio. And so she doth cosin.

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

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

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

Prince. Will you have me? Lady.

Beat. No, my lord, unlesse I might have another for working-dayes, your Grace is too costly to weare every day: but I beseech your Grace pardon me, I was borne to speake all mirth, and no matter.

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

Beat. No sure my lord, my mother cryed, but then there was a starre danst, and under that was I borne: cosins God give you joy.

Leona. Necce, will you looke to those things I told you of?

Beat. I cry you mercy Vncle, by your Graces pardon.

Exit Beatrice.

Prince. By my troth a pleasant spirited Lady.

Leona. There's little of the melancholy element in her my lord, she is never sad, but when she sleepe, and not ever sad then: for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamt of unhappinesse, and wakt her selfe with laughing.

Pedro. Shee cannot indure to heare tell of a husband.

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

Prince. She were an excellent wife for *Benedicke*.

Leona. O lord, my lord, if they were but a weeke married,

married, they would talke themselves mad.

Prince. Count *Claudio*, when meane you to goe to Church?

Clau. To morrow my Lord, Time goes on crutches, till Love have all his rites.

Leona. Not till monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a just seven night, and a time too briefe too, to have all things answer mind.

Prince. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing, but I warraunt thee *Claudio*, the time shall not goe dally by us, I will in the interim, undertake one of *Hercules* labours, which is, to bring Signior *Benedicke* and the Lady *Beatrice* into a mountaine 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 minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

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

Clau. And I my lord.

Prin. And you too gentle *Hero*?

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

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

Enter John and Borachio.

Job. It is so, the Count *Claudio* shall marry the daughter of *Leonato*.

Bora. Yea my lord, but I can crosse it.

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

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

Job. Shew me briefly how.

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

John. I remember.

Bor. I can at any unseasonable 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 poyson of that lyes 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 doe you mightily hold up, to a contaminated stale, such a one as *Hero*.

John. What prooffe shall I make of that?

Bor. Prooffe enough, to misuse the Prince, to vex *Claudio*, to undoe *Hero*, and kill *Leonato*, looke you for any other issue?

John. Onely to despite them; I will endeavour any thing.

Bor. Goethen, find me a meete houre, to draw on *Pedro* and the Count *Claudio* alone, tell them that you know that *Hero* loves me, intend a kind of zeale both to the Prince and *Claudio* (as in a love of your brothers

honor who hath made this match) and his friends reputation, who is thus like to be cosen'd with the semblance of a maid, that you have discover'd thus: they will scarcely beleeeve this without triall: offer them instances which shall beare no lesse likelyhood, than to see me at her chamber window, heare me call *Margaret*, *Hero*; heare *Margaret* terme me *Claudio*, and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding, for in the meane time, I will so fashion the matter, that *Hero* shall be absent, and there shall appeare such seeming truths of *Heroes* disloyalty, that jealousie shall be call'd assurance, and all the preparation ouerthrowne.

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

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

John. I will presently goe learne their day of marriage. *Exit.*

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 heere already sir. *Exit.*

Bene. I know that, but I would have thee hence, and heere againe. I doe much wonder, that one man seeing how much another man is a foole, when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will after he hath laugh't at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his owne scorne, by falling in love, and such a man is *Claudio*, I have knowne when there was no musicke with him but the drum and the fife, and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe: I have knowne when he would have walkt ten mile a foot, to see a good armor, and now will he lye ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new dublet: he was wont to speake plaine, and to the purpose (like an honest man and a souldier) and now is he turn'd orthography, his words are a very fantasticall banquet, just so many strange dishes: may I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I will not bee sworne, but love may transforme me to an oyster, but Ile take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a foole: one woman is faire, yet I am well: another is wise, yet I am well: another vertuous, yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace: rich she shall be, that's certaine: wise, or Ile none; vertuous, or Ile neuer cheapen her: faire, or Ile never looke on her: milde, or come not nere me: Noble, or not for an Angell: of good discourse: an excellent Musitian, and her haire shall be of what colour it please God, hah! the Prince and Monsieur Love, I will hide me in the Arbor.

Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Iacke Wilson.

Prin. Come, shall we heare this musicke?

Clau. Yea my good lord: how still the evening is, As husht on purpose to grace harmony.

Prin. See you where *Benedicke* hath hid himselfe?

Clau. O very well my lord: the musicke ended, We'll fit the kid-foxe with a penny worth.

Prin. Come *Balthazar*, we'll heare that song againe.

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

Prince.

Prince. It is the witness still of excellency,
To put a strange face on his owne perfection,
I pray thee sing, and let me wooe no more.

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

Prince. Nay pray thee come,
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Doe it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

Prince. Why these are very crotchets that he speaks,
Note notes forsooth, and nothing.

Bene. Now divine ayre, now is his soule ravisht, is it
not strange that sheepes guts should hale soles out of
mens bodies? well, a horne for my money when all's
done.

The Song.

Sigh no more Ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in Sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so, but let them goe,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe,
Into hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no more,
Of dumps so dull and heavy,
The fraud of men were ever so,
Since summer first was leavy,
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.

Bene. And he had beene a dog that should have howl'd
thus, they would have hang'd him, and I pray God his
bad voyce bode no mischief, I had as leife have heard
the night-raven, come what plague could have come af-
ter it.

Prince. Yea marry, dost thou heare *Balthazar*? I pray
thee get us some excellent musick: for to morrow night
we would have it at the Lady *Heroes* chamber window.

Balth. The best I can my lord. *Exit Balthazar.*

Prince. Doe so, farewell. Come hither *Leonato*, what
was it you told me of to day, that your Niece *Beatrice*
was in love with Signior *Benedicke*?

Claudio. O I, stalker on, stalker on, the foule sits. I did ne-
ver thinke that Lady would have loved any man.

Leon. No, nor I neither, but most wonderfull, that she
should so dote on Signior *Benedicke*, whom she hath in
all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhorre.

Bene. Is't possible? sits the wind in that corner?

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

Prince. May be she doth but counterfeit.

Claudio. Faith like enough.

Leon. O God! counterfeit? there was never counter-
feit of passion, came so neere the life of passion as she dis-
covers it.

Prince. Why what effects of passion shewes she?

Claudio. Bait the hooke well, the fish will bite.

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

Claudio. She did indeed.

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

Leon. I would have sworne it had, my lord, especially
against *Benedicke*.

Bene. I should thinke this a gull, but that the white-
bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot sure hide him-
selfe in such reverence.

Claudio. He hath tane th' infection, hold it up.

Prince. Hath she made her affection knowne to *Bene-
dicke*?

Leonato. No, and sweares she never will, that's her tor-
ment.

Claudio. 'Tis true indeed, so your daughter sayes: shall
I, sayes she, that have so oft encountred him with scorne,
write to him that I love him?

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

Claudio. Now you talke of a sheet of paper, I remember
a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

Leon. O when she had writ it, and was reading it ever,
she found *Benedicke* and *Beatrice* betweene the sheete.

Claudio. That.

Leon. O she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence,
raild at her selfe, that she should be so immodest to write,
to one that she knew would flout her: I measure him,
sayes she, by my owne spirit, for I should flout him if he
writ to me, yea though I love him, I should.

Claudio. Then downe upon her knees she falls, weepes,
sobs, beats her heart, teares her hayre, prayes, curies, O
sweet *Benedicke*, God give me patience.

Leon. She doth indeed, my daughter sayes so, and the
extasie hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is
sometime afeard she will doe a desperate out-rage to her
selfe, it is very true.

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

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

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

Claudio. And she is exceeding wise.

Prince. In every thing, but in loving *Benedicke*.

Leon. O my lord, wisdom and bloud combating in
so tender a body, we have ten proofes to one, that bloud
hath the victory, I am sorry for her, as I have just cause,
being her Vncle, and her Guardian.

Prince. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me,
I would have daft all other respects, and made her halfe
my selfe: I pray you tell *Benedicke* of it, and heare what
he will say.

Leon. Were it good thinke you?

Claudio. *Hero* thinks surely she will dye, for she sayes she
will dye, if he love her not, and she will dye ere shee
make her love knowne, and she will dye if he wooe her,
rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed
crossnesse.

Prince. She doth well, if she should make tender of her
love,

loue, 'tis very possible hee'll scorne it, for the man (as you know all) hath a contemptible spirit.

Clau. He is a very proper man.

Prin. He hath indeed a good outward happines.

Clau. Fore God, and in my minde very wise.

Prin. He doth indeed shew some sparkes that are like wit.

Leon. And I take him to be valiant.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Leon. My Lord, will you walke? dinner is ready.

Clau. If he do not doat on her vpon this, I will never trust my expectation.

Prin. Let there be the same Net spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry: the sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of anothers dotage, and no such matter, that's the Scene that I would see, which will be meerey a dumbe shew: let vs send her to call him into dinner. *Exeunt.*

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

Enter Beatrice.

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 beene painefull; I would not haue come.

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message.

Beat. Yea just so much as you may take upon a knives point, and choake a daw withall: you haue no stomacke 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 tooke no more paines for those thankes, then you tooke paines to thanke me, that's as much as to say, any paines that I take for you is as easie as thankes: if I do not take pittie of her I am a villaine, if I do not love her I am a lew, I will go get her picture. *Exit.*

Actus Tertius.

Enter Hero and two Gentlemen, Margaret, and Ursula.

Hero. Good *Margaret* runne thee to the parlour, There shalt thou finde my Cosin *Beatrice*, Proposing with the Prince and *Claudio*, Whisper her care, and tell her I and *Ursula* Walke in the Orchard, and our whole discourse Is all of her, say that thou over-heardst vs, And bid her steale into the pleached bower, Where hony-suckles ripened by the sunne, Forbid the sunne to enter: like favourites, Made proud by Princes, that aduance their pride, Against that power that bred it, there will shee hide her, To listen to our purpose, this is thy office, Beare thee well in it, and leave us alone.

Marg. Ile make her come I warrant presently. *Exit.*

Hero. Now *Ursula*, when *Beatrice* doth come, As we do trace this alley up and downe, Our talke must onely be of *Benedicke*, When I do name him, let it be thy part, To praise him more then euer Man did merit, My talke to thee must be how *Benedicke* Is sicke in love with *Beatrice*: of this matter, Is little *Cupids* crafty arrow made, That onely wounds by heare-say: now begin,

Enter Beatrice.

For looke where *Beatrice* like a Lapwing runs Close by the ground, to heare our conference.

Urs. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish Cut with her golden ores the siluer streame, And greedily deuoure the treacherous baite: So angle we for *Beatrice*, who even now, Is couched in the wood-bine coverture, Feare you not my part of the Dialogue.

Her. Then go we neare her that her eare lose nothing, Of the false sweete baite that we lay for it: No truly *Ursula*, she is too disdainfull, I know her spirits are as coy and wilde, As Haggerds of the rocke.

Ursula. But are you sure, That *Benedicke* loves *Beatrice* so intirely?

Her. So saies the Prince, and my new trothed Lord.

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

Her. They did intreate me to acquaint her of it, But I perswaded them, if they lou'd *Benedicke*,

To wish him wrastle with affection,
And never to let *Beatrice* know of it.

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

Hero. O God of love! I know he doth deserve,
As much as may be yeelded to a man:
But nature never fram'd a womans heart,
Of powder stufte then that of *Beatrice* :
Disdaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eye,
Mis-prizing what they looke on, and her wit
Values it selfe so highly, that to her
All matter else seemes weake: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor proiect of affection,
Shee is so selfe indeared.

Vrsula. Sure I thinke so,
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his loue, lest she make sport at it.

Hero. Why you speake truth, I never yet saw man,
How wise; how noble, yong, how rarely featur'd.
But she would spell him backward: if faire fac'd,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an anticke,
Made a foule blot: if tall; a launce ill-headed:
If low, an agot very vildlie cut:
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all windes,
If silent, why a blocke moved with none.
So turnes she every man the wrong side out,
And never gives to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simplenesse and merit purchaseth.

Vrsula. 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, presse me to death with wit.
Therefore let *Benedicke* like couered fire,
Consume away in sighes, waste inwardly:
It were a bitter death, to die with mockes,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

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

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

Vrsula. O doe not do your cosin such a wrong,
She cannot be so much without true judgement,
Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is prifde to have, as to refuse
So rare a Gentleman as signior *Benedicke*.

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

Vrsula. 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:

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

Hero. Why every day to morrow, come goe in,
Ile shew thee some attires, and have thy counsell;
Which is the best to furnish me to morrow.

Vrsula. Shee's tane I warrant you,
We have caught her Madame?

Hero. If it prove so, then loving goes by haps,

Some *Cupid* kills with arrowes, some with traps. *Exit.*

Beat. What fire is in mine eares? can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorne so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adew,
No glory lives behinde the backe of such.
And *Benedicke*, love on, I will requite thee,
Taming my wilde heart to thy loving hand:
If thou dost love, my kindenesse shall incite thee
To binde our loves up in a holy band.
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Beleeve it better then reportingly. *Exit.*

Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedicke, and Leonato.

Prince. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate,
and then go I toward Arragon.

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

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

Benedicke. Gallants, I am not as I have bin.

Leo. So say I; methinkes you are sadder.

Claudio. I hope he be in love.

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

Benedicke. I have the tooth-ach:

Prince. Draw it.

Benedicke. Hang it.

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

Prince. What? sigh for the tooth-ach.

Leo. Where is but a humour or a worne.

Benedicke. Well, every one can be maister a grieffe, but hee
that has it.

Claudio. Yet say I, he is in love.

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

Claudio. If he be not in love with some woman, there is
no beleeving old signes, a brushes his hat a mornings;
What should that bode?

Prince. Hath any man seene him at the Barbers?

Claudio. No, but the Barbers man hath beene seene with
him, and the old ornament of his cheeke hath alreadie
stufte tennis balls.

Leo. Indeed he looks yonger than he did, by the losse
of a beard.

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

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

Prince. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claudio. And when was he wont to wash his face?

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

Claudio. Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is now crept
into a lute-string, and now govern'd by stops.

Prince.

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

Clau. Nay, but I know who loves him.

Prin. That would I know too, I warrāt one that knows him not.

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

Prin. Shee shall be buried with her face upwards.

Bene. Yet is this no charme for the tooth-ake, old signior, walke aside with mee, I have studied eight or nine wise words to speake to you, which these hobby-horses must not heare.

Prin. For my life to breake with him about *Beatrice*.

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

Enter John the Bastard.

Bast. My Lord and brother, God save you.

Prin. Good den brother.

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

Prin. In priuate?

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

Prin. What's the matter?

Bast. Meanes your Lordship to be married to morrow?

Prin. You know he does.

Bast. I know not that when he knowes what I know.

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

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

Prin. Why, what's the matter?

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

Clau. Who! *Hero*?

Bast. Even shee, *Leonatoes Hero*, your *Hero*, every mans *Hero*.

Clau. 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: goe but with mee to night, you shall see her chamber window entred, even the night before her wedding day, if you love her, then to morrow wed her: but it would better fit your honour to change your minde.

Clau. May this be so?

Prin. I will not thinke it.

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

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

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

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

Prin. O day untowardly turned?

Clau. O mischief strangely thwarting!

Bast. O plague right well prevented! so will you say, when have scene the sequele.

Exeunt.

Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pittie but they should suffer saluation 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.

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

Dog. First, who thinke you the most defartlesse man to be Constable?

Watch. 1. *Hugh Ore-cake* sir, or *George Sea-coale*, for they can write and reade.

Dog. Come hither neighbour *Sea-coale*, God hath blest you with a good name: to be a wel-favoured man, is the gift of fortune, but to write and reade, comes by Nature.

Watch. 2. Both which Master Constable

Dog. You have: I knew it would bee your answer: well, for your favour sir, why give God thanks, & 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 senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch: therefore beare you the lanthorne: this is your charge: You shall comprehend all vagrom men, you are to bid any man stand in the Princes name.

Watch. 2. How if a will not stand?

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

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

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

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

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

Watch. How if they will not?

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

Watch. Well sir.

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

Watch. If wee know him to be a theefe, shall wee not lay hands on him?

Dog. Truly by your office you may, but I thinke they that touch pitch will be defil'd: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a theefe, is, to let him shew himselfe what he is, and steale out of your company.

Verg. You have bin alwaies cal'd a mercifull mā partner.

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

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

Watch. How if the nurse be asleepe and will not heare us?

Dog. Why then depart in peace, and let the childe wake her with crying, for the ewe that will not heare her Lambe when it baes, will never answer a calfe when he bleates.

Verges. 'Tis very true.

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

Verges. Nay birlady that I thinke a cannot.

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

Verges. Birlady I thinke it be so.

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

Watch. Well maisters, we heare our charge, let us go sitt here upon the Church bench till two, 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 coile to night, adieu, be vigilant I beseech you.

Exeunt.

Enter borachio and Conrade.

Bor. What, *Conrade*?

Watch. Peace, stir 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 under this penthouse, for it driffels raine, and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

Watch. Some treason maisters, yet stand close.

Bor. Therefore know, I have earned of *Don Iohn* a thousand Ducates.

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

Bor. Thou should'st rather aske if it were possible any villanie should bee so rich? for when rich villains have neede of poore ones, poore ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bor. That shewest thou art unconfirm'd, thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, 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. Tush, I may as well say the foole's the foole, but seest thou not what a deformed theefe this fashion is?

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

Bor. Did'st thou not heare some body?

Con. No, 'twas the vane on the house.

Bor. Seest thou not (I say) what a deformed thiefe this fashion is, how giddily a turnes about all the Hot-

blouds, betweene foureteene & five & thirty, sometimes fashioning them like *Pharaoes* souldiours in the rechie painting, sometime lik god Bels priests in the old Church window, sometime like the shaven *Hercules* in the smircht worm-eaten tapestrie, where his cod-peece seemes as massie as his club.

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

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

Con. And thought thy *Margaret* was *Hero*?

Bor. Two of them did, the Prince and *Claudio*, but the divell my Maister knew she was *Margaret*, and partly by his oathes, which first posselt them, partly by the darke night which did deceive them, but chiefly, by my villanie, which did confirme any slander that *Don Iohn* had made, away went *Claudio* enraged, swore hee would meete her as he was apointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation shame her with what he saw o're night, and send her home againe without a husband.

Watch. 1. We charge you in the Princes name stand.

Watch. 2. Call up the right maister Constable, we have here reconered the most dangerous peece of lechery, that ever was knowne in the Common-wealth.

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

Con. Maisters, maisters.

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

Con. Maisters, never speake, we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.

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

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

Exeunt.

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Ursula.

Hero. Good *Ursula* wake my cosin *Beatrice*, and desire her to rise.

Ursu. I will Lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urs. Well.

Mar. Troth I thinke your other rebato were better.

Bero. No pray thee good *Meg*, lle weare this.

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

Bero. My cosin's a foole, and thou art another, lle weare none but this.

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

Bero. O that exceeds they say,

Mar. By my troth's but a night-gowne in respect of yours, cloth a gold and cuts, and lac'd with silver, set with pearles, downe sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts, round underborn with a blewish tinsel, but for a fine queint gracefull and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

Bero. God

Hero. God give mee joy to weare it, for my heart is exceeding heavy.

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

Hero. Fic upon thee, art not asham'd?

Marga. 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, saving your reverence a husband: and bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, Ile offend no body, is there any harme in the heavier for a husband? none I thinke, and it be the right husband, and the right wife, otherwife 'tis light and not heavy, aske my Lady *Beatrice* else, here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Hero. Good marrow Coze.

Beat. Good morrow sweet *Hero.*

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

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

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

Beat. Ye light alove with your heeles, then if your husband have stables enough, you'll looke he shall lacke no barnes.

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

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

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

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

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

Beat. What meanes the foole trow?

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

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

Beat. I am stuf't cofin, I cannot smell.

Mar. A maid and stuf't! there's goodly catching of colde.

Beat. O God helpe me, God helpe me, how long have you profest apprehension?

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

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

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

Hero. There thou prickst her with a thissell.

Beat. *Benedictus*, why *benedictus*? you have some morall in this *benedictus*.

Mar. Morall? no by my troth, I have no morall meaning, I meant plaine holy thissell, you may thinke perchance that I thinke you are in love, nay birlady I am not such a foole to thinke what I list, nor I list not to thinke what I can, nor indeed I cannot thinke, if I would thinke my hart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love: yet *Benedicke* was such another, and now is he become a man, he swore hee would never marry, and yet now in despite of his heart he eates his meat without grudging, and how you may be converted I know not, but me thinkes you looke with your eyes as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keepes.

Mar. Not a false gallop.

Enter Ursula.

Ursu. Madam, with draw, the Prince, the Count, signior *Benedicke*, Don *Iohn*, and all the gallants of the towne are come to fetch you to Church.

Hero. Helpe to dresse me good coze, good *Meg*, good *Ursula*.

Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough.

Leonato. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Const. Dog. Mary sir I would have some confidence with you, that decernes you nearely.

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

Const. Dog. Mary this it is sir.

Headb. Yes in truth it is sir.

Leon. What is it my good friends?

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

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

Con. Dog. Comparisons are odorous, palabras, neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious.

Con. 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.

Leon. All thy tediousnesse on me, ah?

Con. Dog. Yea, and 'twere a thousand times more than 'tis, for I heare as good exclamation on your Worship as of any man in the City, and though I be but a poore man, I am glad to heare it.

Head. And so am I.

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

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

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

Leon. Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.

Con. Dog. Gifts that God gives.

Leon. I must leave you.

Con. Dog. One word sir, our watch sir have indeed comprehended two aspitious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

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

Const. It shall be suffigance.

(Exit.)

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

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

Leon. Ile wait upon them, I am ready.

Dogh. Goe good partner, goe get you to *Francis See-coale*, bid him bring his pen and inkehorne to the Gaole: we are now to examine those men.

Verges. And we must doe it wisely.

Dogh. Wee will spare for no witte I warrant you:

heere's that shall driue some of them to a non-come, on-ly get the learned writer to set downe our excommuni-cation, and meet me at the Iaile. *Exeunt.*

Actus Quartus.

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

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

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

Clau. No.

Leo. To be married to her, Frier, you come to marrie her.

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

Hero. I doe.

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

Clau. Know you any, *Hero*?

Hero. None my Lord.

Frier. Know you any, Count?

Leon. I dare make his answer, None.

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

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

Clau. Stand thee by Frier, father, by your leave, Will you with free and vnconstrained soule Give me this maid your daughter?

Leon. As freely sonne as God did give her me.

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

Prin. Nothing, unlesse you render her againe.

Clau. Sweet Prince, you learne me noble thankfulness: There *Leonato*, take her backe againe,

Give not this rotten Orange to your friend, Shee's but the signe and semblance of her honour:

Behold how like a maid she blushes heere!

O what authority and shew of truth

Can cunning sinne cover it selfe withall!

Comes not that bloud, as modest evidence, To witnesse simple Vertue? would you not swear

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

By these exterior shewes? But she is none:

She knowes the heat of a luxurious bed:

Her blush is guiltinesse, not modestie.

Leo. What do you meane, my Lord?

Clau. Not to be married,

Not knit my soule to an approved wanton.

Leon. Deere my Lord, if you in your owne prooffe,

Have vanquisht the resistance of her youth,

And made defeat of her virginity. *(her,*

Clau. I know what you would say: if I have knowne You will say, she did imbrace me as a husband,

And so extenuate the forehead sinne: No *Leonato*,

I never tempted her with word too large,

But as a brother to his sister, shewed

Bashfull sincerity and comely loue.

Hero. And sem'd I ever otherwise to you?

Clau. Out on thee seeming, I will write against it, You seeme to me as *Diane* in her Orbe,

As chaste as is the budde ere it be blowne:

But you are more intemperate in your blood,

Than *Venus*, or those pampred animalls,

That rage in savage sensuality.

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

Leon. Sweete Prince, why speake not you?

Prin. What should I speake?

I stand dishonour'd that have gone about,

To linke my deare friend to a common stale.

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

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

Bene. This lookes not like a nuptiall.

Hero. True, O God!

Clau. *Leonato*, stand I here?

Is this the Prince? is this the Princes brother?

Is this face *Heroes*? are our eyes our owne?

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

Clau. Let me but move one question to your daughter, And by that fatherly and kindly power,

That you have in her, bid her answer truly.

Leon. I charge thee do so as thou art my childe.

Hero. O God defend me, how am I beset,

What kinde of catechizing call you this?

Leo. To make you answer truly to your name.

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

Clau. Marry that can *Hero*,

Hero it selfe can blot out *Heroes* vertue.

What man was he, talkt with you yesternight,

Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?

Now if you are a maid answer to this.

Hero. I talkt with no man at that howre my Lord.

Prin. Why then you are no maiden. *Leonato*,

I am sorry you must heare: upon mine honor,

My selfe, my brother, and this grieved Count

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

Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window,

Who hath indeed most like a liberall villaine,

Confest the vile encounters they have had

A thousand times in secret.

John. Fie, fie, they are not to be named my Lord,

Not to be spoken of,

There is not chastity enough in language,

Without offence to utter them: thus pretty Lady

I am sorry for thy much misgovernement.

Clau. O *Hero*! what a *Hero* hadst thou beene

If halfe thy outward graces had beene placed

About thy thoughts and counsailes of thy heart?

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

Thou pure impiety, and impious purity,

For thee Ile locke up all the gates of Love,

And on my eie-lids shall Conjecture hang,

To turne all beauty into thoughts of harme,

And never shall it more be gracious.

Leo. Hath no mans dagger here a point for me?

Beat. Why how now cosin, wherefore sink you down?

Bast. Come, let vs go: these things come thus to light,

Smother her spirits up.

Bene. How doth the Lady?

Beat. Dead I thinke, helpe vncke,

Hero. why *Hero*, vncke, Signor *Benedicke*, Frier.

Leo. O Fate! take not away thy heauy hand,

Death is the fairest cover for her shame

That may be wisht for.

Beat. How

Beat. How now cosin *Hero*?

Fri. Have comfort Lady.

Leo. Dost thou looke up?

Fri. Yea, wherefore should she not?

Leo. Wherefore? Why doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she heere denie
The storie that is printed in her blood?
Do not live *Hero*, do not open thine eyes:
For did I thinke thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger then thy shames,
My selfe would on the reareward of reproaches
Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
Chid I, for that at frugall Natures frame?
One too much by thee: why had I one?
Why ever was't thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not with charitable hand
Tooke up a beggars issue at my gates,
Who smcered thus, and mir'd with infamie,
I might have said, no part of it is mine:
This shame derives it selfe from unknowne loines,
But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
And mine that I was proud on, mine so much,
That I my selfe, was to my selfe not mine:
Valewing of her, why she, O she is false
Into a pit of Inke, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,
And salt too little, which may season give
To her foule tainted flesh.

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

Bea. O on my soule my cosin is belied.

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Bea. No truly: not, although vntill last night,
I have this twelvemonth bin her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd, O that is stronger made
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron.
Would the Prince lie, and *Claudio* would he lie
Who lov'd her so, that speaking of her foulnesse,
Wash'd it with teares? Hence from her, let her die.

Fri. Heare me a little, for I have onely bene silent so
long, and given way vnto this course of fortune, by no-
ting of the Lady, I have markt
A thousand blushing apparitions,
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames,
In Angel whitnesse beare away those blushes,
And in her eie there hath appear'd a fire
To burne the errors that these Princes hold
Against her maiden truth. Call me a foole,
Trust not my reading, nor my obseruations,
Which with experimentall seale doth warrant
The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor diuinity,
If this sweet Lady lye not guiltlesse heere,
Vnder some biting error.

Leo. Friar, it cannot be:

Thou seest that all the Grace that she hath left,
Is, that she will not adde to her damnation
A sinne of perjury, she not denies it:
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse,
That which appears in proper nakednesse?

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

Hero. They know that do accuse me, I know none:
If I know more of any man alive
Then that which maiden modestie doth warrant,
Let all my sinnes lacke mercy. O my Father,
Prove you that any man with me convers't,

At houres unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Fri. There is some strange misprision in the Prince.

Ben. Two of them have the very bent of honor,
And if their wisdomes be misled in this:
The practise of it lives in *Iohn* the bastard,
Whose spirits toile in frame of villanies.

Leo. I know not: if they speake but truth of her,
These hands shall teare her: if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well heare of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eate up my invention,
Nor Fortune made such havocke of my meanes,
Nor my bad life rest me so much of friends,
But they shall finde, awak'd in such a kinde,
Both strength of limbe, and policie of minde,
Ability in meanes, and choise of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.

Fri. Pause awhile,

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

Leo. What shall become of this? What will this do?

Fri. Marry this well carried, shall on her behalfe,
Change slander to remorse, that is some good,
But not for that dreame I on this strange course,
But on this travaile looke for greater birth:
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Vpon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pittied, and excus'd
Of every hearer: for it so fals out,
That what we have; we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,
Why then we racke the value, then we finde
The vertue that possession would not shew us
Whiles it was ours, so will it fare with *Claudio*:
When he shall heare she dyed upon his words,
Th' Idea of her life shall sweetly creepe
Into his study of imagination.

And every lovely Organ of her life,
Shall come apparel'd in more precious habite:
More moving, delicate, and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soule
Than when she liv'd indeed: then shall he mourne,
If ever Love had interest in his Liver,
And wish he had not so accus'd her:
No, though he thought his accusation true:
Let this be so, and doubt not but successe
Will fashion the event in better shape,
Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
But if allayme but this be leuell'd false,
The supposition of the Ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamy,
And if it fort not well, you may conceale her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, mindes and injuries:

Bene. Signior *Leonato*, let the Friar advise you,
And though you know my inwardnesse and love
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.

Leo. Being that I flow in greefe,
The smallest twine may leade me.

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

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

Beat. Yea, and I will weepe a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason, I doe it freely.

Bene. Surely I do beleve your fair'cosin is wrong'd.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of mee
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 doe it?

Beat. It is a mans office, but not yours.

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

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

Bene. By my sword *Beatrice* thou loy'st me.

Beat. Do not sweare by it and eat it.

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

Beat. Will you not eat your worde?

Bene. With no sawce that can be devised to it, I pro-
test I love thee.

Beat. Why then God forgive me.

Bene. What offence sweet *Beatrice*?

Beat. You have stayed me in a happy howre, I was a-
bout to protest I loved you.

Bene. And do it with all thy heart.

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

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

Beat. Kill *Claudio*.

Bene. Ha, not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to denie, farewell.

Bene. Tarric sweet *Beatrice*.

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

Bene. *Beatrice*.

Beat. Infaith I will go.

Bene. Wee'll be friends first.

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

Bene. Is *Claudio* thine enemy?

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

Bene. Heare me *Beatrice*.

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

Bene. Nay but *Beatrice*.

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

Bene. Bet?

Beat. Princes and Counties! surely a Princely testi-
mony, a goodly Count - Comfect, a sweet Gallant sure-
ly, O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any
friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is mel-
ted into curtsies, valour into complement, and men are
onely turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now
as valiant as *Hercules*, that onely tels a lie, and sweares it:
I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a wo-
man with grieving.

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

Beat. Use it for my love some other way then swea-
ring by it.

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

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

Bene. Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I
will kisse your hand, and so leave you: by this hand *Claudio*
shall render me deere account: as you heare of me,
so thinke of me: go comfort your cousin, I must say she
is dead, and so farewell. *Exeunt.*

*Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne Clerke
in gownes.*

Keeper. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

Cowley. O a stoole and cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton. Which be the malefactors?

Andrew. Marry that am I, and my partner.

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

Sexton. But which are the offenders that are to be ex-
amined, let them come before master Constable.

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

Bor. *Borachio*.

Kemp. Pray write downe *Borachio*. Yours sirra.

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

Kee. Write downe Master gentleman *Conrade*: mai-
sters, do you serve God: maisters, it is proved already
that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go
neere to be thought so shortly, how answer you for your
selves?

Con. Marry sir, we say we are none.

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

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

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

Sext. Maister Constable, you go not the way to ex-
amine, you must call forth the watch that are their ac-
cusers.

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

Watch 1. This man said sir, that *Don Iohn* the Princes
brother was a villaine.

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

Bor. Maister Constable.

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

Sexton. What heard you him say else?

Watch 2. Marry that he had received a thousand Du-
kates of *Don Iohn*, for accusing the Lady *Hero* wrong-
fully. *Kemp.*

Kemp. Flat Burglarie as ever was committed.

Const. Yea by th' masse that it is.

Sexton. What else fellow?

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

Kemp. O villaine! thou wilt be condemn'd into everlasting redemption for this.

Sexton. Whas else?

Watch. This is all.

Sexton. And this is more maisters then you can deny, Prince *John* is this morning secretly stolne away: *Hero* was in this manner accus'd, in this very manner refus'd, and upon the grieffe of this sodainely died: Maister Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to *Leonato*, I will goe before, and shew him their examination.

Const. Come, let them be opinion'd.

Sex. Let them be in the hands of *Coxcombe*.

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

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

Kemp. Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my yeeres? O that hee were heere to write mee downe an asse! but maisters, remember that I am an asse: though it be not written down, yet forget not y I am an asse: No thou villaine, y art full of piety as shall be prov'd upon thee by good witnessse, I am a wife fellow, and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a housholder, and which is more, as pretty a peece of flesh as any in *essina*, and one that knowes the Law, goe to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gownes, and every thing handsome about him: bring him away; O that I had been writ downe an asse!

Exit.

Actus Quintus.

Enter Leonato and his brother.

Brother. If you goe on thus, you will kill your selfe, And 'tis not wisdome thus to second grieffe, Against your selfe.

Leon. I pray thee cease thy counsaile, Which falls into mine eares as profitlesse, As water in a sieve: give not me counsaile, Nor let no comfort els delight mine eare, But such a one whose wrongs doth sute with mine. Bring me a father that so lov'd his childe, Whose joy of her is over-whelmed like mine. And bid him speake of patience, Measure his woe the length and bredth of mine, And let it answere every straine for straine, As thus for thus, and such a grieffe for such, In every lincament, branch, shape, and forme: If such a one will smile and stroke his beard, And sorrow, wagge, crie hem, when he should grone, Patch grieffe with proverbs, make misfortune drunke, With-candle-wasters: bring him yet to me, And I of him will gather patience: But there is no such man, for brother, men Can counsaile, and speake comfort to that grieffe, Which they themselves not feele, but tasting it, Their counsaile turnes to passion, which before,

Would give preceptiall medicine to rage, Fetter strong madnesse in a silken thred, Charme ache with ayre, and agony with words. No, no, 'tis all mens office, to speake patience To those that wring vnder the load of sorrow: But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie To be so morall, when he shall endure The like himselfe: therefore give me no counsaile, My griefs cry lowder then advertisement.

Broth. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leo. I pray thee peace, I will be flesh and blood, For there was never yet Philosopher, That could endure the tooth-ake patiently, How ever they have writ the stile of gods, And made a push at chance and sufferance.

Broth. Yet bend not all the harme upon your selfe, Make those that doe offend you, suffer too.

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

Enter Prince and Claudio.

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

Prin. Good den, good den.

Clau. Good day to both of you.

Leon. Heare you my Lords?

Prin. We have some haste *Leonato*.

Leo. Some haste my Lord! well, fare you well my Lord, Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.

Prin. Nay, do not quarrell with us, good old man.

Broth. If he could right himselfe with quarrelling, Some of us would ly low.

Clau. Who wrongs him?

Leon. Marry thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou: Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword, I feare thee not.

Clau. Marry beshrew my hand, If it should give your age such cause of feare, Infaieth my hand meant nothing to my sword.

Leo. Tush, tush, man, never feere and jest at me, I speake not like a dotard, nor a foole, As under priviledge of age to bragge, What I have done being yong, or what would doe, Were I not old, know *Claudio* to thy head, Thou hast so wrong'd my innocent childe and me, That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by, And with grey haies and bruise of many daies, Doe challenge thee to triall of a man, I say thou hast belied mine innocent childe. Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart, And she lies buried with her ancestors: O in a tombe where never scandall slept, Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villanie.

Clau. My villany?

Leon. Thine *Claudio*, thine I say.

Prin. You say not right old man.

Leon. My Lord, my Lord,

He prove it on his body if he dare, Despight his nice fence, and his active practise, His Maie of youth, and bloome of lustihood.

Clau. Away, I will not have to do with you.

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

Bro. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed, But that's no matter, let him kill one first:

Win me and weare me, let him answere 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.

Leon. Brother.

Bro. Content your selfe, God knows I lov'd my neece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villaines,
That dare as well answer a man indeed,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue.
Boyes, apes, braggarts, Iackes, milke-sops.

Leon. Brother *Anthony.*

Prot. Hold you content, what man? I know them, yea
And what they weigh, even to the vtmost scruple,
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-mongring boyes,
That lye, and cog, and flout, deprave, and slander,
Goe antiquely and show outward hidiousnesse,
And speake of ha fe a dozen dang'rous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst.
And this is all.

Leon. But brother *Anthony.*

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

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

Leon. My Lord, my Lord.

Prin. I will not heare you.

Enter Benedicke.

Leo. No! come brother, away, I will be heard.

Exeunt ambo.

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

Prin. See, see, here comes the man we went to seeke.

Clau. Now signior, what newes?

Ben. Good day my Lord:

Prin. Welcome signior, you are almost come to part
almost a fray.

Clau. Wee had like to have had our two noses snapt
off with two old men without teeth.

Prin. *Leonato* and his brother, what think'st thou? had
wee fought, I doubt we should have beene too yong for
them.

Ben. In a false quarrell there is no true valour, I came to
seeke you both.

Clau. We have beene up and downe to seeke thee, for
we are high prooffe melancholly, and would faine have it
beaten away, wilt thou use thy wit?

Ben. It is in my scabberd, shall I draw it?

Prin. Doeft thou weare thy wit by thy side?

Clau. Never any did so, though very many have beene
beside their wit, I will bid thee draw, as we do the min-
strels, draw to pleasure us.

Prin. As I am an honest man he lookes pale, art thou
sicke, or angry?

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

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

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

Prin. By this light, he changes more and more, I think
he be angry indeed.

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

Ben. Shall I speake a word in your eare?

Clau. God blesse me from a challenge.

Ben. You are a villaine, I jest not, I will make it good
how yow dare, with what you dare, and when you dare:
do me right, or I will protest your cowardise: you have
kill'd a sweete Lady, and her death shall fall heavy on
you, let me heare from you.

Clau. Well, I will meete you, so I may have good
cheare.

Prin. What, a feast?

Clau. I faich I thanke him, he hath bid me to a calves
head and a Capon, the which if I do not carve most cu-
riously, say my knife's naught, shall I not finde a wood-
cocke too?

Ben. Sir, your wit ambles well, it goes easily.

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

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

Prin. Yea that she did, but yet for all that, and if shee
did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly, the
old mans daughter told us all.

Clau. All, all, and moreover, God saw him when hee
was hid in the garden.

Prin. But when shall we set the savage Bulls hornes
on the sensible *Benedicks* head?

Clau. Yea and text vnder-neath, heere dwells *Bene-
dicke* the married man.

Ben. Fare you well, Boy, you know my minde, I will
leave you now to your gossepe-like humor, you breake
jests as braggards do their blades, which God be thank-
ed hurt not: my Lord, for your many courtesies I thank
you, I must discontinue your company, your brother
the Bastard is fled from *Messina*: you have among you,
kill'd a sweete and innocent Lady: for my Lord Lacke-
beard there, he and I shall meete, and till then peace be
with him.

Prin. He is in earnest.

Clau. in most profound earnest, and Ile warrant you,
for the love of *Beatrice*.

Prin. And hath challeng'd thee.

Clau. Most sincerely.

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

Enter Constable, Conrade, and Borachio.

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

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

Con. Come you sir, if justice cannot tame you, shee
shall ne're weigh more reasons in her ballance, nay, and
you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be lookt to.

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

Clau. Harken after their offence my Lord.

Prin. Officers, what offence have these men done:

Con. Marrie

Const. Marrie sir, they have committed false report, moreover they have spoken untruths, secondarily they are slanders, sixt and lastly, they have belyed a Ladie, thirdly, they have verified unjust things, and to conclude they are lying knaves.

Prin. First I aske thee what they have done, thirdly I aske thee what's their offence, sixt and lastly why they are committed, and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Clau. Rightly reasoned, and in his owne division, and by my troth there's one meaning well suted.

Prin. Whom have you offended maisters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned Constable is too cunning to be vnderstood, what's your offence?

Bor. Sweete Prince, let me go no farther to mine answer: do you heare me, and let this Count kill mee: I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdomes could not discover, these shallow fooles have brought to light, who in the night overheard me confessing to this man, how *Don Iohn* your brother incensed me to slander the Lady *Hero*, how you were brought into the Orchard, and saw me court *Margaret* in *Heroes* garments, how you disgrac'd her when you should marrie her: my villanie they have upon record, which I had rather seale with my death, then repeate over to my shame: the Lady is dead upon mine and my maisters false accusation: and briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villaine.

Prin. Runs not this speech like yron through your bloud?

Clau. I have drunke poison whiles he vtter'd it.

Prin. But did my Brother set thee on to this?

Bor. Yea, and paid me rich for the practise of it.

Prin. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery, And fled he is upon this villany.

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

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

Con. 2. Here, here comes maister *Signior Leonato*, and the *Sexton* too.

Enter *Leonato*.

Leon. Which is the villaine? let me see his eyes, That when I note another man like him, I may avoide him: which of these is he?

Bor. If you woul know your wronger, looke on me.

Leon. Art thou art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kild mine innocent childe?

Bor. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so villaine, thou beliefst 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 deedes, 'Twas bravely done; if you bethinke you of it.

Clau. I know not how to pray your patience, Yet I must speake, choose your revenge your selfe, Impose me to what penance your invention Can lay upon my sinne, yet sinn'd I not, But in mistaking.

Prin. By my soule nor I, And yet to satisfie this good old man,

I would bend vnder any heavy waight, That heele enjoyne me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you daughter live, That were impossible, but I praie you both, Possesse the people in *Messina* here, How innocent she died, and if your love Can labour aught in sad invention, Hang her an epitaph upon her toomb, And sing it to her bones, sing it to night: To morrow morning come you to my house, And since you could not be my sonne in law, Be yet my Nephew: my brother hath a daughter, Almost the copie of my childe that's dead, And she alone is heire to both of us, Give her the right you should have giv'n her cosin, And so dies my revenge.

Clau. O noble sir! Your overkindnesse doth wring teares from me, I do embrace your offer, and dispose For henceforth of poore *Claudio*.

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

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

Const. Moroever sir, which indeed is not under white and blacke, this plaintiffe here, the offendour did call mee asle, I beseech you let it be remembred in his punishment, and also the watch heard them talke of one Deformed, they say he weares a key in his care and a lock hanging by it, and borrowes mony in Gods name, the which he hath us'd so long, and never paid, that now men grow hard-harted and will lend nothing for Gods sake: praie you examine him upon that point.

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

Const. Your worship speakes like a most thankfull & reverend youth, and I praie God for you.

Leon. There's for thy paines.

Const. God save the foundation.

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

Const. I leave an arrant knave with your worship, which I beseech your worship to correct your selfe, for the example of others: God keepe your worshippe, I wish your worship well, God restore you to health, I humbly give you leave to depart, and if a merrie meeting may bee wisht, God prohibite it: come neighbour.

Leon. Vntill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

Exeunt.

Bor. Farewell my Lords, wee looke for you to morrow.

Prin. We will not faile.

Clau. To night ile mourne with *Hero*.

Leon. Bring you these fellowes on, wee'l talke with *Margaret*, how her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.

Exeunt.

Enter *Benedicke* and *Margaret*.

Ben. Pray thee sweete Mistris *Margaret*, deserve well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of *Beatrice*.

Mar. Will

Mar. Will you then writte me a Sonnet in praise of my beautie?

Bene. In so high a stile *Margaret*, that no man living shall come over it, for in most comely truth thou deseruest it.

Mar. To have no man come over me, why, shall I alwaies keepe below staires?

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

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

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

Mar. Give us the swords, wee have bucklers of our owne.

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

Mar. Well, I will call *Beatrice* to you, who I thinke hath legges. *Exit Margaret.*

Bene. And therefore will come. The god of love that sits above, and knowes me, and knowes me, how pittifull I deserue. I meane in singing, but in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first imployer of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose name yet runne smoothly in the even rode of a blanke verse, why they were never so truely turned over as my poore selfe in love: marry I cannot shew it rime. I have tried, I can finde out no rime to Ladie but badie an innocents rime: for scorne, horne, a hard rime: for schoole foole, a babling rime: very ominous endings, no, I was not borne vnder a riming Plannet, for I cannot wooc in festivall tearmes:

Enter Beatrice.

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

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

Bene. O stay but till then.

Beat. Then, is spoken: fare you well now, and yet ere I go, let me go with that I came, which is, with knowing what hath past betweene you and *Claudio*.

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

Beat. Foule words is but foule wind, and foule winde is but foule breath, and foule breath is noisome, therefore I will depart un-kist.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right fence, so forcible is thy wit, but I must tell 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 which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together, which maintain'd so politique a state of evill, 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 epithite, I do suffer love indeede, for I love thee against my will.

Bene. In spite of your heart I thinke, alas poore 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 wooc peaceable.

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

Bene. An old, an old instance *Beatrice*, that liv'd in the time of good neighbours, if a man doe not erect in this age his owne tombe ere he dies, hee shall live no longer in monuments, then the Bels ring, and the Widow weepes.

Beat. And how long is that thinke you?

Bene. Question, why an hower in clamour and a quarter in rhowme, therefore is it most expedient for the wife, if Don worne (his conscience) finde no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his owne vertues, as I am to my selfe so much for praising my selfe, who I my selfe will beare witness is praise worthy, and now tell me how doth your cosin?

Beat. Very ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Very ill too.

Enter Ursula.

Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend, there will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your Vncle, yonders old coile at home, it is proved my Lady *Hero* hath bin falsely accusde, the *Prince* and *Claudio* mightily abusde, and *Don Iohn* is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go heare this newes Signior?

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes: and moreover, I will goe with thee to thy Vncles. *Exeunt.*

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 slanderous tongues,

Was the *Hero* that here lies:

Death in guerdon of her wrongs,

Gives her same which never dies:

So the life that died with shame,

Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tombe,

Praising her when I am dombe.

Claudio. Now musick sound and sing your solemne hymne.

Song.

Pardon goddesse of the night,

Those that slew thy virgin knight,

For the which with songs of woe,

Round about her tombe they goe:

Midnight assist our mone, helpe vs to sigh and grone.

Heavily, heavily.

Graves yawne and yeelde your dead,

Till death be vttered,

Heavenly heavenly.

(this right.

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

Prin. Good morrow maisters, put your Torches out, The wolves have preied, and looke, the gentle day

Before the wheelles of *Phæbus*, round about

Dapples the drowfie East with spots of grey:

Thanks to you all, and leave us, fare you well.

Claudio. Good morrow maisters, each his severall way.

Prin. Come let us hence, and put on other weedes,

And then to *Leonatoes* we will goe.

Claudio. And *Hymen* now with luckier issue speed;

Then

Then this for whom we rendred up this woe. *Exeunt.*

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

Frier. Did I not tell you she was innocent?

Leo. So are the *Prince* and *Claudio* who accus'd her,
Vpon the error that you heard debated.

But *Margaret* was in some fault for this;

Although against her will as it appears,
In the true course of all the question.

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

Ben. And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd,
To call yong *Claudio* to a reckoning for it.

Leo. Well daughter, and yong Gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a Chamber by your selves,

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

The *Prince* and *Claudio* promis'd by this houre

To visit me, you know your office Brother,

You must be father to your Brothers daughter,

And give her to yong *Claudio*. *Exeunt Ladies.*

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

Ben. Frier, I must intreat your paines, I thinke.

Frier. To doe what Signior?

Ben. To binde me, or undoe me, one of them:
Signior *Leonato*, truth it is good Signior,
Your Neece regards me with an eye of favour.

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

Ben. And I doe with an eye of love requite her.

Leo. The fight whereof I thinke you had from me,
From *Claudio* and the *Prince*, but what's your will?

Ben. Your answer sir is Enigmaticall,
But for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoyn'd,
I'th state of honourable marriage,

In which good Frier I shall desire your helpe.

Leo. My heart is with your liking.

Frier. And my helpe.

Enter Prince and Claudio with attendants.

Prin. Good morrow to this faire assembly.

Leo. Good morrow *Prince*, good morrow *Claudio*,
We here attend you, are you yet determin'd,
To day to marry with my brothers daughter?

Clau. Ile hold my minde were she an Ethiope.

Leo. Call her forth brother, heres the Frier ready.

Prin. Good morrow *Benedicke*, why what's the matter?
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storme, and clowdinesse.

Clau. I thinke he thinkes upon the savage bull:
Tush, feare not man, we'll tip thy hornes with gold,
And all *Europa* shall rejoyce at thee,
As once *Europa* did at lusty *Iove*,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

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

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula.

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

Leo. This same is she, and I doe give you her.

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

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

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

Hero. And when I liv'd I was your other wife,
And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.

Clau. Another *Hero*?

Hero. Nothing certainer.

One *Hero* died, but I doe live,
And surely as I live, I am a maid.

Prin. The former *Hero*, *Hero* that is dead.

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

Frier. All this amazement can I qualifie,
When after that the holy rites are ended,

Ile tell you largely of faire *Heroes* death:

Meane time let wonder seeme familiar,

And to the chappell let us presently.

Ben. Soft and faire Frier, which is *Beatrice*?

Beat. I answer to that name, what is your will?

Bene. Doe not you love me?

Beat. Why no, no more then reason.

Bene. Why then your Vncle, and the *Prince*, & *Claudio*,
have beene deceiv'd, they swore you did.

Beat. Doe not you love me?

Bene. Troth no, no more then reason.

Beat. Why then my Cofin *Margaret* and *Ursula*
Are much deceiv'd, for they did sweare you did.

Bene. They swore you were almost sicke for me.

Beat. They swore you were wel-nye dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis no matter, then you doe not love me?

Beat. No truly, but in friendly recompence.

Leon. Come Cofin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

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

Hero. And heeres another,
Writ in my cofins hand, stolne from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto *Benedicke*.

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

Beat. I would not denie you, but by this good day, I
yeeld upon great perswasion, and partly to save your life,
for I was told, you were in a consumption.

Leon. Peace I will stop your mouth.

Prin. How dost thou *Benedicke* the married man?

Bene. Ile tell thee what *Prince*: a Colledge of witte-
crackers cannot flout mee out of my humour, dost thou
thinke I care for a Satyre or an Epigram? no, if a man will
be beaten with braines, a shall weare nothing handsome
about him: in brieft, since I do purpose to marry, I will
thinke nothing to any purpose that the world can say a-
gainst it: and therefore never flout at me, for I have said
against it: for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclu-
sion: for thy part *Claudio*, I did thinke to have beaten
thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live un-
bruis'd, and love my cofin.

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

Bene. Come, come, we are friends, let's have a dance
ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts,
and our wives heeles.

Leon. Wee'll have dancing afterwards.

Bene. First, of my word, therefore play musicke. *Prince*,
thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife, there is no
staffe more reverend then one tip't with horn. *Enter Mes.*

Messen. 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 brave punishments for him: strike up Pipers. *Dance.*