



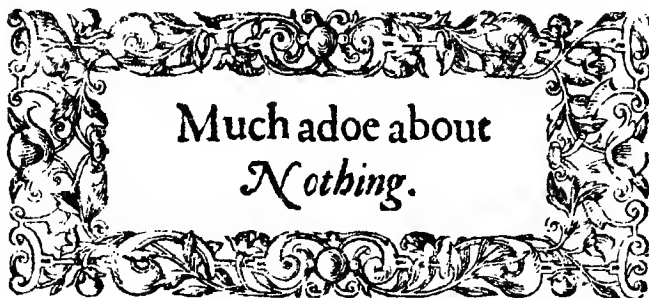
Much adoe about Nothing.

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

Written by William. Shakespeare.



L O N D O N
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1600.



Enter Leonato gouvernour of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, with a messenger.

l. i.

Leonato,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Leo. Did he breake out into teares?

Mess. In great measure.

A 2

Leo.

Much adoe

Leo. A kind ouerflow of kindnesse, there are no faces truer then those that are so walht, how much better is it to weepe at ioy, then to ioy at weeping?

Beatr. I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returnd from the warres or no?

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

Leonato What is he that you aske for neece?

Hero My cosen meanes Signior Benedicke of Padua.

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

Bea. He set vp his bills here in Messina, and challenge Cupid at the Flight, and my vnckles foole reading the chalenge subscribe for Cupid, and challenge him at the Burbolt: I pray you, how many hath he kild and eaten in these warres? but how many hath he kild? for indeede I promised to eate all of his killing.

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

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

Beat. You had musty vittaile, and he hath holpe to eate it, he is a very valiaunt trencher man, he hath an excellent stomacke.

Mess. And a good souldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good souldiour to a Lady, but what is he to a Lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stufft with al honorable vertues.

Beat. It is so indeed, he is no lesse then a stufft man, but for the stuffing wel, we are al mortall.

Leo. You must not, sir, mistake my neece, there is a kind of mery warre betwixt Signior Benedicke and her, they neuer meet but there's a skirmish of wit betwene them.

Beat. Alas he gets nothing by that, in our last conflict, of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man gouerned with one, so that if he haue wit enough to keep himself warm, let him beare it for a difference between himself and his horse, for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable

about Nothing.

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

Mess. Ist possible?

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

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

Beat. No, and he were, I would burne my study, but I pray you who is his companion? is there no yong squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the diuell?

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

Beat. O Lord, he will hang vpon him like a discafe, hee is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently madde, God help the noble Claudio, if he haue caught the Benedickt, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a be cured.

Mess. I will holde friends with you Ladie.

Beat. Do good friend.

Leon. You will neuer runne madde niece.

Beat. No, not till a hote Ianuary.

Mess. Don Pedro is approacht.

*Enter don Pedro, Claudio, Benedicke, Balithajar
and Iohn the bastard.*

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

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

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

Leonato Her mother hath many times tolde me so.

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

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

Pedro You haue it full Benedicke, wee may ghesse by this, what you are, being a man, truly the Lady fathers her selfe:

A 3 be

Much adoe

be happy Lady, for you are like an honourable father.

Be. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not haue 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.

Bene. What my deere lady Disdaine! are you yet liuing?

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

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

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

Bene. God keepe your Ladiship stil in that mind, 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.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrat teacher.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Leon.

about Nothing.

I.i.

Leon. Please it your grace leade on?

Pedro Your hand Leonato, we wil go together.

Exeunt. Manent Benedicke & Claudio.

Claudio. Benedicke, didst thou note the daughter of Signior

Bene. I noted her not, but I lookte on her, (Leonato?

Claudio. Is she not a modest yong ladie?

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

Claudio No, I pray thee speake in sober iudgement.

Bene. Why yfaith me thinks shees too low for a hie praise,
too browne for a faire praise, and too litle for a great praise, on-
lie this commendation I can affoord her, that were shee other
then she is, she were vnhansome, and being no other, but as she
is, I do not like her.

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

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

Claudio Can the world buie such a iewel?

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

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

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

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

Bened. Ist come to this? in faith hath not the worlde one
man but he will weare his cappe with suspition? Shall I neuer
see a batcheller of three score againe? go to yfaith, and thou wilt
needes thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and
sigh away fundaites: looke, don Pedro is returned to seeke you.

Enter

*Much adoe**Enter don Pedro, John the bastard.*

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

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

Pedro I charge thee on thy allegiance.

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

Claudio. If this were so, so were it vttered.

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

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

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

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

Pedro By my troth I speake my thought.

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

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

Claudio. That I loue her, I feele.

Pedro That she is worthy, I know.

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

Pedro Thou wast euer an obstinate heretique in the despite of Beauty.

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

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

about Nothing.

l.i.

which I may go the finer,) I will liue a bacheller.

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

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

Pedro Well, if euer thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prouoe a notable argument.

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

Pedro Well, as time shal trie: in time the sauage bull doth beare the yoake.

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

Claudio If this should euer happen, thou wouldst be horn madde.

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

Bened. I looke for an earthquake too then.

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

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

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

Pedro The sixt of Iuly: your louing friend Benedicke.

Bened. 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 flowt old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leaue you.

B

exiit
Claudio

I.i.

Much adoe

Claudio My hege, your Highnesse nowe may doe mee good.

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

Claudio Hath Leonato any sonne, my lord?

Pedro No childe but Hero, thees his onely heire:
Dooſt thou affect her Claudio?

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

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

Claudio How sweetly you do minister to loue,
That know loues grieve by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sodaine seeme,
I would haue salude it with a longer treatise.

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

And

about Nothing.

And strong incounter of my amorous tale:
Then after to her father will I breake,
And the conclusion is, she shal be thine,
In practise let vs put it presently.

exunt.

Enter Leonato and an old man brother to Leonato

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

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

Leo. Are they good?

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

Leo Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

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

Leo. No, no, we wil hold it as a dreame til it appeare it self: but I will acquaint my daughter withall, that she may bee the better prepared for an answer, if peraduenture this be true: go you and tel hir of it: coosins, you know what you haue to doe, O I crie you mercie friend, go you with me and I wil vse your skill: good cosin haue a care this busie time.

exunt.

Enter sir Iohn the bastard, and Conrade his companion.

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

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

Con. You should heare reason.

Iohn And when I haue heard it, what blessing brings it?

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

Iohn I wonder that thou (being as thou saist, thou art, borne vnder Saturne) goest about to apply a morall medicine, to a

I.i.

328

I.ii.

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I.iii.

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12

Much adoe

mortifying mischief: I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I haue cause, and smile at no mans iests, eate when I haue stomach, and wait for no mans leifure: sleep when I am drowsie, and tend on no mans businesse, laugh when I am mery, and claw no man in his humor.

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

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

Con. Can you make no vse of your discontent?

John. I make all vse of it, for I vse it only,
Who comes here? what newes Borachio?

Enter Borachio.

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

John. Will it serue for any model to build mischief on? what is he for a foole that bettothes himselfe to vnquietnesse?

Bor. Mary it is your bothers right hand.

John. Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

Bor. Euen he.

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

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

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

Bor.

about Nothing.

Li.

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 me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed vpon, that the prince should wooe Hero for himselfe, and hauing obtain'd her, giue her to Counte Claudio.

John Come, come, let vs thither, this may proue food to my displeasure, that yong start vp hath all the glory of my ouerthrow: if I can crosse him any way, I blesse my selfe euery way, you are both sure, and wil assist me.

Conr. To the death my Lord.

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

Bor. Weele wait vpon your lordship.

exit.

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

Leonato Was not counte Iohn here at supper?
brother I saw him not.

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

Hero He is of a very melancholy disposition.

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

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

Beatrice With a good legge and a good foote vnckle, and money inough in his purse, such a man would winne any woman in the world if a could get her good will,

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

brother In faith shees too curst.

Beatrice Too curst is more then curst, I shall lessen
Gods

Much adoe

24 Gods sending that way, for it is faide, God sends a curst cow
short hornes, but to a cow too curst, he sends none.

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

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

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

36 *Beatrice* What should I do with him, dresse him in my apparel and make him my waiting gentlewoman? he that hath a
beard, is more then a youth: and he that hath no beard, is lesse
40 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
euen take sixpence in earnest of the Berrord, and leade his
apes into hell.

44 *Leonato* Well then, go you into hell.

Beatrice No but to the gate, and there will the diuell meete
me like an old cuckold with hornes on his head, and say, get
48 you to heauen *Beatrice*, get you to heauen, heeres no place for
you maids, so deliuer I vp my apes and away to saint Peters: for
the heauens, he shewes me where the Batchellers sit, and there
52 liue we as mery as the day is long.

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

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

60 *Leonato* Well neece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a
husband,

64 *Beatrice* Not til God make men of some other mettall then
earth, would it not grieue a woman to be ouer-masterd with
† a peece of valiant dust to make an account of her life to a clod
of waiward marle? no vnckle, ile none: A damis sonnes are my
68 brethren, and truely I holde it a sinne to match in my kin-
red.

Leonato

about Nothing.

II.1.

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

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

Leonato Cosin you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beatrice I haue a good eie vnckle, I can see a church by day-light.

Leonato The reuellers are entring brother, make good roome.

*Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthasar,
or dumb Iohn.*

Pedro Lady will you walke about with your friend?

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

Pedro With me in your company.

Hero I may say so when I please.

Pedro And when please you to say so?

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

Pedro My visor is Philemons rooffe, within the house is Ioue.

Hero Why then your visor should be thatcht.

Pedro Speake low if you speake loue.

Bene. Well, I would you did like me,

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

Bene. Which is one?

Mar. I say my praies alowd,

Bene.

Much adoe

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

Marg. God match me with a good dauncer.

112 *Balth.* Amen.

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

Balth. No more words, the Clarke is answered.

116 *Vrsula* I know you well enough, you are signior Antho-
nio.

Antho. At a word I am not.

120 *Vrsula* I knowe you by the wagling of your head.

Antho. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

Vrsula You coulde neuer doe him so ill well, vnlesse you
were the very man : heeres his drie hand vp and downe , you
are he, you are he.

124 *Antho.* At a word, I am not.

Vrsula Come, come, do you thinke I do not know you by
your excellent wit? can vertue hide it selfe? go to, mumme, you
are he, graces will appeere, and theres an end.

128 *Beat.* Will you not tell me who tolde you so?

Bened. No, you shall pardon me.

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

Bened. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdainefull, and that I had my good wit
out of the hundred merry tales: wel, this was signior Benedick
that said so.

Bened. Whats he?

Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.

Bened. Not I, belecue me.

140 *Beat.* Did he neuer make you laugh?

Bened. I pray you what is he?

Beat. Why he is the princes ieafter, a very dul fool, only his
gift is, in deuising impossible slaunders , none but Libertines
delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in
his villanie, for he both pleases men and angers them, and then
they laugh at him, and beate him : I am sure he is in the Fleete,
I would he had boorded me.

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

Beat.

about Nothing.

Beat. Do, do, heele but break a comparifon or two on me, which peraduenture, (not markt, or not laught at) strikes him into melancholy and then theres a partridge wing faued, for the foole will eate no fupper that night: wee muft follow the leaders.

Bene. In euery good thing.

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

Dance

exiunt

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

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

John Are not you fignior Benedicke?

Claudio. You know me well, I am he.

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

Claudio How know you he loues her?

John I heard him fwere his affection.

Borachio. So did I too, and he fwore hee would marry her to night.

John Come let vs to the banquet. *exiunt: manet Claudio.*

Claudio. Thus answer I in name of Benedicke, But heare thefe ill newes with the eares of Claudio:

Tis certaine fo, the Prince wooes for himfelfe,

Friendfhip is conftant in all other things,

Saue in the office and affaires of loue:

Therefore all hearts in loue vfe their owne tongues.

Let euery eie negotiate for it felfe,

And truft no Agent: for Beauty is a witch,

Againft whole charmes, faith melteth into blood:

This is an accident of hourelly prooffe,

Which I miftrufte not: farewel therefore Hero. *Enter Bene-*

Benedicke Count Claudio.

Claudio Yea, the fame.

C

Bene.

II.

Much adoe

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claudio Whither?

Bene. Euen to the next willow, about your owne busines, county: what fashion will you weare the garland of? about your necke, like an Vsurers chaine? or vnder your arme, like a Lieutenants scarffe? you must weare it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claudio I wish him ioy of her.

Bened. Why thats spoken like an honest Drouier, so they sell bullockes: but did you thinke the Prince would haue seru'd you thus?

Claudio I pray you leaue me.

Benedicke Ho now you strike like the blindman, 'twas the boy that stole your meate, and youle beate the post.

Claudio If it will not be, ile leaue you. *exit*

Benedicke Alas poore hurt foule, now will hee creepe into sedges: but that my Ladie Beatrice should know me, and not know mee: the princes foole! hah, it may be I goe vnder that title because I am merry: yea but so I am apte to doe my selfe wrong: I am not so reputed, it is the base (though bitter) disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person, and so giues me out: well, ile be reuenged as I may.

Enter the Prince, Hero, Leonato, Iohn and Borachio, and Conrade.

Pedro Now signior, wheres the Counte, did you see him?

Benedicke Troth my lord, I haue played the part of Ladie Fame, I found him heere as melancholy as a Lodge in a Warren, I tolde him, and I thinke I tolde him true, that your grace had got the goodwill of this yong Lady, and I offred him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to binde him vp a rod, as being worthie to be whipt.

Pedro To be whipt, whats his fault?

Benedicke The flatte transgression of a Schoole-boy, who being ouer-ioyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companion, and he steales it.

Pedro Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? the transgression

about Nothing.

II. i.

tion is in the stealer.

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

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

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

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

Bened. O shee misusde me past the indurance of a blocke: an oake but with one greene leafe on it, would haue answered her: my very visor beganne to assume life, and scold with her: she tolde me, not thinking I had beene my selfe, that I was the Princes iester, that I was duller than a great thawe, huddling iest vpon iest, with such impossible conueiance vpon me, that I stood like a man at a marke, with a whole army shooting at me: she speakes poynyards, and euery word stabbes: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no liuing neere her, shee would infect to the north starre: I would not marry her, though shee were indowed with al that Adam had left him before he transgreft, she would haue made Hercules haue turnd spit, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too: come, talke not of her, you shall find her the infernall Ate in good apparell, I would to God some scholler would coniuere her, for certainly, while she is heere, a man may liue as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuarie, and people sinne vpon purpose, because they would goe thither, so indeede all disquiet, horror, and perturbation followes her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

Pedro Looke heere she comes.

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

II.i.

Much adoe

the length of Prester Iohns foot: fetch you a haire off the great Chams beard: doe you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than holde three words conference, with this harpy, you haue no employment for me?

Pedro None, but to desire your good company.

Benedicke O God sir, heeres a dish I loue not, I cannot indure my Ladie Tongue. *exit.*

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

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

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

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

Pedro Why how now Counte, wherefore are you sad?

Claudio Not sad my Lord.

Pedro How then? sicke?

Claudio Neither, my Lord.

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

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

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

Beatrice Speake Counte, tis your Qu.

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

Beatr.

about Nothing.

II.i.

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

Pedro Infaith lady you haue a merry heart.

Beatr. Yea my lord I thanke it, poore foole it keepest on the windy side of Care, my coosin tells him in his care that he is in her heart

Clau. And so she doth coosin.

Beat. Good Lord for aliance : thus goes euery one to the world but I, and I am sun-burnt, I may sit in a corner and crie, heigh ho for a husband.

Pedro Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

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

Prince Will you haue me? lady.

Beatr. No my lord, vnles I might haue another for working-daies, your grace is too cosly to weare euery day : but I beseech your grace pardon me, I was born to speake all mirth, and no matter.

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

Beatr. No sure my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a starre daunst, and vnder that was I borne, cofins God giue you ioy.

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

Beat I crie you mercy vnle, by your graces pardon.

exie Beatrice.

Prince By my troth a pleasant spirited lady.

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

Pedro She cannot indure to heare tell of a husband.

Leonato O by no meanes, she mockes al her wooers out of fute.

II.

Much adoe

Prince She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

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

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

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

Leonato Nottil monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a iust seuennight, and a time too brieft too, to haue al things answer my mind.

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

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

Claudio And I my Lord.

Prince And you too gentle Hero?

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

Prince And Benedicke is not the vnhopefullest husband that I know: thus farre can I praise him, he is of a noble strain, of approoued valour, and confirme honesty, I will teach you how to humour your cosin, that she shall fall in loue with Benedicke, and I, with your two helpes, wil so practise on Benedicke, that in dispiight of his quicke wit, and his queasie stomacke, he shall fall in loue with Beatrice: if we can do this, Cupid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall bee ours, for we are the onely loue-gods, goe in with mee, and I will tell you my drift.

exit.

Enter Iohn and Borachio.

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

Borachio Yea my lord, but I can crosse it.

Iohn

about Nothing.

II.ii.

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

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

John Shew me briefly how.

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

John I remember.

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

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

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

John What prooffe shall I make of that?

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

John Onely to dispiight them I will endeavour any thing.

Bor. Go then, find me a meet houre, to draw don Pedro and the Counte Claudio alone, tell them that you know that Hero loues me, intend a kind of zeale both to the prince & Claudio (as in loue of your brothers honor who hath made this match) and his friends reputation, who is thus like to bee cosen'd with the semblance of a maid, that you haue discouer'd thus: they wil scarcely beleue this without trial: offer them instances which shall beare no lesse likelihood, than to see me at her chamber window, heare me call Margaret Hero, heare Marg. terme me Claudio, & bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding, for in the mean time, I wil so fashion the matter, that Hero shal be absent, and there shal appeere such seeming truth of Heroes disloyal tie, that iealousie shal be cald assurance

II.ii.

Muchadoe

rance, and al the preparation ouerthrowne.

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

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

John I will presently go learne their day of marriage. *exit*

II.iii.

Enter Benedicke alone.

Bene. Boy.

Boy Signior.

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

Boy. I am here already sir. *exit.*

Bene. I know that, but I would haue thee hence and here againe. I do much wonder, that one man seeing how much another man is a foole, when he dedicates his behauiours to loue, wil after he hath laugh't at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his owne scorne, by falling in loue, and such a man is Claudio, I haue knowne when there was no musique with him but the drumme and the fife, and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe: I haue knowne when he would haue walkt ten mile afoot, to see a good armour, and now will he lie ten nights awake caruing 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 turnd orthography, his words are a very fantasticall banquet, iust so many strange dishes: may I be so conuerted and see with these eies? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I wil not be sworne but loue may transforme me to an oyster, but ile take my oath on it, till he haue made an oyster of me, he shall neuer make me such a foole: one woman is faire, yet I am well, another is wise, yet I am well: another 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 certain, wise, or ile none, vertuous, or ile neuer cheapen her: faire, or ile neuer looke on her, mild, or come not neare me, noble, or not I for an angel, of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her haire

about Nothing.

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

Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Muſicke.

Prince Come ſhall we heare this muſique?

Claud. Yea my good lord: how ſtil the eueing is,
As huſht on purpoſe to grace harmonie!

Prince See you where Benedicke hath hid himſelfe?

Claud. O very wel my lord: the muſique ended,
Weele fit the kid-foxe with a penny worth.

Enter Balthaſer with muſicke.

Prince Come Balthaſer, weele heare that ſong againe.

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

Prince It is the witneſſe ſtill of excellencie,
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 ſute,
To her he thinkes not worthy, yet he wooes,
Yet will he ſweare he loues.

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

Balth. Note this before my notes,
Theres not a note of mine thats worth the noting.

Prince Why theſe are very crotchets that he ſpeakes,
Note notes forfooth, and nothing.

Bene. Now diuine aire, now is his ſoule rauisht, is it not
ſtrange that ſheepes guts ſhould hale ſoules out of mens bo-
dies? well a horne for my mony when alls done.

The Song.

Sigh no more ladies, ſigh no more,
Men were deceiuers euer,
One foote in ſea, and one on ſhore,
To one thing conſtant neuer,
Then ſigh not ſo, but let them go,
And be you bliſh and bonnie,

D

Con-

Much ado

Converting all your foundes of woe,
Into hey nony nony.

72 Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
Of dumps so dull and heauy,
The fraud of men was euer so,
76 Since summer first was leauy,
Then sigh not so, &c;

Prince By my troth a good song.

Balth. And an ill singer my lord.

80 *Prince* Ha, no no faith, thou singst wel enough for a shift.

Ben. And he had bin a dog that should haue howld thus,
they would haue hangd him, and I pray God his bad voice
84 bode no mischeefe, I had as liue haue heard the night-rauen,
come what plague could haue come after it.

Prince Yea mary, doost thou heare Balthasar? I pray thee
88 get vs some excellent musique: for to morow night we would
haue it at the ladie Heroes chamber window.

Balth. The best I can my lord.

Exit Balthasar.

92 *Prince* Do so, farewell. Come hither Leonato, what was
it you told mee of to day, that your niece Beatrice was in loue
with signior Benedicke?

96 *Cla.* O I, stalke on, stalke on, the foule fits. I did neuer think
that lady would haue loued any man.

Leo. No nor I neither, but most wonderful, that she should
100 so dote on signior Benedicke, whome she hath in all outward
behauiors seemd euer to abhorre.

Bene. Ist possible? sits the wind in that corner?

104 *Leo.* By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of
it, but that she loues him with an iraged affection, it is past the
infinite of thought.

Prince May be she doth but counterfeit,

108 *Claud.* Faith like enough.

Leon. O God! counterfeit? there was neuer counterfeit of
passion, came so neare the life of passion as she discouers it.

Prince

about Nothing.

II.iii.

Prince Why what effects of passion shewes she?

Claud. Baite the hookewel, this fish will bite.

Leon. What effects my Lord? she wil sit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did indeede.

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

Leo. I would haue sworn it had, my lord, especially against Benedicke,

Bene. I should think this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow speakes it: knauery cannot sure hide himself in such reverence.

Claud. He hath tane th' infection, hold it vp.

Prince Hath shee made her affection knowne to Benedicke?

Leonato No, and sweares shee neuer will, thats her torment.

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

Leo. This saies she now when she is beginning to write to him, for sheel be vp twenty times a night and there will she sit in her smocke til she haue writ a sheete of paper: my daughter tels vs all.

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

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

Claudio That,

Leon. O she tore the letter into a thousand halspence, raild at her self, that she should be so immodest to write, to one that she knew would flout her, I measure him, saies she, by my own spirit, for I should flout him, if he writ to me, yea though I loue him I should.

Claudio Then downe vpon her knees she falls, weepes, sobs, beates her heart, teares her haire, prayes, curses, O sweet Benedicke,

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Much adoe

dicke, God giue me patience.

Leonato She doth indeed, my daughter saies so, and the ex-
tatie hath so much ouerborne her, that my daughter is some-
time afear'd shee will doe a desperate out-rage to her selfe, it is
very true.

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

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

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

Claudio And she is exceeding wise.

Prince In euery thing but in louing Benedicke.

Leonato O my Lord, wisdom and blood combating in
so tender a body, we haue ten proofes to one, that bloud hath
the victory, I am sory for her, as I haue iust cause, becing her
vncke, and her gardian.

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

Leonato Were it good thinke you?

Claudio Hero thinks surely she will die, for she sayes shee
will die, if he loue her not, and shee will die ere shee make her
loue knowne, and she will die if he wooe her, rather than shee
will bate one breath of her accustomed crofnesse.

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

Claudio He is a very proper man.

Prince He hath indeede a good outward happines.

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

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

Claudio And I take him to be valiant.

Prince As Hector, I assure you, and in the marnaging of
quartels you may say he is wise, for either hee auoydes them
with

about Nothing.

II.iii.

with great discretion, or vndertakes them with a most christi-
anlike feare.

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

Prince And so will hee doe, for the man doth feare God,
howsoeuer it seemes not in him, by some large iestes hee will
make: well I am sory for your niece, shall we go seeke Bene-
dicke, and tell him of her loue?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Benedicke This can be no tricke, the conference was sadly
borne, they haue the truth of this from Hero, they seeme to
pittie the Lady: it seemes her affections haue their full bent:
loue me? why it must be requited: I heare how I am censurde,
they say I will beare my selfe proudly, if I perceiue the loue
come from her: they say too, that she will rather die than giue
anie 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 witnesse: and vertuous, tis so, I can-
not reprocuit, and wise, but for louing me, by my troth it is

II.iii.*Much adoe*

no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her follie, for I will be horribly in loue with her, I may chaunce haue some odde quirkes and remnants of witte broken on me, because I haue railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loues the meate in his youth, that he cannot indure in his age. Shall quippes and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the carriere of his humor? No, the world must be peopled. When I saide I would die a batcheller, I did not think I should liue til I were married, here comes Beatrice: by this day, shees a faire lady, I doe spie some markes of loue in her.

Enter Beatrice.

Beatr. 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 thanks, then you take paines to thanke me, if it had bin painful I would not haue come.

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message.

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

exit.

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

exit.

Enter Hero and two Gentlemen, Margaret, and Vrsley.

Hero. Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,
There shalt thou find my cosin Beatrice,
Proposing with the prince and Claudio,
Whisper her eare and tell her I and Vrsley,
Walke in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her, say that thou ouer-heardst vs,
And bid her steale into the pleached bowere
Where hony-suckles ripened by the sunne,

Forbid

about Nothing.

III. i.

Forbid the sunne to enter: like fauourites,
Made proud by princes, that aduance their pride,
Against that power that bred it, there will she hide her,
To listen our propofe, this is thy office,
Beare thee well in it, and leaue vs alone.

Marg. Ile make her come I warrant you presently.

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

Enter Beatrice.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Vrfula

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Much adoe

Vrsula Why did you so, dooth not the gentleman
Deserue as full as fortunate a bed,
As euer Beatrice shall couch vpon?

Hero O God of loue! I know he doth deserue,
As much as may be yeilded to a man:
But nature neuer framde a womans hart,
Of prowder stuffe then that of Beatrice:
Disdaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eies,
Misprising what they looke on, and her wit
Valewes it selfe so highly, that to her
All matter els seemes weake: she cannot loue,
Nor take no shape nor proiect of affection,
She is so selfe indeared,

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

Hero Why you speake truth, I neuer yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, yong, how rarely featured,
But she would spel him backward: if faire faced,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an antique,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launce ill headed:
If flow, an agot very vildly cut:
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all winds:
If silent, why a blocke moued with none:
So turnes she euery man the wrong side out,
And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simplenesse and merite 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 couerd fire,
Consume away in sighes, waste inwardly:
It were a better death, then die with mockes,

Which

about Nothing.

III.i.

Which is as bad as die with tickling.

Vrsula Yet tel her of it, heare what she wil say.

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

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

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

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 go in,
Ile shew thee some attyres, and haue thy counsaile,
Which is the best to furnish me to morrow.

Vrsula Shees limed I warrant you,
We haue caught her madame.

Hero If it proue so, then louing goes by haps,
Some Cupid kills with arrowes some with traps.

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 liues behind the backe of such.

And Benedicke, love on I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy louing hand:
If thou dost loue, my kindnesse shall incite thee
To bind our loues vp in a holy band.

For others say thou dost deserue, and I

E

Beleeue

82

86

90

94

98

102

†

106

110

114

III. i.

Much adoe

Beleeue it better then reportingly.

*exit.**Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedicke, and Leonato.**Prince* I doe but stay til your mariage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.*Claud.* Ile bring you thither my lord, if youle vouchsafe me.*Prince* Nay that would be as great a soyle in the new glosse of your marriage, as to shew a child his new coate and forbid him to weare it, I wil only be bold with Benedick for his company, for from the crowne of his head, to the sole of his foot, he is al mirth, he hath twice or thrice cut Cupides bow-string, and the little hang-man dare not shoot at him, he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinks, his tongue speakes.*Bene.* Gallants, I am not as I haue bin.*Leo.* So say I, me thinks you are sadder.*Claudio.* I hope he be in loue.*Prince* Hang him truant, theres no true drop of bloud in him to be truly toucht with loue, if he be sadde, he wantes money.*Bene.* I haue the tooth-ach.*Prince* Draw it.*Bene.* Hang it.*Claudio.* You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.*Prince* What? sigh for the tooth-ach,*Leon.* Where is but a humour or a worme.*Bene.* Wel, euery one cannot master a grieve, but he that has it.*Claudio.* Yet say I, he is in loue.*Prince* There is no appeerance of fancie in him, vnlesse it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to be a Dutchman to day, a French-man to morrow, or in the shape of two countries at once, as a Germaine from the waste downward, all stops, and a Spaniard from the hip vpward, no dublet: vnlesse he haue a fancie to this foolery, as it appeares he hath, he is no foole for fancy, as you would haue it appeare he is.*Claudio.*

about Nothing.

III.ii.

Claudio. If he be not in loue with some woman, there is no beleeuing 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 bin scene with him, and the olde ornament of his checke hath already stufft tennis balls.

Leon. Indeed he lookes 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. Thats as much as to say, the sweete youthe's in loue.

Bene. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

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

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

Claudio. Nay but his iesting spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string, and now gouerned by stops.

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

Claudio. Nay but I know who loues him.

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

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

Prince. She shall be buried with her face vpwards.

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

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

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

Enter Iohn the Bastard.

Bastard. My lord and brother, God saue you.

Prince. Good den brother.

E 2

Bastard

III. ii.

Much adoe

84 *Bastard* If your leifure seru'd, I would speake with you.

Prince In priuate?

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

Prince Whats the matter?

92 *Bast.* Meanes your Lordship to be married to morrow?

Prince You know he does.

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

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

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

104 *Prince* Why whats the matter?

Bast. I came hither to tel you, and circumstances shortned, (for she has bin too long a talking of) the lady is disloyall.

†
108 *Claud.* Who Hero?

Bastard. Euen she, Leonatoes Hero, your Hero, euery mans Hero.

Claud. Disloyall?

112 *Bast.* The word is too good to paint out her wickednesse, I could say she were worfe, thinke you of a worfe title, and I wil fit her to it: wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to nighit you shall see her chamber window entred, euen the night before her wedding day, if you loue her, then to morow wed her: But it would better fitte your honour to change your mind.

120 *Claud.* May this be so?

Prince I wil not thinke it.

124 *Bast.* If you dare not trust that you see, confesse not that you knowe: if you will follow mee, I will shew you enough, and when you haue seene more, and heard more, proccede accordingly.

128 *Claudio* If I see anie thing to night, why I should not marry her to morrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shatne her.

Prince

about Nothing.

III.ii.

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

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

132 †

Prince O day vntowardly turned!

Claud. O mischief sttangelly thwarting!

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

136

Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the Watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verges 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 haue any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Princes watch.

4

Verges Well, giue them their charge, neighbour Dogbery.

8

Dogbery Firft, who thinke you the most defartlesse man to be Constable?

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

12

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

16

Watch 2 Both which maister Constable.

Dogbery You haue: I knew it would be your answer: wel, for your fauour sir, why giue God thanks, and make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeere 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 bidde any man stand, in the Princes name.

20

24

Watch 2 How if a will not stand?

28

Dogbery Why then take no note of him, but let him goe,

E 3 and

Much adoe

and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thanke
god you are ridde of a knaue.

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

† 36 *Dogbery* 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 to talke, is most tollerable, and
not to be indured.

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

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

48 *Watch* How if they will not?

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

52 *Watch* Well sir.

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

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

60 *Dogbery* Truly by your office you may, but I thinke they
that touch pitch will be defilde: the most peaceable way for
you, if you doe take a thiefe, is, to let him shew himselfe what
he is, and steale out of your companie.

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

68 *Dog.* Truly I would not hang a dogge by my will, much
more a man who hath anie honestie in him.

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

72 *Watch* How if the nurse be asleepe and will not heare vs.

Dog.

about Nothing.

III.iii.

Dog. Why then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying, for the ewe that will not heare her lamb when it baes, will neuer 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 stay him.

Verges Nay birlady that I thinke a cannot.

Dog. Fiue shillings to one on't with any man that knowes the statutes, he may stay him, mary not without the prince be willing, for indeede 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, wel masters good night, and there be any matter of weight chaunces, cal vp me, keepe your fellowes counsailes, and your owne, and good night, come neighbour.

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

Dog. One word more, honest neighbors. I pray you watch about signior Leonatoes doore, for the wedding being there to morrow, there is a great coyle to night, adiew, be vigitant 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 icht, I thought there would a scabbe follow.

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

Bor. Stand thee close then vnder this penthouse, for it driffells raine, and I will, like a true drunekard, vitter all to thee.

Watch Some treason masters, yet stand close.

Bor.

76

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84

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104

108

112

Much adoe

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

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

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

Con. I wonder at it.

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

Con. Yes it is apparell.

Bor. I meane the fashion.

Con. Yes the fashion is the fashion.

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

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

Bor. Didst thou not heare some body?

Con. No, twas the vane on the house.

Bor. Seeest thou not (I say) what a deformed thiefe this fashion is, how giddily a turnes about all the Hot-blounds, between foureteene and fife and thirtie, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoes souldiours in the rechie painting, sometime like god Bels priests in the old church window, sometime like the shauen Hercules in the smirchit worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-peece seemes as massie as his club.

Con. Al this I see, and I see that the fashion weares out more apparell then the man - but art not thou thy selfe giddy 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 haue 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 tel thee how the prince Claudio and my master planted, and placed, and possessed, by my master Don Iohn, saw a farre off

about Nothing.

III.iii.

off in the orchard this amiable incounter.

Conr. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bar. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the diuel my master knew she was Margaret, and partly by his oths, which first possesse them, partly by the darke night which did deceiue them, but chiefly, by my villany, which did confirme any slander that Don Iohn had made, away went Claudio enraged, swore he would meet her as he was appointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation shame her, with what he saw o're night, and send her home againe without a husband.

Watch 1 We charge you in the princes name stand.

Watch 2 Call vpp the right maister Constable, wee haue here recouerd the most dangerous peece of lechery, that euer was knowne in the common wealth.

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

Conr Masters, masters.

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

Conr Masters, neuer speake, we charge you, let vs obey you to go with vs.

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

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

exeunt.

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Ursula.

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

Ursula I wil lady.

Hero And bid her come hither.

Ursula Well.

Marg. Troth I thinke your other rebato were better.

Hero No pray thee good Meg, ile weare this.

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

Hero My cosin's a foole, and thou art another, ile weare

F

none

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164

168

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III.iv.

4

8

12

Much adoe

none but this.

Mar I like the new tye 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.

Hero O that exceeds they say.

Marg. By my troth's but a night-gown it respect of yours, cloth a gold and cuts, and lac'd with siluer, set with pearles, downe sleeues, side sleeues, and skirts, round vnderborne with a blewish tinfell, but for a fine queint graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

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

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

Hero Fie vpon thee, art not ashamed?

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

Enter Beatrice.

Hero Good morrow coze.

Beat. Good morrow sweete *Hero*.

Hero Why how now? do you speake in the sicke tune?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Beat.

about Nothing.

III. iv.

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

Mar. Wel, and you be not turnde Turke, theres no more sayling by the starre.

Beat. What meanes the foole trow?

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

Hera. These gloues the Counte sent me, they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuf cosin, I cannot smell.

Mar. A maide and stuf! theres goodly catching of colde.

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

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

Beat. It is not 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 qualme.

Hera. There thou prickst her with a thistle.

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

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

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keepes?

Marg. Not a false gallop,

Enter Ursula.

Ursula. Madame withdraw, the prince, the Count, signior *Benedicke*, Don Iohn, and all the gallants of the towne are

III.IV.

Much adoe

come to fetch you to church.

Hero Help to dresse me good coze, good Meg, good Vrfula.

III.V.

Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough.

Leonato What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Const. Dog. Mary fir I would haue some confidence with you, that decernes you nearely.

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

Const Dog. Mary this it is fir.

Headb. Yes in truth it is fir,

Leonato What is it my good friends?

Con. Do. Goodman Verges fir speaks a litle of the matter, an old man fir, and his wittes are not so blunt, as God helpe I would desire they were, but infaith honest, as the skin between his browes.

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

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

Leonato Neighbors, you are tedious.

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

Leonato Al thy tediousnesse on me, ah?

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

Head. And so am I.

Leonato I would faine know what you haue to say.

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

Const. Dog. A good old man fir, he will be talking as they say, when the age is in, the wit is out, God help vs, it is a world
to

about Nothing.

III.v.

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

Leonato Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.

Const. Do. Gifts that God giues,

Leonato I must leaue you.

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

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

Constable It shall be suffigance. (*exit*)

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

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

Leon. Ile wait vpon them, I am ready.

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

Verges And we must do it wisely.

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

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

IV.i.

Leonato 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.

Claudio No.

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

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

Hero I do.

Frier If either of you know any inward impediment why

Much adoe

you should not be conioyned , I charge you on your soules to vtter it.

Claudio Know you any, Hero?

Hero None my lord.

Frier Know you any, Counte?

Leonato I dare make his answer, None.

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

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

Claudio Stand thee by Frier, father, by your leaue,
Will you with free and vnconstrained soule
Giue me this maide your daughter?

Leonato As freely sonne as God did giue her mee.

Claudio And what haue I to giue you backe whose woorth
May counterpoise this rich and pretious gift?

Princke Nothing, vnlesse you render her againe.

Claudio Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulnes:
There Leonato, take her backe againe,
Giue not this rotten orange to your friend,
Shee's but the signe and semblance of her honor:
Behold how like a maide she blushes heere!

O what authoritie and shew of truth
Can cunning sinne couer it selfe withall!
Comes not that blood, as modest euidence,
To witnesse simple Vertue? would you not sweare
All you that see her, that she were a maide,
By these exterior shewes? But she is none:
She knowes the heate of a luxurious bed:
Her blush is guiltinesse, not modestie.

Leonato What do you meane my lord?

Claudio Not to be married,
Not to knit my soule to an approoued wanton.

Leonato Deere my lord, if you in your owne prooffe,
Haue vanquisht the resistance of her youth,
And made defeate of her virginie.

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

about Nothing.

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

Hero And seemde I euer otherwise to you?

Claudio Out on thee seeming, I wil 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 interperate in your blood,
Than Venus, or those pampred animalls,
That rage in sauage sensualitye.

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

Leonato Sweete prince, why speake not you?

Prince What should I speake?

I stand dishonourd that haue gone about,
To lincke my deare friend to a common stale.

Leonato Are these things spoken, or do I but dreame?

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

Bened. This lookes not like a nuptiall.

Hero True, O God!

Claudio, Leonato, stand I here?

Is this the prince? is this the princes brother?

Is this face Heroes? are our eyes our owne?

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

Claudio. Let me but moue one question to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power,
That you haue in her, bid her answer truly.

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

Hero O God defend me how am I beset,
What kind of catechising call you this?

Claudio. To make you answer truly to your name,

Hero Is it not Hero, who can blot that name
With any iust reproch?

Claudio. May that can Hero,

Hero it selfe can blot out Heroes vertue.

What man was he talkt with you yesternight,
Out at your window betwixt twelue and one?

Now

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IV.i.

Much adoe

Now if you are a maide, answer to this.

Hero I talkt with no man at that hower my lord.

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

†
98 *John* Fie, fie, they are not to be named my lord,
Not to be spoke of,
There is not chastitie enough in language,
Without offence to vtter them: thus pretty lady,
I am sory for thy much misgouernement.

102 *Claud.* O *Hero*! what a *Hero* hadst thou bin,
If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed,
About thy thoughts and counsailes of thy heart?
But fare thee well, most foule, most faire, farewell
Thou pure impietic, and impious puritie,
106 For thee ile locke vp all the gates of Loue,
And on my eie-liddes shall Coniecture hang,
To turne all beautie into thoughts of harme,
And neuer shall it more be gracious.

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

Beatrice Why how now cosin, wherfore sinke you down?

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

114 *Benedicke* How doth the Lady?

Beatrice Dead I thinke, help vncle,
Hero, why *Hero*, vncle, signior *Benedicke*, *Frier*.

Leonato O Fate! take not away thy heauy hand,
Death is the fairest couer for her shame
118 That may be wisht for.

Beatrice How now cosin *Hero*?

Frier Haue comfort lady.

Leonato Dost thou looke vp?

Frier

about Nothing.

IV.i.

Frier Yea, wherefore should she not?

Leonato Wherefore? why doth not euery earthly thing,
Cry shame vpon her? could she here deny
The story that is printed in her bloud?
Do not lue Hero, do not ope thine eies:
For did I thinke thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirites were stronger than thy shames,
My selfe would on the rereward of reproches
Strike at thy life. Griued I I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugall Natures frame?
O one too much by thee: why had I one?
Why euer wast thou louely in my eies?
Why had I not with charitable hand,
Tooke vp a beggars issue at my gates,
Who sinched thus, and mired with infamy,
I might haue said, no part of it is mine,
This shame deriues it selfe from vnkowne loynes,
But mine and mine I loued, and mine I praisde,
And mine that I was prowd 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 incke, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,
And salt too little, which may season giue
To her foule tainted flesh.

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

Beat. O on my foule my cosin is belied.

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

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

Leon. Confirmd, confirmd, O that is stronger made,
Which was before bard vp with ribs of yron,
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who loued her so, that speaking of her foulness,
Washt it with teares: hence from her, let her die.

Frier Heare me a little, for I haue only bin silent so long, &
giuen way vnto this course of fortune, by noting of the lady, I
haue markt,

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Much adoe

162 A thousand blushing apparitions,
 † To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames,
 In angel whitenesse beate away those blushes,
 And in her eie there hath appeared a fire,
 To burne the errors that these princes hold
 166 Against her maiden truth: call me a foole,
 Trust not my reading, nor my obseruations,
 Which with experimental scale doth warrant
 The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,
 170 My reuerence, calling, nor diuinitie,
 If this sweete ladie lie not guiltlesse here,
 Vnder some biting errour,

Leonato Frier, it cannot be,
 Thou seest that al the grace that she hath left,
 174 Is, that she will not adde to her damnation,
 A sinne of periury, she not denies it:
 Why seekest thou then to couer with excuse,
 That which appeares in proper nakednesse?

178 *Frier* Lady, what man is he you are accusde of?

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

Frier There is some strange misprision in the princes.

Bene. Two of them haue the very bent of honour,
 And if their wisdomes be misled in this,
 190 The practise of it liues in Iohn the Bastard,
 Whose spirites toyle in frame of villanies.

Leonato I know not, if they speake but truth of her,
 These hands shall teare her, if they wrong her honour,
 194 The proudest of them shal wel heare of it.
 Time hath not yet so dried this bloud of mine,
 Nor age so eate vp my inuention,

Nor

about Nothing.

IV.i.

Nor Fortune made such hauocke of my meanes,
 Nor my bad life rest me so much of friends,
 But they shall find awakte in such a kind,
 Both strength of limbe, and policy of mind,
 Ability in meanes, and choise of friends,
 To quit me of them throughly.

198

202

Frier Pawse awhile,
 And let my counsell sway you in this case,
 Your daughter here the princeesse (left for dead,)
 Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
 And publish it, that she is dead indeede,
 Maintaine a mourning ostentation,
 And on your families old monument,
 Hang mourneful epitaphes, and do all rites,
 That appertaine vnto a buriall.

206

210

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

Frier Mary this well caried, shall on her behalfe,,
 Change slaunder to remorse, that is some good,
 But not for that dreame I on this strange course,
 But on this trauaile looke for greater birth:
 She dying, as it must be so maintaine,
 Vpon the instant that she was accusde,
 Shal be lamented, pittied, and excusde
 Of euery hearer: for it so falls out,
 That what we haue, we prize not to the worth,
 Whiles we enioy it, but being lackt and lost,
 Why then we racke the valed, then we find
 The vertue that possession would not shew vs
 Whiles it was ours, so will it fare with Claudio:
 When hee shall heare she died vpon his words,
 Th Idæa of her life shall sweetly creepe,
 Into his study of imagination,
 And euery louely Organ of her life,
 Shall come appareld in more precious habite,
 More moouing delicate, and full of life,
 Into the eie and prospect of his soule
 Then when she liude indeed: then shall he mourne,

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Much adoe

234 If euer loue had interest in his liuer,
 And with he had not so accused her:
 No, though he thought his accusation true:
 Let this be so, and doubt not but successe
 238 Will fashion the euent in better shape,
 Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
 But if all ayme but this be leuelld false,
 The supposition of the ladies death,
 Will quench the wonder of her infamie.
 242 And if it fort not wel, you may conceale her,
 As best befits her wounded reputation,
 In some reclusiue and religious life,
 Out of all eies, tongues, minds, and iniuries.

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

Leon. Being that I flow in griefe,
 The smallest twine may leade me.

254 *Frier* Tis wel consented, presently away,
 For to strange fores, strangely they straine the cure,
 Come lady, die to liue, this wedding day
 Perhaps is but prolong'd, haue patience and endure. *exit.*

Bene. Lady Beatrice, haue you wept al this while?

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

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You haue no reason, I do it freely.

262 *Bene.* Surely I do beleeue your faire cosin is wronged.

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

Bene. Is there any way to shew such friendship?

Beat. A very euen way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

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

Bene. I doe loue nothing in the worlde so well as you,

about Nothing.

IV.i.

is not that strange?

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

Bened. By my sword Beatrice, thou louest me.

Beat. Do not sweare and eate it.

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

Beat. Will you not eate your word?

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

Beat. Why then God forgiue me.

Bened. VVhat offence sweete Beatrice?

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

Bened. And do it with all thy heart.

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

Bened. Come bid me doe any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bened. Ha, not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it, farewell.

Bened. Tarry sweete Beatrice.

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

Bened. Beatrice.

Beat. In faith I will go.

Bened. VVeele be friends first.

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

Bened. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is a not approoued in the height a villaine, that hath flaundered, scorned, dishonored my kinswoman? O that I were a man! what, beare her in hand, vntill they come to take handes, and then with publike accusation vncouerd flaunder, vnmittigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I would eate

IV.i.

Muchadoe

eat his heart in the market place.

Bened. Heare me Beatrice.

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

Bened. Nay but Beatrice.

Beat. Sweete Hero, she is wrongd, she is flaundred, shee is vndone.

316 *Bened.* Beat?

† *Beat.* Princes and Counties! surely a princely testimonie, a
320 goodly Counte, Counte Comfect, a sweete Gallant surely, O
that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend woulde
be a man for my sake! But manhoode is melted into curfies,
324 valour into complement, and men are only turnd into tongue,
and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only
tels a lie, and sweares it: I cannot be a man with wishing, there-
fore I will die a woman with grievuing.

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

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

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

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

† 336 *Bened.* Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will
kisse your hand, and so I leaue you: by this hand, Claudio shal
render me a deere account: as you heare of me, so think of me:
goe comforte your coosin, I must say she is dead, and so fare-
well.

IV.ii.

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

Keeper Is our whole dissembly appeard?

Cowley O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton Which be the malefactors?

4 *Andrew* Mary that am I, and my partner.

Cowley Nay thats certaine, we haue the exhibition to exam-
mine.

8 *Sexton* But which are the offenders? that are to be exami-
ned, let them come before maister constable.

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

about Nothing.

IV.ii.

name, friend?

Bor. Borachio.

Ke. Pray write downe Borachio. Yours sirra.

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

Ke. Write downe maister gentleman Conrade : maisters, do you serue God?

Both Yea sir we hope.

Kem. Write downe, that they hope they serue God : and write God first, for God defend but God shoulde goe before such villaines: maisters, it is prooued already that you are little better than false knaues, and it will go neere to be thought so shortly, how answer you for your selues?

Con. Mary sir we say, we are none.

Kemp A maruellous witty fellowe 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 knaues.

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

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

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

Kemp Yea mary, thats the esteest way, let the watch come forth : masters, 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 downe, prince Iohn a villaine : why this is flat periuurie, to call a Princes brother villaine.

Borachio Maister Constable.

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

Sexton VVhat heard you him say else?

Watch 2 Mary that he had receiued a thousand duckats of don Iohn, for accusing the Ladie Hero wrongfully.

Kemp Flat burglarye as euer was committed.

Const. Yea by masse that it is.

Sexton VVhat else fellow?

Watch

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IV.ii

Much adoe

Watch 1 And that Counte Claudio did meane vppon his wordes, to disgrace Hero before the whole assemblie, and not marrie her.

Kemp O villaine! thou wilt be condemnd into euerlasting redemption for this.

Sexton VVhat else? *Watch* This is all.

Sexton And this is more masters then you can deny, prince John is this morning secretlie stolne awaie : Hero was in this manner accusde, in this verie manner refufde, and vppon the grieve of this sodainlie died : Maister Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonatoes, I will goe before and shew him their examination.

Constable Come let them be opiniond.

Conley Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.

Kemp Gods my life, wheres the Sexton? let him write down the Princes officer Coxcombe: come, bind them, thou naughty varlet.

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

Kemp Dooft thou not suspect my place? dooft thou not suspect my yeeres? O that he were here to write me downe an asse! but maisters, remember that I am an asse, though it bee not written downe, yet forget not that I am an asse: No thou villaine, thou art full of pietie as shal be proude vpon thee by good witnes, I am a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a houtholder, and which is more, as pretty a peece of flesh as anie is in Messina, and one that knowes the Law, goe to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gownes, and eury thing hanfome about him: bring him away: O that I had bin writ downe an asse!

exit.

Enter Leonato and his brother.

Brother If you go on thus, you will kill your selfe, And tis not wisdom thus to second grieve, Against your selfe.

Leonato I pray thee cease thy counsaile, Which falles into mine cares as profitlesse, As water in a syue: giue not me counsaile,

Nor

about Nothing.

V.i.

Nor let no comforter delight mine eare,
 But such a one whose wrongs doe sute with mine.
 Bring me a father that so lou'd his child,
 Whose ioy of her is ouerwhelmd like mine,
 And bid him speake of patience,
 Measure his woe the length and bredth of mine,
 And let it answer euery straine for straine,
 As thus for thus, and such a griefe for such,
 In euery lineament, branch, shap, and forme:
 If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
 And sorrow, wagge, crie hem, when he should grone,
 Patch griefe with prouerbes, 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 griefe,
 Which they themselues not feelee, but tasting it,
 Their counsaile turnes to passion, which before,
 Would giue preceptiall medicine to rage,
 Fetter strong madnesse in a silken thred,
 Charme ach with ayre, and agony with words,
 No, no, tis all mens office, to speake patience
 To those that wring vnder the load of sorrow
 But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie
 To be so morall, when he shall endure
 The like himselfe: therefore giue me no counsaile,
 My griefes crie lower then aduertisement.
Brother Therein do men from children nothing differ.
Leonato I pray thee peace, I wil be flesh and bloud,
 For there was neuer yet Philosopher,
 That could endure the tooth-ake patiently,
 How euer they haue writ the stile of gods,
 And made a push at chance and sufferance.
Brother Yet bend not all the harme vpon your selfe,
 Make those that do offend you, suffer too.
Leonato There thou speakst reason, nay I will do so,
 My soule doth tell me, Hero is belied,

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And

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Much adoe

And that shall Claudio know, so shall the prince,
And all of them that thus dishonour her.

Enter Prince and Claudio.

Brother Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily.

Prince Good den, good den.

Claudio Good day to both of you.

Leonato Heare you my Lords?

Prince We haue some haste Leonato.

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

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

Brother If he could right himselfe with quarrelling,
Some of vs would lie low.

Claudio Who wrongs him?

Leona. Mary thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou:
Nay, neuer lay thy hand vpon thy sword,
I feare thee not.

Claudio Mary beshrew my hand,
If it should giue your age such cause of feare,
In faith my hand meant nothing to my sword.

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

Claudio My villany?

Leonato Thine Claudio, thine I say.

Prince You say not right old man.

Leonato

about Nothing.

V.i.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord,
He prooue it on his body if he dare,
Dispight his nice fence, and his actiue practise,
His Maie of youth, and bloome of lustihood.

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

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

Brother He shal kill two of vs, and men indeed,
But thats no matter, let him kill one first:
Win me and weare me, let him answer me,
Come follow me boy, come sir boy, come follow me
Sir boy, ile whip you from your foyning fence,
Nay, as I am a gentleman I, will.

Leonato Brother.

Brother Content your self, God knowes, I loued my neece,
And she is dead, slandered 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-fops.

Leonato Brother Anthony.

Brother Hold you content, what man! I know them, yea
And what they weigh, euen to the vtmost scruple,
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boies,
That lie, and cogge, and flout, depraue, and flaunder,
Go antiquely, and shew outward hidioufnesse,
And speake of halfe a dozen dang'rous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,
And this is all.

Leonato But brother Anthonie

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

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

Leonato My Lord, my Lord.

Prince I will not heare you.

H 2

Leonato

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106

Much adoe

Leo. No come brother, away, I wil be heard. *Exeunt amb.*

Bro. And shal, or some of vs wil smart for it. *Enter Ben.*

110 *Prince* See see, heere comes the man we went to seeke.

Cland. Now signior, what newes?

Bened. Good day my Lord :

114 *Prince* Welcome signior, you are almost come to parte almost a fray.

Cland. Wee had likt to haue had our two noses snappt off with two old men without teeth.

118 *Prince* Leonato and his brother what thinkst thou? had we fought, I doubt we should haue beene too yong for them.

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

122 *Cland.* We haue beene vp and downe to seeke thee, for we are high prooffe melancholie, and would faine haue it beaten away, wilt thou vse thy wit?

Bened. It is in my scabberd, shal I drawe it?

126 *Prince* Doeest thou weare thy wit by thy side?

Cland. Neuer any did so, though very many haue been beside their wit, I will bid thee drawe, as wee doe the minstrels, draw to pleasure vs.

130 *Prince* As I am an honest man he lookes pale, art thou sicke, or angry?

134 *Cland.* What courage man : what though care kild a catte, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

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

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

Prince By this light he chaunges more and more, I thinke he be angry indeed.

142 *Cland.* If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.

Bened. Shall I speake a word in your eare?

Cland. God blesse me from a challenge.

146 *Bened.* You are a villaine, I ieast not, I will make it good howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare : doo mee right, or I will protest your cowardise : you haue kild a sweete

about Nothing.

V.i.

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

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

Prince What, a feast, a feast?

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

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

Prince Ile tell thee how Beatrice praisd thy witte the other day: I said thou hadst a fine witte, true said she, a fine little one: no said I, a great wit: right saies she, a great grosse one: nay said I, a good wit, iust said she, it hurts no body: nay said I, the gentleman is wise: certaine said she, a wise gentleman: nay said I, he hath the tongues: that I belecue said shee, for he swore a thing to mee on munday night, which hee forswore on tuesday morning, theres a double tongue theirs two tongues, thus did shee an houre together trans- shape thy particular vertues, yet at last shee occluded with a sigh, thou wast the properst man in Italy.

Cland. For the which shee wept heartily and saide she cared not.

Prince Yea that shee did, but yet for all that, and if shee did not hate him deadly, shee would loue him dearly, the old mans daughter told vs all.

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

Prince But when shall we set the sauage bulles hornes one the sensible Benedicks head?

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

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

Much adoe

Prince He is in earnest.

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

Prince And hath challenge thee.

Claudio Most sincerely.

Prince What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his dublet and hose, and leaues off his wit!

Enter Constables, Conrade, and Borachio.

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

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

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

Prince How now, two of my brothers men bound? Borachio one.

Claudio Hearken after their offence my Lord.

Prince Officers, what offence haue these men done?

Const. Mary sir, they haue committed false report, moreover they haue spoken vntruths, secondarily they are slanderers, sixt and lastly, they haue belyed a Lady, thirdly they haue vnedged vniust thinges, and to conclude, they are lying knaues.

Prince. First I aske thee what they haue done, thirdly I ask thee whats their offence, sixt and lastly why they are committed, and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his owne diuision, and by my troth theres one meaning wel suted.

Prince Who haue you offended maisters, that you are thus bound to your answere? this learned Constable is too cunning to be vnderstood, whats your offence?

Bor. Sweete prince, let me goe no farther to mine answere: do you heare me, and let this Counte kill me: I haue deceiued euen your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discouer, these shallowe fooles haue broght to light, who in the night ouerheard me confessing to this man, how Don Iohn your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero, howe you were brought

about Nothing.

brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Heroes garments, how you disgrace hir when you should marry hir: my villany they haue vpon record, which I had rather seale with my death, then repeate ouer to my shame: the lady is dead vpon mine and my masters false accusations: and briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villaine.

Prince Runnes not this speech like yron through your bloud?

Claud. I haue dronke poison whiles he vttered it.

Prince But did my brother set thee on to this?

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

Prince He is compoſde and framde of treacherie; And fled he is vpon this villanie.

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

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

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

Enter Leonato, his brother, and the Sexton.

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

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

Leonato Art thou the ſlaue that with thy breath haſt killd Mine innocent child?

Bor. Yea, euen I alone.

Leo. No, not ſo villaine, thou belieſt thy ſelfe, Here ſtand a paire of honourable men, A third is fled that had a hand in it:

I thanke you Princes for my daughters death, Record it with your high and worthy deeds, T was brauely done, if you bethinke you of it.

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

Impoſe

244

246

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Vi.

Much adoe

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

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

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

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

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

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

Const. Moreouer sir, which indeede is not vnder white and
 blacke, this plaintiffe heere, the offendour, did call me asse, I
 beseech you let it be remembred in his punishment, and also
 the

about Nothing.

V.i.

the watch heard them talke of one Deformed, they say he weares a key in his eare and a locke hanging by it, and borows monie in Gods name, the which he hath vsde so long, & neuer paid, that now men grow hard-hearted and wil lend nothing for Gods sake: praie you examine him vpon that point.

320

Leonato I thanke thee for thy care and honest paines.

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

324

Leon. Theres for thy paines.

Const. God saue the foundation.

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

328

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

332

Leon. Vnill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

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

Prince We will not faile.

Claud. To night ile mourne with Hero.

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

340

Enter Benedicke and Margaret.

V.ii.

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

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

4

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

8

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

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

12

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

I

Bene.

Much ado

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

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

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

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

Exit Margarete.

Bene. And therefore wil come. The God of loue that sits aboue, and knowes mee, and knowes me, how pittifull I deserue. I meane in singeing, but in louing, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first imploier of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet runne smoothly in the euen rode of a blancke verse, why they were neuer so truly turnd ouer and ouer as my poore selfe in loue: mary I cannot shew it in rime, I haue tried, I can finde out no rime to Ladie but babie, an innocent rime: for scorne, horne, a hard rime: for schoole foole, a babling rime: very ominous endings, no, I was not borne vnder a riming plannet, nor I cannot wooe in festiuall termes: sweete Beatrice wouldst thou come when I cald thee?

Enter Beatrice.

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

Bene. O stay but till then.

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

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

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

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sence, so forcible is thy wit, but I must tel thee plainly, Claudio vndergoes my challenge, and either I must shortly heare from him, or I will subscribe him a coward, and I pray thee now tell me,
for

about Nothing.

V.ii.

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

Beat. For them all together, which maintained so politique a state of evil, that they will not admitte 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 indeed, for I love thee against my will.

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

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

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

Bene. An old, an old instance Beatrice, that liu'd in the time of good neighbours, if a man do not erect in this age his owne toomb ere he dies, he shall liue no longer in monument, then the bell rings, and the widow weepes.

Beat. And how long is that thinke you?

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

Beat. Verie ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Verie ill too.

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

Enter Versula.

Vrsula. Madam, you must come to your vncle, yonders old coile at home, it is prooued my Lady Hero hath bin falsely accus'de, the Prince and Claudio mightily abus'de, 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 liue in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy cies: and moreouer, I will go with thee to thy vncles.

exit. Enter

V.iii.

Much adoe

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 heere lies:

Death in guerdon of her wronges,

Giues her fame which neuer dies:

So the life that dyed with shame,

Liues in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there vpon the toomb,

Praising hir when I am dead.

Claudio Now musick sound & 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, help vs to sigh & grone.

Heauily heauily.

Graues yawne and yeeld your dead,

Till death be vttered,

Heauily heauily. (right.

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

Prince Good morrow maisters, put your torches out,

The wolues haue preied, and looke, the gentle day

Before the wheelles of Phoebus, round about

Dapples the drowfie East with spots of grey:

Thanks to you al, and leaue vs, fare you well.

Claudio Good morrow maisters, each his feuerall way.

Prince Come let vs hence, and put on other weedes,

And then to Leonatoes we will goe.

Claudio And Hymen now with luckier issue speeds,

Then this for whom we rendred vp this woe. *exeunt.*

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

Frier Did I not tell you shee was innocent?

Leo. So are the Prince and Claudio who accusd her,

Vpon the errour that you heard debated:

But Margaret was in some fault for this,

Although against her will as it appears,

In

V.iv.

about Nothing.

V. iv.

In the true course of all the question.

Old Wel, I am glad that all things sorts so well.

Bened. And so am I, being else by faith enforst
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leo. Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by your selues,
And when I send for you come hither masked:
The Prince and Claudio promise by this howre
To visite me, you know your office brother,
You must be father to your brothers daughter,
And giue her to young Claudio. *Exeunt Ladies.*

Old Which I will doe with confirmd countenance.

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

Frier To doe what Signior?

Bened. To bind me, or vndo me, one of them:
Signior Leonato, truth it is good Signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of fauour.

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

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

Leo. The sight whereof I thinke you had from me,
From Claudio and the Prince, but whats your will?

Bened. Your answere fir is enigmaticall,
But for my wil, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conioynd,
In the state of honorable marriage,
In which (good Frier) I shal desire your help.

Leo. My heart is with your liking.

Frier And my helpe.

Heere comes the Prince and Claudio.

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

Prince Good morrow to this faire assembly.

Leo. Good morrow Prince, good morrow Claudio:
We heere attend you, are you yet determined,
To day to marry with my brothers daughter?

Claud. He hold my mind were she an Ethiopie.

Leo Call her forth brother, heres the Frier ready.

P. Good morrow Bened, why whats the matter?

I 3

That

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40 †

Much adoe

That you haue such a Februarie face,
So full of frost, of storme, and clowdinesse.

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

48 *Bene.* Bull Ioue sir had an amiable lowe,
And some such strange bull leapt your fathers cowe,
† And got a calfe in that same noble feate,
Much like to you, for you haue iust his bleate.

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula.

52 *Claud.* For this I owe you: here comes other recknings.
Which is the Lady I must seize vpon?

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

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

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

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

60 *Hero* And when I liu'd I was your other wife,
And when you loued, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero.

Hero Nothing certainer,

† One Hero died defilde, but I do liue,
64 And surely as I liue, I am a maide.

Prince The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

Leon. She died my Lord, but whiles her slaunder liu'd.

Frier All this amazement can I qualifie,

68 When after that the holy rites are ended,

Ile tell you largely offaire Heroes death,

Meane time let wonder seeme familiar,

And to the chappell let vs presently,

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

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

Bene. Do not you loue me?

Beat. Why no, no more then reason.

Bene.

about Nothing.

Viv.

Bene. Why then your vncle, and the prince, and Claudio.
Haue beene deceiu'd, they swore you did.

Beat. Do not you loue me?

Bene. Troth no, no more then reason.

Beat. Why then my cosin Margaret and Vrsula
Are much deceiu'd, for they did sweare you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sieke for me.

Beat. They swore that you were welnigh dead for me.

Bene. Tis no such matter, then you do not loue me.

Beat. No truly, but in friendly recompence.

Leon. Come cosin, I am sure you loue the gentleman.

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

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

Bene. A miracle, heres our owne hands against our hearts:
come, I will haue thee, but by this light I take thee for pittie.

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

Leon. Peace I will stop your mouth,

Prince. How dost thou Benedicke the married man?

Bene. Ile tel thee what prince: a colledge of witte-crackers
cannot flout me out of my humour, dost thou think I care for
a Satyre or an Epigramme? no, if a man will be beaten with
braines, a shall weare nothing handsome about him: in briebe,
since I doe purpose to marrie, I will think nothing to anie pur-
pose that the world can saie against it, and therefore neuer flout
at me, for what I haue said against it: for man is a giddie thing,
and this is my conclusion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke
to haue beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman,
liue vnbruisde, and loue my cousen.

Claudio. I had wel hope thou wouldst haue denied Beatrice,
that I might haue cudgell'd thee out of thy single life, to make
thee

V.IV.*Much adoe*

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

120 *Bene.* Come, come, we are friends, lets haue a dance ere we
are maried, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wiues
hecles.

Leon. Weele haue dancing afterward.

124 *Bene.* Firft, of my worde, therefore plaie musicke, Prince,
thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife, there is no staffe
more reuerent then one tipt with horne.

Enter Messenger.

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

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

F I N I S.

