SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY
OF
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING;

PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHED, BY EXPRESS PERMISSION,
AND UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF

MR. H. STAUNTON,

FROM

THE MATCHLESS ORIGINAL OF 1600,

In the Library of the Earl of Ellesmere.

R. PRESTON, Photo.

LONDON: DAY & SON,

Lithographers to H.M. the QUEEN, and to H.R.H. the PRINCE OF WALES,
6, GATE STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

1864.
THE serious incidents of this admirable Play, one of the most brilliant, highly finished, and entertaining of all Shakespeare's Comedies, have been variously attributed to the story of Ariodante and Genevra, in book v. of Ariosto's Orlando Furioso; to the tale of the hapless stripling whom "Sir Guyon" rescues from "Furor" and "Occasion," in book ii., Canto 4, of The Faerie Queene; and to a novel by Bandello.

Shakespeare's obligations to Ariosto in this piece are, however, not easy to be discerned, and the utmost he could have derived from Spenser is the circumstance of "Philemon" persuading "Pryené" to array herself in her lady's "gorgeous geare." This may have suggested the idea of "Margaret" being induced to put on "Hero's" clothes, and play a love scene, wherein, for sport, she imitates her mistress and calls her wooer "Claudio."

The real source of the tragic plot appears to have been some, now extinct, translation of Bandello's twenty-second novel; of which the argument is,—"Como il S. Timbreo di Cardona, essendo col Re Piero d'Aragona in Messina, s'innamora di Fenicia Leonata; e i vari fortunevoli accidenti che avvennero prima che per moglie la prendesse." In this romance "Don Pedro"
of Arragon returns from a victorious campaign, and with his friend, the gallant "Signor Timbreo di Cardona," makes a sojourn at Messina. Here "Signor Timbreo" becomes enamoured with "Fenicia," the beautiful daughter of "Lionato di Leonati," a gentleman of the place, and, like "Claudio" in the play, courts her by proxy. His suit proves successful, and the lovers are betrothed; when one "Girondo," a disappointed suitor of the lady, determines to prevent the marriage. In pursuance of his design, he impresses in the mind of "Timbreo" a belief that "Fenicia" is unfaithful, and offers to show him a stranger in the act of scaling her chamber window. The unhappy lover agrees to watch, and at the appointed hour "Girondo" and an accomplice in the plot pass him disguised, and the confederate is seen to ascend a ladder and enter "Lionato's" house. In a tumult of rage and jealousy, "Timbreo," on the morrow, accuses the lady of disloyalty, and rejects the alliance. "Fenicia" falls into a swoon; a dangerous illness supervenes; and her father, to stifle all rumours injurious to her reputation, has her conveyed to a retired dwelling of his brother, proclaims her death, and solemnly performs her funeral obsequies. Struck with remorse at having caused the death of a being so pure and innocent, "Girondo" confesses the treachery he has been guilty of to "Timbreo," and the two determine to restore the fair fame of the slandered lady, and to undergo any penance her family may impose. "Lionato" is merciful, and he demands only that "Timbreo" shall wed a lady whom he recommends, and whose face shall be concealed till the ceremony has been performed. The dénouement is
easily surmised. "Timbreo" espouses the mysterious bride, and finds in her his loving, faithful, and beloved "Feniccia."

Bandello's contribution to the Play ends here. The under-plot,—secondary only in name,—the characters, including the inimitable "Beatrice" and "Benedict," the unrivalled "Dogberry," "Verges," and their subordinates; the sparkling dialogue, with its delicate irony, its wit, its pathos, and its humour,—these are all Shakespeare's own mintage; and they are destined to enchant the world while and wherever the language in which he wrote is known.

The only edition of *Much Ado about Nothing* published before the First folio collection of Shakespeare's Dramas is the Quarto of 1600. It differs in many minute particulars from the text of the Folio, and has become exceedingly rare.

The Copy in Bridgewater House, from which, by the generous permission of the Ellesmere family, the present *fac-simile* has been executed, is incomparably finer than any other extant, and its reproduction can hardly fail to prove of interest to the literary world.

*September, 1864.*
Much adoe about Nothing.

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

Written by William Shakespeare.
Enter Leonato governor of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his niece, with a messenger.

Leonato.

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

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

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

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

Leon. A victory is twice itself, when the achieuer brings home full numbers: I find here, that don Peter hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio.

Mess. Much defer'd on his part, and equally remembered by don Pedro; he hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion, he hath indeed better bin the expectation, than you must expect of me to tell you how.

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

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

Leo. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure.
Much ado

Leo. A kind overflown of kindnesse, there are no faces truer
then those that are so waisht, how much better is it to weepe at
joy, then to joy 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 sort.

Leonato What is he that you aske for neece?

Hero My cosen meanes Signior Benedicke of Padua.

Meff. O hee's returnd, and as plesant as euer he was.

Beat. He set vp his bills here in Messina, and challengde
Cupid at the Flight, and my uncles foole reading the chalenge
subscribde for Cupid, and challengde 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.

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

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

Meff. And a good fouldier too, ladie.

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

Meff. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stufft with al hono-

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

Leo. You must not, sir, mistake my neece, there is a kind
of myrwarre betwixt Signior Benedicke and her, they never
meet but there's a skirmith of wit betweene them.

Beat. Alas he gets nothing by that, in our last conflikt, 4 of his
five wits went halting off; and now is the whole man gouernd
with one, so that if he haue wit enough to keep himself warm,
let him beare it for a difference betweene himself and his horse,
for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasona-
ble
about Nothing.

ble creature, who is his companion now? he hath every month
a new sworn brother.
Mess. Itt possible?
Beat. Very easily possible, he weares his faith but as the fa-
shion of his hat, it ever 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 young squarer now that
will make a voyage with him to the diuell?
Mess. He is most in the companie of the right noble Clau-
dio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang vpon him like a disease, hee is
sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs present-
ly madde, God help the noble Claudio, if he haue caught the
Benedict, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a be cured.
Mess. I will holde friends with you Ladie.
Beat. Do good friend.
Leon. You will never runne madde niece.
Beat. No, not till a hote January.
Mess. Don Pedro is approacht.

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

Pedro Good signior Leonato, are you come to meet your
trouble : the fashion of the world is, to auoyd cost, and you in-
counter it.
Leon. Never 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 have it full Benedicke, wee may ghesse by this,
what you are, being a man, truely the Lady fathers her selfe:
Much ado

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

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

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

Benc. What my deere lady Disdale! are you yet living?

Bea. Is it possible Disdale should die, while the hath such meete foode to feede it, as Signior Benedicke? Curtesie itselfe must convert to Disdale, if you come in her presence.

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

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

Benc. God keepe your Ladiship stil in that mind, so some Gentleman or other shall escape a predestinate scratch face.

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

Benc. Well, you are a rare parrot 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 contunier, but keep your way a Gods name, I have done.

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

Pedro. That is the summe of all: Leonato, signior Claudio, and signior Benedicke, my deere friend Leonato, hath invited you all, I tell him we shall stay here, at the leaft a moneth, and he heavily 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 duetie.

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

Leon.
about Nothing.

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

Exeunt. Manent Benedicke & Claudio.

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

Claudio. No, I pray thee speake in sober judgement.
Bene. Why faith me thinks shee too low for a hie praise,
too browne for a faire praise, and too little for a great praise, on-
tlie this commendation I can afford her, that were shee other
then she is, she were vvhansome, 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 ieuel?
Bene. Yea, and a care to putte it into, but spreake you this
with a sad brow? or doe you play the flowtine jacke, 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 euuer I
lookt on.

Bened. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such
matter: theres her cousin, and she were not possest 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, have you?

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

Bened. Ift come to this? in faith hath not the world one
man but he will weare his cappe with suspicion? shall I never
see a batcheller of three score again? go to yfaith, and thou wilt
needs thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and
figh away fundaies: 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?

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

Pedro I charge thee on thy allegiance.

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

Claud. If this were so, so were it vttred.

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 love her, for the Lady is very well worthy.

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

Pedro By my troth, I speake my thought.

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

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

Claud. That I love 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 walt ever an obstinate heretique in the despight of Beauty.

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

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thanke her: that she brought me vp, I likewise give her most humble thankes: but that I will have a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, 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.

which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor.

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

Bene. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my Lord, not with love: proove that euer I loose more blood with love then I will get againe with drinking, picke out mine eyes 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 prooue a notable argument.

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

Pedro Well, as time shall trye: in time the sauage bull doth beare the yoke.

Bene. The sauage bull may, but if euer the sensiblle Benedicke beare it, plucke off the bulls horns, 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 born madde.

Pedro Nay, if Cupid haue not spent all his quiever in Ven-nice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

Bened. I looke for an earthquake too then.

Pedro Well, oue 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 have almost matter enough in mee for suche an Embassallage, and so I committ you.

Claun. 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 guarden with fragements, and the guardes are but slightely baston on neither, ere you flowt old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leave you. exit

Claudio
Much adoe

Claudio My liege, 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, she is his onely heire:
Doost thou affect her Claudio?

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

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

Claudio How sweetly you do minister to loue,
That know loues grieue by his complexion?
But left my liking might too sodaine see me,
I would haue salude it with a longer treatise.

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

And
about Nothing.

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

    Enter Leonato and an old man brother to Leonato

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

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

Leo. Are they good?

Old As the events (tampes them) but they have a good co-
uer : 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 ac-
cordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and in-
stantly breake with you of it.

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

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

Leo. No, no, we 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 her of it; cousins, you know what you haue to doe,
O I crie you mercie friend, go you with me and I wil vse your
shill: good cousin have a care this busie time.  

    Enter for John the bastard, and Conrade his companion.

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

John. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds, ther-
fore the sadnesse is without limit.

Con. You should heare reason.

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

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

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

B 2  
mor-
Much adoe

mortifying mischiefe: I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad
when I haue cause, and smile at no mans leisures, eate when I haue
stomack, and wait for no mans leisures; sleep when I am drow-
sie, 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 contrustment, you haue of late stooide
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 selfe, it is needful that you
frame the season for your owne harvest.

John I had rather bee a canker in a hedge, then a rose in his
grace, and it better fits my bloud to be disdaine'd of all, then to
fashion a cariage to rob loue from any; in this (thogh I cannot
be said to bee a flattering honest man) it must not be denied but I
am a plain dealing villain, I am trusted with a muffel, and en-
fracchise with a clogge, therfore I haue decreed, not to sing
in my cage; if I had my mouth I would bite; if I had my libert-
ty 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 mariaige.

John Will it serene for any model to build mischiefe on? what
is he for a foole that betrothes 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.

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

John Come, come, let vs thither, this may prove food to my displeasure, that young start vp hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can crosse him any way, I bless my selfe every way, you are both sure, and will 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 goe prove what's to be done?

Bor. Weele wait vpon your lordship. exit.

Enter Leonato his brother, his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his niece, and a kin's man.

Leonato Was not counte John here at supper?

Bor. I saw him not.

Beatrice How tartely that gentleman lookes, I never saw him but I am heart-burn'd an hower after.

Hero He is of a very melancholy disposition.

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

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

Beatrice With a good legge and a good foote vnkle, 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 niece, thou wilt neuer get thee a husband, if thou be fo shrewd of thy tongue.

Bor. Infaith shees too curt.

Beatrice Too curt is more then curt , I shall lesten...
Muchadoe

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

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

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

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

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 then a man: and he that is more then a youth, is not for me, and he that is lesse then a man, I am not for him, therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the Berrold, and leade his apes into hell.

Leonato Well then, go you into hell.

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

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

Beatrice Yes faith, it is my cozens dute to make curstie and say, father, as it please you: but yet for all that cofin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make an other curstie, and say, father, as it please me.

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

Beatrice Not til God make men of some other mettal then earth, would it not grieve a woman to be ouer-masterd with a piece of valiant dust to make an account of her life to a clod of waiward marle? no vnkle, ilke none: A dams sonnes are my brethren, and truely I holde it a sinne to match in my kinred.

Leonato
about Nothing.

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

Beatrice The fault will be in the musique cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in every thing, and so daunce out the answer, for here me Hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch ijge, a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suite is hot and hafty like a Scotch ijge (and ful as fantastical) the wedding mannerly modest (as a measure) full of state and auncheontry, and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faster and faster, till he sink into his graue.

Leonato Cousin you apprehend passing shrewdly.

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

Leonato The reuellers are entring brother, make good roome.

Enter prince Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke and Balbaser, or dumbJohn.

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 favour, for God defend the lute should be like the cale.

Pedro My vifor is Philemons roose, within the house is lune.

Hero Why then your vifor should be thatch

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 have many ill qualities.

Bene. Which is one?

Mar. I say my prayers alowd.
Much adoe

Bene. I love you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.
Marg. God match me with a good dauncer.
Balth. Amen.
Marg. And God keep him out of my sight when the daunce is done: answer Clarke.
Balth. No more words, the Clarke is answered.
Ursula I know you well enough, you are signior Antho- nio.

Antho. At a word I am not.
Ursula I knowe you by the wagling of your head.
Antho. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.
Ursula You could never doe him so ill well, vnlesse you were the very man: heeres his drie hand vp and downe, you are he, you are he.
Antho. At a word, I am not.
Ursula Come, come, do you thinke I do not know you by your excellent wit? can vertue hide it selfe? go to, mumme, you are he, graces will appeare, and there is an end.
Beat. Will you not tell me who tolde you so?
Bened. No, you shall pardon me.
Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?
Bened. Not now.
Beat. That I was disdainfull, and that I had my good wit out of the hundred merry tales: wel, this was signior Benedick that said so.
Bened. What's he?
Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.
Bened. Not I, beleene me.
Beat. Did he never make you laugh?
Bened. I pray you what is he?
Beat. Why he is the prince of aster, every dul fool, only his gift is, in devising impossible slaunders, none but Libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villanie, for he both pleaseth men and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beate him: I am sure he is in the Fleece, I would he had booded me.
Bene. When I know the Gentleman, Ie tell him what you say.
Beat.
about Nothing.

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

Bene. In every good thing.

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

Dance

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

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

John. Are not you signior Benedicke?

Clau. You know me well, I am he.

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

Claudio. How know you he loves her?

John. I heard him sweare his affection.

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

John. Come let vs to the banquet.

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedicke, But heare these ill newes with the eares of Claudio:
This certaine is, the Prince wooes for himselfe, Friendship is constant in all other things, Save in the office and affaires of loue:
Therefore all hearts in loue vse their owne tongues.
Let every eie negotiate for it selfe,
And truist no Agent: for Beauty is a witch,
Against whose charmes, faith melteth into blood:
This is an accident of hourly prove,
(dicke Which I mistrusted not: farewel therefore Hero. Enter Bene-
Benedicke Count Claudio.

Claudio. Yea, the same.
Much ado

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 armue, like a Lieutenant's scarffe? you must weare it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.
Claudio I wish him joy of her.
Bened. Why that's spoken like an honest Drouier, so they fell bullocks: but did you think the Prince would haue serv'd you thus?
Claudio I pray you leave me.
Benedicke Ho now you strike like the blindman, 'twas the boy that stole your meate, and you beate the post.
Claudio If it will not be, Ie leave 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 fooliah, 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, Ie be revenged as I may.

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

Pedro Now signior, where is 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 yoong Ladie, and I offred him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forfaken, or to binde him vp a rod, as being worthie to bee whipt.
Pedro To be whipt, what is his fault?
Benedicke The flatte transgression of a Schoole-boy, who being ouer-joyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companion, and he fleales it.
Pedro Wilt thou make a truf't: a transgression, the transgres-
sion is in the stealer.

Benedick 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 daunger with her, told her she is much wronged by you.

Bened. O shee misled me past the indurance of a blocke: an oakke 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 isenter, that I was duller than a great thawe, huddling left upon left, with such impossible conceance upon me, that I stood like a man at a marke, with a whole army shooting at me: she speakes poynyards, and every word stabbes: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no lieing neere her, shee would infect to the north starre: I would not marry her, though shee were indowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgress, she would haue made Hercules haue turnd spit, yea, and haue clest his club to make the fire too: come, take not of her, you shall find her the infernall Ate in good apparell. I would to God some scholler woulde conjure her, for certainly, while she is heere, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuarie, and people sinne upon purpose, because they would goe thither, so indeede all disquiet, horrour, and perturbation followes her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

Pedro Looke heere she comes.

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

C2 the
Much ado

the length of Prelster Johns foot: fetch you a haire off the great
Chams beard: doe you any embazage to the Pigmies, rather
than holde three words conference, with this harpy, you have
no imployment for me?

Pedro None, but to desyre your good company.

Benedicke O God Sir, heeres a dith I loue not, I cannot in-
dure my Ladie Tongue.

Pedro Come Lady, come, you haue loft the heart of signi-
or Benedicke.

Beatrice Indeed my Lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gaue
him vfe for it, a double heart for his single one, many once be-
fore he wonne it of me, with falsd dice; therefore your grace
may well say I haue loft 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,
not well: but ciuil Counte, ciuil as an orange, and somthing
of that jealous complexion.

Pedro If faith Lady, I think your blazon to be true, though
ile be sworne, if he be so, his conceit is false: heere Claudio, I
haue woode 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 joy.

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

Beatrice Speake Counte, tis your Qu.

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

Beat. Speake cousin, or (if you cannot) stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speake either.

Pedro Infaith lady you have a merry heart.

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

Claus. And so the doth cousin.

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

Pedro Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

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

Prince Will you haue me? lady.

Beat. No my lord, vnles I might haue another for working-days, your grace is too costly to wear every 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.

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

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

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

exit Beatrice.

Prince By my troth a pleasant spirited lady.

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

Pedro She cannot indure to heare tell of a husband.

Leonato O by no means, she mockes at her wooers out of sute.
Much adoe

Prince She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

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

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

Claud. To morow my Lord, Time goes on crutches, til Loue have all his rites.

Leonato Not til monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a iust feuennight, and a time too briefe 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, undertake one of Hercules labors, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection, th' one with th' other, I would faine have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

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

Claud. And I my Lord.

Prince And you too gentl Hero?

Hero I wil do any modest office, my Lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

Prince And Benedicke is not the vnhopefull'est husband that I know: thus farre can I praise him, he is of a noble strain, of approved valoure, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in loute with Benedicke, and I, with your two helps, wil so practice on Benedicke, that in despite of his quicke wit, and his queasie stomacke, he shall fall in loute with Beatrice: if we can do this, Cupid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall bee ours, for we are the onely loute-gods, goe in with mee, and I will tell you my drift.

Exit John and Borachio.

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

Bora Yea my Lord, but I can crosse it.
about Nothing.

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

Bor. Not honestly my lord, but so 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 favour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

John I remember.

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

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

Bor. The 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 mighty hold vp, to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

John What proofe shall I make of that?

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

John Oney to dispight them I will endeavour any thing.

Bor. Go then, find me a meet hour, 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 triall: offer them instances which shall beare no leffe 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 intendent wedding, for in the mean time, I wil fo fashien the matter, that Hero shal be absented, and ther shall appeare such seeming truth of Heroes disloyaltie, that jealousie shal be cal'd affurance
Much ado.

rance, and all the preparation overthrown.

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

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

John I will presently go learn their day of marriage. exit

Enter Benedick 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 have thee hence and here again. I do much wonder, that one man seeing how much another man is a foole, when he dedicates his behavioirs to loue, will after he hath laught at such shallow follies in others, becom the argument of his owne scorne, by falling in loue, and such a man is Claudio. I have knowne when there was no musicke with him but the drumme and the sife, and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe: I have knowne when he would haue walkt ten mile afoot, to see a good armour, and now wil he lie ten nights awake caruing the fashion of a new doubled: he was woont to speake plaine, and to the purpose (like an honest man and a souldier) and now is he turnd oratography, his words are a very fantasticall banquet, iust so many strange dishes: may I be so converted and see with these eies? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I wil not be sworne but loue may transorme me to an oyster, but ile take my oath on it, till he haue made and oyster of me, he shall neuer make me such a foole: one woman is faire, yet I am well, an other is wife, yet I am well: an other vertuous, yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not com in my grace: rich she shal be that certain, wife, 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 angell, of good discours, an excellent musitian, and her haire
about Nothing.

haire shall be of what colour it please God, ha! the prince and monsieur Louise, I will hide me in the arbor.

Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Musick.

Prince Come shall we heare this musique?

Claud. Yea my good lord; how stil the evening is,

As hutf on purpose to grace harmonie!

Prince See you where Benedick hath hid himselfe?

Claud. O very well my lord: the musique ended,

Whee fete the kid-fox with a penny worth.

Enter Balthasar with musique.

Prince Come Balthasar, whee heare that song againe.

Balth. O good my lord, taxe not so bad a voice,

To flaunder musique 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 thinke not worthy, yet he woxes,

Yet will he sweare he loves.

Prince Nay, pray thee come,

Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,

Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,

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

Prince Why these are very crotchets that he speakes,

Note notes forsooth and nothing,

Bene. Now divine aire, now his soule rauisht, is it not strange that sheepes guts should have soules out of mens bodies? Well a horne for my mony when alls done.

The Song.

Sigh no more ladies, sigh no more,

Men were deceivers ever,

One foote in sea, and one on shore,

To one thing constant never,

Then sigh not so, but let them go,

And be you blith and bonnie,
Much adoe

Converting all your soundes of woe,
Into heynony nony.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
Of dumps so dull and heavy,
The fraud of men was euer so,
Since summer first waseauny,
Then sigh not so, &c.

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

Exit Balthasar.

Prince. Do so, farewell. Come hither Leonato, what was
it you told mee of to day, that your niece Beatrice was in loue
with signior Benedicke?
Cla. O I, falle ke on, falle ke on, the foule sit, I did neuer think
that lady would haue loued any man.
Leo. No nor I neither, but most wonderful, that she should
so dote on signior Benedicke, whom she hath in all outward
behaviours seemd euer to abhorre.
Bene. Ift possible? sit the wind in that corner?
Leo. By my troth my Iord, I cannot tell what to thinke of
it, but that she loues him with an inraged affection, it is past the
infinite of thought.
Prince. May be the doth but counterfeit.
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.

Prince Why what effects of passion shewes she?
Claud. Baite the hooke wel, this fish will bite.
Leod. What effects my Lord she will fit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.
Claud. She did indeede.
Prince How, how I pray you, you amaze me, I would have thought her spirite had beene invincible against all assaults of affection.
Leod. I would have sworn it had, my lord, especially against Benedicke,
Bene. I should think this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot sure hide himself in such reverence.
Claud. He hath taken his infection, hold it vp.
Prince Hath shee made her affection knowne to Benedicke?
Leod. No, and sweares shee neuer will, thats her torment.
Claudio Tis true indeede, so your daughter saies: shall I, saies she, that have so oft encountered him with remorse, write to him that I love him?
Leod. 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, till she haue writ a sheete of paper: my daughter tells us all.
Claud. Now you talk of a sheete of paper, I remember a prety left your daughter told of vs,
Leod. O when she had writ it, and was reading it ouer, she found Benedicke and Beatrice betweene the sheete.
Claudio That.
Leod. O she tore the letter into a thousand halspence, railed 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 love him I should.
Claud. Then downe vpon her knees she falls, weepes, sobs, beats her heart, tears her haire, prays, curtes, O sweet Benedicke,
Much ado

dicke, God give me patience.

Leonato She doth indeed, my daughter saies so, and the ex-
tasie hath so much ouerborne her, that my daughter is some-
time afearde 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 discover it.

Claudio To what end she would make but a sport of it, and
sorment the poore lady worse.

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

Claudio And she is exceeding wife.

Prince In euery thing but in louing Benedicke.

Leonato O my Lord, wisedome and blood combating in
so tender a body, we haue ten prooses to one, that bloud hath
the victory, I am sorry for her, as I haue iust cause, beeing her
niece, 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 self:
I pray you tell Benedicke of it, and heare what a will say.

Leonato Were it good thinke you?

Claudio Hero thinkes surely she will die; for she saies shee
will die, if he loue her not, and shee will die ere shee make her
loue knowne, and she will die if he woot her, rather than shee
will bate one breath of her accustomed crostneffe.

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

Claudio He is a very proper man.

Prince He hath indeede a good outward happines.

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

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

Claudio And I take him to be valiant.

Prince As Hector, I assure you, and in the manning of
quarrells you may say he is wise; for either hee auoydes them
with
about Nothing.

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

Leonato If he doe 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, 
howsoever it seemes not in him, by some large iestes hee will 
make: well I am sorry 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 
unworthy so good a lady.

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

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

Prince Let there be the same nette spread for her, and that 
muost your daughter and her gentlewomen carry: the sporte 
will be, when they holde one an opinion of another's dotage, 
and no such matter, that the scene that I woulde see, which 
will be mereely a dume shew: let us send her to call him in to 
dinner.

Benedicke This can be no tricke, the conference was sadly 
borne, they have the truth of this from Hero, they seeme to 
pitie the Lady: it seemes her affections haue their full bent: 
loue me? why it muust be requited: I heare how I am cenfurde, 
they say I will beare my selfe prouedly, if I perceiue the loue 
come from her: they say too, that she will rather die than give 
anie signe of affection: I did never thinke to marry, I muust 
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 heare them witnesse; and vertuous, tis so, I can-
not reprooue it, and wife, but for loving me, by my woth it is

D 3 no
Much adoe

no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her follie, for
I will be horribly in love with her, I may chance have some
odde quirkes and remnans of witte broken on me, because I
have railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appec-
tite alters? a man loves the meate in his youth, that he cannot in-
dure in his age. Shall quippe and sentences, and these paper
bullets of the brain awe a man from the carreeer of his humor?
No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a
batcheller, I did not think I shold live til I were married, here
comes Beatrice: by this day, she is a faire lady, I doe spie some
markes of love in her.

Enter Beatrice.

Beatr. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to din-
ner.

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

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

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message.

Beat. Ye a iust so much as you may take upon a kniues
point, and choake a daw withall: you have no stomach signior,
fare you well.

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

Exit.

Enter Hero and two Gentlewomen, Margaret, and Ursley.

Hero. Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice,
Proposing with the prince and Claudio,
Whisper her ear and tell her I and Ursley,
Walke in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her, say that thou ouer-heardst vs,
And bid her steal into the pleased bower
Where bony-suckles ripened by the sunne.

Forbid
about Nothing.

Forbid the same to enter: like favorites,
Made proud by princes, that aduance their pride,
Against that power that bred it, there will she hide her,
To listen our propose, this is thy office,
Bear thee well in it, and leave vs alone.

Mary. Ile make her come I warrant you presently.

Hero. Now Ursula, 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 ever man did merite,
My talke to thee must be how Benedicke,
Is sicke in love with Beatrice: of this matter,
Is little Cupids crafty arrow made,
That onely wounds by heare-fay: now begin,
For looke where Beatrice like a Lapwing runs
Close by the ground, to heare our conference.

Enter Beatrice.

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

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

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

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

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

Hero. They did intreate me to acquaint her of it,
But I perfwaded them, if they lou'de Benedicke,
To with him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.
Much adoe

VAR  Why did you so, dost not the gentleman
defere as full as fortunate a bed,
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

HERO O God of love! I know he doth deferue,
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But nature neuer framed a womans hart,
Of prouder stufte then that of Beatrice:
Disdaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eies,
Misprizing what they looke on, and her wit
Valewes it selfe so high, that to her
All matter else seems weaker; she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so selfe indeared.

VAR  Sure I thinke so,
And therefore certainly it were not good,
She knew his love left sheele make sport at it.

HERO Why you speake truth, I neuer yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured.
But she would speel him backward: if faire faced,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blanke, why Nature drawing of an antique,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launcel ill headed:
If low, an agot very wildly cut:
If speaking, why a vaine blowne with all winds:
If silent, why a blocke mouded with none:
So turns she every man the wrong side out,
And neuer giues to Truth and Virtue, that
Which sимpleness of merito purchaseth.

VAR  Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

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

Which
about Nothing.

Which is as bad as die with tickling.
    Volumna Yet tell her of it, hear what she will say.
    Hero No rather I will go to Benedick,
And countaile him to fight against his passion,
    And truly I devise some honest slaunders,
To stain my cousin with, one doth not know,
How much an ill word may poison liking.
    Volumna O do not do your cousin such a wrong,
She cannot be so much without true judgement,
    Haung so swift and excellent a wit,
As she is pride to have, as to refuse
    So rare a gentleman as signior Benedick.
    Hero He is the onely man of Italy,
Always excepted my deare Claudio.
    Volumna I pray you be not angry with me, madame,
Speaking my fancy: signior Benedick,
    For shape, for bearing argument and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.
    Hero Indeed he hath an excellent good name.
    Volumna His excellence did earn 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 have thy counsaile,
    Which is the belt to furnish me to morrow.
    Volumna Shee's limed I warrant you,
We have caught her madame.
    Hero If it prove so, then loving goes by haps,
    Some Cupid kills with arrows some with traps.
    Bee. 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, adieu,
No glory liues behind the backe of such.
And Benedick, love on I will requite thee,
    Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee,
To bind our loues vp in a holy band,
    For others lay thou dost deserve, and I

Beleeue
Much ado

Beleeue it better then reportingly.  

Prince. I doe but stay till your mariage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. He bring you thither my lord, if youle vouchsafe me.

Prince. Nay that would be as great a foil as the new glose 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 all mirth, he hath twice or thrice cut Cupides bow-string, and the little hang-man dare not shoot at him, he hath a heart as found as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinkes, his tongue speakes.

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

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

Claud. I hope he be in love.

Prince. Hang him truant, theres no true drop of blood in him to be truly toucht with love, if he be fadde, he wantes money.

Bene. I haue the tooth-ach.

Prince. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it.

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


Leon. Where is but a humour or a worme.

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

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love.

Prince. There is no appearance 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 flops, and a Spaniard from the hip vpward, no doubte, 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.
About Nothing.

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

PRINCE Hath any man seene him at the Barbers?

CLAU. No, but the barbers man hath bin seene with him, and the olde ornament of his cheeke hath alreadie stuffed tennis balls.

LEON. Indeed he lookest younger than he did, by the losse of a beard.

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

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

BENE. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

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

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

CLAUD. Nay but his iefting spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string, and now gouern'd by stops.

PRINCE Indeed that tells a heavy tale for him: conclude, conclude, he is in love.

CLAUD. Nay but I know who loves him.

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

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

PRINCE She shall be buried with her face vpwards.

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

PRINCE For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

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

Enter John the Bastard.

BASTARD My lord and brother, God save you.

PRINCE Good den brother.
Much afoe

Bastard If your leisure seru'd, I would speake with you.
Prince In priuate?
Bastard If it please you, yet Count Claudio may heare, for what I would speake of, concerns him.
Prince What's the matter?
Bast. Means your Lordship to be married to morrow?
Prince You know he does.
Bast. I know not that when he knowes what I know.
Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.
Bast. You may think I love you not, let that appeare hereafter, and ayme better at me by that I now will manifest, for my brother (I thinke, he holds you well, and in dearenesse of heart) hath holpe to effect your ensuing marriage: surely fute ill spent, and labor ill bestowed.
Prince Why what's 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.
Claud. Who Hero?
Bast. Even shee, Leonatoes Hero, your Hero, every mans Hero.
Claud. Disloyall?
Bast. The word is too good to paint out her wickednesse, I could say she were worse, thinke you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it: wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to night you shall see her chamber window entred, even the night before her wedding day, if you love her, then to morrow wed her: But it would better fite your honour to change your mind.
Claud. May this be so?
Prince I wil not thinke it.
Bast. If you dare not trust that you see, confesse not that you knowe: if you will follow mee, I wil shew you enough, and when you have seene more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.
Claudio If I see anie thing to night, why I should not marrie her to morrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

Prince
about Nothing.

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

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

Prince O day vntowardly turned!

Claud. O mischefe strangely thwarting!

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

Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the Watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verges Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation 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.

Verges Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogbery.

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

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

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

Watch 2 Both which maister Constable.

Dogbery You haue: I knew it would be your answer: well, for your favour sir, why giue God thanks, and make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeare when there is no neede of such vanity, you are thought here to be the most sencelesse 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.

Watch 2 How if a will not stand?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Watch How if they will not?

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

Watch Well sir.

Dogbery If you meete a thiefe, you may suspect him, by
verue 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 honeffy.

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

Dogbery Truely by your office you may, but I thinke they
that such pitch will be desilde: 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.

Verges You have beene always called a mercifull manne,
partner.

Dog. Truely 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 cry in the night you must call to
the nurse and bid her still it.

Watch How if the nurse be asleep and will not heare vs.

Dog.
about Nothing.

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 baaes, will never answer a calfe when he bleates.

Verges. Tis very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge: you constable are to present the princes owne person, if you meete the prince in the night, you may stay him.

Verges. Nay burlady that I thinke a cannot.

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

Verges. Birlady I thinke it be so.

Dog. Ha ha, wel masters good night, and there be any matter of weight chaunes, call vp me, keep your fellowes counsailes, and your owne, and good night, come neighbour.

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

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

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

Bor. What Conrade?

Watch. Peace, sir not.

Bor. Conrade I say.

Con. Here man, I am at thy elbow.

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

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

Bor. Stand thee close then vnder this penthouse, for it driessells raine, and I will, like a true drunckard, viter all to thee.

Watch. Some treason masters, yet stand close.

Bor.
Much ado

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

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

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

Con. I wonder at it.

Bor. That newes thou art unconfirm'd, thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloake, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes it is apparell.

Bor. I mean the fashion.

Con. Yes the fashion is the fashion.

Bor. Tush, I may as well say the fool's the fool, but seest thou not what a deformed theefe this fashion ist?

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

Bor. Didst thou not heare some body?

Con. No, twas the vane on the house.

Bor. Seest thou not (I say) what a deformed theefe this fashion is, how giddely a turnes about all the Hot-blouds, between foureteene and fuite and thirtie, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaohs souldiers in the rechie painting, sometyme like god Bel's priests in the old church window, sometyme like the shauen Hercules in the smircht worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-pieces seemes as massie as his club.

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

Bor. Not so neither, but know that I have to night wooed Margaret the Lady Heroes gentle-woman, by the name of Hero, she leanes me out at her mistres chamber window, bids me a thousand times good night; I tell this tale wildly. 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.

off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Cow. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bar. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the dilet my master knew she was Margaret, and partly by his oth, which first possest them, partly by the darke night which did deceive them, but chiefly, by my villany, which did confirme any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enragde, swore he would meet her as he was appointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation shame she, 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 vppe the right master Constable, we have here recouerd the most dangerous piece of lechery, that euer was knowne in the common wealth.

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

Cow Masters, masters.

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

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

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

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

Enter Hero and Margaret, and Ursula.

Hero Good Ursula wake my cousin 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 cousin will say so.

Hero My cousin's a foole, and thou art another, ile weare none
Much adoe

none but this.

Mar. I like the new tite within excelently, 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 praisefo.

Hero. O that exceedes they say.

Marg. By my troth's but a night gowne it respect of yours,
cloth a gold and cuts, and lac'd with siluer, set with pearles,
downe sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts, round vnderborne with
a blowish tinsell, but for a fine queint graceful and excellent fa-
shion, yours is worth ten on't.

Hero. God give me joy to weare it, for my heart is exced-
ing heauy.

Marg. 'Twill be heauier soone by the weight of a
man.

Hero. Fie upon thee, art not ashamed?

Marg. Of what lady; of speaking honourably? is not mar-
age honourable in a beggar? is not your Lord honourable
without marriage? I thinke you would haue me say, sauing your
reuerence a husband: & bad thinking do not wrest true spea-
kling, 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 its light and not heauy, ask my lady Bea-
trice 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 heele, then if your husband
haue stables enough youle see he shall lacke no barnes.

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

Beat. Tis almost fume a clocke cosin, its time you were rea-
dy, by my troth I am exceeding ill, hey ho.

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

Beat.
about Nothing.

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

Mar. Wel, and you be not turned Turk, there's no more laying by the starre.

Bett. What means the foole trow?

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

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

Bett. I am stuf cloth, I cannot smell.

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

Bett. O God help me, God help me, how long haue you protest apprehension?

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

Bett. 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 carduss benedictus, and lay it to your heart; it is the onely thing for a qualme.

Hero There thou prickst her with a thistle.

Bett. Benedictus, why benedictus? you have some moral in this benedictus.

Mar. Moral? no by my troth I have no morall meaning, I meant plaine holy thistle, you may thinke perchaunce that I think you are in love, nay 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 love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love; yet Benedicke was such another and now is he become a man, he swore he would neuer marry, and yet now in despite of his heart he eates his meate without grudging, and how you may be converted I know not, but me thinkes you looke with your eyes as other women do.

Bett. 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 John, and all the gallants of the town are come.
Much ado

come to fetch you to church.

Hero Help to dresse me good coze, good Meg, good Ver- fula.

Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough.

Leonato What would you with me, honest neighbour?

Const. Dog. Mary sir I would have some confidence with you, that decrees you nearest.

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

Const. Dog. Mary this is this.

Head. Yes in truth it is sir.

Leonato What is it my good friends?

Const. Dog. Goodman Vergey sir speaks a little of the matter, an old man sir, and his wit is not so blunt, as God helpe I would desire they were, but in so much as it is the skin between his brows.

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

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

Leonato Neighbors, you are tedious.

Const. Dog. It pleaseth 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 Althy tediousnesse on me, ah?

Const. Dog. Yea, and 'twere a thousand pound more than it.

for I heare as good exclamation on your worshippe as of any man in the citie, and though I be not a poore man, I am glad to heare it.

Head. And so am I.

Leonato I would faine know what you have to say.

Head. Mary sir our watch to night, excepting your wor- ships presence, ha tane a couple of as arrant knaues as any in Messina.

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

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

Leonato Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.
Conf. Do. Gifts that God giues.
Leonato I must leaue you.
Conf. Dog. One word sir, our watch sir haue indeede comprehended two aspitious persons, and wee would haue them this morning examin'd before your worship.
Leonato Take their examination your selue, and bring it me, I am now in great haste, as it may appeare vnto you.
Constable It shall be sufﬁgance. 
Leonato Drinke some wine ere you goe: fare you well.
Messenger My lord, they stay for you, to giue your daughter to her husband.
Leon. Ile wait vpon them, I am ready.
Dogb. Go good partner, goe get you to Francis Seacole, 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 wil spare for no witte I warrant you: heeres that shall drive some of them to a noncome, only get the learned writer to set downe our excommunication, and meet me at the Taile.

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

Leonato Come Frier Francis be brieue, 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

F 3

you
Much adoe

you should not be coniyned; I charge you on your soules to
utter it.

Claudio Know you any, Hero?
 Hero None my lord.
Friar 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 now! intercicions? why then, some be of
lauging, as, ah, ha, he.

Claudio Stand thee by Frier, father, by your leave,
Will you with free and unconstrained soule
Give me this maide your daughter?

Leonato As freely sonne as God did give her mee.

Claudio And what have I to give you backe whose woorth
May counterpoise this rich and pretious gift?
Prin. Nothing, vnlesse you render her againe.

Claudio Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulness
There Leonato, take her backe againe,
Give not this rotten orenge to your friend,
Shee's but the signe and semblance of her honor,
Behold how like a maide she blushes here:
O what authoritie and shew of truth
Can cunning sinne couer it selve 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 heathe of a luxurious bed:
Her blush is guiltiness, 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 prooof,
Have vanquished the resitance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginitie.

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 forehand sinne: No Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large,
But as a brother to his sister, shewed
Both full sincerity, and comely love.

_Hero_ And seemde I ever otherwise to you?

_Claudio_ Out on thee seeming, I will write against it.

You seeme to me as Diane in her Orbe,
As chaste as is the budde ere it be blowne:
But you are more intemperate in your blood,
Than Venus, or those pampered-animals,
That rage in sauage sensuality.

_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 dream?

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

_Bened._ This lookes not like a nuptiall.

_Hero_ True, O God!

_Claud._ Leonato, stand I here?

_Is this the prince? is this the princes brother?_

_Is this face Heroes? are our eies our owne?_

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

_Claud._ Let me but moue one question to your daughter,

And by that fatherly and kindly power,
That you haue in her, bid her answere truly.

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

_Hero_ O God defend me how am I beset,

What kind of catechizing call you this?

_Claud._ To make you answere truly to your name.

_Hero_ Is it not Hero, who can blot that name

With any iust reproch?

_Claud._ Mary that can Hero,

Hero it selfe can blot out Heroes vertue.

What man was he talkt with you yesternight,

Out at the window betwixt twelue and one? Now
Much adoe

Now if you are a maide, answer to this.
   Hero  I talke with no man at that howre my lord.
   Prince Why then are you no maiden. Leonato,
I am sorry you must hear upon mine honor,
My selve, my brother, and this grieved Counte
Did see her, heare her, at that howre last night,
Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window,
Who hath indeede most like a liberall villaine,
Confess the vile encounters they haue had
A thousand times in secret.

John  Fie, fie, they are not to be named my lord,
Not to be spoke of,
There is not chastitie enough in language,
Without offence to vter them: thus pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernement.

Claud.  O Hero! what a Hero hast thou bin,
If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed,
About thy thoughts and countailes of thy heart?
But fare thee well, most soule, most faire, farewell
Thou pure impiete, and impious purtie,
For thee I looke vp all the gates of Loue,
And on my eie lids (shall Coniecture hang,
To turne all beautie into thoughts of harme,
And never shall it more be gracious.

Leonato  Hath no mans dagger here a point for me.
Beatrice  Why how now cousin, wherefore sinkes you down?
Bailard  Come let vs goe: these things come thus to light,

Smother her spirits vp.

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
That may be wished for.

Beatrice  How now cousin Hero?
Frier  Haue comfort lady.

Leonato  Dost thou looke vp?
about Nothing.

Fr. Yea, wherefore should she not?
Leo. Wherefore? why doth not every earthly thing,
Cry shame upon her? could she here deny
The story that is printed in her bloud.
Do not the 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 rewarde of reproches
Strike at thy life. Grieued I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugall Natures frame?
O one too much by thee? why had I one?
Why ever wast thou lonely in my eies?
Why had I not with charitable hand,
Tooke vp a beggars illue at my gates,
Who smurched thus, and mired with infamy,
I might have said, no part of it is mine,
This shame derives it selfe from vnknowne lownes,
But mine and mine I loued, and mine I praised,
And mine that I was proud on mine so much,
That I my selfe was to my selfe not mine:
Valewing of her, why she, O she is false,
Into a pit of incke, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,
And fall too little, which may season give
To her soule tainted fleseh.

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

Beat. O on my soule my coffin is belied.
Ben. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

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

Leo. Confrind, confirm, O that is stronger made,
Which was before hard vp with ribs of yron,
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who loued her so, that speaking of her soulenelle,
Waft it with teares hence from her, let her die.

Fr. Heare me a little, for I haue only bin silent so long, &
given way vnto this course of fortune, by noting of the lady, I
haue markt,
Much ado

A thousand blushing apparitions,
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shamers,
In angel whitenesse beate away those blushes,
And in her eie there hath appeard a fire,
To burne the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth: call me a foole,
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,
Which with experimental seale doth warrant
The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor diuinities,
If this sweete ladie lie not guiltelese here,
Vnder some biting errour.

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

Frier Lady, what man is he you are accuse of?

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

Frier There is some strange misprision in the princes.

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

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

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

Frier Pawse awhile,
And let my counsell sway you in this case,
Your daughter here the prinsesse (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 mournefull epitaphes, and do all rites,
That appertaine unto a burial.

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

Frier Mary this well caried, shall on her behalfe,
Change slaughter to remorse, that is some good,
But not for that dreame I on this strange course,
But on this travaile looke for greater birth:
She dying, as it must be so maintaine,
Upon the instant that she was accusde,
Shall be lamented, pittied, and execusde
Of every hearer: for it so falls out.
That what we haue, we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lackt and lost,
Why then we racke the valew, then we find
The vertue that possession would not shew vs
Whiles it was ours, so will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall heare she died vpon his words,
Th' Idea of her life shall sweeetly creepe,
Into his study of imagination,
And euerie lovely Organ of her life,
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habite,
More mouing delicate, and full of life,
Into the eie and prospect of his soule
Then when she liude indeed, then shall he mourn,
Much ado

If ever love had interest in his liuer,
And wish he had not so accused her:
No, though he thought his accusation true:
Let this be so, and doubt not but success;
Will fashion the event in better shape,
Then I can lay it downe in likehood.
But if all syne but this be leuelld false,
The supposition of the ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamie.
And if it sort not wel, you may conceale her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusius and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

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

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

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

Bene. Lady Beatrice, haue you wept at this while?
Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.
Bene. I will not desire that.
Beat. You haue no reason, I do it freely.
Bene. Surely I do beleue your faire cousin is wronged.
Beat. Ah, how much migh the man desuer of me that
would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to shew such friendship?
Beat. A very euyn 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.

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 sorry for my cooin.

Bened. By my sword Beatrice, thou loueest me.

Beat. Do not sweare and eate it.

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

Beat. Will you not eate your word?

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

Beat. Why then God forgive me.

Bened. What 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, farewel.

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. Sweete 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 slandered, scorned, dishonored my kinwoman? O that I were a man, that I had a hand to take hands with publike accusation vncouerd slander, vnmitigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I woulde
Much adoe

eate his heart in the market place.

_Bened._ Heare me Beatrice.

_Beat._ Talke with a man out at a window, a proper sayng.

_Bened._ Nay but Beatrice.

_Beat._ Sweete Hero she is wrongd, she is slaundred, shee is
vndone.

_Bened._ Beat?

_Beat._ Princes and Counties! surely a princely testimonie, a
goodly Counte, Counte Compey, 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 cursies,
valour into complement, and men are only turnd into tongue,
and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only
tells a lie, and sweares it: I cannot be a man with wishing,
therefore I will die a woman with grievings.

_Bened._ Tarry good Beatrice, by this hand I love thee.

_Beatrice._ Vie it for my love some other way than swearing
by it.

_Bened._ Thinke you in your soule the Count Claudio hath
wronged Hero?

_Beatrice._ Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soule.

_Bened._ Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will
kisse your hand, and so I leasee you: by this hand, Claudio shal
render me a deere account: as you heare of me, so think of me:
go comforte your cousin, I must say she is dead, and so far-
well.

Enter the Constables; Borachio, and the Towne clearkes
in gowrnes.

Keeper._ Is our whole distempe appeard?

Cawley._ O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton._ Which be the malefacutors?

Andrew._ Mary that am I, and my partner.

Cawley._ Nay thats certaine, we haue the exhibition to exa-
mine.

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

Kemp._ Yea mary, let them come before mee, what is your
name,
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 gentle man Conrade: maisters, do you serve God?
  *Bor.* Yea sir we hope.
  *Kemp.* Write downe, that they hope they serve God: and write God first, for God defend but God shoulde goe before such villaines: maisters, it is prooued alreadie that you are little better than false knaues, and it will go neere to be thought so shortly, how answer you for your sehues?
  *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.* VVel, stand a side, fore God they are both in a tale: haue you writ downe, that they are none?
  *Sexton.* Maister constable, you go not the way to examine, you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.
  *Kemp.* Yea mary, that the eftest way, let the watch come forth: maisters, I charge you in the Princes name accuse these men.
  *Watch 1.* This man saide sir, that don John the Princes brother was a villaine.
  *Kemp.* Write downe, prince John a villaine: why this is flat perjurie, 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 receuied a thousand duchates of don John, for accusing the Ladie Hero wrongfully.
  *Kemp.* Flat burglarie as ever was committed.
  *Const.* Yea by male that it is.
  *Sexton.* VVhat else fellowe?
Much adoe

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

Kemp O villain! thou wilt be condemn’d into everlasting redemption for this.

Sexton What else? Watch This is all.

Sexton And this is more matters then you can deny, prince John is this morning secretlie stolne awaye: Hero was in this manner accus’d, in this verie manner refus’d, and yppon the grieve of this sodainlie did: 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 opiniord.

Coxley 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 affe, you are an affe.

Kemp Doost thou not suspec my place? doost thou not suspec my yeeres?

Enter Leonato and his brother.

Brother If you go on thus, you will kill your selfe, And it is not wise to meddle thus to second grieve, Against your selfe.

Leonato I pray thee cease thy countnaile, Which falleth into mine eares as profitlesse, As water in a syue; give not me countnaile, Nor
about Nothing.

Nor let no comforter delight mine care,
But such a one whose wrongs doe sute with mine.
Bring me a father that so loud his child,
Whole joy of her is over-whelmed like mine,
And bid him speake of patience,
Measure his woe the length and bredth of mine,
And let it answer euery straine for straine,
As thus for this, and such a griefe for such,
In euery lineament, branch, shape, and forme:
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
And sorrow, wagge, crie hem, when he should groane,
Patch griefe with proverbes, make misfortune drunke,
With candle-waffers: 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 themselves not feele, but tastinge it,
Their counsaile turnes to passion, which before,
Would guie preceptiall medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madnessse 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 under the loade of sorrow
But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie
To be so morall, when he shall endure
The like himselfe: therefore guie me no counsaile,
My griefes crie lowder then advertisement.

Brother Therein do men from children nothing differ.
Leonato I pray thee peace, I wil be flesh and bloud,
For there was never yet Philosopher,
That could endure the tooth-ake patiently,
However they have writ the tale of gods,
And made a puse at chance and sufferance.

Brother Yet bend not all the harme upon your selfe,
Make those that do offend you, suffer too.
Leonato There thou speakest reason, nay I will do so,
My soule doth tell me, Hero is belied,

H And
Much ado

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 haft Leonato.
Leonato Some haft my lord! well, fare you well my lord.
Are you so haftly 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 be low.
Claudio Who wrongs him?
Leonato Mary thou dost wrong me thou dissembler, thou:
Nay, never lay thy hand vpon thy sword,
I feare thee not.
Claudio Mary be shrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of feare,
In faith my hand meant nothing to my sword.
Leonato Tush, tush man, neuer fleere and ieft at me,
I speake not like a dotard, nor a foole,
As vnder proueledge of age to bragge,
What I haue done being yong, or what would doe,
Were I not old, know Claudio to thy head,
Thou haft to wrongd mine innocent child and me,
That I am forst to lay my reverence by,
And with grey haires and bruise of many daies,
Do challenge thee to triall of a man,
I say thou haft belied mine innocent child.
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors;
O in a toomb where never scandal slept,
Sawe this of hers, framde by thy villanie.

Claudio My villany?
Leonato Thine Claudio, thine I say.
Prince You say not right old man.

Leonato
about Nothing.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord,
Ile prooue it on his body if he dare,
Dishight his noble fence, and his actue practice,
His Maiestie of youth, and bloome of lusithood,

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

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

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

Leonato Brother.

Brother Content your self, God knowes, I loued my neece,
And she is dead, slanderd to death by villaines,
That dare as well answer a man indeed,
As I dare take a serpente by the tongue,
Boyes apes, braggers, lackes, milke-sops.

Leonato Brother Anthony.

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

Leonato But brother Anthony.

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 proffe.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord.

Prince I will not heare you.
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.
Prince. See se, heere comes the man we went to seke.
Claud. Now signior, what newes?
Bened. Good day my Lord:
Prince. Welcome signior, you are almost come to parte almost a fray.
Claud. Wee had lyke to have had our two noses snapt off with two old men without teeth.
Prince. Leonato and his brother what thinkst thou? had we fought, I doubt we should have beene too yong for them.
Bened. In a false quarrell there is no true valour, I came to seke you both.
Claud. We have beene vp and downe to seke thee, for we are high profe melancholie, and would taine have it beaten away, wilt thou vse thy wit?
Bened. It is in my scander, shal I drawe it?
Prince. Doest thou weare thy wit by thy side?
Claud. Neuer any did so, though very many have beene besides their wit, I will bid thee drawe as wee doe the minstrels draw to pleasure vs.
Prince. As I am an honest man he lookes pale, art thou sick or angry?
Claud. 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 subject.
Claud. Nay then give him another staffe, this last was broke crosse.
Prince. By this light, he chaunges more and more, I thinke he be angry indeed.
Claud. If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.
Bened. Shall I speake a word in your care?
Claud. God bleffe me from a challenge.
Bened. You are a villaine, I ieast not, I will make it good howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: doe mee right, or I will protest your cowardice: you haue kild a sweets
about Nothing.

sweete Lady, and her death shall fall heauie on you, let me hear from you.

Clau. Well I wil meet you,so I may have good cheare.

Prince What, a feast, a feast?

Clau. I faith I thanke him he hath bid me to a valus 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 He tell thee how Beatrice prais'd 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 the, a great groslie one: nay said I, a good wit, lust 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 beleue said she, for he swore a thing to me on munday night, which hee forswore on tuesday morning, there's a double tongue theirs two tongues, thus did she an houre together transe: shape thy particular vertues, yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou waft the properst man in Italy.

Clau. For the which shee wept heartily and sai'd shee the ca-

red not.

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

Clau. All all, and moreouter, God save him when he was bid in the garden.

Prince But when shall we set the faunge bulles bornes one the sensible Benedicks head?

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

Bened. Fare you wel, boy, you know my minde, I wil leave you now to your gofflep-like humor, you breake ists as brag-gards do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not: my Lord, for your many courtisies I thanke you, I must disconti-nue your company, your brother the baftard is fled from Me-

fina: you have 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 I c5 warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

Prince And hath challenge thee.

Claudio Most sincerely.

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

Enter Constables, Conrad, 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 justice cannot tame you, she shall here weigh more reasons in her ballance, nay, and you be a curst 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 have these men done?

Const. Mary sir, they have committed false report, moreover they have spoken untruths, secondarily they are flanders, first and lastly, they have belied a Lady, thirdly they have verisified untruths, and to conclude, they are lying knaues.

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

Claudio Rightly reasoncd, and in his owne division, and by my troth there is one meaning well suted.

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

Bor. Sweete prince, let me goe no farther to mine answere: do you heare me, and let this Counte kill me: I haue deceived euery your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discouer, these shal lowe fooles haue brought 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 Her-roles garments, how you disgrac'd her when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record, which I had rather scale with my death, then repeate over to my shame: the lady is dead upon mine and my masters false acculation: and briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

Prince Runnes not this speech like yron through your bloud?

Claud. I have dronke poison whiles he vttred 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 compose and framde of treacherie,
And fled he is vpon this villainie.

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

Conf. Come, bring away the plaintiffs, by this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter: and masters, do not forget to specify when time and place shal serve, 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 villain? 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 slave that with thy breath hast killd
Mine innocent child?

Bor. Yea, even I alone.

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

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

Imose
Much adoe

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

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

Leonato I cannot bid you bid my daughter live,
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 that invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her toomb,
And sing it to her bones, sing it to night:
To morrow morning come you to my houe,
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 heare to both of vs,
Give her the right you should haue giu' n her coffin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claudio O noble sir!
Your over kindness 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 leave, this naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I beleuee 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 alwaies hath bin iuust and vertuous,
In any thing that I do know by her.

Const. Moreover sir, which indeede is not vnder white and
blacke, this plaintiffe heere, the offendour, did call me afte, I
beleech you let it be reembered in his punishment, and also
the
about Nothing.

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

Leonato I thanke thee for thy care and honest paines.

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

Leou. Theres for thy paines.

Conff. God save the foundation.

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

Conff. I leue 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 humblie giue you leue to depart and if a merie meeting may be wisht, God prohibite it: come neighbour.

Leou. Vntill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

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

Prince We will not faile.

Clauf. To night ile mourne with Hero.

Leonato Bring you these fellowshipe, well talke with Margarett, how her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow. exent

Enter Benedick and Margarett.

Bened. Praie thee sweete mistris Margarett, deferue 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?

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

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

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

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

I Bene.
Much adoe

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

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

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

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

Exit Margarite.

Bene. And therefore will come. The God of love that sits aboue, and knowes mee, and knowes me, how pittifull I deserve. I meane in singing, but in louing, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the fist impoller of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet runne smoothly in the euen rode of a blanke verse, why they were never so truly turnd ouer and ouer as my poore selfe in loue: mary I cannot thew 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 rining planket, nor I cannot wooe in festiall termes; sweete Beatrice wouldst thou come when I cald thee?

Enter Beatrice.

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

Bene. O stay but till then.

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

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

Beat. Foule words is but foule wind, and foule wind is but foule breath, and foule breath is noisome, therefore I will depart vnkist.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bene. An old, an old instance Beatrice, that liuid 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 think you?

Bene. Question, why an hower in clamour and a quarter in rhewme, therefore is it most expedient for the wife, if Don worne (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 myselfe, who I myselfe will beare witness is praise worthie, and now tell me, how doth your cousin?

Beat. Verie ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Verie ill too.

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

Vnscula Madam, you must come to your vnkle, yonders old coile at home, it is prooued my Lady Hero hath bin falsely accuse, the Prince and Claudio mightly abuse, and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go heare this newes signior?

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy cies: and moreouer, I will go with thee to thy vncles. exit.

Enter
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 Hisdorous tonges,
Was the Hero that here lies:
Death in guerdon of her wronges,
Gives her fame which never dies:
So the life that dyed with shame,
Lies in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the toomb,
Praying her when I am dead.

Claudio Now muse sound & sing your solemn hymne.

Song Pardon goddess of the night,
That she that flew thy virgin knight,
For which with songs of woe,
Round about her tome they goe:
Midnight alit our mone, help us sigh & groane.
Heavily heavily.

Graves yawn and yeeld your dead,
Till death be uttered,
Heavily heavily.

Lo. Now unto thy bones good night, yedere will I doe this

Prince Good morrow masters, put your torches out,
The wolues have preyed, and looke, the gentle day
Before the wheele of Phoebus, round about
Dapples the drowsie East with spots of grey:
Thanks to you al, and leaue vs, fare you well.

Claudio Good morrow masters, eack his seuerall 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.

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

Frier Did I not tell you she was innocent?

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

Upon the errour that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will as it appeares,
about Nothing.

In the true course of all the question.

Old. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.
Bened. And so am I, being else by faith enforced
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.
Leo. Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by your selves,
And when I send for you, come hither masked:
The Prince and Claudio promise by this howre
To visit me; you know your office brother,
You must be father to your brothers daughter,
And give her to young Claudio. Exeunt Ladies.

Old. Which I will doe with confirmed countenance.
Bened. Frier, I must intreat your paines, I thinke.
Frier. To do what Signior?
Bened. To bind me, or undo me, one of them:
Signior Leonato, truth it is good Signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

Leo. That eye my daughter lent her, 'tis most true.
Bened. And I do with an eye of love requite her.
Leo. The sight whereof I think you had from me,
From Claudio and the Prince, but what's your will?
Bened. Your answer sir is enigmatical,
But for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conioynd,
In the state of honorable marriage,
In which (good Frier) I shall desire your help.
Leo. My heart is with your liking.
Frier. And my helpe.

Here comes the Prince and Claudio.

Enter Prince, and Claudio, and two or three others.
Prince. Good morrow to this faire assembly.
Leo. Good morrow Prince, good morrow Claudio:
We here attend you, are you yet determined,
To day to marry with my brothers daughter?
Claud. He hold my mind were she an Ethiop.
Leo. Call her fourth brother, heres the Frier ready.
P. Good morrow Bened, why what's the matter?

13. That
Much adoe

That you have such a Februrie face,
So full of frost, of storme, and cloudiness.

Claud. I thinke he thinkes upon the savjage bull:
Tooth feare not man, weele tip thy horse with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoyce at thee,
As once Europa did at lustie loue,
When he would play the noble beast in loue.

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

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula.

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

Leo. This fame is she, and I do give you her.

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

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

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

Hero. And when I liued I was your other wife,
And when you loued, you were my other husband.

Claud. Another Hero.

Hero. Nothing certain.

One Hero died deside, but I do liue,
And surely as I liue, I am a maide.

Prince. The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

Leo. She died my Lord, but whiles her sajander liued.

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

Bene. 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 than reason.
about Nothing.

Bene. Why then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio,
Haue beene deceived, they swore you did.
Beat. Do not you love me?
Bene. Troth no, no more then reason.
Beat. Why then my cousin Margaret and Vefula
Are much deceive’d, for they did sweare you did.
Bene. They swore that you were almost sicke for me.
Beat. They swore that you were welnigh dead for me.
Bene. Tis no such matter, then you do not love me.
Beat. No truly, but in friendly recompence.
Leon. Come cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.
Clan. And ile be sworn vpon’t, that he loves her,
For heres a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his owne pure braine,
Fashioned to Beatrice.

Hero. And heres another,
Writ in my cousins hand, stole from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedicke.

Bene. A miracle, heres our owne hands against our hearts:
Come, I will have thee, but by this light I take thee for pittie.
Beat. I would not deny you, but by this good day, I yeeld
vpon great pertwasion, 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 collidge of witte-crackers
cannot flout me out of my humour, dost thou think I care for
a Satyre or an Epigramme? no, if a man will be beaten with
braines, a shall wear nothing hansom about him: in brieve,
since I doe purpose to marrie, I will think nothing to any pur-
pose that the world can faie against it, and threfore neuer flout
at me, for what I have said against it: for man is a giddie thing,
and this is my conclusion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke
to have beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman,
lie vnbruysde, and love my cousen.

Clan. I had well hopet thou wouldst have denied Beatrice,
that I might have cudgeld thee out of thy single life, to make
thee
Much adoe

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

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

Leon. Well haue dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my worde, therefore plaie musique, Prince, thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife, there is no stiffe more reverent then one tipt with horne.

Enter Messenger.

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

Bene. Thinke not on him till to morrow, Ile devise thee brave punishments for him: strike vp Pipers. dance.

FINIS.