

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

20 + Characters

Antonio, Leonato's brother

Balthasar, Attendant on Don Pedro

Beatrice, Niece to Leonato

Benedick, A young lord of Padua

Borachio, Follower of Don Juan

Boy

Claudio, A young lord of Florence

Conrade, Follower of Don Juan

Dogberry, A constable

Don John, The prince's bastard brother

Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon

First Watchman

Friar Francis

Hero, Daughter to Leonato

Leonato, Governor of Messina

Margaret, Gentlewoman attending on Hero

Lords, Messengers, Watchmen

Sexton

Ursula, Gentlewoman attending on Hero

Verges, A headborough

Scena Prima

ENTER LEONATO GOVERNOUR OF MESSINA, HERO HIS DAUGHTER, AND
BEATRICE HIS NEECE, WITH A MESSENGER

[1.a]

Leonato I learne in this Letter, that Don Peter of Arragon,
 comes this night to Messina.

Messenger He is very neere.

Leonato How many Gentlemen have you lost in this
 action?

Messenger But few and none of name.

Leonato Don Peter hath bestowed much honor on a young man called Claudio.

Messenger Much deserv'd, he hath borne himselfe beyond the promise of his age.

Leonato He hath an Unckle heere in Messina.

Messenger I have alreadie delivered him letters, and there appeares much joy in him.

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

Messenger I know none of that name, Lady.

Hero My cousin meanes Signior Benedick.

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

Beatrice I pray you, how many hath hee kil'd and eaten in these warres?

Leonato 'Faith Neece, you taxe Signior Benedicke too much.

Messenger He hath done good service Lady in these wars.

Beatrice He's a very valiant Trencher-man. Indeed, he is no lesse then a stuf man.

Leonato You must not (sir) mistake my Neece, there is
 a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick, & her:

Beatrice Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworne brother.

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

Beatrice O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease:

God helpe the noble Claudio.

Messenger Don Pedro is approach'd.

ENTER DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICKE, BALTHASAR, BATHSHEBA
AND JOHN THE BASTARD

[1.b]

Don Pedro Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet
your trouble:

Leonato Never came trouble to my house in the likenes of your Grace:.

Don Pedro I thinke this is your daughter.

Leonato Her mother hath many times told me so.

Benedicke Were you in doubt that you askt her?

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

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

Beatrice I wonder that you will still be talking, signior
Benedicke, no body markes you.

Benedicke What my deere Ladie Disdaine! are you yet living?

Beatrice Is it possible Disdaine should die, while shee
hath such meete foode to feede it, as Signior Benedicke?

Benedicke It is certaine I am loved of all Ladies, onely you excepted:

Beatrice I had rather heare my Dog barke at a Crow,
than a man sweare he loves me.

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

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

Benedicke Well, you are a rare Parrot teacher.

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

Benedicke I would my horse had the speed of your tongue,
but keepe your way a Gods name, I have done.

Beatrice You alwaies end with a Jades tricke, I know you of old.

Don Pedro This is the summe of all: my deere friend Leonato, hath invited you all, I tell him we shall stay here, at the least a month.

Leonato Let mee bid you welcome, my Lord. I owe you all duetie.

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

Leonato Please it your grace leade on?

Don Pedro Your hand Leonato, we will goe together.

EXEUNT ALL EXCEPT BENEDICKE AND CLAUDIO

[1.c]

Claudio Benedicke, didst thou note the daughter of signior Leonato?

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

Claudio Is she not a modest young Ladie?

Benedicke Why yfaith me thinks shee's too low for a high praise, too browne for a faire praise, and too little for a great praise.

Claudio I pray thee tell me truely how thou lik'st her.

Benedicke Would you buy her, that you enquier after her?

Claudio Can the world buy such a jewell?

Benedicke I hope you have no intent to turne husband, have you?

Claudio I would scarce trust my selfe, if Hero would be my wife.

Benedicke Ist come to this? Shall I never see a batcheller of three score againe? goe to yfaith. Don Pedro is returned to seeke you.

ENTER DON PEDRO, JOHN THE BASTARD

[1.d]

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

Benedicke Hee is in love, With who? with Hero, Leonatoes short daughter.

Don Pedro That she is worthie, I know.

Benedicke That a woman conceived me, I thanke her: that

she brought mee up, I likewise give her most humble
thanks: but I will doe my selfe the right to
trust none: and the fine is, I will live a Batchellor.

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

Benedicke With anger, with sicknesse, or with hunger, my Lord, not with love.

Don Pedro 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.

Benedicke And so I leave you.

EXIT BENEDICKE

[1.e]

Claudio Hath Leonato any sonne my Lord?

Don Pedro No childe but Hero, she's his onely heire.

ENTER BORACHIO

Don Pedro If thou dost love faire Hero, cherish it,
And I will breake with her.

Claudio How sweetly doe you minister to love!

Don Pedro I know we shall have revelling to night,
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell faire Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosome Ile unclaspe my heart,
Then after, to her father will I breake,
And the conclusion is, shee shall be thine.

EXEUNT ALL

ENTER LEONATO AND AN OLD MAN, BROTHER TO LEONATO

[1.f]

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

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

Leonato Are they good?

Old Man The Prince and Count Claudio were thus over-heard
by a man of mine: the Prince discovered to Claudio
that hee loved my niece your daughter, and meant
to acknowledge it this night in a dance.

Leonato Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Old Man A good sharpe fellow.

Leonato I will acquaint my daughter withall, goe you and tell her of it.

EXEUNT ALL

ENTER SIR JOHN THE BASTARD, AND CONRADE HIS COMPANION

[1.g]

Conrade My Lord, why are you thus out of measure sad?

Don John I cannot hide what I am: I must bee sad when I have cause.

Conrade Yea, but you must not make the ful show of this,
you have of late stood out against your brother, and hee hath tane
you newly into his grace.

Don John I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rose
in his grace. Let me be that I am, and seeke not to alter me.

Conrade Can you make no use of your discontent?

Don John I will make all use of it. Who comes here? what newes Borachio?

ENTER BORACHIO

[1.h]

Borachio I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

Don John Will it serve for any Modell to build mischief on?
What is hee for a foole that betrothes himselfe to unquietnesse?

Borachio Marry it is your brothers right hand.

Don John Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

Borachio Even he.

Don John Which way lookes he?

Borachio Marry on Hero, the daughter and Heire of Leonato.

Don John Come, come, let us thither,
if I can crosse him any way, I blesse my selfe every way,
you are both sure, and will assist mee?

Conrade To the death my Lord.

Don John Let us to the great supper.

Borachio Wee'll wait upon your Lordship.

EXEUNT ALL

Scena Secundus

ENTER LEONATO, HIS BROTHER, HIS WIFE, HERO HIS DAUGHTER, AND
BEATRICE HIS NEECE

[2.a]

Leonato Was not Count John here at supper?

Brother I saw him not.

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

Hero He is of a very melancholy disposition.

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

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

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

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

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

Beatrice Not till God make men of some other mettall then earth.

Leonato Daughter, remember what I told you, if the
Prince doe solicit you in that kinde, you know
your answere. The revellers are entring brother, make good roome.

ENTER PRINCE, PEDRO, CLAUDIO, AND BENEDICKE, AND BALTHASAR,
OR DUMBE JOHN, MASKERS WITH A DRUM

[2.b]

Don Pedro Lady, will you walke about with your friend?

Hero So you walke softly, and looke sweetly.

Balthasar Well, I would you did like me.

Margaret So would not I for your owne sake, for I have manie ill qualities.

Bathsheba Which is one?

Margaret I say my prayers alowd.

Balthasar Amen.

Ursula I know you well enough, you are Signior Anthonio.

Anthonio At a word, I am not.

Ursula I know you by the wagling of your head.

Anthonio To tell you true, I counterfet him.

Ursula You are he, you are he.

Beatrice Will you not tell me who told you so?

Benedicke No, you shall pardon me.

Beatrice Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Benedicke Not now.

Beatrice That I was disdainfull, this was Signior Benedicke that said so.

Benedicke What's he?

Beatrice I am sure you know him well enough.

Benedicke Not I, beleeve me.

Beatrice Why he is the Princes jeaster, a very dull foole.

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

Beatrice Do, do. We must follow the Leaders.

EXEUNT BEATRICE AND BENEDICKE

MUSICKE FOR THE DANCE

Don John Are not you signior Benedicke?

[2.c]

Claudio You know me well, I am hee.

Don John Signior, you are verie neere my Brother in his
love, he is enamor'd on Hero, I pray you disswade him
from her, she is no equall for his birth.

Claudio How know you he loves her?

Don John I heard him sweare his affection,

Borachio So did I too, and he swore he would marrie her to night.

Don John Come, let us to the banquet.

EXEUNT ALL EXCEPT CLAUDIO

Claudio Thus answere I in name of Benedicke,
But heare these ill newes with the eares of Claudio:
'Tis certaine so, the Prince woos for himselfe:
Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the Office and affaires of love:
Farewell therefore Hero.

[2.d]

ENTER BENEDICKE

Benedicke Count Claudio.

Claudio Yea, the same.

Benedicke Come, will you goe with me?

Claudio Whither?

Benedicke Even to the next Willow, for the Prince hath got your Hero.

Claudio I wish him joy of her.

Benedicke But did you thinke the Prince would have served you thus?

Claudio I pray you leave me.

[2.e]

EXIT CLAUDIO

Benedicke Alas poore hurt fowle. But that my Ladie Beatrice
should know me, & not know me: the Princes foole! Hah?
Well, Ile be revenged as I may.

[2.f]

ENTER THE PRINCE

[2.g]

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

Benedicke I told him, that your grace had got the will of this young Lady.

Don Pedro The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrell to you, the Gentleman that danced with her, told her shee is much wrong'd by you.

Benedicke Shee told mee, not thinking I had beene my selfe, that I was the Princes Jester. Come, talke not of her.

ENTER CLAUDIO AND BEATRICE, LEONATO, HERO

Don Pedro Looke heere she comes.

Benedicke I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furthest inch of Asia: rather then hold three words conference, with this Harpy: you have no employment for me?

Don Pedro None, but to desire your good company.

Benedicke O God sir, heeres a dish I love not, I cannot indure this Lady tongue.

EXIT BENEDICKE

Don Pedro Come Lady, come, you have lost the heart of Signior Benedicke. You have put him downe Lady, you have put him downe.

Beatrice So I would not he should do me, my Lord: I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seeke.

Don Pedro Why how now Count, wherfore are you sad?

Claudio Not sad my Lord.

Don Pedro How then? sicke?

Claudio Neither, my Lord.

Don Pedro Heere Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and faire Hero is won, I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained, name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy.

Leonato Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes.

Beatrice Speake Count, tis your Qu.

Claudio Silence is the perfectest Herauld of joy. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours.

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

Don Pedro In faith Lady you have a merry heart.

Beatrice Yea my Lord. My coosin tells him in his eare that he is in her heart.

Claudio And so she doth cousin.

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

Prince Will you have me? Lady.

Beatrice No, my Lord, unlesse I might have another for working-daies, your Grace is too costly to weare everie day: but I beseech your Grace pardon mee.

EXIT BEATRICE

[2.j]

Prince By my troth a pleasant spirited Lady.

Leonato She mocks all her wooers out of suite.

Prince She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

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

Prince Counte Claudio, when meane you to goe to Church?

Claudio To morrow my Lord.

Leonat{o} Not till monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a just seven night.

Prince I warrant thee Claudio, the time shall not goe dully by us, I will in the interim, undertake one of Hercules labors, which is, to bring Signior Benedicke and the Lady Beatrice into a mountaine of affection, th' one with th' other.

Leonato My Lord, I am for you.

Claudio And I my Lord.

Prince And you to gentle Hero?

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

Prince If wee can doe this, Cupid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall be ours,
for wee are the onely love-gods, Goe in with me, and I will tell you my
drift.

EXIT ALL

ENTER JOHN AND BORACHIO

[2.k]

Don John It is so, the Count Claudio shal marry the daughter of Leonato.

Borachio Yea my Lord, but I can crosse it.

Don John How canst thou crosse this marriage?

Borachio Not honestly my Lord, but so covertly, that no
dishonesty shall appeare in me.

Don John Shew me breiefely how.

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

Don John I remember.

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

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

Borachio Goe you to the Prince your brother, spare not to tell him, that
hee hath wronged his Honor in marrying the renowned
Claudio to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

Don John What prooffe shall I make of that?

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

Don John Onely to despight them, I will endeavour any thing.

Borachio Finde me a meete howre, to draw Don
Pedro and the Count Claudio alone, tell them that you
know that Hero loves me. Offer them instances to see mee at her

chamber window, heare me call Margaret, Hero; heare
Margaret terme me Claudio, and bring them to see this
the very night before the intended wedding.

Don John Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducates.
I will presentlie goe learne their day of marriage.

EXIT ALL

ENTER BENEDICKE ALONE

[2.1]

Benedicke I doe much wonder, that one man seeing
how much another man is a foole, will become the argument of his
owne scorne, by falling in love, & such a man is Claudio.
One woman is faire, yet I am well: another is wise,
yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman,
one woman shall not come in my grace. Hah! the Prince and
Monsieur Love, I will hide me in the Arbor.

ENTER PRINCE, LEONATO, CLAUDIO, AND JACKE WILSON

[2.m]

Prince Come, shall we heare this musicke?

Claudio Yea my good Lord.

Prince See you where Benedicke hath hid himselfe?

Claudio O very well my Lord.

Prince Come Balthasar and Bathsheba,
I pray thee sing, and let me woe no more.

Balthasar & Bathsheba

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 goe,
And be you blithe and bonnie,
Converting all your sounds of woe,
Into hey nony non.

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

Prince. By my troth a good song.

Balthasar And an ill singer, my Lord.

Prince. Ha, no, no faith, thou singst well enough for a shift.

EXIT BALTHASAR AND BATHSHEBA

[2.n]

Prince Come hither Leonato, what
was it you told me of to day, that your Niece Beatrice
was in love with signior Benedicke?

Claudio O I, I did never thinke that Lady would have loved any man.

Leonato No nor I neither, but most wonderful, that she
should so dote on Signior Benedicke

Benedicke Is't possible?

Leonato By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to
thinke of it, but that she loves him with an intraged affection.

Prince Why what effects of passion shewes she?

Claudio Baite the hooke well, this fish will bite.

Leonato What effects my Lord? you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claudio She did indeed.

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

Leonato I would have sworne it had, my Lord, especially against Benedicke.

Prince Hath shee made her affection known to Benedicke?

Leonato No, and swears she never will, that's her torment.

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

Leonato This saies shee now when shee is beginning to
write to him: my daughter tells us all.

Claudio Now you talke of a sheet of paper, I remember

a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

- Leonato O when she had writ it, & was reading it over,
she found Benedicke and Beatrice betweene the sheete.
- Claudio That.
- Leonato O she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence,
railed at her self, that she should be so immodest to write,
to one that shee knew would flout her.
- Claudio Then downe upon her knees she falls, weepes,
sobs, O sweet Benedicke, God give me patience.
- Leonato She doth indeed.
- Prince It were good that Benedicke knew of it by some other.
- Claudio To what end? he would but make a sport of it,
and torment the poore Lady worse.
- Leonato O my Lord, I am sorry for her, as I have just cause,
being her Uncle, and her Guardian.
- Prince I pray you tell Benedicke of it, and heare what he will say.
- Leonato Were it good thinke you?
- Claudio Hero thinkes surely she wil die, for she says she
will die, if hee love her not, and shee will die ere shee
make her love knowne, and she will die if hee wooe her.
- Prince If she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible
hee'l scorne it, for the man (as you know all)
hath a contemptible spirit.
- Claudio He is a very proper man.
- Prince He hath indeed a good outward happines.
- Claudio 'Fore God, and in my minde very wise.
- Prince He doth indeed shew some sparkes that are like wit.
- Leonato And I take him to be valiant.
- Prince Well, I am sorry for your niece, shall we goe
see Benedicke, and tell him of her love.

Claudio Never tell him, my Lord, let her weare it out with good counsell.

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

Prince I love Benedicke well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himselfe, to see how much he is unworthy to have so good a Lady.

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

Claudio If he do not doat on her upon this, I wil never trust my expectation.

Prince Let there be the same Net spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry: Let us send her to call him into dinner.

EXEUNT ALL

[2.o]

Benedicke Love me? why it must be requited. The world must be peopled. Here comes Beatrice: by this day, shee's a faire Lady, I doe spie some markes of love in her.

ENTER BEATRICE

[2.p]

Beatrice Against my wil I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

Benedicke Faire Beatrice, I thanke you for your paines.

Beatrice I tooke no more paines for those thanks, then you take paines to thanke me.

Benedicke You take pleasure then in the message.

Beatrice Yea just so much as you may take upon a knives point. Fare you well.

EXIT

[2.q]

Benedicke Ha, against my will I am sent to bid you come into dinner: there's a double meaning in that: if I do not take pittie of her I am a villaine. I will goe get her picture.

EXIT

Scena Tertius

ENTER HERO AND TWO GENTLEMEN, MARGARET, AND URSULA

[3.a]

Hero Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,
 There shalt thou finde my Cosin Beatrice.

Margaret Ile make her come I warrant you presently.

 EXIT MARGARET

Hero Now Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
 Our talke must onely be of Benedicke,

 ENTER BEATRICE

[3.b]

 For looke where Beatrice runs to heare our conference.

Hero No truely Ursula, she is too disdainfull.

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

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

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

Hero They did intreate me to acquaint her of it,
 But I perswaded them never to let Beatrice know of it.

Ursula Why did you so?

Hero Nature never fram'd a womans heart,
 Of powder stufte then that of Beatrice:

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

Hero Why you speake truth, I never yet saw man,
 But she would spell him backward.
 But who dare tell her so? if I should speake,
 She would mocke me into ayre.

Ursula Yet tell her of it, heare what shee will say.

Hero No, rather I will goe to Benedicke,
 And counsaile him to fight against his passion,

Ursula O doe not doe your cosin such a wrong,
 She cannot be so much without true judgement, to refuse
 So rare a Gentleman as signior Benedicke.

Hero Indeed he hath an excellent good name.

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

Hero To morrow, come goe in,

Ursula We have caught her Madame?

Hero If it prove so, then loving goes by haps,
Come Cupid kills with arrowes, some with traps.

EXIT HERO AND URSULA

Beatrice What fire is in mine eares? can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorne so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adew,
And Benedicke, love on, I will requite thee.

EXIT BEATRICE

ENTER PRINCE, CLAUDIO, BENEDICKE, AND LEONATO

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

Benedicke Gallants, I am not as I have bin.

Leonato So say I, methinkes you are sadder.

Claudio I hope he be in love.

Prince If he be sad, he wants money.

Benedicke I have the tooth-ach.

Prince What? sigh for the tooth-ach.

Claudio Yet say I, he is in love.

Benedicke Old signior, walke aside with mee, I have studied eight or nine
wise words to speake to you, which these hobby-horses
must not heare.

Prince For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

Claudio 'Tis even so.

ENTER THE JOHN THE BASTARD

Bastard My Lord and brother, God save you.

Prince Good den brother.

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

Prince. In private?

Bastard If it please you, yet Count Claudio may hear.

Prince What's the matter?

Bastard Meanes your Lordship to be married to morrow?

Prince You know he does.

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

Bastard I came hither to tell you, the Lady is disloyall.

Claudio Who Hero?

Bastard Even shee.

Claudio Disloyall?

Bastard The word is too good to paint out her wickedesse.
Goe but with mee to night, you shal see her chamber
window entred, even the night before her wedding.

Claudio May this be so?

Prince I will not thinke it.

Bastard If you will follow mee, I will shew you
enough.

Claudio If I see any thing to night, why I should not
marry her, there will I shame her.

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

Bastard I will disparage her no farther, till you are my
witnesses, beare it coldly but till night.

Prince O day untowardly turned!

Claudio O mischiefes strangelic thwarting!

Bastard O plague right well prevented!.

EXIT ALL

ENTER DOGBERRY AND HIS COMPARTNER WITH THE WATCH

[3.f]

Dogberry Are you good men and true?

Verges Yea, give them their charge, neighbour Dogbery.

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

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

Dogberry Come hither neighbour Sea-coale. You are thought heere to be the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch: therefore beare you the lanthorne: this is your charge. You are to bid any man stand in the Princes name.

Watch 2 How if a will not stand?

Dogberry Why then take no note of him, but let him go.

Verges If he will not stand when he is bidden, hee is none of the Princes subjects.

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

Watch 1 We will rather sleepe than talke.

Dogberry I cannot see how sleeping should offend: well, you are to call at all the Alehouses, and bid them that are drunke get them to bed.

Watch 2 How if they will not?

Dogberry Why then let them alone till they are sober.

Watch 1 Well sir.

Dogberry If you meet a theefe, you may suspect him, by vertue of your office, to be no true man:

Watch 2 If wee know him to be a thiefe, shall wee not lay hands on him.

Dogberry Truly by your office you may, but the most peaceable way is, to let him shew himselfe what he is, and steale out of your company.

Verges You have bin alwaies cal'd a merciful man partner.

Dogberry Truly I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath anie honestie in him.

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

Watch 1 How if the nurse be asleepe?

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

Verges 'Tis verie true.

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

EXEUNT DOGBERRY AND VERGES
ENTER BORACHIO AND CONRADE

[3.g]

Borachio What, Conrade?

Watch 1 Peace, stir not.

Borachio Conrade I say.

Conrade Here man, I am at thy elbow.

Borachio Stand thee close, and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

Watch 2 Some treason masters, yet stand close.

Borachio Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand Ducates. Know that I have to night wooed Margaret the Lady Heroes gentlewoman, by the name of Hero: I should first tell thee how the Prince Claudio and my Master saw a far off in the Orchard this amiable incounter.

Conrade And thought thy Margaret was Hero?

Borachio Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio, but the divell my Master knew she was Margaret. Away

went Claudio enraged, swore hee would shame her
with what he saw o're night, and send her home againe
without a husband.

- Watch 1 We charge you in the Princes name stand.
- Conrade Masters, masters, never speake, we charge you,
let us obey you to goe with us.
- Borachio We are like to prove a goodly commoditie,
being taken up of these mens bills.
- Conrade A commoditie in question I warrant you, come weele obey you.

EXEUNT ALL

ENTER HERO, AND MARGARET, AND URSULA

Hero Good Ursula wake my cosin Beatrice. [3,h]

Ursula I will Lady.

Hero And bid her come hither.

Ursula Well.

EXIT URSULA

Margaret Troth I thinke your other rebato were better.

Hero No pray thee good Meg, Ile weare this.

ENTER BEATRICE

Hero Good morrow Coze. [3,i]

Beatrice Good morrow sweet Hero.

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

Beatrice I am out of all other tune, me thinkes.
'Tis almost five a clocke cosin, 'tis time you
were ready, by my troth I am exceeding ill, hey ho.

Margaret Get you some of this distill'd *carduus benedictus*
and lay it to your heart.

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

Margaret Morall? no by my troth.

ENTER URSULA

Ursula. Madam, withdraw, the Prince, the Count, sinnior Benedicke,
Don John, and all the gallants of the
towne are come to fetch you to Church.

[3.j]

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

EXEUNT ALL

ENTER LEONATO, AND THE CONSTABLE [DOGBERRY], AND THE
HEADBOROUGH [VERGES]

Leonato What would you with mee, honest neighbour?

[3.k]

Const. Dog. Mary this it is sir.

Headborough Yes in truth it is sir.

Leonato What is it my good friends?

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

Con. Dog. Well said yfaith neighbour Verges, well,
and two men ride of a horse, one must ride behinde.

Leonato I must leave you.

Const. Dog. One word sir, our watch sir have indeede
comprehended two aspitious persons, & we would have
them this morning examined before your worship.

Leonato Take their examination your selfe, and bring it
me, I am now in great haste.

Constable It shall be suffigance.

ENTER MESSENGER

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

[3.l]

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

Dogberry Goe good partner, goe get you to Francis Seacoale,
we are now to examine those men.

Verges And we must doe it wisely.

Dogberry Wee will spare for no witte I warrant you:
Meet me at the Jaile.

EXEUNT ALL

Scena Quartus

ENTER PRINCE, BASTARD, LEONATO, FRIER, CLAUDIO, BENEDICKE,
HERO, AND BEATRICE

[4.a]

Leonato Come Frier Francis, be briefe.

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

Claudio No.

Leonato To be married to her: Frier, you come to marrie her.

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

Hero I doe.

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

Claudio Know you any, Hero?

Hero None my Lord.

Frier Know you any, Count?

Leonato I dare make his answer, None.

Claudio O what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do!

Benedicke How now! why then, some be of laughing, as ha, ha, he.

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

Leonato As freely sonne as God did give her me.

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

Prince Nothing, unlesse you render her againe.

Claudio Sweet Prince, you learn me noble thankfulnes:
There Leonato, take her backe againe,
Give not this rotten Orenge to your friend.
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed:
Her blush is guiltinesse, not modestie.

Leonato What doe you meane, my Lord?

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

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 dishonour'd that have gone about,
To linke my deare friend to a common stale.

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

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

Benedicke This lookes not like a nuptiall.

Hero True, O God!

Claudio Let me but move one question to your daughter.

Hero O God defend me how am I beset,

Claudio To make you answer truly to your name.

Hero Is it not Hero?

Claudio
What man was he, talkt with you yesternight,
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?
Now if you are a maid, answer to this.

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

Prince. Why then you are no maiden. Leonato,
I am sorry you must heare: upon mine honor,
My selfe, my brother, and this grieved Count
Did see her, heare her, at that howre last night,
Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window.

Leonato Hath no mans dagger here a point for me?

- Beatrice Why how now cosin, wherfore sink you down?
- Bastard Come, let us go.
- Benedicke How doth the Lady?
- Beatrice Dead I thinke, helpe uncle,
- Leonato O Fate! take not away thy heavy hand,
Death is the fairest cover for her shame
That may be wisht for.
- Beatrice How now cousin Hero?
- Frier Have comfort Ladie.
- Beatrice O on my soule my cosin is belied.
- Benedicke Ladie, were you her bedfellow last night?
- Beatrice No, truly: not although untill last night,
I have this twelvemonth bin her bedfellow.
- Leonato Confirm'd, confirm'd. Hence from her, let her die.
- Frier Pause awhile:
And let my counsell sway you in this case,
Your daughter heere the Princesse (left for dead)
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeed.
- Leonato What shall become of this? What wil this do?
- Frier She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Shal be lamented, pittied, and excus'd
Of every hearer. So will it fare with Claudio:
When he shal heere she dyed upon his words,
And wish he had not so accused her:
Let this be so, and doubt not but successe
Wil fashion the event in better shape,
Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
And if it sort not well, you may conceale her
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusiue and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, mindes and injuries.
- Benedicke Signior Leonato, let the Frier advise you.

Frier 'Tis well consented, presently away.
Come Lady, die to live, this wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd, have patience & endure.

EXIT ALL BUT BEATRICE AND BENEDICKE

[4.b]

Benedicke Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

Beatrice Yea, and I will weepe a while longer.

Benedicke Surelie I do beleeve your fair cosin is wrong'd.

Beatrice Ah, how much might the man deserve of mee that would right her!

Benedicke Is there any way to shew such friendship?

Beatrice A verie even way, but no such friend.

Benedicke May a man doe it?

Beatrice It is a mans office, but not yours.

Benedicke I doe love nothing in the world so well as you, is not that strange?

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

Benedicke By my sword Beatrice thou lov'st me.

Beatrice Will you not eat your word?

Benedicke With no sauce that can be devised to it, I protest I love thee.

Beatrice Why then God forgive me.

Benedicke What offence sweet Beatrice?

Beatrice You have stayed me in a happy howre, I was about to protest
I loved you.

Benedicke And doe it with all thy heart.

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

Benedicke Come, bid me doe any thing for thee.

Beatrice Kill Claudio.

Benedicke Ha, not for the wide world.

Beatrice You kill me to denie, farewell.

Benedicke Heare me Beatrice.

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

Benedicke Nay but Beatrice.

Beatrice Sweet Hero, she is wrong'd, shee is slandered, she is undone.

Benedicke Beat?

Beatrice O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake!
I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Benedicke Tarry good Beatrice, by this hand I love thee.

Beatrice Use it for my love some other way then swearing by it.

Benedicke Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will kisse your hand. Goe comfort your coosin, I must say she is dead, and so farewell.

EXIT

ENTER THE CONSTABLES (DOGBERRY AND VERGES), SEXTON, BORACHIO,
CONRADE AND THE WATCH

[4.c]

Dogberry Is our whole dissembly appeard?

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

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

Borachio Borachio.

Dogberry Pray write downe Borachio. Yours sirra.

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

Dogberry Write downe Master gentleman Conrade: maisters, doe you serve God?

Conrade |
 | yea, sir, we hope.
 Borachio |

Dogberry Write down, that they hope they serve god.

Sexton Master Constable, you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dogberry Yea marry, let the watch come forth: masters,
 I charge you in the Princes name, accuse these men.

Watch 1 This man said sir, that Don John was a villaine.

Dogberry Write down, Prince John a villaine:

Sexton What heard you him say else?

Watch 2 That he had accused Lady Hero wrongfully.

Dogberry O villaine!

Sexton What else?

Watch This is all.

Sexton Prince John is this morning secretly stolne away: Hero
 was in this manner accus'd, and upon the grieffe of this suddenly died:
 Master Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato,
 I will goe before, and shew him their examination.

EXIT

Dogberry Come, let them be opinion'd.

Conrade Off, Coxcombe!

Dogberry Gods my life, where's the Sexton? let him write
 downe the Princes Officer Coxcombe.

Conrade Away, you are an asse, you are an asse.

Dogberry O that hee were heere to write mee
 downe an asse! but masters, remember that I am an asse:
 though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an
 asse: Bring him away: O that I had been writ downe an asse!

EXIT

Scena Quintus.

ENTER LEONATO AND HIS BROTHER

[5.a]

Brother If you goe on thus, you will kill your selfe,

Leonato I pray thee cease thy counsaile,
Bring me a father that so lov'd his childe,
And bid him speake of patience.

Brother Yet bend not all the harme upon your selfe.

Leonato My soule doth tell me, Hero is belied.

ENTER PRINCE AND CLAUDIO

[5.b]

Brother Here comes the Prince and Claudio hastily.

Prince We have some haste Leonato.

Leonato Some haste my Lord! well, all is one.

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

Claudio Who wrongs him?

Leonato Marry thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou:
I say thou hast belied mine innocent childe.
And she lies buried with her ancestors:
O in a tombe where never scandall slept,
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villanie.

Claudio My villany?

Leonato Thine Claudio, thine I say.

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

Leonato My Lord, my Lord.

Prince I will not heare you.

ENTER BENEDICKE

[5.c]

Leonato No come brother, away, I will be heard.

EXEUNT LEONATO AND ANTONIO

[5.d]

- Prince See, see, here comes the man we went to seeke.
- Claudio Now signior, what newes?
- Benedicke Good day my Lord.
- Prince Welcome signior, you are almost come to part almost a fray.
- Benedick I came to seeke you both.
- Claudio We have beene up and downe to seeke thee.
- Prince As I am an honest man he lookes pale, art thou sicke, or angrie?
- Benedicke Shall I speake a word in your eare? You are a villaine:
- Prince Ile tell thee how Beatrice prais'd thy wit the other day.
- Claudio For the which she wept heartily, and said shee car'd not.
- Prince Yea that she did, but yet for all that, and if shee
did not hate him deadlie, shee would love him dearely.
- Benedicke I must discontinue your companie. he and I shall meete, and till then peace
be with him.
- Prince He is in earnest.
- Claudio In most profound earnest, and Ile warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.
- Prince And hath challeng'd thee.
- Claudio Most sincerely.

ENTER CONSTABLE, CONRADE, AND BORACHIO [5.e]

- Prince How now, two of my brothers men bound? Borachio one.
- Claudio Harken after their offence my Lord.
- Prince Officers, what offence have these men done?
- Constable Marrie sir, they have committed false report,
moreover they have spoken untruths, secondarily they
are slanders, sixth and lastly, they have belied a Ladie,
thirdly, they have verified unjust things, and to conclude
they are lying knaves.

Prince Who have you offended masters, that you are thus bound to your answer?

Borachio Sweete Prince, let me go no farther to mine answer: do you heare me, and let this Count kill mee: I have deceived even your verie eyes: these shallow fooles have brought to light how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Ladie Hero, how you were brought into the Orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Heroes garments. The Ladie is dead upon mine and my masters false accusation: and briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villaine.

Prince But did my Brother set thee on to this?

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

Prince He is compos'd and fram'd of treacherie,
And fled he is upon this villanie.

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

Constable Come, bring away the plaintiffes, by this time
our Sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter:
and masters, do not forget to specifie when time & place
shall serve, that I am an Asse.

Constable 2 Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the Sexton too.

ENTER LEONATO

[5.f]

Leonato Which is the villaine?

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

Leonato Art thou thou the slave that with thy breath
hast kild mine innocent childe?

Borachio Yea, even I alone.

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.
To morrow morning come you to my house,
And since you could not be my sonne in law,
Be yet my Nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copie of my childe that's dead,

Give her the right you should have giv'n her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claudio O noble sir!
I do embrace your offer.

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

Constable Moreover sir, this plaintiffe here did call mee
asse, I beseech you let it be remembred in his punishment.

Leonato There's for thy paines.

Constable God save the foundation.

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

Cosntable God keepe your worship, I
wish your worship well, God restore you to health,
I humblie give you leave to depart, and if a merrie
meeting may be wisht, God prohibite it: come neighbour.

Leonato Untill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

EXEUNT ALL

ENTER BENEDICKE

Benedicke Marrie I cannot show it rime, I have tried, I can finde out no
rime to Ladie but babie:

[5.g]

ENTER BEATRICE

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

[5.h]

Beatrice Yea Signior, and depart when you bid me.

Benedicke O stay but till then.

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

Benedicke Claudio undergoes my challenge,. And

I pray thee now tell me, for which of my bad parts didst
thou first fall in love with me?

Beatrice For them all together: but for which of
my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Benedicke Suffer love! I do suffer love indeede,
for I love thee against my will. Now tell me,
how doth your cosin?

Beatrice Verie ill.

Benedicke And how doe you?

Beatrice Verie ill too.

Benedicke Serve God, love me, and mend.

ENTER URSULA

Ursula Madam, you must come to your Uncle, yonders old coile at home,
it is proved my Ladie Hero hath bin falselie accusde, the Prince and
Claudio mightilie abusde, and Don John is the author of all, who
is fled and gone: will you come presentlie? [5.i]

Beatrice Will you go heare this newes Signior?

Benedicke I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eies:
and moreover, I will goe with thee to thy Uncles.

EXEUNT ALL

ENTER CLAUDIO, PRINCE, AND THREE OR FOURE WITH TAPERS

Claudio Is this the monument of Leonato? [5.J]

Lord It is my Lord.

Epitaph.

*Done to death by slanderous tongues,
Was the Hero that here lies:
Now unto thy bones good night,
Yeerely will I do this right.*

Prince Good morrow masters, put your Torches out,
Thanks to you all, and leave us, fare you well.

EXEUNT ALL

ENTER LEONATO, BENEDICKE, MARGARET, URSULA, OLD MAN, FRIER,
HERO

[5.k]

Frier Did I not tell you she was innocent?

Leonato So are the Prince and Claudio who accus'd her,
 Upon the error that you heard debated:

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

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

Leonato Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
 Withdraw into a chamber by your selves,
 And when I send for you, come hither mask'd.

 EXEUNT LADIES

[5.l]

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

Frier To doe what Signior?

Benedicke Signior Leonato,
 Your neece regards me with an eye of favour.

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

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

Leonato But what's your will?

Benedicke This day to be conjoyn'd,
 In the state of honourable marriage,
 In which (good Frier) I shall desire your helpe.

Leonato My heart is with your liking.

Frier And my helpe.

ENTER PRINCE AND CLAUDIO, WITH ATTENDANTS

[5.m]

Prince Good morrow to this faire assembly.

Leonato Good morrow Prince, good morrow Claudio:
 We heere attend you, are you yet determin'd,
 To day to marry with my brothers daughter?

Claudio Ile hold my minde.

Leonato Call her forth brother, heres the Frier ready.

ENTER BROTHER, HERO, BEATRICE, MARGARET, URSULA

[5.n]

Claudio Which is the Lady I must seize upon?

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

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

Leonato No that you shal not, till you take her hand,

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

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

Claudio Another Hero?

Hero Nothing certainer.
One Hero died, but I doe live.

Prince The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

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

Benedicke Soft and faire Frier, which is Beatrice?

Beatrice I answer to that name, what is your will?

Benedicke Doe not you love me?

Beatrice Why no, no more then reason.

Benedicke Why then your Uncle, and the Prince, & Claudio,
have beene deceived, they swore you did.

Beatrice Doe not you love mee?

Benedicke Troth no, no more then reason.

Beatrice Why then my Cosin Margaret and Ursula
Are much deceiv'd, for they did sweare you did.

- Benedicke They swore you were almost sicke for me.
- Beatrice They swore you were wel-nye dead for me.
- Benedicke 'Tis no matter, then you doe not love me?
- Beatrice No truly, but in friendly recompence.
- Leonato Come Cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.
- Claudio And Ile be sworne upon't, that he loves her,
For heres a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his owne pure braine,
Fashioned to Beatrice.
- Hero And heeres another,
Writ in my cosins hand, stolne from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedicke.
- Benedicke Come I will have thee, but by this light I take
thee for pittie.
- Beatrice I would not denie you, but by this good day, I
yeeld upon great perswasion, & partly to save your life,
for I was told, you were in a consumption.
- Benedicke Peace I will stop your mouth.
- Prince How dost thou Benedicke the married man?
- Benedicke Come, come, we are friends,
let's have a dance ere we are married.
- Leonato Wee'll have dancing afterward.
- Benedicke First, of my word, therefore play musick. Prince,
thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife.

ENTER MESSENGER

[5.0]

- Messenger My Lord, your brother John is tane in flight,
And brought with armed men backe to Messina.
- Benedicke Thinke not on him till to morrow, Ile devise
thee brave punishments for him: strike up Pipers.

[DANCE]

FINIS.
MUCH ADOE ABOUT NOTHING