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Sir Karl Elge
with kind regards from
Dr. Daniel.
With kind regards from

Dr. Daniel
Much Ado About Nothing,
written by
William Shakespeare.

The Quarto Edition,
1600.

A Facsimile
by
Charles Praetorius.

With Introduction
by
Peter Augustin Daniel.

London:
Produced by C. Praetorius, 14 Clareville Grove,
Hereford Square, S.W.
1886.
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40 SHAKSPERE QUATRO FACSIMILES,
WITH INTRODUCTIONS, LINE-NUMBERS, &c., BY SHAKSPERE SCHOLARS,
ISSUED UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF DR. F. J. FURNIVALL.

1. Those by W. Griggs.

No. 1. Hamlet. 1603.
2. Hamlet. 1604.
3. Midsummer Night's Dream. 1600. (Fisher.)
4. Midsummer Night's Dream. 1600. (Roberts.)
5. Love's Labour's Lost. 1600.
7. Merchant of Venice. 1600. (Roberts.)
8. Henry IV. 1st Part. 1598.
9. Henry IV. 2nd Part. 1600.
12. Venus and Adonis. 1593.

2. Those by C. Prattius.

15. Taming of a Shrew. 1594.
16. Merchant of Venice. 1600. (I. R. for Thomas Heyes.)
18. Richard II. 1597. Mr. Ruth. (fotograv.)
20. Richard III. 1597. (fotograv.)
22. Pericles. 1609. Qr.
24. The Whole Contention. 1619. Part II. (for 3 Henry VI.)
25. Romeo and Juliet. 1597.
26. Romeo and Juliet. 1598.
27. Henry V. 1600.
29. Sonnets and Lover's Complaint. 1609.
30. Othello. 1623.
31. Othello. 1630.
32. King Lear. 1606. Qr. (W. Britter, Pict. Bull.)
33. King Lear. 1606. Qr. (W. Britter.)
34. Lear. 1609. Qr. (W. Britter.)
35. Lucrece. 1594.
36. Romeo and Juliet. Undated. (fotograv.)
37. Contention. 1504. (not yet done.)
38. True Tragedy. 1604. (not yet done.)
39. The Famous Victories. 1598. (not yet done.)
40. The Troublesome Reign. 1601. (For King John: not yet done.)

[Shakspeare-Quarto Facsimiles, No. 14.]
INTRODUCTION.

Under date 4th August, presumably in the year 1600, there is an entry in the Stationers' Register to the effect that Much Ado about Nothing and other plays, As You Like It, Henry V. and Every Man in his Humour, were "to be staied."

The reason for this stay or injunction is not known; but shortly after, on the 23rd August 1600, we find Much Ado and the second part of Henry IV. entered for Andrew Wyse and William Aspley, and both plays were printed for them, in this same year, by V. S. [Valentine Sims].

As regards the Publishers of these two Plays, I do not find in the British Museum Catalogue of Early English Books that Wise and Aspley had ever any other partnership relations. Wise appears to have been in business from 1594 to 1602. During the years 1597–1599 he published the first two Qo. editions of each of the three plays, Richard II., Richard III. and 1st Pt. of Henry IV., and, in 1602, a third edition of Richard III. On the 25th Jan. 1603 he transferred his right in all three to Matthew Law, by whom nine subsequent editions (2 of Richard II., 3 of Richard III., and 4 of Henry IV. Pt. 1) were published prior to their appearance in the first Folio. In view of these numerous publications it is a singular but unexplained fact that no second quarto editions of two such popular plays as Much Ado and 2 Henry IV. should have been issued.

Aspley is shown by the Catalogue above-mentioned to have been in business from 1599 to 1630; his name appears on the title-page of some copies of the Sonnets, 1609, as the bookseller, and in 1623 he was one of the four booksellers at whose charges the first Fo. ed. of Shakespeare's Plays was printed (see Colophon of that vol.). The two plays with which he was specially connected made their appearance in that volume under very different circumstances; for while, as we shall see, Much Ado was little more than a reprint of the Qo., it is very doubtful whether the Qo. ed. of 2 Henry IV. was used at all as copy for the Fo. version. Mr H. A. Evans does indeed, in his Introduction (p. viii) to the Facsimile of that Qo., point out some instances of what appears to be reproduction of Qo. blunders, and a few other seeming points of contact might be adduced; but on the whole I incline to agree with the Cambridge
editors that the printers of the Fo. had only MS. copy for 2
Henry IV.

The entries in the Stationers’ Register of course determine the
latest date that can be assigned to Much Ado. How much earlier
it was produced is uncertain. Meres does not mention it in the
list of twelve plays which he gives in his Palladis Tamia, 1598,
and although this of course is no proof that it was not then in
existence, Meres has shown himself to be so well informed with
regard to the literature of the day, published and unpublished, that
the absence from his list of so popular a play as this must at once
have become, has been accepted by nearly all editors as a main
argument for fixing the date of its production at some time in 1599,
1600.

Another point to be considered in regard to date is Will Kemp’s
connection with the play: from the prefixes to the speeches in Act
IV. sc. ii., we learn that he took the part of Dogberry and was no
doubt its first personator, or “creator,” according to modern
theatrical parlance, and did we know the exact time at which he
withdrew from the Chamberlain’s Company we might possibly be
able to determine the date to be assigned to the play more precisely
than by the entries in the Stationers’ Register we now can do. That
he was a member of the Company in 1598 we have the testimony
of Ben Jonson, who includes his name in the list of Chamberlain’s
men who acted in Every Man in his Humour in that year; Jonson
does not mention him in a similar list of the actors of Every Man
out of his Humour, performed by the same Company in 1599; but
we cannot therefore conclude that Kemp had then quitted that
company; Kemp and Shakespeare, in fact, are in exactly the same
position as regards these two plays: both performed in the first,
neither in the second; and we know of course that Shakespeare had
not parted company with the Chamberlain’s men. From this
mention of him in 1598 till his name appears in Henslowe’s Diary,
10 March, 1602, we know nothing of Kemp’s career, with the
exception of the fact that in the Lent of 1599 he danced his famous
Morris between London and Norwich; but as this was during the
theatrical vacation it would not have interfered with his duties in
the company. The account of this Morris, which he published the
next year as his Nine daisies wonder, was entered in the Stationers’
Register, 22 April, 1600.

The appearance then of Kemp’s name in the play, as the
original personator of Dogberry, is in no way inconsistent with the
generally received opinion that Much Ado was produced at some
time between the date of Meres’s book and the entries of the play
in the Stationers’ Register.

I have said above that Meres makes no mention of our play;
but included in his list of twelve he gives us the title of a play called _Love labours wonne_, and Mr A. E. Brae in his pamphlet entitled _Collier, Coleridge and Shakespeare, 1860_, endeavours to prove that this is merely another title for _Much Ado about Nothing_. This identification if established would necessarily throw back the date of our play to some time not later than the beginning of 1598; but I own, ingenious as Mr Brae's arguments certainly are, they fail to carry conviction to my mind. _Much Ado_ is not the only play which is supposed to be referred to under the title of _Love labours wonne_: Dr. Farmer in his _Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare_ (see Vol. I. p. 314, _Var_. 1821), suggested _All's Well that Ends Well_ as probably the supposed lost play; the Rev. Joseph Hunter in his _Disquisition on The Tempest_, 1841, and again in his _New Illustrations_, 1845, Vol. I. pp. 130 and 359, argued in favour of _The Tempest_; Prof. G. L. Craik, in his _English of Shakespeare_, 1st ed. 1853, p. 7, advocated the claims of the _Taming of the Shrew_, and after carefully considering all these claims I see no reason why _As You Like It_ and _Twelfth Night_ should not also enter into the competition; though possibly it will be thought that a title which can be made to fit so many different plays probably belongs to none of them.

At any rate it does not seem to me that the claim of _Much Ado_ to this title is sufficiently established to allow of its intervention on the question of the date of that play.

A matter presenting less scope for ingenious speculation, but one of very much greater importance, is that of the relationship of the Qo. and Fo. versions; 'till this is ascertained, and their relative authority determined, no satisfactory settlement of the text is possible.

As regards _Much Ado_ the question presents no great difficulties, and it may be stated briefly and with confidence that in 1623 the only authority Messrs. Heminge and Condell had for their Folio edition was a copy of the quarto containing a few MS. alterations and corrections made probably years before, and not specially for this purpose. By far the greater number of the variations of the Fo. must, however, be attributed to carelessness on the part of its printer, not to MS. alterations made by the corrector of the Qo.; indeed the fewness and small importance of those which can be attributed to deliberate alteration and correction forbid the notion that any independent MS. of the Play could have been consulted for the purpose, or that any sustained effort was made to supply the deficiencies of the Qo. and correct its errors.

In the Fo. we find the Play divided into Acts, and Sc. i. of the first Act marked; but no further attempt to number the scenes was made. The Fo., or rather the "corrected" Qo. from which it was printed, must also be credited with the marking of four or five
more exist than appear in the Qo.; but, as regards the stage directions and distribution of speeches generally, both editions are almost equally deficient and faulty. The only variations worth notice in this respect are:

Act II. sc. i. l. 88. The Qo. has Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Beneike, and Balthasar, or dumb John. To this muddle the Fo., without correcting it, adds Maskers with a drum. In the same scene, l. 160, the Qo. has Dance excent, which the Fo. changes to Excent. / Musick for the dance.

In the same scene, l. 217, the Qo. has Enter the Prince, Hero, Leonato, John and Borachio, and Conrade. The Fo. rightly omits all after Prince, and at l. 270 where the Qo. has Enter Claudio and Beatrice, the Fo. rightly adds Hero, Leonato.

Act II. sc. iii. at line 38 the Qo. has Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Musick, and at line 44 Enter Balthasar with musicke. For these two stage directions the Fo. only has, at l. 38, Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Jacke Wilson.¹

Act II. sc. iii. 195. A speech given to Claudio in Qo. is assigned to Leonato in Fo.; either may be right.

Act III. sc. i. in the first entrance, the Fo. corrupts Hero's Gentlemen to Gentlemen.

Act III. sc. ii. l. 54. A speech wrongly assigned to Beneke in the Qo. is in the Fo. given to Prince; though it might equally well have been given to Leonato.

Act V. sc. i. l. 209. The Fo. for Enter Constables has Enter Constables; and at l. 267 where the Qo. has Enter Leonato, his brother and the Sexton, the Fo. wrongly omits all after Leonato.

Act V. sc. iv. l. 33, at the entry of the Prince and Claudio, the Fo. changes and two or three other to with attendants.

In other places the Fo. reproduces the stage directions just as they appear in the Qo.; Innogen, wife of Leonato, a character not

¹ Mr. Collier supposed that "Jacke Wilson" might be identical with a "John Wilson, son of Nicholas Wilson, minstrel," a record of whose birth, 24th April, 1585, he had discovered in the registers of St. Giles, Cripplegate; he thought too that this might be the same individual as the "Mr. Wilson, the singer," who dined with Alleyn, the actor, on the anniversary of his wedding, 22 Oct. 1620, and that he was not only a singer, but a composer of Shaksperean music. (See his Memoirs of Alleyn, Sh. Soc. 1845, p. 153.—Sh. Soc. Papers, 1845, Vol. II. p. 33, and Introduction to Memoirs of Actors, Sh. Soc. 1846, p. xv.) This last piece of information Mr. Collier would seem to have derived in an imperfect manner from Dr. E. F. Kimbault, who in 1846, in a pamphlet entitled Who was Jack Wilson? sought, with some degree of probability, to identify him with John Wilson, Dr. and Prof. of Music at Oxford, who was born 1594 and died 1673.

It is evident from the birth dates of these two individuals that neither of them could be the original personator of Balthasar; but either might, for anything we know to the contrary, have taken the part at some revival of the play. Hence the insertion of the name in the theatrical copy of the Qo.
in the Play at all, is reproduced in the Fo. as in the Qo. in the entrances to Act I. sc. i., and Act II. sc. i.; in Act I. sc. i. l. 205, the Fo. follows the Qo. in making "John the bastard" enter with Don Pedro, though he has nothing whatever to do with this part of the scene; the cousins or attendants whom Leonato addresses at the end of Act I. sc. ii., are no more provided in the stage directions of the Fo. than of the Qo.; in Act II. sc. i. ll. 104, 107, 109, three speeches belonging to Balthasar remain in the Fo. as in the Qo. to Benedick; no correction appears in the Fo. of the jumble by which in III. iii. l. 187 Conrade is made to speak both his own and the watchman's speeches; the confusion of prefixes to the speeches in Act IV. sc. ii.—where Kemp's and Cowley's names are given instead of those of the characters they represented—is the same in the Fo. as in the Qo., with the exception that the prefix to the mangled speeches, ll. 70, 71, which the Qo. gives to Cowley is changed in the Fo. to Sex. i. e. the Sexton, who has already left the stage; in Act V. sc. iii., in both Qo. and Fo., Claudio's speech ll. 22, 23 is given to Lo. [Lord] and printed as prose; and in Act V. sc. v. l. 98, the Fo., as the Qo., gives to Leonato the privilege which belongs to Benedick, of stopping Beatrice's sweet mouth.

In the text itself we find in the Fo. the same persistence in the errors and peculiarities of the Qo. The following instances—the number of which might be largely increased—will, added to those already displayed in connection with the stage-directions, suffice to establish the dependence of the Fo. on the Qo.:—

I. i. 1 and 10. In both places Don Pedro called Peter.
I. i. 59—
"But for the stuffing well, we are all mortall."—stuffing and well wrongly connected.
I. i. 89. Benedick called Benedict.
III. ii. 28—
"Well every one cannot master a griefe, but he that has it."
III. ii. 118—
"If you loue her, then to-morrow wed her."—Comma should come after them.
III. iii. 11. George Sea-cole. In Act III. sc. v. he becomes Francis.
III. iii. 158—
"how the Prince Claudio and my master planted, and placed, and possessed by my master Don Iohn."—Evidently corrupt; should probably read—"how the Prince and Claudio planted and placed and possessed by my master Don Iohn."
III. v. 10—
"Speakes a little of the matter."—of for off.
IV. i. 57—
"Out on thee seeming," etc.

IV. i. 103—
"About thy thoughts and counsails of thy heart."—thy for the.


IV. i. 157-160. Commencement of Friar's speech. "Heare me . . . I have marke."—Printed as prose.

IV. i. 204—
"Your daughter heere the Princesse (left for dead)"—should be—the princes left for dead.

V. ii. 47—
"let me goe with that I came"—should be came for.

It was perhaps scarcely worth while to take into account obvious blunders peculiar to the Fo, but, as showing the general inferiority of its text, the following instances may be noted:

I. i. 51. ease for cote; I. iii. 41. I will make for I make; II. i.

On this instance the Cambridge Editors remark—"The commencement of the Friar's speech comes at the bottom of page, sig. G. i. (r) of the Quarto. The type appears to have been accidentally dislocated, and the passage was then set up as prose." The Editors further suppose that "some words were probably lost in the operation," and they accordingly mark a lecua in their Globe edition. A theory of a bit of "pie" resulting in corruption of the text demands very careful consideration. I do not perceive that any words are wanting for the sense, and my examination of the page (49 of our Facsimile) inclines me to believe that there was nothing accidental in the printing of a portion of it as prose. The page, it will be observed, is abnormally long, and consists of 39 lines; whereas the regular full page, including line for signature and catch-word, has 38 only: but if this page had been printed metrically throughout it would have required 42 lines; of which three would have been occupied by Benedick's speech, II. 145-7, and four by the commencement of the Friar's speech. Now it is not to be supposed that the whole play was set up by one man, and it is therefore allowable to imagine that the portion assigned to—let us say—Compositor A. may have ended with the last line of this page: the following portion, given out to Compositor B., may have been made up into pages before A. had finished his stint. Were B.'s pages to be pulled to pieces to make room for the fag end of A.'s work? I imagine not: it was less trouble to compress a few lines of verse into prose and, with the help of an extra line, to get all A.'s work into his last page, as we now see it in p. 49 of our Facsimile. Probably to a somewhat similar transaction in the printing office was due the appearance in prose of the first part of Mercutio's famous Queen Mab speech in Romeo and Juliet. See p. 19 of the Facsimile of Q2 of that play, edited by Mr. H. A. Evans.

It is worth noting here that this p. 49 of Much Ado has received some slight corrections in its passage through the press: in l. 123, "Do not live Hero, do not ope thine eies:"; the British Museum copy, C. 12. g. 29, has a comma in lieu of a colon at the end of the line; in line 149, "Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?", the same copy has no comma after Lady and has a full stop in place of the note of interrogation at the end of the line; the last words also of the page, "haue marke," do not in this copy range with the line above, but are the breadth of one letter within the line.
LOVE FOR LOVE; II. i. 284. THIS Lady tongue for my Ladie Tongue; II. i. 305. something of a jealous complexion, a for that; II. i. 328. he is in my heart, my for her; II. ii. 34. on for Don; III. i. 79. It were a better death, to die with mockes, to for then; IV. i. 128. reward for reweard; V. i. 6. comfort for comforter; V. ii. 33. name for names; V. ii. 38, 39. time (twice) for rime.

The chief sins however of the Fo. in this respect are sins of omission; besides numerous single words, the omission of which may be unhesitatingly ascribed to carelessness on the part of the printer, the Fo. omits some eight or nine lines, here noted; the omitted passages being printed in Italic:

I. i. 311, 312—
"And I will breake with hir, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her: wast not to this end," etc.

A common error of the press: the eye of the compositor glancing to the her in the second line, he overlooked the words between. See similar instances noted at the end of Dr Furnivall's Forewords to the Q2 Hamlet Facsimile.

III. ii. 33-37—
"as to be a Dutch-man to day, a French-man to morrow, or in the shape of two countries at once, as a Germanine from the west downwards, all slope, and a Spaniard from the hip upwards, no doubt."

Malone suggested that this passage may have been struck out "to avoid giving any offence to the Spaniards, with whom James became a friend in 1604."

IV. i. 20—
"What men daily do, not knowing what they do."

Here, as in the first instance, the compositor having set up the first do, supposed he had arrived at the second.

IV. ii. 18-23—
Kemp [Dogberry] loq. ... "maisters, do you serve God?
Both. Yea sir we hope.
Kem. Write down, that they hope they serve God: and write God first, for God defend but God should get before such villaines: maisters it is proved," etc.

Blackstone supposes that this omission "may be accounted for from the stat. 3 Jac. I. c. 21."

V. iv. 33—
"Here comes the Prince and Claudio."

I have given Malone's and Blackstone's reasons for the omission of two of these passages; but I apprehend they may all be set down to accident.
In reviewing then the errors of the Fo., enough, I think, has been said to prove beyond dispute its connection with the Qo.: it now remains to consider whether that connection has been in any way affected by the supervising authority of a MS. copy of the play, as has been shown to be the case with some other plays where the Qo. editions have been made use of in providing "copy" for the printers of the Fo.

I have already expressed my conviction that no such MS. copy was consulted for the Fo. edition of Much Ado; but in order that the reader may have before him all the evidence on which such an opinion could be founded, I have made out a list of all the corrections and variations of the Fo. that have been received into modern texts, Mr. Knight's especially; for he more than any other editor has taken the Fo. for his guide. When he rejects its authority in favour of the Qo. the Fo. reading must indeed be "grandly suspicious." In this list I have marked with a star (*) all such variations as I consider to be obvious corrections: there will not, I think, be found among them any that might not have been made by an ordinarily intelligent reader of the Qo. A number of others I have marked with a dagger (†): most of these seem to me very palpable blunders, and I should not have encumbered my list with them were it not that Mr Knight has adopted and popularized them in his numerous editions. Another few I have marked with a parallel [§]: their acceptance or rejection would, I presume, depend on the degree of authority to be assigned to Qo. or Fo. For the rest, which I have left blank, I think we need not look further than to the caprice or carelessness of the printer for their origin.

The quotations are taken from the Qo., followed by the variations of the Fo.

I. i. 51—"he is"—he's.
I. i. 90—"ere a be curet"—ere he be cur'd.
I. i. 93—"You will never"—you'll ne'er.
|| I. i. 96—"are you come to meet your trouble"—you are.
† I. i. 106—"Were you in doubt sir"—sir om.
|| I. i. 147—"That is the summe of all"—This.
I. i. 314—"How sweetly you do minister to loue"—do you.
† I. ii. 4—"I can tell you strange newes"—strange om.
I. ii. 10—"in mine orchard"—my.
† I. ii. 11—"were thus much over-heard"—much om.
I. iii. 8—"what blessing brings it"—bringeth.
|| I. iii. 9—"at least a patient sufferance"—yet.
† I. iii. 25—"where it is impossible you should take true root"—true om.
† I. iii. 63—"I whipt me behind the arras"—me om.
II. i. 17—"if a could"—he.
II. i. 34—"light on a husband"—upon.
† II. i. 56—"father, as it please you"—father om.
† II. i. 65—"to make an account of her life"—an om.
II. i. 146—"he both pleases men"—pleaseth.
II. i. 195—"county"—count.
† II. i. 222—"I tolde him, and I think I tolde him true"—last I om.
† II. i. 223—"the goodwill of this young Lady"—will.
† II. i. 263—"to binde him up a rod"—up om.
II. i. 251—"that I was dullest than a great thawe"—and that.
† II. i. 288—"a double heart for his single one"—a.
II. i. 346—"out a question"—of.
II. i. 370—"countie"—count.
† II. i. 376—"to haue al things answer my mind"—my om.
† II. ii. 37—"as in love of your brothers honor"—in a love.
II. ii. 49—"such seeming truth of Holyoes disloyaltie"—truth.
† II. ii. 57—"Be you constant"—thou.
* II. iii. 141—"your daughter told of us"—us of.
|| II. iii. 162—"he would make but a sport of it"—but make.
II. iii. 178—"what a will say"—he.
II. iii. 192—"Before God"—Fors.
† II. iii. 197—"you may say he is wise"—see.
† II. iii. 199—"a most christianlike feare"—most om.
† II. iii. 207—"shall we go seeke Benedicke"—see.
II. iii. 217—"ynworthy so good a lady"—to have so.
† II. iii. 223—"gentlewomen"—gentlewoman.
* III. i. 4—"Vrsity"—Vrsula.
|| III. i. 12—"to listen our propose"—purpose.
|| III. i. 58—"lest shee make sport at it"—she.
|| III. i. 104—"Shees timed I warrant you"—tame.
III. ii. 39—"as you would haue it appeare he is"—to appeare.
† III. ii. 64—"conclude, conclude, he is in love"—conclude om.
III. ii. 106—"she hat bin"—hath been.
† III. ii. 132—"bear it coldely but 'till midnight"—night.
† III. iii. 37—"for the watch to babble and to talke"—to om.
CORRECTIONS AND VARIATIONS OF FO. THE FACSIMILE.

III. iii. 45 — "bid those that are drunke"—them.
* III. iii. 85 — "the statues"—statues.
III. iii. 134 — "this vij. yeere"—yeares.
† III. iii. 148 — "At this I see, and I see"—I om.
† III. iii. 162 — "And thought they Margaret was Hero?"—thy.
|| III. iii. 48 — "youe see he shall lacke no barnes"—look.
|| III. v. 27 — "a thousand pound more"—times.
III. v. 34 — "ha tane"—have.
† III. v. 54 — "as it may appeare vnto you"—it om.
† IV. i. 77 — "I charge thee do so, as thou art my child"—do.
IV. i. 88 — "Why then are you no maiden"—you are.
IV. i. 97 — "Not to be spoke of"—spoken.
|| IV. i. 163 — "In angel whitenesse beate away those blushes"—beare.
* IV. i. 277 — "Do not swaewre and eate it"—sware by it.
† IV. i. 293 — "You kill me to deny it"—it om.
IV. i. 318 — "Counte, Comte Comsect"—Count, Comsect.
IV. i. 336 — "I will kisse your hand, and so I leaue you"—I om.
* IV. ii. 53 — "Yea by masse"—by th.
V. i. 7 — "whose wrongs doe sute with mine"—doth.
* V. i. 24 — "Would glue preceptiall medicine to rage"—medicine.
V. i. 63 — "mine innocent child"—my.
V. i. 162 — "true said she, a fine little one"—saies.
† V. i. 272 — "Art thou the slaue"—thou thou (printing the verse as prose).
† V. i. 81 — "he shall liue no longer in monument then the bell rings"—monuments...bells ring.
* V. iii. 10 — "Praising her when I am dead"—dombe.
|| V. iii. 21 — "Heauily heauily"—Heauenly, heauenly.
V. iv. 7 — "all things sorts"—sorts.

The Acts, scenes and lines of the Facsimile are numbered in accordance with the Globe edition on the outer margin; on this margin also a dagger [†] marks every line varying in any way in its text from the Fo.; lines peculiar to the Qo. and omitted in Fo. are marked with an asterisk [*]. On the inner margin a dagger marks any variation of the stage directions or of the prefixes to speeches, and a caret [=] marks the places where additional stage directions and the Act divisions are found in the Fo.

P. A. DANIEL.

Sept. 1886.
Much adoe about Nothing.

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

Written by William Shakespeare.

LONDON
Printed by V.S. for Andrew Wise, and
William Aspley.
1600.
Much ado about Nothing.

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

Leonato.

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

Mess. He is very 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 itselfe, when the victors brings home full numbers: I find here, that don Peter hath bestowed much honour on a yong Florentine called Claudio.

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

Leo. He hath an vnkle 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 it selfe modest enough, without a badge of bitterness.

Leo. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure.
Much adoe

Leo. A kind overflow of kindnesse, there are no faces truer
then those that are so wafle, how much better is it to wepe at
joy, then to joy at weeping?

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

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

Leonato What is he that you ask for niece?

Her. My soen meane Signior Benedicke of Padua.

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

Beat. He set vp his bills here in Messina, and challenge
d Cypid at the Flight, and my uncles foole reading the chalenge
subscrib'd for Cypid, and challenge him at the Burbolt: I
pray you, how many hath he kild, and eaten in these warrest
but how many hath he kild, for indeed I promised to eate all
of his kiling.

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

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

Beat. You had sullenly vittaile, and he hath holpe to eate it,
he is a very valiant trencher man, he hath an excellent sto-
macke.

Meff. And a good souldier too, lady.

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

Meff. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuft with all hono-
orable vertues.

Beat. It is so indeed, he is no less then a stuf man, but for
the flutting we, we are of mortall.

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

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


about Nothing.

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

Mess. Is't possible?

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

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

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 Claudio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease, he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently 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, Benedick, Balthasar and John the bostard.

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

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

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

Leonato Her mother hath many times tolde me so.

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

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

Pedro You have it full Benedicke, we may ghesse by this, what you are, being a man, truely the Lady fathers her selfe.
Much adoe

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

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

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

Bene. What my deere Lady Disdaine are you yet living?

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

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

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

Bene. God keepe your Ladifhip fil in that mind, to some
Gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratcht face.

Bea. Scratching could not make it worse, and there such
a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot teacher.

Bea. 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 continuator, but keep your way a Gods name, I haue
done.

Bea. You always end with a ladys trickes, I knowe you of
olde.

Pedro That is the summe of all: Leonato, signior Claudio,
and signior Benedicke, my deere friend Leonato, hath inuited
you all, I tell him we shall play here, at the least a moneth, and
he heartily praises some occasion may detaine vs longer, I dare
sweare he is no hypocrite, but praiseth 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 thankyou, I am not of many wordes, but I thank you
Leon.
about Nothing.

Leon. Please it your grace lead on?

Pedro Your hand Leonato, we will go together.

Exeunt, Moment Benedick & Claudio.

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior

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

Claud. Is she not a modest yong ladie?

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 proffesed tyrant to their fesi

Claudio. No, I pray thee speake in sober judgement.

Bene. Why yfaith me thinks shees too low for a his praise,

too browne for a faire praise, and too little for a great praise.on-

lie this commendation I can afford her, that were she other

then she is, she were vnhandome, 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 likist her.

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

Claudio. Can the world buse such a Jewell?

Bene. Yea, and a caxe to putte it into, but speake you this

with a fad browe? or doe you play the flowing iceke, 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 ever I

lookt on.

Bened. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such

matter: thereis her cousin, and she were not poistent with a fury,

exceedes her as much in beautie, as the first of Maiic dooth the

last of December: but I hope you have no intent to turne hus-

band, have you?

Claudio. I would scarce trust my selfe, though I had sworne

the contrarie, if Hero would be my wife.

Bened. If it come to this, in faith hath not the world one

man but he will weare his cappe with suspition? shall I never

see a batcheller of three score againe? go to yfaith, and thou wilt

needs thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and

figh away fundacie: looke, don Pedro is returned to secke you.

Enter
Much ado.

Enter don Pedro, John the bastard.

Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

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

Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Bene. You heare, Count Claudio, I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so (but on my allegiance, mark you this, on my allegiance he is in love, with whom now that is your Grace's part: mark how short his answer is, with Hero Leonato's short daughter.

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

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

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

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

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

Pedro. By my troth I speake my thought.

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

Bened. And by my two faiths and troths, my Lorde, 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 lovd, 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 conceiued me, I thank her: that she brought me vp, I likewise give her most humble thankes: but that I will have a rechate wined in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldricke, all women shal pardon mee: because I will not doe them the wrong to mistrust any, I will doe my selfe the right to truft none: and the fine is, (for the which
about Nothing.

which I may go the fitter,) I will live a bachelour.

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

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

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

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

Pedro Well, as time shall trie: in time the saucage bull doth bear the yoake.

Bene. The saucage bull may, but if euer the sensible Benedicke bear it, plucke off the bulls hornes, and let them in my forhead, and let me be valde 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 wouldest be horn madde.

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

Bened. I looke for an earthquake too then.

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

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

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

Pedro The sixt of July: your loving friend Benedicke.

Bened. Nay mocke not, mocke not, the body of your disscouerse is sometime guarded with fragments; and the guards are but slightly baffed on neither, ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leave you. exit

B

Claudio
Much ado

Claudio My hir, your Highness now may doe mee good.

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

Claud. Hath Leonato any sonne, my lord?

Pedro No child, but Hero, he is his only heire.

Claud. Doost thou affect her Claudio?

Claud. O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldiers eyes,
That look, but had a rougher task in hand,
Than to draw liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd, and that warre thoughts,
Have left their places vacant in their rooms,
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 love faire Hero, cherish it,
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt haue her; waft not to this end,
That thou beganst to twist to fine a story.

Claud. How sweetly you do minister to love,
That knowes loues griefe by his complextion
But left my liking might too sodaine seeme,
I would haue salue it with a longer treatise.

Pedro What need the bridge much broder then the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity:
Looke what will serve is fit; its once, thou louest,
And I will fit thee with the remeide,
I know we shall haue retellling to night,
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell faire Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bofore ile vnclasp me heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force.
about Nothing.

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

Enter Leonato and an old man brother to Leonato

Leo. How now brother, where is my colin your sonne, hath
he pronounced this mufique?

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

Leo. Are they good?

Old. As the events stampes them, but they have a good co-
urer: they shewed well outward, the prince and Count Claudio
walking in a thicke pleched alley in mine orchard, were thus
much over-heard by a man of mine: the prince disconuered to
Claudio that he loved 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-
flamely breake with you of it.

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

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

Leo. No, no, we will hold it as a dreame til it appeare it selfe;
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: coosins, you know what you have to doe,
O I crie you mercie friend, go you with me and I will use your
skill: good coisin have a care this busie time.

Enter for John the bastard, and Conrade his companion.

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

John. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds; there-
fore the giddinesse 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 suferance.

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

mor-
Much ado

mortifying mischief: I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad
when I have cause, and smile at no man's feet, eat when I have
fomack, and wait for no man's leisure: sleep when I am drow-
sie, and tend on no man's businesse, laugh when I am merry, and
daw no man in his humor.

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

John. I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rose in his
grace, and it better fits my blood to be dildain'd of all, then to
fashion a cariage to rob loose from any: in this (though I cannot
be said to be a flattering honest man) it must not be denied but I
am a plain dealing villaine, I am trusted with a muffle, and en-
braunch'd with a clogge, therfore I have decreed, not to sing
in my cage: if I had my mouth I would bite: if I had my liberty
I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am,
and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make any vse of your discontent?

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

Enter Borachio.

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

John. Wilt it fere any model to build mischief on? what
is he for a fool that betrothes himselfe to vnquietnesse?

Bor. Mary it is your brother's 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?
about Nothing.

Bor Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoaking a mufly roome, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agread upon, that the prince should woe Hero for himselfe, and haue obtain'd her, geue her to Counte Claudio.

John Come, come, let vs thither, this may prove food to my displeaseure, that yong start vp hath all the glory of my overthrow; if I can crosse him any way, I bleffe my selfe euery way, you are both sure, and wil assist me.

Cor. To the death my Lord.

John Let vs to the great supper, their cheere is the great that I am subdued, would the cooke were a my mind, shall we go prove what's to be done?

Bor. Weelee wait vpun your lordship.

exit.

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

Leonato Was not Counte John here at supper?

brother I saw him not.

Beatrice How tarrye 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 He were an excellent man that were made just iufl in the mid-way between him and Benedick, the one is too like an image and faius nothing, and the other too like my ladies eldest Ionne, euermore taling.

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 vnuckle, and money inough in his purse, such a man would winne any wo- man in the world if a could get her good will.

Leonato By my troth niece thou wilt never get thee a hus- band, if thou be to shrewd of thy tongue.

brother Infaith thee see to curt.

Beatrice Too curt is more then curt, I shall leffen

Gods
Much ado

God's sending that way, for it is wise, God sends a curtse cow short horns, but to a cow too curtse, he sends none.

Leonato So, by being too curtse, God will send you no horns.

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 than a youth: and he that hath no beard, is lesse than a man: and he that is more than 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 Beford, and lead his apes into hell.

Leonato Well then, go you into hell.

Beatrice No but to the gate, and there will the duell meete me like an old cuckold with horns on his head, and say, get you to heaven Beatrice, get you to heaven, heeres no place for your maids, so deliver I vp my apes and away to saint Peter; for the heavens, he shews me where the Batchellers sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

Brother Well necce, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

Beatrice Yes faith, it is my costens dueste to make curtse and say, father, as it please you; but yet for all that costen, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make an other curtse, and say, father, as it please me.

Leonato Well necce, I hope to see you one day sittted with a husband.

Beatrice Not til God make men of some other metal then earth, would it not grieve a woman to be ouer-masted with a piece of valiant duft, to make an account of her life to a clod of waiward marle? no vneckle, jet none: A dams forms are my brethren, and truely I holde it a finne 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 coffin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in every thing, and to daunce out the answer, for here me Hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch iegge, a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suite is hot and hasty like a Scotch iegge (and ful as fantastical) the wedding manerly 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 grave.

Leonato Coffin you apprehend passing threwdly.

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

Leonato The recullers are entering brother, make good room.

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

Pedro Lady will you walke about with your friend?

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

Pedro With me in your company.

Hero I may say so when I please.

Pedro And when please you to say so?

Hero When I like your favours, for God defend the lute should be like the cace.

Pedro My visor is Philomons roose, within the house is love.

Hero Why then your visor should be thatch.

Pedro Speake low if you speake love.

Bene. Well, I would you did like me.

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

Bene. Which is one?

C. Mar. I lay my prayers alowd.
Much adoe

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

Marc. God match me with a good dauncer.

Balb. Amen.

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

Balb. No more words, the Clarke is answered.

Ursula. I know you well enough, you are signior Antho-
nio.

Amb. At a word I am not.

Ursula. I knowe you by the wagling of your head.

Amb. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

Ursula. You could not Doe him so ill well, vnlesse you
were the very man: heeres his drie hand vp and downe, you
are he, you are he.

Amb. 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, immme, you
are he, graces will appeare, and thers an end.

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

Bened. No, you shall pardon me.

Beat. Not will you not tell me who you are?

Bened. Not now.

Beat. That I was disdisnefull, and that I had my good wit
out of the hundred mery 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, beleue me.

Beat. Did he neuer make you laugh?

Bened. I pray you what is he?

Beat. Why he is the princes ieaster, avery dull fool, only his
gifts is, in deuising impossible flaunders, none but Libertines
delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in
his villanie, for he both pleases men and angers them, and then
they laugh at him, and beate him: I am sure he is in the Fleece,
I would he had boarded me.

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

Beat.
about Nothing.

Beat. Do, do, heele but break a comparison or two on me,
which peradventure, (not mark, or not laught at) ittikes him in-
to melancholy and then there a partridge wing sauted, for the
foole will eat no supper that night: wee must follow the lea-
ders.

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 with-
drawne her father to breake with him about it: the Ladies fol-
low her, and but one visor remaines.

Borachio And that is Claudio, I knowe him by his bear-
ing.

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 swerae his affection.

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

John Come let vs to the banquet.

Claud. Thus answere I in name of Benedicke,
But heare these ill newes with the cares of Claudio:
Tis certaine fo, the Prince woos for himselfe,
Friendship is constanta in all other things,
Saue in the office and affaires of loue:
Therefore all hearts in loue vs their owne tongues.
Let every eie negotiate for it selfe,
And truete no Agent: for Beauty is a witch,
Against whose charmes faith melteth into blood:
This is an accident of howrely profe,
(dicke)
Which I mistrust not: farwell therefore Hero. Enter Bene-
Benedicke Count Claudio.

Claudio Yea, the same.
Much adoe

Bene. Come, will you go with me?
Claudio. Whither?

Bene. E'en to the next willow, about your owne busines, county: what fashion will you weare the garland of about your necke, like an Visurers chaine or vnder your arm, like a Lieutenants scarfe? you must weare it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claudio. I with him ioy of her.
Bened. Why that's spokun like an honest Drouier, so they fell bullockes: but did you thinke the Prince would haue servued you thus?

Claudio. I pray you leaue me.
Benedicke. Ho now you strike like the blindman,twas the boy that stole your meate, and youle beate the poole.

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

Benedicke. Alas poore hurt foule, now will hee creep into sedges: but that my Ladie Beatrice shold know me, and not know mee: the princes foule, hah, it may be I goe vnder that title because I am merry: yes but so I am apte to doe my selfe wrong: I am not so reputed, it is the baue (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's the Counte, did you see him?
Benedicke. Troth my lord, I haue played the part of Ladie Fame, I found him here as melancholy as a Lodge in a Warren. I tolde him, and I thinke I tolde him true, that your grace had got the good will of this young Lady, and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsoaken, or to binde him vp a rod, as being worthie to bee whipt.

Pedro. To be whipt, what's his fault?
Benedicke. The flate tranfgression of a Schoole-boy, who being over-joyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companion, and he steales it.

Pedro. Wilt thou make a trayt, a tranfgression? the tranfgression
about Nothing.

Benedick Yet it had not bene amisse the rodde had bene 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 will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

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

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

Bened. O shee misuide me past the indurance of a blocke: an oake but with one greene leafe on it, would haue answered her: my very visor beganne to assome life, and scold with her: she tolde me, not thinking I had bene my selfe, that I was the Princes jestor, that I was duller than a great thawe, huddling hee upon hee, with such impossible contemiance vpon me, that I stode like a man at a marke, with a whole army shooting at me: she speaks poynyards, and every word stabbes: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living 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 tranfgret, she would haue made Hercules have turned spitt, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too: come, take not of her, you shall find her the infernall Ate in good apparel, I would to God some scholler woulde coniure her, for certainly, while she is heere, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a fantasie, and people sinne vpon purpose, because they would goe thither, to indeede all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

Pedro Look heere shee comes.

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

the length of Pretser John's foot: fetch you a hair off the great
Cham's beard: do you any embassage to the Pignies, rather
than holde the words conference, with this harpy, you have
no employment for me?

Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Benedick. O God sir, here's a dish I love not, I cannot in-
dure my Lady Tongue.

Pedro. Come Lady, come, you have lost the heart of sig-
ior Benedick.

Beatrice. Indeed my Lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gave
him vice for it, a double heart for his single one, marry once be-
fore he won it of me, with false dice, therefore your grace
may well say I have lost it.

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

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

Pedro. Why how now Counte, why are you sad?

Claudio. Not sad my Lord.

Pedro. How then? sick?

Claudio. Neither, my Lord.

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

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

Claudio. Silence is the perfectest Heralt 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. 

Beatr.
about Nothing.

Boat. Speak cousin, or (if you cannot) stop his mouth with a knife, and let not him speake neither.

Pedro. Infaith lady you have a merry heart.

Boat. Yea my lord I thanke it, poore fool it keepes on the windy side of Care, my cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

Clan. And so the doth cousin.

Boat. Good Lord for aliance: thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burnt, I may sit in a corner and cry, leigh ho for a husband.

Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

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

Prince. Will you have me lady?

Beatrice. No my lord, whiles I might have another for working-daies, 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 hour.

Beatrice. No sure my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a starre daun't, and under that was I borne, cousins God give you joy.

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

Beatrice. I cry you mercy vncl, by your graces pardon.

exit Beatrice.

Prince. By my tryd a pleasant spirited lady.

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

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

Leonato. O by no meanes, she mockes all her wooers out of 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 Counte Claudio, when meanes you to goe to church?

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

Leonato Not til monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a iust seuen night, and a time too briefe too, to have all things answer my mind.

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

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

Prince And Benedicke is not the vnhopefull left husband that I know; thus faire can I praise him; he is of a noble straine, of approoued valoure, and confirmed honesty, I will teach you how to humour your cosin, that she shall faile in loue with Benedicke, and I, with your two helpes, will so practice on Benedicke, that in dispite of his quicke wit, and his queasie stomacke, she shall fall in loue with Beatrice; if we can do this, Cypid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall bee ours, for we are the onely Loue gods, goe in with mee, and I wil tell you my drift.

Enter 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 croste, any impediment, will be med-
cinable to me, I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever
comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with mine, how
canst thou croste this marriage?

Bor. Not honsetly my lord, but so couertly, that no disho-
nesty shall appeare in me.

John Shew me brieferly 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 vnseasonable instant of the night, appoitn
her to looke out at her ladies chamber window.

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

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

John What proofe shall I make of that?

Bor. Proofe enough, to misufe the prince, to vexe Claudio,
to vn doe Hero, and kill Leonato, looke you for any other
issue.

John Onely to disspight them I will endevour any thing.

Bor. Go then, find me a meet houre, to draw don Pedro and
the Counte Claudio alone, tell them that you know that Hero
loves me, intend a kind of zeale both to the prince & Claudio
(as in love of your brothers honor who hath made this match)
and his friends reputation, who is thus like to bee cast out of
the semblance of a maid, that you have discouer'd thus: they wil
scarcely beleue this without trial: offer them instances which
shall bee no leffe likehood, than to see me at hers chamber
window, heare me call Margaret Hero, heare Margaret terme me
Claudio, & bring them to see this the very night before the inten-
ded wedding: for in the mean time, I will so fashion the mat-
ter, that Hero shall be absent, and there that appeare such seem-
ing truth of Heroes disloyaltie, that jealousie shall bee cald assu-
stance
Muchadoe

rans, and all the preparation overthrowne.

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

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

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

Enter Benedict 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 fool, when he dedicates his behaviours to loue, will after he hath laught at such shallow follies in others, become 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 hear the taber and the pipe: I have knowne when he would have walked ten mile afoot, to see a good armour, and now wilt he lie ten nightes awake caruing the fashion of a new dublet: he was woont to speake plaine, and to the purpose (like an honest man and a foundler) and now is he turn'd orthography, his words are a very fantasticall banquet, such as many strange dishes: may I be so converted and feele this ecies? I cannot tell. I think not: I will not be sworne but loue may transforme me to an oyster, but Ie take my oath on it, till he haue made and oyster of me, he shall not make me such a fool: one woman is faire, yet I am well, an other is wise, yet I am well: an other vertuous, yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace; rich the shal be that certain, wise, or ile none, vertuous, or ile neuter cheaper her: saine, or ile neuter looke on her, mild, or come not near me, noble, or not I for an angell, of good discours, an excellent musician, and her haire
about Nothing.

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

Enter prince, Leoneo, Claudio, Mucike.

Prince Come shall we heare this musique?

Claud. Yea my good lord: how stil the euening is,
As hyst on purpoe to grace harmonie!

Prince See you where Benedicke hath hid himselfe?

Claud. O ver y wely lord: the musique ended,
Weele fit the kid-folke with a penny worth.

Enter Balthasar with musick.

Prince Come Balthasare, weehe hear that song againe.

Battb. O good my lord, zaxe not so bad a voice,
To flawnder musicke any more then once.

Prince It is the witnesse flil of excellencie,
To put a strange face on his owe perfetion,
I pray thee sing, and let me woode no more.

Battb. Because you talk of wooing I will sing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit,
To her she thinkes not worthy, yet she woos,
Yet will he swear he loves.

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

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

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

Bene. Now diuine are, now is his soule rauisht, is it not
Strange that theepes guts should hale soules out of mens bodies?well a borne for my mony when alls done.

The Song.

Sigh no more ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers euer,
One foote in sea, and one on shore,
To onething constant neuer,
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blith and bonnie,
Much adoe

Correcting all your soundes of woe,
Into hey nony nony.

Sing no more ditties, sing no more,
Of dumps to dull and heavy,
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leauy,
Then sighe not so, &c.

Prince By my troth a good song.
Balth. And an ill singer my lord.
Prince Ha, no no faith, thou singst wel enough for a shiff.
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 mischeefe, I am as sure have heard the night-rauen, come what plague could have come after it.
Prince Yea marie, dooest thou hcare 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 love with signior Benedicke?
Cla. O I, tale on, talk on, the soule fits, I did never think that lady would have foued any man.
Leo. No nor I neither, but most wonderful that she should do dele on signior Benedicke, whom she hath in all outward behaviors seemed euers to abhorre.
Ben. If possible fits the wind in that corner?
Leo. By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of it, but that the loves him with an iraged affecion, it is past the infinite of thought.
Prince May be the doth but counterfeit.
Claud. Faith like enough.
Leo. O God counterfeit? there was never counterfeit of passion, came so neare the life of passion as the discouers it.

Prince
about Nothing.

Prince Why what effects of passion shewes she?
Claud. Bait the hooke well, this fish will bite.
Leon. What effects my Lord the wilst you, you heard my daughter tell you how.
Claud. She did indeed.
Prince How, how I pray you! you amaze me, I would have thought her spriite had beene incuable against all assaults of affection.
Leon. 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 tane th'infection, hold it vp,
Prince Hath shee made her affection knowne to Benedicke?
Leonato No, and swears shee never will, thats her torment.
Claudio Tis true indeed, so your daughter saies: shall I, saies she, that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?
Leon. This saies she now when she is beginning to write to him, for shee be vp twenty times a night and there will she sit in her smocks til she have writ a sheete of paper; my daughter tells vs all.
Claud. Now you talke of a sheete of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told of vs.
Leonato O when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedicke and Beatrice betweene the sheete.
Claudio Thats,
Leon. O for the letter into a thousand halfpence, raile 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 her, if he writ to me, yea though I love him I should.
Claud. Then downe upon her knees she falls, weepes, sobs, beats her heart, teares her haire, prays, curses, O sweet Bene...
Much ado

dike, God give me patience.

Leonato She doth indeed, my daughter fai's so, and the ex-

tasie hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is some-
time afeard she will doe a desperate out-rage to her selfe, it is
ever true.

Prince It were good that Benedicke knew of it by some o-

ther, if she will not discover it.

Claudio To what end: he would make but a sport of it, and

tortment the poore Lade worfe.

Prince And he should it were an almes to hang him, shees

an excellent sweete lady, and (out of all suspition) she is vertu-
ous.

Claudio And she is exceeding wise.

Prince In every thing but in loving Benedicke.

Leonato O my Lord, wisdome and blood combating in

tender a body, we haue ten proofs to one, that blood hath

the victory, I am fory for her, as I haue suffe cause, becing her

uuncle, and her gardian.

Prince I would shee had bestowed this donge on mee, I

would haue daft all other respect, and made her halfe my selfe

I pray you tell Benedicke of it, and heare what a will she.

Leonato Were it good thinke you?

Claudio Hero thinke surely she will die, for she fayes shee

will die, if he love her not, and shee will die ere shee make her

loue knowne, and she will die if he woore her, rather then shee

will bate one breath of her accustomed crosnesse.

Prince She doth well, if shee shoulde make tender of her

loue, is very possible heele scorne it, for the man (as you know

all) hath a contemptible spirite.

Claudio He is a very proper man.

Prince He hath indeede a good outward happines.

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

Prince Hee dooth indeede shew some spaknes that are like

wit.

Claudio And I take him to be valiant.

Prince As Hector, I assure you, and in the manmagning of

quarrels you may say he is wise, for either hee anoydes them

with
about Nothing.

with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christ-like fear.

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

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

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

Leonato: Nay that is impossible, shee may weare her heart out first.

Prince: Well, we will heare farther of it by your daughter, let it coole the while, I loue Benedicke well, and I could with he would modestly examine himselfe, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

Leonato: My Lord, will your walket dinner is ready.

Claudio: If he do not doe on her vppon this, I will never trust my expectation.

Prince: Let there be the same nette spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carrie: the sparte will be, when they holde one an opinion of an others dotage, and no such matter, that is the scene that I would see, which will be mostely a dumbe stew: let vs 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 pittie the Lady: it seemes her affections have their full bent: loue me why it must be requited: I heare how I am cenfurde, they say I will breste my selfe proudely, if I perceive the loue come from her: they say too, that she will rather die then give anie signe of affection: I did never thinke to marry, I must not seeme proud, happy are they that heare their detractitions, and can put them to mending: they say the Lady is faire, tis a truth, I can breste them witnesse: and vertuous, tis so, I cannot reprooue it, and wife, but for loving me, by my worth it is no
Much adoe

no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for
I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some
odde quirks and remnants of witte broken on me, because I
have raile so long against marriage: but doth not the appe-
tite alter? a man looves the meate in his youth, that he cannot in-
dure in his age. Shall quippes and sentences, and these paper
bullets of the brain awe a man from the careere of his humor? No,
the world must be peopled. When I sayde I would die a
batcheller, I did not think I should live til I was married, here
comes Beatrice by this day, shees a faire lady, I doe spie some
markes of love in her.

Enter Beatrice.

Beat. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to din-
er.

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

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

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message,

Beat. Yea forsooth as you may take upon a kniues
point, and choake a daw withall: you have no stomack signior,
fare you well.

Bene. Ha, against my will I am sent to bid you come in to
dinner: thers a double meaning in that: I took no more paines
for those thanks the you took pains to thank me, that's 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 villain, if I do not love her I am a
lwy, I will go get her picture,

Enter Hero and two Gentlemen, 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 eare and tell her I and Ursley,
Walk in the orchard and our whole discourse
Is all of her, say that thou ouer heardst vs,
And bid her steale into the pleached bowere
Where hony-fuckles ripened by the sunne,

Forbid
about Nothing.

Forbid the flame to enter: like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride,
Against that power that bred it, there will she hide her,
To listen our proposal, this is thy office,
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

U. Sue the child come I warrant you presently.

H. Now Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedicke,
When I do name him let it be thy part,
To praise him more than ever man did merite,
My talk to thee must be how Benedicke,
Is sick in love with Beatrice: of this matter,
Is little Cupids crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hear-sey: now begin,
For looke where Beatrice like a Lapwing runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

Enter Beatrice.

U. The pleasant fishing is to see the fish
Cut with her golden cresses the siluer line,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
So angle we for Beatrice, who even now,
Is couched in the wood-bine couverture,
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

H. Then go we near her that her care loose nothing,
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it:
Not truly Ursula, she is too disdainfull,
I know her spirits are as coy and wild,
As haggards of the rocke.

U. But are you sure,
That Benedicke loves Beatrice so entirely?

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

U. And did they bid you tell her of it, madame?

H. They did intreat me to acquaint her of it,
But I persuaded them if they loue Benedicke,
To with him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

U.
Much ado

Volumna Why did you so, dooeth not the gentleman
Defence as full as fortunate a bed,
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

Hero O God of love! I know he doth defend,
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But nature never framed a woman's heart,
Of powder stuff'd then that of Beatrice:
Dissaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprizing what they looke on, and her wit
Values it false so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak; she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so false indeed.

Volumna Sure I think so,
And therefore certainly it were not good,
She knew her love left sheelee make sport at it.

Hero Why you speake truth, I neuer yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
But she would spel him backward; if faire faced,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister:
If blace, why Nature drawing of an antique,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a haffe ill headed:
If low, an agot very wildly cut:
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all winds:
If silent, why a blocke mowed with none:
So turns he every man the wrong side out,
And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simplicitye and merit purchaseth.

Volumna Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable,

Hero No not to be doode, and from all fashions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable,
But who dare tell her so? if I should speake,
She would mocke me into ayre, O she would laugh me
Out of my selfe, press me to death with wit,
Therefore let Benedick be couerd fire,
Consuming 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.

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

Hero No rather I will go to Benedicke,
And countaine him to fight against his passion,
And truly Ile devise some honest flaunders,
To flaine my cosin with, one doth not know,
How much an ill word may imposon liking.

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

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

Vrslula I pray you be not angry with me, madame,
Speaking my fancy: signior Benedicke,
For shape, for bearing argument and valour,
Goes forsoth in report through Italy.

Hero Indeed he hath an excellent good name,

Vrslula His excellence did earne it, ere he had it:
When are you married madame?

Hero Why every day to tommorrow, come go in,
Ile shew thee some attyres, and haue thy counsaile,
Which is the best to furnish me to tommorrow.

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

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

Beat. What fire is in mine eares? can this be true?
Stand I condemn’d for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adew,
No glory liues behind the backe of such.
And Benedicke, love on I will require thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy louing hand:
If thou dost loue, my kindnesse shall incite thee
To bind our loues vp in a holy band.
For others say thou dost destrcue, and I


**Much ado**

Believe it better then reportingly.  
*exit.*  

Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedick, and Leonato.

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

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

**Prince** Nay that would be as great a foyle in the new gloffe 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 crown of his head, to the sole of his foot, he is al mirth, he hath twice or thrice cut Cupides bow-string, and the little hang-man dare not shoot at him, he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinkes, his tongue speakes.

**Beno** Gallants, I am not as I have bin.

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

**Claud** I hope he be in loue.

**Prince** Hang him truant, theres no true drop of bloud in him to be truly toucht with loue, if he be fadder, he wantes mo-

**Beno** I haue the tooth-ach.

**Prince** Draw it.

**Beno** Hang it.

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

**Prince** Whatstigh for the tooth-ach.

**Leon** Where is but a humour or a worme.

**Beno** Wel, every one cannot maste a griefe, but he that has it.

**Claud** Yet say I, he is in loue.

**Prince** There is no appearance of fancie in him, vnlesse it be a fancie that he hath to strange disguises, as to be a Dutchman to day, a French-man to Morrow, or in the shape of two counties at once, as a Germaine from the waite downward, all flops, and a Spaniard from the hip vward, no dublet: vnlesse he haue a fancie to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no foole for fancie, as you would haue it appeare he is.

**Claud**
about Nothing.

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

Prince Hath any man seen him at the Barbers?

Claud. No, but the barbers man hath bin seen with him, and the olede ornament of his cheek hath already stuffi tennis balls.

Leon. Indeed he lookes youger than he did, by the loste of a beard.

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

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

Bene. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

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

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

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

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, walke aside with me, I haue studied eight or nine wise wordes to speake to you, which these hobby-horses must not heare.

Prince For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

Claud. Tis, tis, 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 adoe

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

Prince. In priuate?

Bassard. If it please you, yet Count Claudio may heare, for what I would speake of, concerns him.

Prince. What's the matter?

Bass. Means your Lordship to be married to morrow?

Prince. You know he does.

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

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

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

Prince. Why what's the matter?

Bass. 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?

Bass. Even she, Leonatoes Hero, your Hero, every mans Hero.

Claud. Disloyall?

Bass. 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 loue her, then to morow wed her: But it would better sute your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

Prince. I will not thinke it.

Bass. If you dare not trust that you see, confesse not that you knowe: if you will follow mee, I will shew you enough, and when you haue seen more, and heard more, proceede accordingly.

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

Prince
about Nothing.

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

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

Prince O day vntowardly turned!

Cland. O mischiefe strangely thwarting!

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

Enter Dogberry and his comparsion with the Watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verges Yea, or else were we pitty but they should suffear sa-
ulation 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, gie them their charge, neighbour Dog-
bery.

Dogberry 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.

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

Watch 2 Both which maister Constable.

Dogberry You haue: I knew it would be your answer: wel,
for your fauour sir, why gie God thanks, and make no boast
of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeare when
there is no neede of such vanity, you are thought heere to be
the most senslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch:
therefore beare you the lanthonre: 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?

Dogberry Why then take no note of him, but let him goe,
Much adoe

and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank god you are rid of a knave.

Verges If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Prince's subjects.

Dogberry True, and they are to meddle with none but the Prince's subjects: you shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and to talk, is most intolerable, and not to be endured.

Watch We will rather sleepe than talk, we know what belongs to a watch.

Dogberry Why you speake like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: one ly have a care that your billes bee not stole: well, you are to call at all the alehouse, and bid those that are drunke get them to bed.

Watch How if they will not?

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

Watch Well sir.

Dogberry 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 leafe you meddle or make with them, why the more is for your honesty.

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

Dogberry Truely by your office you may, but I thinke they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peacable way for you, if you doe take a thiefe, is, to let him shew himself: what he is, and fleale out of your companie.

Verges You haue bene always called a mercifull manne, partner.

Dog. Truely I would not hang a dogge by my will, much more a man who hath ame honestie in him.

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

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

Dog.
about Nothing.

Dog. Why then depart in peace, and let the child wak her
with crying, for the eue that will not heare her lamb when it
baes, will never answer a calfe when he bleates.

Verges. Tis very true.

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

Verges. Nay birlady that I thinkke a cannot.

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

Verges. Birlady I thinke it be so.

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

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

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

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

Bor. Stand thee close then vnder this penthouse, for it
driellis raine, and I will, like a true drunkard, vter all to
thee.

Watch. Some treason masters, yet stand close.

Bor.
Much adoe

Bor. Therefore know, I have earned of Dun John a thousand ducats.

Con. Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

Bor. Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villainy 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 sithes thou art vnconfirm'd, thou knowest that the fashion of a dudlet, 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 feele thou not what a deformed thefe, this fashion is?

Watch I know that deformed, a has bin a vile thefe, this viii. 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. Seeft thou not (I say) what a deformed thiefe this fashion is, how giddily a turns about all the Hot-bloeds, between foureteen and fiue and thirtie, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoes fouldiers in the reche painting, sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church window, sometime like the frauen Hercules in the finichert worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-peeces seemes as maffe as his club.

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

Bor. Not so, neither, but know that I have to night wooded Margaret the Lady Heroes gentle-woman, by the name of Hero, he leanes me out at her mistis 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 John, saw a farre off.
about Nothing.

off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Cont. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bar. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the di-
uel my master knew she was Margaret, and partly by his oths,
which first posseted them, partly by the darke night which did
deceive them, but chiefly, by my villany, which did confirm
any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio en-
rage. Fwore he would meet her as he was appointed next mor-
ning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation
theye her, with what he saw one night, and send her home a-
gaine without a husband.

Watch 1 We charge you in the princes name stand.

Watch 2 Call vppe the right maister Constable, wee have
here recouered the most dangerous peece of lechery, that euer
was knowne in the common wealth.

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

Cont. Master, masters.

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

Cont. Master, never speake, we charge you, let vs obey you
to go with vs.

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

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

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Urfula.

Hero. Good Urfula wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her
to rise.

Urfula. I wil lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urfula. Well.

Marg. Trueth I think ye other rebato were better.

Hero. No pray thee good Meg, Ile weave this.

Marg. By my trueths not so good, and I warrant your cousin
will say so.

Hero. My cousin's a foole, and thou art another, Ile weave
none
None but this.

Marc. I like the new tye within excellently, if the haire were a thought browner: and your gowne's a most rare fashion, faith.

Hero. O that exceeds they say.

Marc. By my troth's but a night-gown it respect of yours, cloth a gold and cuts, and lack'd with silver, set with pearls, downe sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts, round ynderborne with a blew with tinsell, but for a fine quieint graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on's.

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

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

Hero. Fie upon thee, art not ashamed?

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

Enter Beatrice.

Hero. Good morrow coze.

Beat. Good morrow sweete Hero.

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

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

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

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

Marc. Of illegitimate constrution: I scorne that with my heels.

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

Marc. For a hauke, a horse, or a husband?
about Nothing.

Beat. For the letter that begins them al, H.
Mar. Wel, and you be not turnde Turke, theres no more
saying by the starre.
Beat. What means the foole trow?
Mar. Nothing I, but God send every one their hearts de-
site.
Hero. These gloues the Counte sent me, they are an excel-
lent perfume.
Beat. I am stuft cousin, I cannot smell.
Mar. A maid and stuft! theres goodly catching of
colde.
Beat. O God help me, God help me, how long hase you
profeest apprehension?
Mar. Euer since you left it, doth not my wit become me
rarely?
Beat. It is not seene enough, you should weare it in your
cap, by my troth I am sicke.
Mar. Get you some of this distill'd cardani benedictus,
and lay it to your heart, it is the onely thing for a qualme.
Hero. There thou prickst her with a thistle.
Beat. Benedictus, why benedictus you have some moral in this
benedictus.
Mar. Morall? no by my troth I haue no morall meaning,
I meant plaine holy thistle, you may thinke perchaunce that I
think you are in loue, ray birlady I am not such a foole to thinke
what I lift, nor I lift not to thinke what I can, nor indeed I can
not think, if I would thinke my heart out of thinking, that you
are in loue, or that you will be in loue, or that you can be in
loue; yet Benedicke was such another and now is he become a
man, he sware he would never marry, and yet now in dispite
of his heart he eates his meate without grudging, and how you
may be converted I know not, but me thinke you looke with
your cies as other women do.
Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keepest?
Marg. Not a false gallop.
Enter Vrfula.

Vrfula. Madame withdraw the prince, the Count, signior
Benedicke, Don John, and all the gallants of the town are
F 2 come
come to fetch you to church.

_Hero_ Help to driffe me good coze, good Meg, good Vr-

_fula._

_Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough._

_Leonato_ What would you with me, honest neighbour?

_Constf. Dog._ Mary sir I would have some confidence with

_you, that decernes you nereely.

_Leonato_ Briefe I pray you, for you see it is a busie time with

_me.

_Constf. Dog._ Mary this it is sir.

_Head._ Yes in truth it is sir,

_Leonato_ What is it my good friends?

_Constf. Dog._ Goodman Verges sir speaks a little of the matter,

_an old man sir, and his wit is not so blunt, as God helpe I

_would desipe they were, but if my honest, as the skin between

_his browes.

_Head._ Yes I thank God, I am as honest as any man living,

_that is an old man, and no honest then I.

_Constf. Dog._ Comparisons are odorous, palabras, neighbour

_Verges._

_Leonato_ Neighbors, you are tedious.

_Constf. Dog._ It please 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 all of

_your worship.

_Leonato_ Al thy tediousnisse on me, ah?

_Constf. Dog._ Yea and t were a thousand pound more than tis,

_for I heare as good exclamation on your worshippe as of any

_man in the citie, and though I be but a poore man, I am glad to

_heare it.

_Head._ And so am I.

_Leonato_ I would faine know what you haue to say.

_Head._ Mary sir our watch to night, excepting your wor-

_ships prefence, ha tane a couple of as arrant knaves as any in

_Melfina.

_Constf. Dog._ A good old man sir, he will be talking as they

_say, when the age is in, the wit is out, God help vs, it is a world

_to
about Nothing.

to see: well said yfaith neighbour Verge, 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 ever broke bread, but God is to be worship, all men are not alike, alas good neighbour.

Leonato Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.

Const. Do. Gifts that God giues,

Leonato I must leave you.

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

Leonato Take their examination your selfe, and bring it me, I am now in great haste, as it may appeare unto 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. Iu wait upon them, I am ready.

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

Verge And we must do it wisely.

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

Enter Prince, Bulhard, Leonato, Frier, Claudio, Benedick, Hero, and Beatrice.

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

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

Claudio No.

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

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

Hero I do.

Frier If either of you know any inward impediment why
Much ado

you should not be consoyned, I charge you on your soules to
utter it.

Claudio Know you any, Hero?
 Hero None my lord.
 Frier Know you any, Counte?
 Leonato I dare make his answer, None.
 Clau. O what men dare do! what men may do! what men
daily do, not knowing what they do!
 Bene. Howe nowet interdictions? why then, some be of
laughing 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 somne as God did give her mee.
 Claudio And what haue I to giue you backe whose woorth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?
 Prince Nothing, vnlesse you render her again.
 Claudio Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulnes:

There Leonato, take her backe againe,
Give not this rotten orenge to your friend,
She's but the signe and semblance of her honor:
Behold how like a maide she blushes here!

O what authoritie and shew of truth
Can cunning finne couer it selfe withall!
Comes not that blood, as modest evidence,
To wittenss simple Virtue? would you not sweare

All you that see her, that she were a maide,
By these exterior sheves? But she is none:
She knowes the heat of a luxurious bed:
Her bluth is guiltylesse, not modestly.

Leonato What do you meane my lord?
 Claudio Not to be married,
Not to knity my soule to an approoued wanton.
 Leonato Deere my lord, if you in your owne proose,
Have vanquished the resistallce 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 embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the forehand sinne: No Leonato,
I neuer tempted her with word too large,
But as a brother to his sister, shewed
Bashfull sinceritie, and comelie loue.

(Claudio) And seeme I euer otherwise to you?
Hero. And seeme I euer otherwise to you?
Claudio. Out on thee seeming, I wil write against it,
You seeme to me as Diane in her Orbe,
As challe 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 savage sensualitie.

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 hynke my deare friend to a common stale.

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

(Claudio) Leonato, I stand here?
Is this the prince? is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Heroes? are our eyes our owne?

Leonato. All this is so, but what of this my Lord?
Claudio. Let me but moue one question to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power,
That you haue in her, bid her answer truly.

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

Claudio. To make you answer truly to your name.
Hero. Is it not Hero, who can blot that name
With any just reproch?

Claudio. Mary that can Hero,
Hero itselfe can blot out Heroes vertue.
What man was he talke with you yesternight,
Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?
Much adoe

Now if you are a maide, answer to this.

_ Hero_ I talke with no man at that howse my lord.

_ Prince_ Why then are you no maiden. _Leonato_,

I am sorry you must heare upon mine honor,

My selfe, my brother, and this grieved Counte

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

Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window,

Who hath indeede most like a liberall villain,

Confess the vile encounters they haue had

A thousand times in secret.

_ John_ Fie, fie, they are not to be named my lord,

Not to be spoke of,

There is not chastite enough in language,

Without offence to utter them: thus pretty lady,

I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

_Claud_ O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou bin,

If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed,

About thy thoughts and counsailes of thy heart?

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

Thou pure impietie, and impious puritie,

For thee ile locke vp all the gates of Loue,

And on my eie-liddes shall Conjecture hang,

To turne all beautie into thoughts of harme,

And neuer shall it more be gracious.

_Leonato_ Hath no mans dagger here a point for me,

_Beatrice_ Why how now colin, wherfore finke you down?

_Bailard_ Come let vs goe: these things come thus to light,

Smother her spirits vp.

_Benedick_ How doth the Lady?

_Beatrice_ Dead I thinke, help vnclc,

_Hero, why Hero, vnclc, signior Benedicke, Frier._

_Leonato_ O Fate! take not away thy heavie hand,

Death is the fairest couer for her shame

That may be wisht for.

_Beatrice_ How now colin Hero?

_Frier_ Haue comfort lady.

_Leonato_ Dost thou looke vp?
about Nothing.

Frier Yea, wherefore should she not?

Leonato 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 true Hero, do not open thine eyes:

For did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,

Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shame,

My selfe would on the reeward of reproches

Strike at thy life. Grieved I, I had but one:

Chide I for that at frugal Natures frame?

O one too much by thee: why had I one?

Why ever wait thou louely in my eyes?

Why had I not with charitable hand,

Tooke vp a beggars issue at my gates,

Who finish'd thus, and mired with infamy,

I might have said, no part of it is mine,

This shame derives itself from unknowne loynes,

But mine and mine I loued, and mine I prais'd,

And mine that I was proud on mine so much,

That my selfe, was to my selfe not mine:

Valuing of her, why lie, O she is faigne,

Into a pit of inke, that the wide sea

Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,

And falt too little, which may seafon guie

To her soule tainted flesh.

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

Beat. O on my soule my cosin is belied.

Ben. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No truly, not although untill last night,

I have this twelvemonth bin her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirmed, confirmed. O that is stronger made,

Which was before hard vp with ribs of yron,

Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,

Who loved her so, that speaking of her soulenesse,

Waft it with tears: hence from her, let her die.

Frier Hear me a little, for I have only bin silent so long, &
given way vnto this course of fortune, by noting of the lady, I
have markt,
Much adoe

A thousand blushing apparitions,
To start into her face, a thousand innocent shame,
In angel whitenesse beat 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 scale doth warrant
The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor dignitie,
If this sweete ladie lie not guilelesse here,
Under some biting errour.

Leonato. Frier, it cannot be,
Thou feelest that al the grace that she hath left,
Is, that she will not add to her damnation,
A sinne of periury, he not denies it:
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse,
That which appeares in proper nakedneffe?

Frier. Lady, what man is he you are accus’d of?
Her. They know that do accusfe me, I know none.
If I know more of any man alive
Then that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sinnes lacke mercie, O my father,
Prove you that any man with me consort,
At houres vnmeet, or that I yefternight
Maintain’d the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Frier. There is some strange misprisison in the princes.

Bene. Two of them haue the very bent of honour,
And if their wisedomnes be mifled in this,
The practice of it lies in John the Baffard,
Whose spirits 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 proudest of them that we heare of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age to eate vp my invention.
about Nothing.

Nor Fortune made such haueoke of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall finde awakke in such a kind,
Both strength of limbe, and policy of mind,
Ability in meanes, and choice of friends,
To quit me of them thoroughly.

Frier Pawe awhile,
And let my counsell swaye you in this case,
Your daughter here the princesse (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 mournful epitaphs, and do all rites,
That appertaine unto a buriall.

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

Frier Mary this well caried, shall on her behalfe,
Change slauder 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, pitied, and excuse
Of every herrer: for it so falls out,
That what we hate, we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lackt and loft,
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 shee shall heare shee died vpon his words,
The Idea of her life shall sweetly creepe,
Into his study of imagination,
And every lonely Organ of her life,
Shall come apparelled in more precious habite,
More mouing delicate, and full of life,
Into the eie and prospect of his soule.
Then when shee liueth indeed: then shall he mourn,


Much adoe

If ever one had interest in his liver,
And with 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 down in likelihood.
But if all aye but this be true and false,
The supposition of the ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamy.
And if it not well, you may conceal her,
As best befits her wounded reputation,
In some reclusive and religious life.
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries,

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the Friar advise you,
And though you know my inwardness and love
Is very much into the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honor, I will deal in this,
As secretly and justly as your soul.
Should with your body.

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

Frier Tis weel conforted, prently away,
For to strange shores, strangely they strane the cure.
Come lady, die to live, this wedding day.
Perhaps is but prolonged, have patience and endure. exit.

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

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

Bene. I will not desire that.

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

Bene. Surely I do believe your faire coffin is wronged.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that
would right her?

Bene. Is there any way to shew such friendship?

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

Bene. May a man do it?

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

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

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

_Bened._ By my sword Beatrice, thou louest me.

_Beat._ Do not swear and eate it.

_Bened._ I will swear by it that you loue me, and I will make him eate it that faies I loue not you.

_Beat._ Will you not eate your word?

_Bened._ With no fawce that can be devis'd to it, I protest I loue thee.

_Beat._ Why then God forgive me.

_Bened._ What offence sweete Beatrice?

_Beat._ You haue flayed me in a happy house, I was about to protest I loued you.

_Bened._ And do it with all thy heart.

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

_Bened._ Come bid me doe any thing for thee.

_Beat._ Kill Claudio.

_Bened._ Ha, not for the wide world.

_Beat._ You kill me to deny it, farewell.

_Bened._ Tarry sweete Beatrice.

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

_Bened._ Beatrice.

_Beat._ In faith I will go.

_Bened._ VVeele be friends first.

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

_Bened._ Is Claudio thine enemy?

_Beat._ Is a not approv'd in the height a villain, that hath flaundered, scorned, dishonor'd my kinfwoman? O that I were a man! what, beare her in hand, vnstill they come to take handes, and then with publike accusation vncoyed flaunder, vnmitigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I woulde eate
Muchadoe

eate his heart in the market place.

_Bened._ Heare me Beatrice.

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

_Bened._ Nay but Beatrice.

_Beat._ Sweete Hero, she is wronged, she is slaundered, she is

vndone.

_Bened._ Beat?

_Beat._ Princes and Countes! surely a princely testimonie, a

goodly Counte, Counte Compef, a sweete Gallant surely, O

that I were a man for his faket 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
tels a lie, and sweares it: I cannot be a man with willing, ther-

fore I will die a woman with grieuing.

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

_Beatrice_ Vie it for my loue some other way than swearing

by it.

_Bened._ Think you in your soule the Count Claudio hath

wrongd Hero?

_Beatrice_ Yes, as sure as I have a thought, or a soule.

_Bened._ Enough, I am engagd, I will challenge him, I will

kisse your hand, and so I leave you: by this hand, Claudio shal
render me a derez account: as you heare of me, so think of me:
go comforte your cousin, I must say she is dead, and so fare-

well.

Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne clearks

in gowms.

_Keeper_ Is our whole dillemby appeard?

_Cowley_ Oa stoole and a cusion for the Sexton.

_Sexton_ Which be the malefactors?

_Andrew_ Marke that am I, and my partner.

_Cowley_ Nay thats certaine, we haue the exhibition to exa-

mine.

_Sexton_ But which are the offenders? that are to be exami-

ned, let them come before master constable.

_Kemp_ Yea marke, let them come before mee, what is your

name,
about Nothing.

name, friend?

**Bor.** Borachio.

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

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

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

**Both** Yes sir we hope.

**Ke.** Write downe, that they hope they serve God: and write God first, for God defend but God should goe before such villains: maisters, it is prooved alreadie that you are little better than false knaues, and it will go neree to be thought so shortly, how answere you for your seues?

**Coun.** Mary sir we say, we are none.

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

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

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

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

**Kemp.** Ye a marre, that's the eftest way, let the watch come forth: maisters, I charge you in the Princes name accuse these men.

**Watch.** This man said sir, that don Iohn the Prince brother was a villain.

**Kemp.** Write downe, prince Iohn a villain: why this is flat perjury, to call a Prince a brother villain.

**Borachio.** Master Constable.

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

**Sexton.** What heard you him say else?

**Watch.** Mary that he had receaved a thousand dukates of don Iohn, for accusing the Ladie Hero wrongfully.

**Kemp.** Flat perjury as ever was committed.

**Cons.** Yea by maffe that it is.

**Sexton.** What else fellow?

**Watch.**
Much adoe

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

Kemp. O villain! thou wilt be condemn'd into everlafting
redemption for this.

Sexton. What else? Watch. This is all.

Sexton. And this is more masters then you can deny, prince

John is this morning secretlie stoln away: Hero was in this
manner accusing, in this verie manner refute, and yppon the
griefe of this sodainlie died: Master Constable, let these men
be bound, and brought to Leonatoes, I will goe before and
shew him their examination.

Constable. Come let them be opinioned.

Comley. Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.

Kemp. Gods my life, where the Sexton? let him write down
the Princes officer Coxcombe: come, bind them, thou naught-
ty varlet.

Comley. Away, you are an affe, you are an affe.

Kemp. Doost thou not suspect my place? doost thou not
suspect my yeeres? O that he were here to write me downe an
affet but masters, remember that I am an affe, though it bee
not written downe, yet forget not that I am an affe: No thou
villaine, thou art full of pietie as that be proude vpon thee by
good witnes, I am a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer,
and which is more, a householder, and which is more, as pret-
ty a piece of flesh as anie is in Messina, and one that knowes
the Law, goe to, and a rich fellow enough, goe to, and a fellow
that hath had losse, and one that hath two gownes and every
thing hanfome about him: bring him away; O that I had bin
writ downe an affet.

exit.

V.i.

Enter Leonato and his brother.

Brother. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself.
And it is not wise. I am thus to second griefe,
Against yourself.

Leonato. I pray thee cease thy counfaile,
Which falls into mine cares as profitlesse,
As water in a syue: give not me counfaile,
about Nothing.
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear,
But such a one whose wrongs do suffice with mine.
Bring me a father that so loud his child,
Whose joy of her is over-whelmed like mine,
And bid him speak of patience,
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form:
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
And sorrow, wagge, crie him, when he should grone,
Patch griefe with proverbes, make misfortune drunk,
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 comfort and speake comfort to that griefe,
Which they themselves not feel, but taunting it,
Their comfort turns to passion, which before,
Would give preceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charme aches with ayres, and agony with words,
No, no, is all mens office, to speake patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow
But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie
To be so morall, when he shall endure
The like himselfe; therefore give me no comfort,
My griefes cry louder then advertisement.

Brother Therein do men from children nothing differ.
Leonato I pray thee peace, I wil be fleth and bloud,
For there was never yet Philosophier,
That could endure the tooth-ake patientely,
How ever they have writ the file of gods,
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

Brother Yet bend not all the harme upon your selle,
Make those that do offend you, suffer too.

Leonato There thou speakest reason, nay I will do so,
My foule dothe tell me, Hero is belied.
Much ado

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

Enter Prince and Claudio.


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 halfe Leonato.
Leonato Some halfe my lord! well, fare you well my lord.
Are you so halfe now? well, all is one.
Prince Nay do not quarrel with vs, good old man.
Brother If he could right himselfe with quarrelling,
Some of vs would lie low.
Claudio Who wrongs him?
Leonato Mary thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler, thou:
Nay, never lay thy hand vpon thy sword,
I feare thee not.
Claudio Mary bestraw my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of feare,
In faith my hand meant nothing to my sword.
Leonato Truth, truth man, never fleere and last at me,
I speake not like a dotard, nor a foole,
As vnder priviledge of age to bragge,
What I haue done being young, or what would doe,
Were I not old, know Claudio to thy head,
Thou haft so wrongd mine innocent child and me,
That I am for the lay my reverence by,
And with grey haires and bruite of many daies,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man,
I say thou haft beheld 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.
about Nothing.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord,
It prove it on his body if he dare,
Dispright his nice fence, and his active practice,
His Maiestie of youth, and bloome of youthhood.

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

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

Brother He shall kill two of vs, and men indeed,
But that is 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 loyed my niece,
And she is dead, slandered to death by vilianses,
That dare as well answer a man indeed,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue,
Boyes, apes, bragarts, lackes, milke-fops.

Leonato Brother Anthony,

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

Leonato But brother Anthonie

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

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 proofe.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord.

Prince: I will not heare you.
Much ado

Leo. No come brother, away, I will be heard. Enter Amb. BRON. And sois, or some of us will smart for it. Enter Ben.

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

Claud. Now signior, what newes?

Bened. Good day my Lord:

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

Claud. Wee had likt to haue had our two noes snappt 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 quarrel there is no true valour, I came to seeke you both.

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

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

Prince. Doest thou weare thy wit by thy side?

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

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

Claud. What courage man: what though care killeth a catte, thou haft mettle enough in thee to kill care.

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

Claud. Nay then give him another staffe, this last was broke croffe.

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 bless mee from a challenge.

Bened. You are a villaine, I least not, I will make it good howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: doo mee right, or I will protest your cowardise: you haue killd a sweete
about Nothing.

Sweete Lady, and her death shall fall heanie on you, let me hear from you.

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

Prince What, a feast, a feast?

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

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

Prince Ile tell thee how Beatrice prais'd thy witte the other day: I said thou had'st a fine witte, true said the, a fine little one: no said I, a great wit: right faire is, a great groffe one: nay said I, a good wit, just said the, it hurts no body: nay said I, the gentleman is wife: certaine said the, a wife gentleman: nay said I, he hath the tongues: that I beleue said thee, for he swore a thing to mee on munday night, which hee forswore on tuesday morning, thers a double tongue theirs two tongues, thus did she an houre together transt-shape thy particular vertues, yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou waftt the properf man in Italy.

Claud. For the which shee wept heartily and saide 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 dearely, the old mans daughter told vs all.

Claud. All all, and moreouer, God saue him when he was hid in the garden.

Prince But when shall we set the sauteage bulles hornes one the fensible Benedicks head?

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

Bened. Fare you wel, boy, you know my minde, I wil leaue you now to your goffes-like humor, you breake lefts as braggarde do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not: my Lord, for your many courtesies I thanke you, I must discontinue your company, your brother the basset is fled from Messina: you have among you, kild a sweett and innocent lady: for my Lord Lacke-beard, there bee and I shall meet, and till then peace be with him.
Much adoe

Prince He is in earnest.
Claudio In most profound earnest, and ile warrant you for the 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 wig.
Enter Constables, Conrade, and Borachio.
Claudio He is then a Giant to an Ape, but then is an Ape a Doctor to such a man.
Prince But soft you, let me be, plucke vp my heart, and be sad, did he not say my brother was fled?
Const. Come you sir, if justice cannot tame you, she shall never weigh more reasons in her ballance, nay, and you be a curting hypocrite once, you must be lookt to.
Prince How now, two of my brothers men bound, Borachio one.
Claudio Hearken after their offence my Lord.
Prince Officers, what offence haue these men done?
Const. Mary sir, they have committed false report, moreover they have spoken vntruths, secondarily they are flanders, sixt and lastly, they have belyed a Lady, thirdly they have verily this false things, and to conclude, they are lying knaves.
Prince First I ask thee what they have done, thirty I ask thee what their offence, sixt and lastly why they are committed, and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.
Claudio Rightly reasoned, and in his owne division, and by my truth thereone meaning well suited.
Prince Who haue you offended maisters, that you are thus bound to your answere? this learned Constable is too cunning to be vnderstood, what is your offence?
Bor. Sweete prince, let me see no farther to mine answere; do you heare me, and let this Counte kill me: I have deceived euery your very eyes: what your wisedoms could not discouer, these shalowe fooles have broght to light, who in the night overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero, howe you were brought
about Nothing.
brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Heroes garments, how you disgraced her when you should marry her: my villany they have upon record, which I had rather see with my death, then repeate ouer to my shame: the lady is dead upon mine and my masters false accusation: and briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.
Prince Runs not this speech like your through your blood?
Claud. I have dronke poison whiles he uttered it.
Prince: But did my brother set thee on to this?
Bor. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.
Prince He is compose and framde of treacherie, And fled heis upon this villanie.
Claud. Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appear In the rare semblance that I louéd it first.
Conf. Come, bring away the plaintiff, by this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter: and matters, do not forget to specify when time and place that sever, that I am an affe.
Conf. 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 eyes,
That when I note another man like him,
I may avoide him: which of these is he?
Bor. If you would know your wronger, looke on me.
Leonato Art thou the fault that with thy breath hast killed mine innocent child?
Bor. Yea, even I alone.
Leo. No, not so villain, thou believest thy selfe,
Here stand a paire of honourable men,
A third is fled that had a hand in it:
I thank you Prince for my daughters death,
Record it with your high and worthy deeds,
Twas bravely 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.
Much ado

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

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

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

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

Leonato To morrow then I wil expect your coming,
To night I take my leave, this naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margarett,
Who I beleue was packt in all this wrong,
Hyred to it by your brother.

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

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

about Nothing.

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

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

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

Leon. Theres for thy paines.

Const. God saue the foundation.

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

Const. I leave an arrant knave with your worship, which I
beseech your worship to correct your selfe, for the example of
others: God keep your worship. I wish your worship well,
and if a mery meeting may be wished, God prohibit it: come
neighbour.

Leon. Till to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

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

Prince. We will not fail.

Claud. To night Ile mourn with Hero.

Leonato. Bring you these fellows on, weel talk with Mar-
garet, how her acquaintance grow with this lewd fellow. exceunt
Enter Benedick & Margaret.

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

Mar. Wil you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beau-
ties?

Bened. In to high a stile Margaret, that no man living shall
come ouer it, for in most comely truth thou defersest it.

Mar. To have no man come ouer me, why that I alwaies
keep below staires.

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

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

I. Bened.
Much ado

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

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

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

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

Exit Margaret.

Benv. And therefore wil come: The God of love that fits aboue, and knowes mee, and knowes me, how pittifull I deserve. I meane in singinge, but in louinge, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first imploier of pandars, and a whole booke full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet runne smoothly in the even rode of a blanke verse, why they were never so truly turnd ouer and ouer as my poore selfe in loue: mary I cannot shew it in rime, I haue tried, I can finde out no rime to Ladie but babie, an innocent rime: for fororne, home, a hard rime: for schoole foole, a babling rime:very omi-

nous endings, no, I was not borne ouer a rimen planter, nor I cannot woe in festiall termes: sweete Beatrice wouldest thou come when I called thee?

Enter Beatrice.

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

Benv. 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.

Benv. Onely foule words, and thereupon I will kiss thee.

Beat. Foule words is but foule wind, and foule wind is but foule breath, and foule breath is noisome, thersfore I wil depart vnkist.

Benv. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, 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 which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together, which maintain'd so politicke 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 epithet, 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, there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himselfe.

Bene. An old, an old instance Beatrice, that liu'd in the time of good neighbours, if a man do not erect in this age his owne toomb ere he dies, he shall live 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 rheume, therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don worme (his conscience) find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his owne vertues, as I am to my self so much for praising my selfe, who I my selfe will beare witness is praise worthy, and now tell me, how dost thy cousin?

Beat. Verie ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Verie ill too.

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

Enter Virsula.

Virsula Madam, you must come to your vncle, yonders old coile at home, it is proued my Lady Hero hath bin falsely accuse de, the Prince and Claudio mightily abusde, 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 view in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes: and moreover, I will go with thee to thy vncles. exil.

Enter
Much ado

Enter Claudio, Prince, and three or four with tapers.

Claudio Is this the monument of Leonato?

Lord It is my Lord.

Epistle

Done to death by slanderous tongues,
Was the Hero that here lies:
Death in guerdon of her wrongs,
Gives her fame which never dies:
So the life that dyed with shame,
Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb,
Prailing her when I am dead.

Claudio Now must I sound and sing your solemn hymne.

Song Pardon goddess of the night,
Thou that slew thy virgin knight,
For the which with songs of woe,
Round about her tombe they goe;
Midnight assist our mome, help vs to sigh and groane.

Heavy heauily.

Graves yawne and yeeld your dead,
Till death be vttered,

Heavy heauily.

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

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

Claudio Good morrow maisters, each his feuerall way.

Prince Come let vs hence, and put on other weedes,
And then to Leonatoes we will goe.

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

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

Frier Did I not tell you shee was innocent?

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

Vpon the error 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. Wel, I am glad that all things forts so well.

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

To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

Leo. Well daughter, and you gentewomen all,

Withdraw into a chamber by your selves,

And when I send for you, come hither masked:

The Prince and Claudio promise by this howre

To visite me, you know your office brother,

You must be father to your brothe's daughter,

And give her to young Claudio.

Old. Which I will doe with confirmed countenance.

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

Frier. To doe what Signior?

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

Signior Leonato, truth it is good Signior,

Your niece regards me with an eye of favoure.

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

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

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

From Claudio and the Prince, but what's your will?

Bened. Your anfwere sir is enigmatical,

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

May stand with ours, this day to be conjoyned,

In the state of honorable marriage,

In which (good Frier) I shall deere 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 other.

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 Ethiope.

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

P. Good morrow Bened, why what's the matter?
That you have such a Februarie face,
So full of frost, of storms, and sowndiness.

Cloud. I think he thinke upon the Satanag bush:
Lufh shere not man, weele tip thy hornes with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoyce at thee,
As once Europa did at lustie love,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

Bun. Bull love sir had an amiable love,
And some strange bull leapt your fathers cowe,
And got a calfe in that same noble scate,
Much like to you, for you have just his bleate.

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula.

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

Loo. This same is shee, and I do shew you her.

Cloud. Why, then shee mine, sweet, let me see your face.

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

Cloud. 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 loved, you were my other husband.

Cloud. Another Hero.

Hero. Nothing certainer.

One Hero died deside, but I do liue,

And surely as I liue, I am a maid.

Prince. The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

Loo. She died my Lord, but whiles her slander liv'd.

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

Ben. Soft and faire Frier, which is Beatrice?

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

Bun. Do not you loue me?

Beat. Why no, no more then reason.
about Nothing.

Bene. Why then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio.

Haue beene deceuued, they sware you did.

Beat. Do not you loue me?

Bene. Troth no, no more then reason.

Beat. Why then my cousin Margaret and Virgula

Are much deceiued, for they did sware you did.

Bene. They sware that you were almost sike for me.

Beat. They sware that you were well enough for me.

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

Beat. No truly, but in friendly recomplence.

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

Clae. And he becomen you not, that he loves her,

For here a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his owne pure braine,
Fashioned to Beatrice.

Hero. And here another,

Writ in my cousins hand, stolen from her pocket,

Containing her affection vnto Benedicke.

Bene. A miracle, here our owne hands against our hearts:

Come, I will hate thee, but by this light I take thee for pitie.

Beat. I would not give you, but by this good day, I yeeld

Upon great persuasion, and partly to save your life, for I was
told, you were in a confusion,

Leon. Peace I will stop your mouth,

Prince. How dost thou Benedicke the married man?

Bene. He told thee what prince, a colleague of wit-crackers
cannot floute 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, he shall weare nothing hanseome about him: in brieue,
since I doe purpose to marrie, I will think nothing to anie purpose
that the world can sate against it, and therefore never floute
at me, for what I have saide against it: for man is a giddie thing,
and this is my conclusion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke
to haue beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinnsman,
liue vnbruitde, and love my cousen.

Clae. I had well hopet thou wouldst have denied Beatrice,

that I might have cudgelld thee out of thy single life, to make
thee
Much adoe

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

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

Leos. Weele haue dancing afterward.

Bens. First, of my worde, therefore playe musike, Prince, thou art sad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife, there is no staflle more reuerent then one tipt with home.

Enter Messenger.

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

Bens. Thinke not on him till to morrow, 'tis devise thee braue punishments for him: strike vp Pipers.

FINIS.