Much adoe 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 QUARTO FACSIMILES,

WITH INTRODUCTIONS, LINE-NUMBERS, &C, BY SHAKSPERE SCHOLARS,

ISSUED UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF DR F. J. FURNIVALL.

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#### 1. Those by W. Griggs.

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Hamlet</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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#### 2. Those by C. Praetorius.

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<th>No.</th>
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<td>Troilus and Cressida</td>
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*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 staid."

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 daies 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
\textit{Loue labours wonne}, and Mr A. E. Brae in his pamphlet
entitled \textit{Collier, Coleridge and Shakespeare, 1860}, endeavours to prove
that this is merely another title for \textit{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. \textit{Much Ado} is not the only play which
is supposed to be referred to under the title of \textit{Loue labours
wonne}; Dr. Farmer in his \textit{Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare} (see
Vol. I. p. 314, \textit{Var. 1821}), suggested \textit{All's Well that Ends Well}
as probably the supposed lost play; the Rev. Joseph Hunter in
his \textit{Disquisition on The Tempest}, 1841, and again in his \textit{New
Illustrations}, 1845, Vol. I. pp. 139 and 359, argued in favour of \textit{The
Tempest}; Prof. G. L. Craik, in his \textit{English of Shakespeare, 1st ed.
1857}, p. 7, advocated the claims of the \textit{Taming of the Shrew}, and
after carefully considering all these claims I see no reason why
\textit{As You Like It} and \textit{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 \textit{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 \textit{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
dition 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 exits 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 Beneacite, and Balthasar, or dumb Iohn. To this muddle the Fo., without correcting it, adds Maskers with a drum. In the same scene, l. 160, the Qo. has Dance exeunt, which the Fo. changes to Exeunt.] Musicke for the dance.

In the same scene, l. 217, the Qo. has Enter the Prince, Hero, Leonato, Iohn 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, Musicke, 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 Iacke 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 Gentlewomen to Gentlemen.

Act III. sc. ii. l. 54. A speech wrongly assigned to Bened’ck 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 Constable; 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 “Iacke 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 Shaksperian music. (See his Memoirs of Alleyn, Sh. Soc. 1841, p. 153.—Sh. Soc. Papers, 1845, Vol. II, p. 33, and Introduction to Memoirs of Actors, Sh. Soc. 1846, p. xvii.) This last piece of information Mr Collier would seem to have derived in an imperfect manner from Dr E. F. Rimbault, 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 euery one cannot master a grieue, but he that has it."

III. ii. 118—
"If you loue her, then to-morrow wed her."—Comma should come after then.

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 counsailes of thy heart.”—thy for the.

IV. i. 145-147. Benedick’s speech. “Sir, sir, . . . what to say.”—Printed as prose.

IV. i. 157-160. Commencement of Friar’s speech. “Heare me . . . I have markt.”—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 eate; I. iii. 41. I will make for I make; II. i.

1 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 lucuna 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, ll. 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 I. 125, “Do not line 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 markt,” do not in this copy range with the line above, but are the breadth of one letter within the line.
Omissions in Fo.

100. *Love for Love*; II. i. 284. this Lady tongue for *my* Lady 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 time.

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 Germaine from the waste downwards, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet."

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 goe before such villains: 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.

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<td>&quot;he is&quot;—he's.</td>
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<td>I. i. 92—</td>
<td>&quot;ere a be cured&quot;—ere he be cur'd.</td>
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<td>I. i. 93—</td>
<td>&quot;You will never&quot;—you'll never.</td>
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<td>I. i. 96—</td>
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<td>† I. i. 106—</td>
<td>&quot;Were you in doubt sir&quot;—sir om.</td>
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<td>I. i. 147—</td>
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<td>I. i. 314—</td>
<td>&quot;How sweetly you do minister to louve&quot;—do you.</td>
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<td>† I. ii. 4—</td>
<td>&quot;I can tell you strange newes&quot;—strange om.</td>
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<td>I. ii. 10—</td>
<td>&quot;in mine orchard&quot;—my.</td>
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<td>† I. ii. 11—</td>
<td>&quot;were thus much ouer-heard&quot;—much om.</td>
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<td>I. iii. 8—</td>
<td>&quot;what blessing brings it&quot;—bringeth.</td>
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<td>I. iii. 9—</td>
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† 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”—vpon.
† 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—“country”—count.
† II. i. 222—“I tolde him, and I thinke I tolde him true”—last I om.
† II. i. 223—“the goodwill of this young Lady”—will.
† II. i. 263—“to binde him vp a rod”—vp om.
II. i. 257—“that I was duller than a great thawe”—and that.
† II. i. 288—“a double heart for his single one”—a.
II. i. 346—“out a question”—ef.
II. i. 370—“countie”—counte.
† II. i. 376—“to haue al things answer my mind”—my om.
† II. ii. 37—“as in loue of your brothers honor”—in a loue.
II. ii. 49—“such seeming truth of Heroes disloyaltie”—truths.
† II. ii. 57—“Be you constant”—thou.
* II. iii. 141—“your daughter told of vs”—vs 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”—Fore.
† 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—“unworthy so good a lady”—to haue so.
† II. iii. 223—“gentlewomen”—gentlewoman.
* III. i. 4—“Vrsley”—Vrslula.
|| III. i. 12—“to listen our propose”—purpose.
|| III. i. 58—“lest sheele make sport at it”—she.
|| III. i. 104—“Shees timed I warrant you”—tane.
III. ii. 39—“as you would haue it appeare he is”—to appeare.
† III. ii. 64—“conclude, conclude, he is in loue”—conclude om.
III. ii. 106—“she has bin”—hath beene.
† III. ii. 132—“beare it coldely but 'till midnight”—night.
† III. iii. 37—“for the watch to babble and to talke”—to om.
III. iii. 45—"bid those that are drunke"—them.
* III. iii. 85—"the statutes"—statues.
III. iii. 134—"this vij. yeare"—years.
† III. iii. 148—"Al this I see, and I see"—I om.
† III. iii. 162—"And thought they Margaret was Hero?"—thy.
∥ III. iii. 48—"youle 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"—doe.
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"—bear.
* IV. i. 277—"Do not sweare and eate it"—sweare by it.
† IV. i. 293—"You kill me to deny it"—it om.
IV. i. 318—"Counte, Counte Comfect"—Count, Comfeet.
IV. i. 336—"I will kisse your hand, and so I leave 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 giue 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 slawe"—thou thou (printing the verse as prose).
† V. i. 81—"he shall lie 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"—Heavenly, heavenly.
V. iv. 7—"all things sorts"—sort.

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 publikey
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.

I earne 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 haue you lost in this action?

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

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

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

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

Mess. I haue already deliuered him letters, and there appears much joy in him, even so much, that joy could not shew it selfe moste enough, without a badge of battemesle.

Leo. Did he breake out into teares?

Mess. In great mesure.
Much adoe

Leo. A kind overflaw of kindnese, there are no faces truer then those that are so wash'd, how much better is it to weep at joy, then to joy at weeping?

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

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

Leonato. What is he that you ask for niece?

Hero. My cousin means Signior Benedicke of Padua.

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

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

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

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

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

Mess. And a good suoldier too, lady.

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

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuff with all honorable vertues.

Beat. It is so indeed, he is no lesse then a stuff man, but for the stuffing well, we are all mortal.

Leo. You must not, sir, mistake my niece, there is a kind of merry warre betwixt Signior Benedicke and her, they neuer meet but there's a skirmish of wit betwecne 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 govern'd with one, so that if he haue wit enouge to keep himself warm, let him bearce it for a difference between himself and his horse, for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasona-
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 as the fa-

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

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

Mess. He is most in the companie of the right noble Clau-
dio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease, hee is
sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs present-
ly madde, God help the noble Claudio, if he have caught the
Benedick, 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 rumne madde niece.

Beat. No, not till a hote January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approacht.

Enter don Pedro, Claudio, Benedicke, Balthasar
and John the bastard.

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

Leon. Never came trouble to my house, in the likenesse of
your grace, for trouble being gone, comfort should remaine:
but when you depart from mee, sorrow abides, and happines
takes his leaue.

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

Leonato Her mother hath many times told me so.

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

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

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

A 3
be happy Lady, for you are like an honourable father.

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

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

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

Beat. Is it possible Disdaine should die, while she hath much
meete foode to feede it, as signor Benedicke? Curtesie it selfe
must concert to Disdaine, if you come in her presence.

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

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

Bene. God keepe your Ladiship filil in that mind, so some
Gentleman or, other shall escape a predestinate scratcht face.

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

Bene. Well you are a rare parrat teacher.

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

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

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

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

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

John I thanke you, I am not of many wordes, but I thanke
you.
Leon. Please it your grace lead on?
Pedro. Your hand Leonato, we will go together.

Exeunt. Manent 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 a honest man should doe, for my simple true judgement? or would you have me speake after my custome, as being a profesed tyrant to their sex?
Claud. No, I pray thee speake in sober judgement.
Bene. Why yfaith me thinks shee too low for a hie praise, too browne for a faire praise, and too little for a great praise, onlie this commendation I can affoord her, that were shee other then she is, she were vnhanome, and being no other, but as she is, I do not like her.
Claud. Thou thinkest I am in sport, I pray thee tell mee truelie how thou likest her.
Bene. Would you buie her that you enquiere after her?
Claud. Can the world buie such a jewel?
Bene. Yea, and a case to putte it into, but speake you this with a fad brow? or doe you prey the flowing jacke, to tell vs Cupid is a good Hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare Carpenter: Come, in what key shall a man take you to go in the song?
Claud. 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: there is her cofin, and she were not posseth with a fury, exceedes her as much in beautie, as the first of Maie doth the last of December: but I hope you have no intent to turne husband, haue you?
Claud. I would scarce truall 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 threescore againe? go to yfaith, and thou wilt needes thrust thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and sigh away sundaies: looke, don Pedro is returned to seeke you.

Enter
Much adoe

Enter don Pedro, John the bastard.

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

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

Pedro I charge thee on thy allegiance.

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

Claudio If this were so, so were it vttred.

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

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

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

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

Pedro By my troth I speake my thought.

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

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

Claudio That I loue her, I seele.

Pedro That she is worthy, I know.

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

Pedro Thou waft ever an obstinate heretique in the des-pight of Beauty.

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

Bene. That a woman conceiued me, I thanke her: that she brought me vp, I likewise give her most humble thenkes; but that I will haue a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisibell baldricke, all women shall pardon mee: because I will not doe them the wrong to mistrust any, I will doe my selfe the right to trust none: and the fine is, (for the which
about Nothing.

which I may go the frier,) I will live a bacheller.

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

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

Pedro Well, if euer thou doest 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 calld Adam.

Pedro Well, as time shal tyme: in time the sauge bull doth beare the yoake.

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

Claudio If this shoud euer happen, thou wouldst bee born madde.

Pedro Nay, if Cupid haue 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 meanes time, good signior Benedicke, repaire to Leonatoses, commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at supper, for indeede he hath made great preparation.

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

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

Pedro The sixt of Iuly: your loving friend Benedicke.

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

exs

Claudio
Much adoe

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

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

Claudio. Hath Leonato any sonne, my lord?

Pedro No childe but Hero, she is his only heire:

Doost thou affect her Claudio?

Claudio O my lord,

When you went onward on this ended action,

I look't upon her with a soldierye eye,

That like, but had a rougher taske in hand,

Than to drive liking to the name of love:

But now I am returnde, and that warre-thoughts,

Have left their places vacant in their roomes,

Come thronging soft and delicate desires,

All prompting mee how faire yong Hero is,

Saying I likd 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 wilt breake with hir, and with her father,

And thou shalt haue her: wait not to this end,

That thou beganst to twise so fine a storie?

Claudio. How sweetly you do minister to love,

That knowes loves griefe by his complextion!

But left my liking might too sodaine seeme,

I would haue saluted it with a longer treatise.

Pedro What need the bridge much broder then the flood?

The fairest graunt is the necessitie:

Looke what will serue is first is once, thou loue'st,

And I will fit thee with the remedie,

I know we shall have revelling to night,

I will assume thy part in some disguise,

And tell faire Hero I am Claudio,

And in her bosome I will encase my heart,

And take her hearing prisoner with the force

And
about Nothing.

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

Enter Leonato and an old man brother to Leonato

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

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

Leo. Are they good?

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

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

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

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

Enter sir John the bastard, and Comrade his companion.

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

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

Con. You should heare reason.

John And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

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

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

mortifying mischiefs: I cannot hide what I am: I must be bad when I have cause, and smile at no man's faults; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure: sleep when I am drowsie, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humor.

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

John I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdain'd of all, then to fashion a carriage to rob love 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 villain, I am trusted with a musket, and enfranchised with a clogge, therefore I have decreed, not to sing in my cage: if I had my mouth I would bite: if I had my liberty I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no worse of your discontent?

John I make all worse of it, for I use 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 marriage.

John What cue for any model to build mischief on? what is he for a soke, that betrothes himself to unequateness?

Bor. Mary it is your brother's right hand.

John Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

Bor. Even 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
musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in
hand in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there
heard it agreed upon, that the prince should wooe Hero for
himselfe, and having obtain'd her, give her to Counte Clau-
dio.

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

Conr. To the death my Lord.

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

Bor. Weelee wait uppon your lordship.

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

Leonato Was not counte John here at supper?

brother I saw him not.

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

Hero He is of a very melancholy disposition.

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

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

Beatrice With a good legge and a good foote vnckle, and
money enow 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 neece thou wilt neuer get thee a hus-
band, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

brother Infaith shees too curt.

Beatrice Too curt is more then curt, I shall lessen

B 3 Gods
Muchadoe

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

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

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

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

Beatrice What should I do with him, dressle him in my apparel and make him my waiting gentlewoman? he that hath a beard, is more then a youth: and he that hath no beard, is lesse then a man: and he that is more then a youth, is not for me, and he that is lesse then a man, I am not for him, therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the Berrod, and lead his apes into hell.

Leonato Well then, go you into hell.

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

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

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

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

Beatrice Not til God make men of some other mettal then earth, would it not grieue a woman to be over-masted with a pece of valiant duff, to make an account of her life to a clod of waiward marke? no vnckle, ile none: Adams sonnes are my brethren, and truely I holde at a sinne to match in my kinred.

Leonato
about Nothing.

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

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

Leonato Cousin you apprehend passing shrewdly.

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

Leonato The reuellers are enting brother, make good roome.

Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthasar, or dumb John.

Pedro Lady will you walke about with your friend?

Hero So, you walke soffily, and looke sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walke, and especially when I walk a-way.

Pedro With me in your company.

Hero I may say so when I please.

Pedro And when please you to say so?

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

Pedro My visor is Philemons roose, within the house is loue.

Hero Why then your visor should be thatche.

Pedro Speake low if you speake loue.

Bene. Well, I would you did like me.

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

Bene. Which is one?

Mar. I say my prayers alowd.
Much adoe

Bene. I love you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.
Marz. God match me with a good dauncer.
Balth. Amen.
Marz. And God kepe him out of my sight when the
daunce is done: answer Clarke.
Balth. No more words, the Clarke is answered.
Ursula I know you well enough, you are signior Antho-
nio.
Antho. At a word I am not.
Ursula I knowe you by the wagling of your head.
Antho. To tell you true, I counterfett him.
Ursula You could neuer doe him so ill well, vnlesse you
were the very man: heere his drie hand vp and downe, you
are he, you are he.
Antho. At a word, I am not.
Ursula Come, come, do you thinke I do not know you by
your excellent wit? can vertue hide it selfe? go to, mumme, you
are he, graces will appeare, and there is an end.
Beat. Will you not tell me who tolde you so?
Bened. No, you shall pardon me.
Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?
Bened. Not now.
Beat. That I was disdainefull, and that I had my good wit
out of the hundred merry tales: wel, this was signior Benedick
that said so.
Bened. Whats he?
Beat. I am sure you know him well enough.
Bened. Not I, believe me.
Beat. Did he neuer make you laugh?
Bened. I pray you what is he?
Beat. Why he is the princes ieafter, avery dul foo, only his
gifts, in devising impossible slaunders, none but Libertines
delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in
his villanic, 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 boorded me.
Bene. When I know the Gentleman, Ile tell him what you
say.
about Nothing.

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

Bene. In every good thing.

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

Dance  excert

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

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

John Are not you signior Benedicke?

Clau. You know me well, I am he.

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

Claudio How know you he loues her?

John I heard him sweare his affection.

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

John Come let vs to the banquet.  excert: mant Clau.

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

Benedicke  Count Claudio.

Claudio Yea, the same.
Much adoe

**Bene.** Come, will you go with me?

**Claudio.** Whither?

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

**Claudio.** I wish him joy of her.

**Bene.** Why that's spoken like an honest Drouier, so they fell bullockes: but did you thinke the Prince would have servued you thus?

**Claudio.** I pray you leave me.

**Benedicke.** Ho! now you strike like the blindman, twas the boy that stole your meate, and youle beate the pest.

**Claudio.** If it will not be, ile leave you.

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

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

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

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

**Benedicke.** The flatte transgression of a Schoole-boy, who being over-toyed with finding a birds nest, shewes it his companioon, and he steales it.

**Pedro.** Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? the transgres-
about Nothing.

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

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

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

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

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

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

Pedro Looke heere she comes.

Benedicke Will your grace command me any seruice to the worlde end? I will go on the slighest arrand now to the Antypodes that you can devise to send me on: I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furthest inch of Asia: bring you
Much ado

the length of Prelter Johns foot: fetch you a hair off the great Chams beard: doth you any embassage to the Pig mies, rather than holde three words conference, with this harpy, you haue no employment for me?

Pedro None, but to desyre your good company.

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

Pedro Come Lady, come, you have lost the heart of signi-or Benedicke.

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

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

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

Pedro Why how now Counte, wherefore are you sad?

Claudio Not sad my Lord.

Pedro How then? sicke?

Claudio Neither, my Lord.

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

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

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

Beatrice Speake Counte, tis your Qu.

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

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

Pedro In faith lady you haue a merry heart.

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

Cla. And so he doth cousin.

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

Pedro Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather haue 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 haue me? lady.

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

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

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

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

Beat I cry you mercy vncle, by your graces pardon. exit Beatrice.

Prince By my troth a pleasant spirited lady.

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

Pedro She cannot endure to heare tell of a husband.

Leonato 0 by no meanes, she mockes at her woers out of sute.
**Much adoe**

Prince She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leonato O Lord, my lord, if they were but a weke married, they would take themselues madde.

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

Claud. To morow my lord, time goes on crutches, til Loue haue all his rites.

Leonato Not til monday, my deare sonne, which is hence a just seuennight, and a time too briefe too, to haue al things answer my mind.

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

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

Claud. And I my lord.

Prince And you too gentle Hero?

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

Prince And Benedicke is not the vnhopefullest husband that I know: thus farre can I praisse him he is of a noble strain, of approoved valour, and confirmde honesty, I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedicke, and I, with your two helps, wil so practise on Benedicke, that in dispight of his quicke wit, and his queasie stomacke, he shall fall in love with Beatrice: if we can do this, Cupid is no longer an Archer, his glory shall bee ours, for we are the onely love-gods, goe in with mee, and I will 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 crosse, any impediment, will be medc

icable to me, I am sicke in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges euely with mine, how canst thou crosse this marriage?

*Bot.* Not honestly my lord, but so courtely, that no dishonesty shall appeare in me.

*John* Shew me briefely how.

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

*John* I remember.

*Bot.* I can at any vnseable infront of the night, appoint her to looke out at her ladies chamber window.

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

*Bot.* 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 mightly hold vp, to a contaminated state, such a one as Hero.

*John* What profe shall I make of that?

*Bot.* Profe enough, to misufe the prince, to vexe Claudio, to vn doe Hero, and kill Leonato, looke you for any other issue?

*John* Onely to dispight them I will endeauour any thing.

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

rane, and at the preparation overthrown.

John Grow this to what adverse 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 accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

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

Enter Benedick alone.

Bene. Boy.

Boy Signior.

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

Boy. I am here already sir. exit.

Bene. I know that, but I would have thee hence and here again. I do much wonder, that one man seeing how much another man is a fool, when he dedicats his behaviours to love, will after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his owne scorne, by falling in love, and such a man is Claudio. I haue knowe when there was no musique with him but the drumme and the sife, and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe: I haue knowe when he would haue walke ten mile afoot, to see a good armour, and now wil he lie ten nights awake caruing the fashion of a new doublet: he was woont to speake plaine, and to the purpose (like an honest man and a souldier) and now is he turned ortography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes: may I be so converted and fee with these eyes? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I wil not be sworn but love may transforme me to an oyster, but ile take my oath on it, till he haue made and oyster of me, he shall neuer make me such a 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 that not com in my grace: rich she shall be thats certain, wise, or ile none, vertuous, or ile neuer cheapen her: faire, or ile neuer looke on her, mild, or come not neare me, noble, or not I for an angell, of good discourse, an excellent musitian, and her haire
about Nothing.

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

Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Musicke.

Prince Come shall we hearle this musique?

Claud. Yea my good lord: how will the evening be,

As hufht on purpohe to grace harmonie!

Prince See you where Benedicke hath hid himselfe?

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

Weele fit the kid-fox with a penny worth.

Enter Balthasar with musike.

Prince Come Balthasar, weele hearle that song againe.

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

To flaunder musicke any more then once.

Prince It is the witness full of excellencie,

To put a strange face on his owne perfection,

I pray thee sing, and let me wooe no more.

Balth. Because you talke of wooing, I will sing,

Since many a wooer doth commence his sute,

To her he thinkes not worthy, yet he wooes,

Yet will he sweare he loues.

Prince Nay pray thee come,

Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,

Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,

Theres not a note of mine thats worth the noting.

Prince Why these are very crotchets that he speakes,

Note notes forsoothe, and nothing.

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

The Song.

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

Converting all your soundes of woe,
Into heavy nony nony.

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

Prince By my troth a good song.
Balth. And all sing to my lord.
Prince Ha, no no faith, thou singst well enough for a shift.
Benv. And he had bin a dog that should haue howld thus,
they would haue hanged him, and I pray God his bad voice
bode no mischeese, I had as liue haue heard the night-rauen,
come what plague could haue come after it.
Prince Yea mary, dost thou heare Balthasar? I pray thee
get vs some excellent musique: for to morowe 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 me of this day, that your niece Beatrice was in love
with signior Benedicke?
Cla. O I, talke on, talke on, the foule sits. I did never think
that lady would haue loued any man.
Leo. No nor I neither, but most wonderful, that she should
so dote on signior Benedicke, where she hath in all outward
behauiors seemd euer to abhorre.
Bene. Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?
Leo. By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of
it, but that she loues him with an inraged affection, it is past the
infinite of thought.
Prince May be the dooth but counterfeit.
Clau. Faith like enough.
Leon. O God! counterfeit? there was never counterfeit of
passion, came so neare the life of passion as the discovers it.
Prince
about Nothing.

Prince Why what effects of passion shewes she?
Claud. Baite the hooke wel, this fish will bite.
Leon. What effects my Lord: she will fit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.
Claud. She did indeede.

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

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

Bene. I should think this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow speakes it: 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 sweares shee never will, thats her torment.

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

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

Cla. Now you talk of a sheete of paper, I remember a pretie left your daughter told of vs.

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

Claudio That.

Leon. O shee tore 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 spirite, for I should flout him, if he write to me, yea thoghe I love him I should.

Cla. Then downe upon her knees she falls, weepes, lobs, beats her heart, teares her hair, prayes, curstes, O sweet Benedicke.
Much ado

dicke, God give me patience.

Leonato She doth indeed, my daughter faies so, and the ex-
tafie hath so much ouerborne her, that my daughter is some-
time afeard she will doe a desperate out-rage to her selfe, it is
very true.

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

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

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

Claudio And she is exceeding wife.

Prince In euery thing but in louing Benedicke.

Leonato O my Lord, wisedome and blood combating in
tender a body, we have ten proofs to one, that blood hath
the victor, I am sory for her, as I haue inst cause, beeing her
uncle, and her gardian.

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

Leonato Were it good thinke you?

Claudio Hero thinkes surely she will die, for she lyes sith
she will die, if he loue her not, and she will die ere she make her
loue knowne, and she will die if he oue her, rather than she
will bate one breath of her accustomed crosnette.

Prince She doth well, if shee should make tender of her
loue, is very possible hee cleare it, for the man (as you know
all) hath a contemptible spirite.

Claudio He is a very proper man.

Prince He hath indeede a good outward happines.

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

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

Claudio And I take him to be valiant.

Prince As Hector, I assiure you, and in the manmaging of
quarrels you may say he is wise, for either hee auoydes 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 breake the peace, hee ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Benedicke This can be no tricke, the conference was lady borne, they have the truth of this from Hero, they seeme to pittie the Lady: it seemes her affections have their full bent: love me, why it must be requited: I heare how I am cenurde, they say I will beare my selfe proudely, if I perceive the love come from her: they say too, that she will rather die than giue any signe of affection: I did never thinke to marry, I must not see me proud, happy are they that have their detractions, and can put them to mending: they say the Lady is faire, tis a truth, I can beare them wittesse: and vertuous, tis so, I cannot reprooue it, and wife, but for loving me, by my truth it is
Much aadoe

no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her follie, for I will be horribly in love with her, I may chance have some odde quirkes and remnants of witte broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meate in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quippes and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the carreere of his humor?

No, the world must be peopled. When I faide I woulde die a batcheller, I did not think I should live til I were 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 dinnr.

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

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

Bene. You take pleasure then in the message.

Beat. Yeau just so much as you may take vppon a knifes point, and choake a daw withall: you have no stomach signior, fare you well.

exit.

Bene. Ha, against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner: there is a double meaning in that: I tooke no more paines for those thanks the you took paines to thanke me, thats as much as to say, any paines that I take for you is as easy as thanks: if I do not take pitty of her I am a villaine, if I do not love her I am a jew, I will go get her picture.

exit.

Enter Hero and two Gentlewomen, Margaret, and Ursley.

Hero. Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,

There shalt thou find my cosin Beatrice,

Proposing with the prince and Claudio,

Whisper her eare and tell her I and Ursley,

Walke in the orchard, and our whole discourse

Is all of her, say that thou ouer-heardst vs,

And bid her steale into the pleached bowere

Where hony-suckle, ripened by the sunne,

Forbid
Forbid the sunne 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 propose, this is thy office,
Beware thee well in it, and leave vs alone.

Marg. [It make her come] I warrant you presently.

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

Enter Beatrice.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Volumna Why did you so, doth not the gentle
Deferee as full as fortunate a bed,
Asuer Beatrice shall couch upon?

Hero O God of love! I know he doth deferue,
As much as may be yeelded to a man:
But nature never fram'd a woman's hart,
Of powders stuffe then that of Beatrice:
Disdaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eies,
Mispris't what they looke on, and her wit
Valewes it selfe so highly, that to her
All matter else seemes weake: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so selfe indeared,

Volumna Sure I thinke so,
And therefore certainly it were not good,
She knew his loue left sheeke make sport at it.

Hero Why you speake truth, I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, yong, how rarely featured,
But she would speld him backward: if faire faced,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an antique,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launce ill headed:
If slow, an agot very wildly cut;
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all winds:
If silent, why a blocke moused with none:
So turnes she every man the wrong side out,
And never giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simplicesse and merite purchase.

Volumna Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable,

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

Which
about Nothing.

Which is as bad as die with tickling.

Volumna Yet tell her of it, hear what she will say.

Hero No rather I will go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion,
And truly I do devise some honest flanders,
To stain my coffin with, one doth not know,
How much an ill word may importune liking.

Volumna O do not do your coffin such a wrong,
She cannot be so much without true judgment,
Having so swift and excellent a wit,
As she is prides to have, as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as signior Benedick.

Hero He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my deare Claudio

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

Hero Indeed he hath an excellent good name,
Volumna His excellence did earne it, ere he had it:
When are you married madame?

Hero Why every day to morrow, come go in,
I'll shew thee some attyres, and have thy counsel,
Which is the best to furnish me to morrow.

Volumna Shees lin'd I warrant you,
We haue caught her madame.

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

Benedick 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, adieu,
No glory liues behind the backe of such.

And Benedick, love on I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:
If thou dost love, my kindnesse shall incite thee
To bind our loves vp in a holy band,
For others say thou dost deserve, and I

Beleeue
Much ado

Believe it better then reportedly. 

Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedick, and Leonato.

Prince 1 doe but stay til your marriage be consummated, and then go I toward Arragon.

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

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

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

Lee. So say I, me thinkes you are sadder.

Claud. I hope he be in love.

Prince Hang him truant, there is no true drop of bloud in him to be truly toucht with love, if he be sadder, he wantes money.

Bene. I haue the tooth-ach.

Prince Draw it.

Bene. Hang it.

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

Prince What is figh for the tooth-ach.

Leon. Where is but a humour or a worme.

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

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love.

Prince There is no appereance of fancie in him, vnlesse it be a fancie that he hath to strange disguises, as to be a Dutchman to day, a Frenchman to morrow, or in the shape of two countries at once, as a Germaine from the wale downward, all flops, and a Spaniard from the hip vpward, no doubter: vnlesse he have a fancie to this foolery, as it appeares 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 be-leaving old signs, a brushes his hat a mornings, what should that bode?

Prince. Hath any man seene him at the Barbers?

Claud. No, but the barbers man hath bin seene with him, and the olde ornament of his cheeke hath already stufft tennis balls.

Leon. Indeed he lookes yonger than he did, by the losse of a beard.

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

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 woont to wase his face?

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

Claud. Nay but his iefting spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string, and now gouernd by stops.

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

Claud. Nay but I know who loues him.

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

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

Prince. She shall be buried with her face vpwards.

Bene. Yet is this no charme for the tooth-ake, old signior, walke aside with me, I have 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 even so, Hero and Margaret haue by this play-ed 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 saue you.

Prince. Good den brother.
Much ado

Bajlard. If your leisure serv'd, I would speake with you.
Prince. In private?
Bajlard. If it please you, yet Count Claudio may hear, for what I would speake of, concerns him.
Prince. What's the matter?
Baj. Means your Lordship to be married to morrow?
Prince. You know he does.
Baj. I know not that when he knowes what I know.
Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

Baj. You may think I love you not, let that appeare hereafter, and by me better at me by that I now will manifest, for my brother (I thinke, he holde you well, and in dearenesse of heart), hath holpe to effect your ensuing mariage: surely sute ill spent, and labor ill bestowed.
Prince. Why what's the matter?
Baj. 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?

Bajard. Euen she, Leonatoes Hero, your Hero, euery mans Hero.
Claud. Disloyall?
Baj. 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, euens the night before her wedding day, if you love her, then to morrow wed her. But it would better fitt your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?
Prince. I will not thinke it.
Baj. 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 scene 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.
about Nothing.

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

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

Prince O day vnlovwardly turned!

Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting!

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

Enter Dogbery and his compartment with the Watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verges Yea, or else it were putty but they should suffer salvation body and soule.

Dog. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should haue any allegiance in them, being chosen for the Princes watch.

Verges Well, giue them their charge, neighbour Dogbery.

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

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

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

Watch 2 Both which maistler Constable.

Dogbery You haue: I knew it would be your answer: well, for your favour sir, why giue God thanks, and make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeere when there is no neede of such vanity, you are thought here to be the most fenslesse and fit man for the Constable of the watch: therefore beare you the lanthorne: this is your charge, You shall comprehend all vagrom men, you are to bidde any man stand, in the Princes name.

Watch 2 How ifa will not stand?

Dogbery Why then take no note of him, but let him goe,
and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank god you are ridde of a knaue.

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

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

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

Dogberry Why you speake like an antient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: one ly haue a care that your billes bee not stolne: well, you are to cal at all the alehouses, 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 vertue of your office, to be no true man: and for such kind of men, the lesse you meddle or make with them, why the more is for your honesty.

Watch If we know him to be a thiefe, 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 peaceable way for you, if you doe take a thiefe, is, to let him shew himselfe: what he is, and steale out of your companie.

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

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

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

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

Dog.
about Nothing.

Dog. Why then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying, for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baa, will never answer a calf when he bleates.

Verges. Tis very true.

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

Verges. Nay birlady that I thinke a cannot.

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

Verges. Birlady I thinke it be so.

Dog. Ha ah ha, wel masters good night, and there be any matter of weight chaunces, cal 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 twoo, and then all to bed.

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

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

Bor. What Conrade?

Watch. Peace, stir not.

Bor. Conrade I say.

Con. Here man, I am at thy elbow.

Bor. Mas and my elbow itch, I thought there would a fPrefab follow.

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

Bor. Stand thee close then under this penthouse, for it driethells raine, and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

Watch. Some treason masters, yet stand close.
Much ado

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

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

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

Con. I wonder at it.

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

Con. Yes it is apparell.

Bor. I meane the fashion.

Con. Yes the fashion is the fashion.

Bor. Tush, I may as well say the fooles the fooles, but feest thou not what a deformed theefe this fashion is?

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

Bor. Didst thou not heare some body?

Con. No, twas the vane on the house.

Bor. Seest thou not that what a deformed theefe this fashion is, how giddily a turns about all the Hot-blouds, between foureteene and five and thirtie, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaohes souldiours in the reche painting, sometime like god Bels priests in the old church window, sometime like the shauen Hercules in the smircht worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-piece seems es maslie as his club.

Con. Al this I see, and I see that the fashion weares out more apparerell 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 haue to night wooed Margaret the Lady Heroes gentle-woman, by the name of Hero, she leases me out at her mistris chamber window, bids me a thousand times good night: I tell this tale wieldly, I should first tel thee how the prince Claudio and my master planted, and placed, and posted, by me master Don Iohn, saw a farre off
about Nothing.

off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Conr. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bar. Two of them did; the prince and Claudio, but the duel my master knew she was Margaret, and partly by his oths, which first posseth them, partly by the dark night which did deceive them, but chiefly, by my villany, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged, swore he would meet her as he was appointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation shame her, with what he saw o’re night, and send her home again without a husband.

Watch 1 We charge you in the princes name stand.

Watch 2 Call vppe the right master Constable, wee haue here recouerd the most dangerous peace of lechery, that euer was knowne in the common wealth.

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

Conr Masters, masters.

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

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

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

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

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Vralsa.

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

Vralsa I will lady.

Hero And bid her come hither.

Vralsa Well.

Marg. Troth I thinke your other rebate were better.

Hero No pray thee good Meg, ile weare this.

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

Hero My cousin’s a foole, and thou att another, ile weare none
none but this.

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

Hero O that exceeds they say.

M Arg. By my troth's but a night-gown it respe'ct of yours, cloth a gold and cuts, and lac'd with siluer, set with pearles, downe fleeces, side fleeces, and skirts, round vnderborne with a Blewifh tinsell, but for a fine queint graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

Hero God gie me joy to weare it, for my heart is exceeding heauy.

M Arg. Twill be heauier soone by the weight of a man.

Hero Fie upon thee, art not ashamed?

M Arg. 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, sauing your reverence a husband: & bad thinking do not wreft true speaking, ile offend no body, is there any harm in the heauier, for a husband? none I thinke, and it be the right husband, and the right wife, otherwise tis light and not heauy, aske my lady Beatrice els, here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Beat. Good morrow coze.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Beat.
about Nothing.

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

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

Beat. What meanes the foole trow?

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

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

Beat. I am fluft coftin, I cannot smell.

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

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

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

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

Mar. Get you some of this distill'd cardamum 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 have no morall meaning, I meant plaine holy thistle, you may thinke perchaunce that I think you are in loue, say birldy I am not such a foole to think 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 swore he would never marry, and yet now in dispight of his heart he etes his meate without grudging, and how you may be converted I know not, but me thinkes you looke with your eies as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keepes?

Marg. Not a false gallop. Enter Vrfsula.

Vrfsula. Madame withdraw, the prince, the Count, signior Benedicke, Don Iohn, and all the gallants of the towne are come.
Much ado

come to fetch you to church.

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

__Enter Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough.__

_Leonato_ What would you with me, honest neighbour?

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

you, that decernes you nearly.

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

me.

_Const. Dog._ Mary this it is sir.

_Headb._ Yes in truth it is sir.

_Leonato_ What is it my good friends?

_Const. Do._ Goodman Verges sir speaks a little of the matter,

an old man sir, and his wittes are not so blunt, as God helpe I

would desire they were; but infaith honest, as the skin between

his bровes.

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

that is an old man, and no honester then I.

_Const. Dog._ Comparisons are odoruous, palabras, neighbour

Verges.

_Leonato_ Neighbors, you are tedious.

_Const. Dog._ It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the

poore Dukes officers, but truly for mine owne part if I were as

tedious as a King I could find in my heart to bestow it all of

your worship.

_Leonato_ Al thy tediousnesse on me, ah?

_Const. Dog._ Yea, and’t were a thousand pound more than tis,

for I heare as good exclamations 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 have to say.

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

ships presence, ha tane a couple of as arrant knaues as any in

Messina.

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

say, when the age is in, the wit is out, God help vs, it is a world
about Nothing.

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

Leonato Indeed neighbour he comes too short of you.

Const. Do. Gifts that God giues.

Leonato I must leave you.

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

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

Constable It shall be suffigance. (exit)

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

Messinger My lord, they say for you, to give your daughter to her husband.

Leon. Ile wait vpon them, I am ready.

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

Verges And we must do it wisely.

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

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

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

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

Claudio No.

Leo To 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 you
Much adoe

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

Claudio Know you any, Hero?

Hero None my lord.

Friar Know you any, Counte?

Leonato I dare make his answer, None.

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

Bene. Howe nowe! interiections? why then, some be of

laughing, as, ah, ha, he.

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

Leonato As freely some as God did giue her mee.

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

Princen Nothing, vnlesse you render her againe.

Claudio Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulness:

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

O what authoritie and shew of truth
Can cunning sinne couer it selve withall?
Comes not that blood, as modest euidence,
To witnesse simple Vertue? would you not sweare

All you that see her, that she were a maide,
By thefe exterior shewes? But she is none:
She knowes the heate of a luxurious bed:
Her blush is guiltlesse, not modestie.

Leonato What do you meane my lord?

Claudio Not to be married,

Not to knit my soule to an approoued wanton.

Leonato Deere my lord, if you in your owne proofe,

Hauing vanquishd the resiistance of her youth,

And made defeate 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 never tempted her with word too large,
But as a brother to his sister, shewed
Jestfull sinceritie, and comelie loue.

Hero And seemde I euer otherwise to you?

Claudio Out on thee seeming, I wil write againsl it,

You seeme to me as Diane in her Orbe,
As chaste as is the budedere it be blowne:
But you are more intemperate in your blood,

Than Venus, or those pampered animalls,
That rage in sauege sensuality.

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

Leonato Sweete prince, why speake not you?

Prince What should I speake?

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

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

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

Bened. This lookes not like a nuptiall.

Hero True, O God!

Claud. Leonato, stand I here?

Is this the prince? is this the princes brother?

Is this face Heroes? are our eies our owne?

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

Claud. Let me but moue one question to your daughter,

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

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

Hero O God defend me how am I befest,

What kind of catechifing call you this?

Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.

Hero Is it not Hero, who can blot that name

With any iust reproch?

Claud. Mary that can Hero,

Hero it selfe can blot out Heros vertue.

What man was he talkt with you yesternight,

Out at your window betwixt twelue and one?
Much adoе

Now if you are a maide, answer to this.

Herо  I talkt with no man at that howr 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 grieued Counte
Did see her, heare her, at that howre last night,
Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window,
Who hath indeede most like a liberal villaine,
Confess the vile encounters they haue had
A thousand times in secret.

Joн  Fie, fie, they are not to be named my lord,
Not to be spoke of,

There is not chastitie enough in language,
Without offence to utter them; thus pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgouvernement.

Claud. O Hero! what a Hero hath thou bin,

If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed,
About thy thoughts and counsailes of thy heart?
But fare thee well, moost foule, moost faire, farewell
Thou pure impetue, and impious puritie,
For thee Ie looke vp all the gates of Loue,
And on my eie-liddes shall Contesture hang,
To turne all beautie into thoughts of harme,
And never shall it more be gracious.

Leonato  Hath no mans dagger here a point for me.
Beatrice  Why how now cousin, wherefore sink you down?

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

Smother her spirits vp.

Benedicke  How doth the Lady?
Beatrice  Dead I thinke, help vncle,
Hero, why Hero, vncle, signor Benedicke, Frier.

Leonato  O Fate! take not away thy heauy hand,

Death is the fairest couer for her shame
That may be wisht for.

Beatrice  How now cousin Hero?
Frier  Haue comfort lady.
Leonato  Dost thou looke vp?
about Nothing.

Frier Yea, wherefore should the not?
Leonato Wherfore? why doth not every earthly thing.

Cry shame upon her? could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood;
Do not liue Hero, do not ope thine eyes;
For did I thinke thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shame,
My selfe would on the reweread of reproches
Strike at thy life. Griued I I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugall Natures frame?
O one too much by thee: why had I one?
Why ever wast thou louely in my eies?
Why had I not with charitable hand,
Tooke vp a beggars issue at my gates,
Who finrched thus, and mired with infamy,
I might haue said, no part of it is mine,
This shame deriues it selfe from unknowne lyones,
But mine and mine I loued, and mine I praisde,
And mine that I was proued on mine so much,
That I my selfe, was to my selfe not mine:
Valewing of her, why the, O she is faine,
Into a pit of incke, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her cleane againe,
And fall too little, which may season gue
To her foule tainted flesh.

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

Beat. O on my foule my cosin is belied.

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

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

Leon. Confirmd, confirmd, O that is stronger made,
Which was before bard vp with ribs of yron,
Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who loued her so, that speaking of her soulenesse,
Wash't it with teares! hence from her, let her die.

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

A thousand blushing apparitions,
To start into her face, a thousand innocent blazes,
A thousand blushing apparitions,
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth: call me a fool,
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,
Which with experimental scale doth warrant
The tenure of my book: trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinitie,
If this sweete lady lie not guiltlesse here,
Under some biting error.

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

Frier Lady, what man is he you are accusfle of?
Hero They know that do accuse me, I know none,
If I know more of any man aligie
Then that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sinnes lacke mercie, O my father,
Prove you that any man with me conuerst,
At hours vnmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintaind the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Frier There is some strange misprision in the princes.
Bene. Two of them haue the very bent of honour,
And if their wisedomes be misfled in this,
The practise of it liues in John the Bastard,
Whose spirites toyle in frame of villanies.

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

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

Frier Pausse awhile,
And let my counsell sway you in this case,
Your daughter here the princesse (left for dead,)
Let her a while be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeed,
Maintaine a mourning ostentation,
And on your families old monument,
Hang mournful epitaphes, and do all rites,
That appertain unto a burial.

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

Frier Mary this well caried, shall on her behalfe,
Change slander to remorse, that is some good,
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this trauaile looke for greater birth:
She dying, as it must be so maintaine,
Upon the instant that she was accusfe,
Shal be lamented, pittied, and excusfe
Of every hearer: for it so falls out,
That what we haue, we prize not to the worth,
While we enjoy it, but being lackt and lost,
Why then we racke the valew, then we find
The vertue that possession would not shew vs
While it was ours, so will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall heare she died vpon his words,
The Idea of her life shall sweetly creepe,
Into his study of imagination,
And every lovely Organ of her life,
Shall come apparelled in more precious habite,
More mourning delicate, and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soule
Then when she ljuide indeed: then shall he mourn,
Much adoe

If ever love had interest in his liuer,
And with he had not so accused her:
No, though he thought his accusation true:
Let this be so, and doubt not but succeffe
Will fashion the event in better shape,
Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
But if all ayme but this be leuell'd falte,
The supposition of the ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamie.
And if it fort not wel, you may conceale her,
As best befts her wounded reputation,
In some reclusiue and religious life,
Out of all eies, tongues, minds, and injuries.

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the Frier advice you,
And though you know my inwardnesse and love
Is very much vnio unto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honor, I will deale in this,
As secretly and iustly as your soule
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in grieue,
The smalleft twine may lead me.

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

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

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

Bene. I will not desire that.

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

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

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

Bene. Is there any way to shew such friendship?

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

Bene. May a man do it?

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

Bene. I doe loue nothing in the worlde so well as you,
is not that strange?
Beat. As strange as the thing I knowe not, it were as possible for me to say, I loued nothing so wel as you, but beleue me not: and yet I lie not, I confesse nothing, nor I deny nothing, I am sory for my cooffin.
Bened. By my sword Beatrice, thou loue 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 sayes I loue not you.
Beat. Will you not eate your word?
Bened. With no sawce that can be deuised to it, I protest I loue thee.
Beat. Why then God forgiue me.
Bened. What offence sweete Beatrice?
Beat. You have flayed me in a happy hour, 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 do 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 approued in the height a villain, that hath flaundered, scorned, dishonored my kinswoman? O that I were a man! what, beare her in hand, vntill they come to take handes, and then with publike accusation vncouerd flaunder, vnmitigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I woulde eate
Machadoe

eat his heart in the market place.

_Bened._ Heare me Beatrice.

_Beat._ Talk with a man out at a window, a proper sayling.

_Bened._ Nay but Beatrice.

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

vndone.

_Bened._ Beat?

_Beat._ Princes and Counties! surely a princely testimonie, a
goodly Counte, Counte Comfit, a sweete Gallant surely, O
that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would
be a man for my sake! But manhoode is melted into cursies,
valour into complement, and men are only turned into tongue,
and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only
tells a lie, and sweares it: I cannot be a man with wishing; ther-
fore I will die a woman with grieuing.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Keeper Is our whole dilemby appeard?

Cowley O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton Which be the malefactors?

Andrew Mary that am I, and my partner.

Cowley Nay thats certayne, we haue the exhibition to exa-
mine.

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

Kemp Yea mary, let them come before mee, what is your
name,
about Nothing.

name, friend?

Bor. Borachio.

Ke. Pray write downe Borachio. Yours sirra.

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

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

Both Yea sir we hope.

Kemp. 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 prov'd alreadie that you are little better than false knaues, and it will goe neede to be thought so shortly, how answer you for your felowes?

Con. Mary sir we say, we are none.

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

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

Kemp. VVel, stand aside, for God they are both in a tale: haue you writ downe, that they are none?

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

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

Watch 1 This man said sir, that don John the Princes brother was a villain.

Kemp. Write downe, prince John a villain: why this is flat perjury, to call a Princes brother villain.

Borachio Maister Constable.

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

Sexton VV What heard you him say else?

Watch 2 Mary that he had received a thousand dukcats of don John, for accusing the Ladie Hero wrongfully.

Kemp. Flat burglarie as ever was committed.

Conft. Yea by maffe that it is.

Sexton VV What else fellow?

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

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

Sexton. V What else? Watch. This is all.

Sexton. And this is more masters then you can deny, prince John is this morning secretlie stolne awaye: Hero was in this manner accusde, in this verie manner refusde, and vpon 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 opiniond.

Couley. Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.

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

Couley. Away, you are an affe, you are an affe.

Kemp. Doost thou not suspec my place? doost thou not suspec my yeeres? O that he were here to write me downe an affe! but maister, 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 piete as shal be proude vpon thee by good witnes, I am a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a housholder, and which is more, as pretty a pece 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 loppes, and one that hath two gownes, and every thing hansome about him: bring him away: O that I had bin writ downe an affe.

Exeunt Leonato and his brother.

Brother. If you go on thus, you will kill your selfe,
And its not wisedome thus to second griefe,
Against your selfe.

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

Nor
about Nothing.

Nor let no comforter delight mine eare,
But such a one whose wrongs does fute with mine.
Bring me a father that so lou'd his child,
Whose joy of her is ouer-whelmd like mine,
And bid him speake of patience,
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer euery straine for straine,
As thus for thus, and such a griefe for such,
In euery lineament, branch, shape, and forme:
If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
And sorrow, wagge, crie him, when he should groane,
Patch griefe with proeverbes, make misfortune drunke,
With candle-wafters: bring him yet to me,
And 1 of him will gather patience:
But there is no such man, for brother, men
Can counfaile and speake comfort to that griefe,
Which they themselfes not feele, but tasting it,
Their counfaile turnes to passion, which before,
Would giue preceptuall medicne to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thred,
Charme each with ayre, and agony with words,
No, no, tis all mens office, to speake patience
To those that wring vnder the loade of sorrow
But no mans vertue nor sufficiencie
To be so morall, when he shall endure
The like himfelfe: therefore giue me no counfaile,
My griefes crie lowder then aduertisement.

 Brother Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leonato I pray thee peace, I wil be flesh and bloud,
For there was neuer yet Philosopher,
That could endure the tooth-ake patientely,
How euer they haue writ the stile of gods,
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

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

Leonato There thou speakest reason, nay I will do so,
My soule doth tell me, Hero is belted,

H And
Much adoe

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

Enter Prince and Claudio.

Prince Good den, good den.
Claudio Good day to both of you.
Leonato Hearc you my Lords?
Prince We have some haste Leonato.
Leonato Some haste my lord; well, fare you well my lord,
Are you so hasty 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 distempler, thou:
Nay, neuer 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, neuer fleere and ieft at me,
I speake not like a dotard, nor a foole,
As under priviledge of age to bragge,
What I have done being yong, or what would doe,
Were I not old, know Claudio to thy head,
Thou hast so wronged mine innocent child and me,
That I am forst to lay my reverence by,
And with grey haires and bruise of many daies,
Do challenge thee to triall of a man,
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child.
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lies buried with her ancestors:
O in a toomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, framed by thy villainie.
Claudio My villany?
Leonato Thine Claudio, thine I say.
Prince You say not right old man.

Leonato
about Nothing.

Leonato My Lord, my Lord,  
He prooue it on his body if he dare,  
Dispaigh his nice fence, and his actiue pratiue,  
HisMaie of youth, and bloome of lusthiood.  

Claudio Away, I will not haue to doe with you.  
Leonato Canst thou so daffe me? thou haft kild my child,  
If thou killest me, boy, thou shalt kill a man,  
Brother He shal kill two of vs, and men indeed,  
But thats no matter, let him kill one first:  
Win me and weare me, let him answer me,  
Come follow me boy, come sir boy, come follow me  
Sir boy, ile whip you from your soyning fence,  
Nay, as I am a gentleman I, will.  

Leonato Brother.  

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

Leonato Brother Anthonie.  

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

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

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

Leonato My Lord, my Lord.  
Prince I will not heare you.
**Much ado**

_Leo._ No come brother, away, I wil be heard. _Exeunt amb._

_Bro._ And shal, or some of vs wil smart for it. _Enter Bon._

_Prince._ See se, here 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 have had our two noses snapt off with two old men without teeth.

_Prince._ Leonato and his brother what thinkst thou? had we fought, I doubt we should have beene to yong for them.

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

_Claud._ We have beene vp and downe to seeke thee, for we are high profe melancholie, and would faine haue it beaten away, wilt thou vfe 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 beene beside their wit, I will bid thee drawe, as wee doe the minstrels, draw to pleasure vs.

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

_Claud._ What courage man: what though care kild 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 crosse.

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

_Claud._ If he be, he knowes how to turne his girdle.

_Bened._ Shall I speake a word in your care?

_Claud._ God blesse me from a challenge.

_Bened._ You are a villaine, I ieaf not, I will make it good howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: doe mee right, or I will protest your cowardise: you haue kild 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 chare.

Prince What, a feast, a feast?

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

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

Prince Ile tell thee how Beatrice praifd thy wittie the other day: I saide thou hadst a fine wittie, true saide she, a fine little one: no saide I, a great witt: right saide she, a great grosse one: may saide I, a good witt, juyst saide she; it hurts no body: may saide I, the gentleman is wife: certaine saide she, a wife gentle-men: may saide I, he hath the tongues: that I beleue saide she, 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 trans-shape thy particular vertues, yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properst man in Italy.

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

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

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

Prince But when shall we set the sauage bulles hores one the sensiblie Benedicks head?

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

Bened. Fare you well, boy, you know my minde, I wil leaue you now to your goffeep-like humor, you breake lefts as brag-gards do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not: my Lord, for your many courtises I thanke you, I must discon-tinue your company, your brother the baftard is fled from Me-sina: you haue among you, kild a sweet and innocent lady: for my Lord Lacke-beard, there hee and I shal meet, and till then peace be with him.
Much ado

Prince He is in earnest.
Claudio In most profound earnest, and I do warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.
Prince And hath challenge thee.
Claudio Most sincerely.
Prince What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!
Enter Constables, 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, pluck up my heart, and be sad, did he not say my brother was slain?
Const. Come you sir, if justice cannot tame you, she shall here weigh more reasons in her balance, nay, and you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be lookt to.
Prince How now, two of my brothers men bound? Borachio one.
Claudio Hearken after their offence my Lord.
Prince Officers, what offence have these men done?
Const. Mary sir, they have committed false report, moreover they have spoken vntruths, secondarily they are flanders, sixth and lastly, they have belied a Lady; thirdly they have vrested vnjust things, and to conclude, they are lying knaves.
Prince First I ask thee what they have done, thirdly I ask thee what their offence, sixth 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 troth there one meaning well suited.
Prince Who haue you offended masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned Constable is too cunning to be understood, what is your offence?
Bor. Sweete prince, let me goe no farther to mine answer: do you heare me, and let this Counte kill me: I haue deceived even your very eyes: what your wisedoms could not discouer, these shalowe fooles haue brought 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 scale with my death, then repeat out 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 Runnes not this speech like yron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison whilst 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 framed of treacherie.
And fled he is upon this villainie.

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

Confi. Come, bring away the plaintiffs, by this time our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter: and masters, do not forget to specify when time and place shall serve, that I am an able.

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

Enter Leonato, his brother, and the Sexton.

Leonato Which is the villain? Let me see his eies,
That when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: which of these is he?
Bor. If you would know your wronger, looke on me.
Leonato Art thou the slauve that with thy breath hast kild
Mine innocent child?

Bor. Yea, even I alone.
Leo. No, not so villain, thou believest thy selve,
Here stand a pair of honourable men,
A third is fled that had a hand in it:
I thank you Princess for my daughters death,
Record it with your high and worthy deeds,
Was braclely done, if you bethinke you of it.

Claud. I know not how to pray your patience,
Yet I must speake, choose your revenge your selve,
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sinne, yet sinnd I not,
But in mistaking.

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

Leonato I cannot bid you bid my daughter liue,
That were impossible, but I pray you both,
Possesse the people in Messina here,
How innocent she died, and if your loue
Can labour aught in sad 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,
Gieue her the right you shoulde haue giu' n her cosin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claudio Noble sir!
Your ouer kindnesse doth wringe teares from me,
I do embrace your offer and dispoe,
For henceforth of poore Claudio.

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

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

Conf. Moreouer sir, which indeede is not vnder white and blacke,
this plaintiffe here, the offendour, did call me afe, I
beseech you let it be remembred in his punishment, and also
about Nothing.

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

Leonato I thanke thee for thy care and honest paines.

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

Leon. There for thy paines.

Cons. God save the foundation.

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

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

Leon. Vntill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

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

Prince We will not faile.

Claud. To night Ile mourne with Hero.

Leonato Bring you these fellows on, weel talke with Margarett, how her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow. exectent 

Enter Benedick and Margaret.

Bened. Praise thee sweete mistres Margarett, deferue well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

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

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

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

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

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

I Bene.
Much adoe

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

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

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

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

Exit Margaret.

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

Enter Beatrice.

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

Bene. O slay 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 paft betweene you and Claudio.

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

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

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

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

Beat. For them all together, which maintain so politique a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to inter-mingle 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 spight 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 is not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

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 own tomb ere he dies, he shall liue no longer in monument, then the bell rings, and the widow weepes.

Beat. And how long is that think you?

Bene. Question, why an hower in clamour and a quarter in rhewme, therefore is it most expedient for the wife, if Don Wurme (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 witnesse is praise worthie, and now tell me, how doth your cousin?

Beat. Vericill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Vericill too.

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

Vrsula Madam, you must come to your uncle, yonder's old coile at home, it is proved my Lady Hero hath bin falsely accus'd, the Prince and Claudio mightily abuse, and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go hearce this newes signior?

Bene. I will liue in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy cies: and moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncles. exit. Enter
**Much ado**

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

**Claudio** Is this the monument of Leonato?

**Lord** It is my Lord.  

_Epitaph._  

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

_Hang thou there upon the toomb,  
Prailing hir when I am dead._

**Claudio** Now mustICK found & sing your solemn hymne.  

_Song_ Pardon goddess of the night,  
Those that fly thy virgin knight,  
For the which with songs of woe,  
Round about her tomb then they goe:  
Midnight asleep our mone, help vs to sigh & groan.  
Heauily heauily.  

_Graues yawne and yeeld your dead,  
Till death be vttered,  
Heauily heauily._

_Lord._ Now unto thy bones good night, yeerely will I do this  

Prince Good morrow masters, put your torches out,  

The wolues have preyed, and looke, the gentle day  
Before the wheeles of Phoebus, round about  
Dapples the drowsie East with spots of grey:  
Thanks to you al, and leaue vs, fare you well.  

_Claudio_ Good morrow masters, each his eueral way.  

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

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

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

_Frier_ Did I not tell you shee was innocent?  

_Leo._ So are the Prince and Claudio who accus'd her,  

Upon 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 enfoft
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.
Leo. Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by your selues,
And when I send for you come hither masked:
The Prince and Claudio promisde by this howre
To visite me, you know your office brother,
You must be father to your brothers 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 favour.
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 answere sir is enigmatical,
But for my wil, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoynd,
In the state of honorable marriage,
In which (good Frier) I shall desire your help.
Leo. My heart is with your liking.
Frier And my helpe.

Heere comes the Prince and Claudio.

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

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

Claud. I think he thinkes vpon the sauage bull:
Tush feare not man, weelet tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall reioyce at thee,
As once Europa did at luftie loue,
When he would play the noble beast in loue.

Bene. Bull loue sir had an amiable loue,
And some such strange bull leapt your fathers cowe,
And got a calfe in that same noble seate,
Much like to you, for you haue luf his bleate.

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Claud. Another Hero.

Hero. Nothing cetainer.

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

Prince. The former Hero, Hero that is dead.

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

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

And to the chappell let vs presently.

Ben. Soft and faire Frier, which is Beatrice?

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

Bene. Do not you loue me?

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

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

Haue beene deceiued, they swore you did.

Beat. Do not you loue me?

Bene. Troth no, no more then reason.

Beat. Why then my cousin Margaret and Vrfula

Are much deceiued; for they did sweare you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almostrike for me.

Beat. They sweare that you were wench dead for me.

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

Beat. No truly, but in friendly recompence.

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

Clau. And ile besworne vpon't, that he loues her,

For hers a paper written in his hand,

A halting sonnet of his owne pure braine,

Fashioned to Beatrice.

Hero. And heres another,

Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,

Containing her affection vnto Benedicke.

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

come, I will have thee, but by this light I take thee for pittie.

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

vpon great perswasion, and partly to saue your life, for I was
told, you were in a consumpation.

Leon. Peace I will stop your mouth.

Prince. How doest thou Benedicke the married man?

Bene. Ile tel thee what prince: a college of witte-crackers
cannot flout me out of my humour, dost thou think I care for
a Satyre or an Epigramme? no, if a man will be beaten with
braines, a shall weare nothing hamsome about him: in briefe,
since I doe purpose to marrie, I will think nothing to anie pur-
pose that the world can faie against it, and therefore never flout
at me, for what I haue said against it: for man is a giddie thing,
and this is my conclusion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke
to haue beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman,
liue vnbruisde, and loue my cousin.

Clau. I had wel hopht thou wouldst haue denied Beatrice,

that I might haue cudgelld thee out of thy sngle life, to make
thee
Much adoe

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

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

Leon. Weele haue dancing afterward.

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

Enter Messenger.

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


FINIS.
Shakespeare, William
Much ado about nothing