

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare

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Four Comedies

William Shakespeare

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DON PEDRO, Prince of Arragon.

DON JOHN, his bastard Brother.

CLAUDIO, a young Lord of Florence.

BENEDICK, a young Lord of Padua.

LEONATO, Governor of Messina.

ANTONIO, his Brother.

BALTHAZAR, Servant to Don Pedro.

BORACHIO, follower of Don John.

CONRADE, follower of Don John.

DOGBERRY, a Constable.

VERGES, a Headborough.

FRIAR FRANCIS.

A Sexton.

A Boy.

HERO, Daughter to Leonato.

BEATRICE, Niece to Leonato.

MARGARET, Waiting-gentlewoman attending on Hero.

URSULA, Waiting-gentlewoman attending on Hero.

Messengers, Watch, Attendants,

SCENE. Messina.

Act I.

Scene I. Before LEONATO'S House.

[Enter LEONATO, HERO, BEATRICE and others, with a Messenger.]

LEONATO.

I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night

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to Messina.

MESSENGER.

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

LEONATO.

How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

MESSENGER.

But few of any sort, and none of name.

LEONATO.

A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers. I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine called Claudio.

MESSENGER.

Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro. He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion: he hath indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how.

LEONATO.

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

MESSENGER.

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

LEONATO.

Did he break out into tears?

MESSENGER.

In great measure.

LEONATO.

A kind overflow of kindness. There are no faces truer than those that are so washed; how much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping!

BEATRICE.

I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars or no?

MESSENGER.

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 Benedick of Padua.

MESSENGER.

O! he is returned, and as pleasant as ever he was.

BEATRICE.

He set up his bills here in Messina and challenged Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid, and challenged him at the bird-bolt. I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars?

But how many hath he killed? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing.

LEONATO.

Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

MESSENGER.

He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

BEATRICE.

You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it; he is a very valiant trencher-man; he hath an excellent stomach.

MESSENGER.

And a good soldier too, lady.

BEATRICE.

And a good soldier to a lady; but what is he to a lord?

MESSENGER.

A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuffed with all honourable virtues.

BEATRICE.

It is so indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man; but for the stuffing,--well, we are all mortal.

LEONATO.

You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her; they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEATRICE.

Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one! so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse; for it is all the wealth that he hath left to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion

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now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

MESSENGER.

Is't possible?

BEATRICE.

Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block.

MESSENGER.

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

BEATRICE.

No; an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

MESSENGER.

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

BEATRICE.

O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a' be cured.

MESSENGER.

I will hold friends with you, lady.

BEATRICE.

Do, good friend.

LEONATO.

You will never run mad, niece.

BEATRICE.

No, not till a hot January.

MESSENGER.

Don Pedro is approached.

[Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHAZAR, and Others.]

DON PEDRO.

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

LEONATO.

Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your Grace, for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but when you depart from me,

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sorrow abides and happiness takes his leave.

DON PEDRO.

You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

LEONATO.

Her mother hath many times told me so.

BENEDICK.

Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

LEONATO.

Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

DON PEDRO.

You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly the lady fathers herself. Be happy, lady, for you are like an honourable father.

BENEDICK.

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

BEATRICE.

I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

BENEDICK.

What! my dear Lady Disdain, are you yet living?

BEATRICE.

Is it possible Disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain if you come in her presence.

BENEDICK.

Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted; and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

BEATRICE.

A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that. I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

BENEDICK.

God keep your ladyship still in that mind; so some gentleman or other shallscape a predestinate scratched face.

BEATRICE.

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

BENEDICK.

Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

BEATRICE.

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

BENEDICK.

I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer. But keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.

BEATRICE.

You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

DON PEDRO.

That is the sum of all, Leonato: Signior Claudio, and Signior Benedick, my dear friend Leonato hath invited you all. I tell him we shall stay here at the least a month, and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

LEONATO.

If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn.

[To DON JOHN]

Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

DON JOHN.

I thank you: I am not of many words, but I thank you.

LEONATO.

Please it your Grace lead on?

DON PEDRO.

Your hand, Leonato; we will go together.

[Exeunt all but BENEDICK and CLAUDIO.]

CLAUDIO.

Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

BENEDICK.

I noted her not; but I looked on her.

CLAUDIO.

Is she not a modest young lady?

BENEDICK.

Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true

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judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

CLAUDIO.

No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment.

BENEDICK.

Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise; only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome, and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

CLAUDIO.

Thou thinkest I am in sport: I pray thee tell me truly how thou likest her.

BENEDICK.

Would you buy her, that you enquire after her?

CLAUDIO.

Can the world buy such a jewel?

BENEDICK.

Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow, or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song?

CLAUDIO.

In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

BENEDICK.

I can see yet without spectacles and I see no such matter: there's her cousin and she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you?

CLAUDIO.

I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn to the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

BENEDICK.

Is't come to this, i' faith? Hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i' faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it and sigh away Sundays. Look! Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

[Re-enter DON PEDRO.]

DON PEDRO.

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

BENEDICK.

I would your Grace would constrain me to tell.

DON PEDRO.

I charge thee on thy allegiance.

BENEDICK.

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

CLAUDIO.

If this were so, so were it uttered.

BENEDICK.

Like the old tale, my lord: 'it is not so, nor 'twas not so; but indeed, God forbid it should be so.'

CLAUDIO.

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

DON PEDRO.

Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

CLAUDIO.

You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

By my troth, I speak my thought.

CLAUDIO.

And in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

BENEDICK.

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

CLAUDIO.

That I love her, I feel.

DON PEDRO.

That she is worthy, I know.

BENEDICK.

That I neither feel how she should be loved nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me: I will die in it at the stake.

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Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

CLAUDIO.

And never could maintain his part but in the force of his will.

BENEDICK.

That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks; but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is,—for the which I may go the finer,—I will live a bachelor.

DON PEDRO.

I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

BENEDICK.

With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love: prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house for the sign of blind Cupid.

DON PEDRO.

Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

BENEDICK.

If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder and called Adam.

DON PEDRO.

Well, as time shall try: 'In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.'

BENEDICK.

The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns and set them in my forehead; and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write, 'Here is good horse to hire,' let them signify under my sign 'Here you may see Benedick the married man.'

CLAUDIO.

If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad.

DON PEDRO.

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

BENEDICK.

I look for an earthquake too then.

DON PEDRO.

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Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's: commend me to him and tell him I will not fail him at supper; for indeed he hath made great preparation.

BENEDICK.

I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassy; and so I commit you--

CLAUDIO.

To the tuition of God: from my house, if I had it,--

DON PEDRO.

The sixth of July: your loving friend, Benedick.

BENEDICK.

Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience: and so I leave you.

[Exit.]

CLAUDIO.

My liege, your highness now may do me good.

DON PEDRO.

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

CLAUDIO.

Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

DON PEDRO.

No child but Hero; he's his only heir.
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

CLAUDIO.

O! my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I looked upon her with a soldier's eye,
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love;
But now I am return'd, and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

DON PEDRO.

Thou wilt be like a lover presently,

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And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

CLAUDIO.

How sweetly you do minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

DON PEDRO.

What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity.
Look, what will serve is fit: 'tis once, thou lov'st,
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling to-night:
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio;
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then, after to her father will I break;
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.
In practice let us put it presently.

[Exeunt.]

Scene II. --A room in LEONATO'S house.

[Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO, meeting.]

LEONATO.

How now, brother! Where is my cousin your son? Hath he provided
this music?

ANTONIO.

He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange
news that you yet dreamt not of.

LEONATO.

Are they good?

ANTONIO.

As the event stamps them: but they have a good cover; they show well
outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley
in my orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: the prince
discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter and meant to

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acknowledge it this night in a dance; and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top and instantly break with you of it.

LEONATO.

Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

ANTONIO.

A good sharp fellow: I will send for him; and question him yourself.

LEONATO.

No, no; we will hold it as a dream till it appear itself: but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you, and tell her of it.

[Several persons cross the stage.]

Cousins, you know what you have to do. O! I cry you mercy, friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill. Good cousin, have a care this busy time.

[Exeunt.]

Scene III. -- Another room in LEONATO'S house.]

[Enter DON JOHN and CONRADE.]

CONRADE.

What the good--year, my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

DON JOHN.

There is no measure in the occasion that breeds; therefore the sadness is without limit.

CONRADE.

You should hear reason.

DON JOHN.

And when I have heard it, what blessings brings it?

CONRADE.

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

DON JOHN.

I wonder that thou, being, --as thou say'st thou art,--born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure;

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sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour.

CONRADE.

Yea; but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

DON JOHN.

I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace; and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than 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 muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; 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 meantime, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

CONRADE.

Can you make no use of your discontent?

DON JOHN.

I make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here?

[Enter Borachio.]

What news, Borachio?

BORACHIO.

I came yonder from a great supper: the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

DON JOHN.

Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

BORACHIO.

Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

DON JOHN.

Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

BORACHIO.

Even he.

DON JOHN.

A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

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BORACHIO.

Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

DON JOHN.

A very forward March--chick! How came you to this?

BORACHIO.

Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking 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 woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

DON JOHN.

Come, come; let us thither: this may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

CONRADE.

To the death, my lord.

DON JOHN.

Let us to the great supper: their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were of my mind! Shall we go to prove what's to be done?

BORACHIO.

We'll wait upon your lordship.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 2.

Scene I. A hall in LEONATO'S house.

[Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, HERO, BEATRICE, and Others.]

LEONATO.

Was not Count John here at supper?

ANTONIO.

I saw him not.

BEATRICE.

How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after.

HERO.

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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 says nothing; and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

LEONATO.

Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face,--

BEATRICE.

With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world ifa' could get her good will.

LEONATO.

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

ANTONIO.

In faith, she's too curst.

BEATRICE.

Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way; for it is said, 'God sends a curst cow short horns;' but to a cow too curst he sends none.

LEONATO.

So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns?

BEATRICE.

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

LEONATO.

You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

BEATRICE.

What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man; and he that is more than a youth is not for me; and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-ward, and lead his apes into hell.

LEONATO.

Well then, go you into hell?

BEATRICE.

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No; but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say, 'Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids: 'so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

ANTONIO.

[To Hero.] Well, niece, I trust you will be ruled by your father.

BEATRICE.

Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please you:'— but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please me.'

LEONATO.

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

BEATRICE.

Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be over-mastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kinred.

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 music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

LEONATO.

Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

BEATRICE.

I have a good eye, uncle: I can see a church by daylight.

LEONATO.

The revellers are entering, brother: make good room.

[Enter, DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHASAR, DON JOHN, BORACHIO, MARGARET, URSULA, and Others, masked.]

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DON PEDRO.

Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

HERO.

So you walk softly and look sweetly and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

DON PEDRO.

With me in your company?

HERO.

I may say so, when I please.

DON PEDRO.

And when please you to say so?

HERO.

When I like your favour; for God defend the lute should be like the case!

DON PEDRO.

My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

HERO.

Why, then, your visor should be thatch'd.

DON PEDRO.

Speak low, if you speak love.

[Takes her aside.]

BALTHAZAR.

Well, I would you did like me.

MARGARET.

So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

BALTHAZAR.

Which is one?

MARGARET.

I say my prayers aloud.

BALTHAZAR.

I love you the better; the hearers may cry Amen.

MARGARET.

God match me with a good dancer!

BALTHAZAR.

Amen.

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MARGARET.

And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done! Answer, clerk.

BALTHAZAR.

No more words: the clerk is answered.

URSULA.

I know you well enough: you are Signior Antonio.

ANTONIO.

At a word, I am not.

URSULA.

I know you by the waggling of your head.

ANTONIO.

To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

URSULA.

You could never do him so ill--well, unless you were the very man. Here's his dry hand up and down: you are he, you are he.

ANTONIO.

At a word, I am not.

URSULA.

Come, come; do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end.

BEATRICE.

Will you not tell me who told you so?

BENEDICK.

No, you shall pardon me.

BEATRICE.

Nor will you not tell me who you are?

BENEDICK.

Not now.

BEATRICE.

That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the 'Hundred Merry Tales.' Well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

BENEDICK.

What's he?

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BEATRICE.

I am sure you know him well enough.

BENEDICK.

Not I, believe me.

BEATRICE.

Did he never make you laugh?

BENEDICK.

I pray you, what is he?

BEATRICE.

Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany; for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the fleet: I would he had boarded me!

BENEDICK.

When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

BEATRICE.

Do, do: he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure not marked or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night.

[Music within.] We must follow the leaders.

BENEDICK.

In every good thing.

BEATRICE.

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

[Dance. Then exeunt all but DON JOHN, BORACHIO, and CLAUDIO.]

DON JOHN.

Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it. The ladies follow her and but one visor remains.

BORACHIO.

And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.

DON JOHN.

Are you not Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO.

You know me well; I am he.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

DON JOHN.

Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her; she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

CLAUDIO.

How know you he loves her?

DON JOHN.

I heard him swear his affection.

BORACHIO.

So did I too; and he swore he would marry her to-night.

DON JOHN.

Come, let us to the banquet.

[Exeunt DON JOHN and BORACHIO.]

CLAUDIO.

Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.
'Tis certain so; the prince wooes for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things
Save in the office and affairs of love:
herefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!

[Re-enter Benedick.]

BENEDICK.

Count Claudio?

CLAUDIO.

Yea, the same.

BENEDICK.

Come, will you go with me?

CLAUDIO.

Whither?

BENEDICK.

Even to the next willow, about your own business, count. What fashion will you wear the garland of? About your neck, like a usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

CLAUDIO.

I wish him joy of her.

BENEDICK.

Why, that's spoken like an honest drovier: so they sell bullocks.
But did you think the prince would have served you thus?

CLAUDIO.

I pray you, leave me.

BENEDICK.

Ho! now you strike like the blind man: 'twas the boy that stole
your meat, and you'll beat the post.

CLAUDIO.

If it will not be, I'll leave you.

[Exit.]

BENEDICK.

Alas! poor hurt fowl. Now will he creep into sedges. But, that my
Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool! Ha!
it may be I go under that title because I am merry. Yea, but so I am
apt to do myself wrong; I am not so reputed: it is the base though
bitter disposition of Beatrice that puts the world into her person,
and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

[Re-enter Don Pedro.]

DON PEDRO.

Now, signior, where's the count? Did you see him?

BENEDICK.

Troth, my lord, I have played the part of Lady Fame. I found him here
as melancholy as a lodge in a warren. I told him, and I think I told
him true, that your Grace had got the good will of this young lady;
and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a
garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy
to be whipped.

DON PEDRO.

To be whipped! What's his fault?

BENEDICK.

The flat transgression of a school-boy, who, being overjoy'd with
finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

DON PEDRO.

Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in
the stealer.

BENEDICK.

Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stolen his bird's nest.

DON PEDRO.

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

BENEDICK.

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

DON PEDRO.

The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you: the gentleman that danced with her told her she is much wronged by you.

BENEDICK.

O! she misused me past the endurance of a block: an oak but with one green leaf on it, would have answered her: my very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed: she would have made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her, for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose because they would go thither; so indeed, all disquiet, horror and perturbation follow her.

[Re-enter CLAUDIO, BEATRICE, HERO, and LEONATO.]

DON PEDRO.

Look! here she comes.

BENEDICK.

Will your Grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the Great Cham's beard; do you any embassy to the Pygmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me?

DON PEDRO.

None, but to desire your good company.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BENEDICK.

O God, sir, here's a dish I love not: I cannot endure my Lady Tongue.

[Exit.]

DON PEDRO.

Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick.

BEATRICE.

Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile; and I gave him use for it, a double heart for a single one: marry, once before he won it of me with false dice, therefore your Grace may well say I have lost it.

DON PEDRO.

You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

BEATRICE.

So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

DON PEDRO.

Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad?

CLAUDIO.

Not sad, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

How then? Sick?

CLAUDIO.

Neither, my lord.

BEATRICE.

The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion.

DON PEDRO.

I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and, his good will obtained; name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

LEONATO.

Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his Grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

BEATRICE.

Speak, Count, 'tis your cue.

CLAUDIO.

Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you and dote upon the exchange.

BEATRICE.

Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

DON PEDRO.

In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEATRICE.

Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

CLAUDIO.

And so she doth, cousin.

BEATRICE.

Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sunburnt. I may sit in a corner and cry heigh-ho for a husband!

DON PEDRO.

Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE.

I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your Grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

DON PEDRO.

Will you have me, lady?

BEATRICE.

No, my lord, unless I might have another for working days: your Grace is too costly to wear every day. But, I beseech your Grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth and no matter.

DON PEDRO.

Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

BEATRICE.

No, sure, my lord, my mother cried; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy!

LEONATO.

Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

BEATRICE.

I cry you mercy, uncle. By your Grace's pardon.

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[Exit.]

DON PEDRO.

By my troth, a pleasant spirited lady.

LEONATO.

There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then, for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness and waked herself with laughing.

DON PEDRO.

She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

LEONATO.

O! by no means: she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

DON PEDRO.

She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

LEONATO.

O Lord! my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

DON PEDRO.

Count Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

CLAUDIO.

To-morrow, my lord. Time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

LEONATO.

Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief too, to have all things answer my mind.

DON PEDRO.

Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labours, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other. I would fain have it a match; and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

LEONATO.

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

CLAUDIO.

And I, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

And you too, gentle Hero?

HERO.

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

DON PEDRO.

And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer: his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 2. Another room in LEONATO'S house.

[Enter DON JOHN and BORACHIO.]

DON JOHN.

It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

BORACHIO.

Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

DON JOHN.

Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me: I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

BORACHIO.

Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

DON JOHN.

Show me briefly how.

BORACHIO.

I think I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

DON JOHN.

I remember.

BORACHIO.

I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber window.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

DON JOHN.

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

BORACHIO.

The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio,—whose estimation do you mightily hold up,—to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

DON JOHN.

What proof shall I make of that?

BORACHIO.

Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato. Look you for any other issue?

DON JOHN.

Only to despise them, I will endeavour anything.

BORACHIO.

Go then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as—in love of your brother's honour, who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances, which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window, hear me call Margaret Hero, hear Margaret term me Claudio; and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding: for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be called assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

DON 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 ducats.

BORACHIO.

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

DON JOHN.

I will presently go learn their day of marriage.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 3.—LEONATO'S Garden.

[Enter Benedick.]

BENEDICK.

Boy!

[Enter a Boy.]

BOY.

Signior?

BENEDICK.

In my chamber--window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard.

BOY.

I am here already, sir.

BENEDICK.

I know that; but I would have thee hence, and here again.

[Exit Boy.]

I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known, when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now is he turned orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. Ha! the prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour.

[Withdraws.]

[Enter DON PEDRO, LEONATO, and CLAUDIO, followed by BALTHAZAR and Musicians.]

DON PEDRO.

Come, shall we hear this music?

CLAUDIO.

Yea, my good lord.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

How still the evening is,
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

DON PEDRO.

See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

CLAUDIO.

O! very well, my lord: the music ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox with a penny-worth.

DON PEDRO.

Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again.

BALTHAZAR.

O! good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander music any more than once.

DON PEDRO.

It is the witness still of excellency,
To put a strange face on his own perfection.
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

BALTHAZAR.

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

DON PEDRO.

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

BALTHAZAR.

Note this before my notes;
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

DON PEDRO.

Why these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Notes, notes, forsooth, and nothing!

[Music.]

BENEDICK.

Now, divine air! now is his soul ravished! Is it not strange that
sheep's gutsshould hale souls out of men's bodies? Well, a horn for
my money, when all's done.

[Balthasar sings.]

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever;

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

One foot in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy.
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

DON PEDRO.

By my troth, a good song.

BALTHAZAR.

And an ill singer, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Ha, no, no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

BENEDICK.

[Aside.] An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him; and I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief. I had as lief have heard the night-raven, come what plague could have come after it.

DON PEDRO.

Yea, marry; dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some excellent music, for to-morrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window.

BALTHAZAR.

The best I can, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Do so: farewell.

[Exeunt BALTHAZAR and Musicians.]

Come hither, Leonato: what was it you told me of to-day, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO.

O! ay:--

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Aside to DON PEDRO] Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits. I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

LEONATO.

No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

BENEDICK.

[Aside.] Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

LEONATO.

By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it but that she loves him with an enraged affection: it is past the infinite of thought.

DON PEDRO.

May be she doth but counterfeit.

CLAUDIO.

Faith, like enough.

LEONATO.

O God! counterfeit! There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

DON PEDRO.

Why, what effects of passion shows she?

CLAUDIO.

[Aside.] Bait the hook well: this fish will bite.

LEONATO.

What effects, my lord? She will sit you; [To Claudio.] You heard my daughter tell you how.

CLAUDIO.

She did, indeed.

DON PEDRO.

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

LEONATO.

I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

BENEDICK.

[Aside] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide itself in such reverence.

CLAUDIO.

[Aside.] He hath ta'en the infection: hold it up.

DON PEDRO.

Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

LEONATO.

No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

CLAUDIO.

Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says: 'Shall I,' says she, 'that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?'

LEONATO.

This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ a sheet of paper: my daughter tells us all.

CLAUDIO.

Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

LEONATO.

O! when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?

CLAUDIO.

That.

LEONATO.

O! she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: 'I measure him,' says she, 'by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should.'

CLAUDIO.

Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses; 'O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!'

LEONATO.

She doth indeed; my daughter says so; and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometimes afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself. It is very true.

DON PEDRO.

It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

CLAUDIO.

To what end? he would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

DON PEDRO.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

An he should, it were an alms to hang him. She's an excellent sweet lady, and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

CLAUDIO.

And she is exceeding wise.

DON PEDRO.

In everything but in loving Benedick.

LEONATO.

O! my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

DON PEDRO.

I would she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have daffed all other respects and made her half myself. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what a' will say.

LEONATO.

Were it good, think you?

CLAUDIO.

Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die if he love her not, and she will die ere she make her love known, and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

DON PEDRO.

She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man,--as you know all,--hath a contemptible spirit.

CLAUDIO.

He is a very proper man.

DON PEDRO.

He hath indeed a good outward happiness.

CLAUDIO.

Fore God, and in my mind, very wise.

DON PEDRO.

He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.

CLAUDIO.

And I take him to be valiant.

DON PEDRO.

As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or

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undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear.

LEONATO.

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

DON PEDRO.

And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick and tell him of her love?

CLAUDIO.

Never tell him, my lord: let her wear it out with good counsel.

LEONATO.

Nay, that's impossible: she may wear her heart out first.

DON PEDRO.

Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter: let it cool the while. I love Benedick well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.

LEONATO.

My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

CLAUDIO.

[Aside.] If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation.

DON PEDRO.

[Aside.] Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentle-woman carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter: that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb-show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner.

[Exeunt DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and LEONATO.]

BENEDICK.

[Advancing from the arbour.] This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry: I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair: 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous: 'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me: by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and

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remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage; but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No; the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day! she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

[Enter BEATRICE.]

BEATRICE.

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

BENEDICK.

Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE.

I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

BENEDICK.

You take pleasure then in the message?

BEATRICE.

Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior: fare you well.

[Exit.]

BENEDICK.

Ha! 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner,' there's a double meaning in that. 'I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me,' that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture.

[Exit.]

ACT 3.

Scene I. Leonato's Garden.

[Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA.]

HERO.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the prince and Claudio:
Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her; say that thou overheard'st us,
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honey-suckles, ripen'd by the sun,
Forbid the sun 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;
Bear thee well in it and leave us alone.

MARGARET.

I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently.

[Exit.]

HERO.

Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick:
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice: of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

[Enter BEATRICE, behind.]

Now begin;
For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

URSULA.

The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
Is couched in the woodbine coverture.
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

HERO.

Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.

[They advance to the bower.]

No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I know her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.

URSULA.

But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

HERO.

So says the prince, and my new-trothed lord.

URSULA.

And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

HERO.

They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

URSULA.

Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full as fortunate a bed
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

HERO.

O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man;
But nature never fram'd a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice;
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak. She cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endear'd.

URSULA.

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

HERO.

Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
But she would spell him backward: if fair-fac'd,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antick,
Made a foul blot; if tall, a lance ill-headed;
If low, an agate very vilely cut;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out,

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

URSULA.

Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

HERO.

No; not to be so odd, and from all fashions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable.
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air: O! she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

URSULA.

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'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with. One doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

URSULA.

O! do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment,--
Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is priz'd to have,--as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

HERO.

He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

URSULA.

I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

HERO.

Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

URSULA.

His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.
When are you married, madam?

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

HERO.

Why, every day, to-morrow. Come, go in:
I'll show thee some attires, and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

URSULA.

She's lim'd, I warrant you: we have caught her, madam.

HERO.

If it prove so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

[Exeunt HERO and URSULA.]

BEATRICE.

[Advancing.] What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band;
For others say thou dost deserve, and I
Believe it better than reportingly.

[Exit.]

Scene 2. A Room in LEONATO'S House.

[Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, and LEONATO.]

DON PEDRO.

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

CLAUDIO.

I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

DON PEDRO.

Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage,
as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only
be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head
to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth; he hath twice or thrice cut
Cupid's bowstring, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him. He
hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper; for
what his heart thinks his tongue speaks.

BENEDICK.

Gallants, I am not as I have been.

LEONATO.

So say I: methinks you are sadder.

CLAUDIO.

I hope he be in love.

DON PEDRO.

Hang him, truant! there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touched with love. If he be sad, he wants money.

BENEDICK.

I have the tooth-ache.

DON PEDRO.

Draw it.

BENEDICK.

Hang it.

CLAUDIO.

You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

DON PEDRO.

What! sigh for the tooth-ache?

LEONATO.

Where is but a humour or a worm?

BENEDICK.

Well, every one can master a grief but he that has it.

CLAUDIO.

Yet say I, he is in love.

DON PEDRO.

There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy 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 German from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet. Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is.

CLAUDIO.

If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: a' brushes his hat a mornings; what should that bode?

DON PEDRO.

Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

CLAUDIO.

No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls.

LEONATO.

Indeed he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

DON PEDRO.

Nay, a' rubs himself with civet: can you smell him out by that?

CLAUDIO.

That's as much as to say the sweet youth's in love.

DON PEDRO.

The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

CLAUDIO.

And when was he wont to wash his face?

DON PEDRO.

Yea, or to paint himself? for the which, I hear what they say of him.

CLAUDIO.

Nay, but his jesting spirit; which is now crept into a lute-string, and new-governed by stops.

DON PEDRO.

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

CLAUDIO.

Nay, but I know who loves him.

DON PEDRO.

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

CLAUDIO.

Yes, and his ill conditions; and in despite of all, dies for him.

DON PEDRO.

She shall be buried with her face upwards.

BENEDICK.

Yet is this no charm for the tooth-ache. Old signior, walk aside with me: I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[Exeunt BENEDICK and LEONATO.]

DON PEDRO.

For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

CLAUDIO.

'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

[Enter DON JOHN.]

DON JOHN.

My lord and brother, God save you!

DON PEDRO.

Good den, brother.

DON JOHN.

If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

DON PEDRO.

In private?

DON JOHN.

If it please you; yet Count Claudio may hear, for what I would speak of concerns him.

DON PEDRO.

What's the matter?

DON JOHN.

[To CLAUDIO.] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

DON PEDRO.

You know he does.

DON JOHN.

I know not that, when he knows what I know.

CLAUDIO.

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

DON JOHN.

You may think I love you not: let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest. For my brother, I think he holds you well, and in dearth of heart hath help to effect your ensuing marriage; surely suit ill-spent and labour ill bestowed!

DON PEDRO.

Why, what's the matter?

DON JOHN.

I came hither to tell you; and circumstances shortened,—for she has been too long a talking of,—the lady is disloyal.

CLAUDIO.

Who, Hero?

DON JOHN.

Even she: Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

CLAUDIO.

Disloyal?

DON JOHN.

The word's too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say, she were worse: think 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 entered, even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

CLAUDIO.

May this be so?

DON PEDRO.

I will not think it.

DON JOHN.

If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know. If you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly.

CLAUDIO.

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

DON PEDRO.

And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

DON JOHN.

I will disparage her no farther till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

DON PEDRO.

O day untowardly turned!

CLAUDIO.

O mischief strangely thwarting!

DON JOHN.

O plague right well prevented! So will you say when you have seen the sequel.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 3. A Street.

[Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES, with the Watch.]

DOGBERRY.

Are you good men and true?

VERGES.

Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

DOGBERRY.

Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

VERGES.

Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

DOGBERRY.

First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

FIRST WATCH.

Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can write and read.

DOGBERRY.

Come hither, neighbour Seacoal. God hath blessed you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

SECOND WATCH.

Both which, Master Constable,--

DOGBERRY.

You have: I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lanthorn. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

SECOND WATCH.

How, if a' will not stand?

DOGBERRY.

Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

VERGES.

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

DOGBERRY.

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

SECOND WATCH.

We will rather sleep than talk: we know what belongs to a watch.

DOGBERRY.

Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend; only have a care that your bills be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the alehouses, and bid those that are drunk get them to bed.

SECOND 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 took them for.

SECOND WATCH.

Well, sir.

DOGBERRY.

If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

SECOND WATCH.

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

DOGBERRY.

Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled. The most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is and steal out of your company.

VERGES.

You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

DOGBERRY.

Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

VERGES.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse
and bid her still it.

SECOND WATCH.

How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

DOGBERRY.

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

VERGES.

'Tis very true.

DOGBERRY.

This is the end of the charge. You constable, are to present the
prince's own person: if you meet the prince in the night, you may
stay him.

VERGES.

Nay, by'r lady, that I think, a' cannot.

DOGBERRY.

Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statutes, he
may stay him: marry, 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.

By'r lady, I think it be so.

DOGBERRY.

Ha, ah, ha! Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight
chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own, and good
night. Come, neighbour.

SECOND WATCH.

Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the
church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

DOGBERRY.

One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you, watch about Signior
Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great
coil to-night.

Adieu; be vigilant, I beseech you.

[Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES.]

[Enter BORACHIO and CONRADE.]

BORACHIO.

What, Conrade!

WATCH.

[Aside.] Peace! stir not.

BORACHIO.

Conrade, I say!

CONRADE.

Here, man. I am at thy elbow.

BORACHIO.

Mass, and my elbow itched; I thought there would a scab follow.

CONRADE.

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

BORACHIO.

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

WATCH.

[Aside.] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

BORACHIO.

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

CONRADE.

Is it possible that any villany should be so dear?

BORACHIO.

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

CONRADE.

I wonder at it.

BORACHIO.

That shows thou art unconfirmed. Thou knowest that the fashion of
a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

CONRADE.

Yes, it is apparel.

BORACHIO.

I mean, the fashion.

CONRADE.

Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

BORACHIO.

Tush! I may as well say the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

WATCH.

[Aside.] I know that Deformed; a' has been a vile thief this seven years; a' goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

BORACHIO.

Didst thou not hear somebody?

CONRADE.

No: 'twas the vane on the house.

BORACHIO.

Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometime fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting; sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church-window; sometime like the shaven Hercules in the smirched worm-eaten tapestry, where his codpiece seems as massy as his club?

CONRADE.

All this I see, and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man. But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

BORACHIO.

Not so neither; but know, that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero: she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night,—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

CONRADE.

And thought they Margaret was Hero?

BORACHIO.

Two of them did, the prince and Claudio; but the devil my master, knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed 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'er night, and send her home again without a husband.

FIRST WATCH.

We charge you in the prince's name, stand!

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

SECOND WATCH.

Call up the right Master Constable. We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

FIRST WATCH.

And one Deformed is one of them: I know him, a' wears a lock.

CONRADE.

Masters, masters!

SECOND WATCH.

You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

CONRADE.

Masters, --

FIRST WATCH.

Never speak: we charge you let us obey you to go with us.

BORACHIO.

We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.

CONRADE.

A commodity in question, I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 4. A Room in LEONATO'S House.

[Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA.]

HERO.

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

URSULA.

I will, lady.

HERO.

And bid her come hither.

URSULA.

Well.

[Exit.]

MARGARET.

Troth, I think your other rabato were better.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

HERO.

No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

MARGARET.

By my troth's not so good; and I warrant your cousin will say so.

HERO.

My cousin 's a fool, and thou art another: I'll wear none but this.

MARGARET.

I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner; and your gown 's a most rare fashion, i' faith. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

HERO.

O! that exceeds, they say.

MARGARET.

By my troth 's but a night-gown in respect of yours: cloth o' gold, and cuts, and laced with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts round, underborne with a blush tinsel; but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

HERO.

God give me joy to wear it! for my heart is exceeding heavy.

MARGARET.

'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man.

HERO.

Fie upon thee! art not ashamed?

MARGARET.

Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, 'saving your reverence, a husband:' an bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody. Is there any harm in 'the heavier for a husband'? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: ask my Lady Beatrice else; here she comes.

[Enter BEATRICE.]

HERO.

Good morrow, coz.

BEATRICE.

Good morrow, sweet Hero.

HERO.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Why, how now? do you speak in the sick tune?

BEATRICE.

I am out of all other tune, methinks.

MARGARET.

Clap's into 'Light o' love'; that goes without a burden: do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

BEATRICE.

Ye, light o' love with your heels! then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barnes.

MARGARET.

O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

BEATRICE.

'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill. Heigh-ho!

MARGARET.

For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

BEATRICE.

For the letter that begins them all, H.

MARGARET.

Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no more sailing by the star.

BEATRICE.

What means the fool, trow?

MARGARET.

Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

HERO.

These gloves the Count sent me; they are an excellent perfume.

BEATRICE.

I am stuffed, cousin, I cannot smell.

MARGARET.

A maid, and stuffed! there's goodly catching of cold.

BEATRICE.

O, God help me! God help me! how long have you professed apprehension?

MARGARET.

Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely!

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BEATRICE.

It is not seen enough, you should wear it in your cap. By my troth, I am sick.

MARGARET.

Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it to your heart: it is the only thing for a qualm.

HERO.

There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

BEATRICE.

Benedictus! why benedictus? you have some moral in this Benedictus.

MARGARET.

Moral! no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy--thistle. You may think, perchance, that I think you are in love: nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted, I know not; but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

BEATRICE.

What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

MARGARET.

Not a false gallop.

[Re--enter URSULA.]

URSULA.

Madam, withdraw: the prince, the count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

HERO.

Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 5. Another Room in LEONATO'S House

[Enter LEONATO and DOGBERRY and VERGES.]

LEONATO.

What would you with me, honest neighbour?

DOGBERRY.

Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that decerns you nearly.

LEONATO.

Brief, I pray you; for you see it is a busy time with me.

DOGBERRY.

Marry, this it is, sir.

VERGES.

Yes, in truth it is, sir.

LEONATO.

What is it, my good friends?

DOGBERRY.

Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest as the skin between his brows.

VERGES.

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

DOGBERRY.

Comparisons are odorous: palabras, neighbour Verges.

LEONATO.

Neighbours, you are tedious.

DOGBERRY.

It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers; but truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

LEONATO.

All thy tediousness on me! ha?

DOGBERRY.

Yea, an 't were a thousand pound more than 'tis; for I hear as good exclamation on your worship, as of any man in the city, and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

VERGES.

And so am I.

LEONATO.

I would fain know what you have to say.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

VERGES.

Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

DOGBERRY.

A good old man, sir; he will be talking; as they say, 'when the age is in, the wit is out.' God help us! it is a world to see! Well said, i' faith, neighbour Verges: well, God's a good man; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul, i' faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread; but God is to be worshipped: all men are not alike; alas! good neighbour.

LEONATO.

Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

DOGBERRY.

Gifts that God gives.

LEONATO.

I must leave you.

DOGBERRY.

One word, sir: our watch, sir, hath indeed comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

LEONATO.

Take their examination yourself, and bring it me: I am now in great haste, as may appear unto you.

DOGBERRY.

It shall be suffigance.

LEONATO.

Drink some wine ere you go: fare you well.

[Enter a Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

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

LEONATO.

I'll wait upon them: I am ready.

[Exeunt LEONATO and Messenger.]

DOGBERRY.

Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal; bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol: we are now to examination these men.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

VERGES.

And we must do it wisely.

DOGBERRY.

We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that shall drive some of them to a non-come: only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the gaol.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 4.

Scene 1. The Inside of a Church.

[Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, LEONATO, FRIAR FRANCIS, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, BEATRICE,

LEONATO.

Come, Friar Francis, be brief: only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

FRIAR.

You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

CLAUDIO.

No.

LEONATO.

To be married to her, friar; you come to marry her.

FRIAR.

Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

HERO.

I do.

FRIAR.

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

CLAUDIO.

Know you any, Hero?

HERO.

None, my lord.

FRIAR.

Know you any, count?

LEONATO.

I dare make his answer; none.

CLAUDIO.

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

BENEDICK.

How now! Interjections? Why then, some be of laughing, as ah! ha! he!

CLAUDIO.

Stand thee by, friar. Father, by your leave: Will you with free and unconstrained soul Give me this maid, your daughter?

LEONATO.

As freely, son, as God did give her me.

CLAUDIO.

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

DON PEDRO.

Nothing, unless you render her again.

CLAUDIO.

Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.
There, Leonato, take her back again:
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold! how like a maid she blushes here.
O! what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal.
Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

LEONATO.

What do you mean, my lord?

CLAUDIO.

Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

LEONATO.

Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof,
Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity,--

CLAUDIO.

I know what you would say: if I have known her,
You'll say she did embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate theforehand sin: No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large;
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity and comely love.

HERO.

And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?

ACT 4.

CLAUDIO.

Out on thee! Seeming! I will write against it:
You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality.

HERO.

Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?

LEONATO.

Sweet prince, why speak not you?

DON PEDRO.

What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
To link my dear friend to a common stale.

LEONATO.

Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

DON JOHN.

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

BENEDICK.

This looks not like a nuptial.

HERO.

True! O God!

CLAUDIO.

Leonato, stand I here? Is this the prince?
Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?

LEONATO.

All this is so; but what of this, my lord?

CLAUDIO.

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

LEONATO.

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

HERO.

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

ACT 4.

CLAUDIO.

To make you answer truly to your name.

HERO.

Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?

CLAUDIO.

Marry, that can Hero:
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
That man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window, betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

HERO.

I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Why, then are you no maiden.
Leonato, I am sorry you must hear: upon my honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count,
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night,
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath indeed, most like a liberal villain,
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.

DON JOHN.

Fie, fie! they are not to be nam'd, my lord,
Not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language
Without offence to utter them. Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

CLAUDIO.

O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been plac'd
About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,
Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.

LEONATO.

Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?

[HERO swoons.]

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BEATRICE.

Why, how now, cousin! wherefore sink you down?

DON JOHN.

Come, let us go. These things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.

[Exeunt DON PEDRO, DON JOHN and CLAUDIO.]

BENEDICK.

How doth the lady?

BEATRICE.

Dead, I think! help, uncle! Hero! why, Hero! Uncle! Signior
Benedick! Friar!

LEONATO.

O Fate! take not away thy heavy hand:
Death is the fairest cover for her shame
That may be wish'd for.

BEATRICE.

How now, cousin Hero?

FRIAR.

Have comfort, lady.

LEONATO.

Dost thou look up?

FRIAR.

Yea; wherefore should she not?

LEONATO.

Wherefore! Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?
Do not live, Hero; do not open thine eyes;
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?
O! one too much by thee. Why had I one?
Why ever wast thou lovely in mine eyes?
Why had I not with charitable hand
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,
Who smirched thus, and mir'd with infamy,
I might have said, 'No part of it is mine;
This shame derives itself from unknown loins?'
But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And mine that I was proud on, mine so much
That I myself was to myself not mine,
Valuing of her; why, she--O! she is fallen
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again,
And salt too little which may season give
To her foul-tainted flesh.

BENEDICK.

Sir, sir, be patient.
For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder,
I know not what to say.

BEATRICE.

O! on my soul, my cousin is belied!

BENEDICK.

Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

BEATRICE.

No, truly, not; although, until last night I have this
twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

LEONATO.

Confirm'd, confirm'd! O! that is stronger made,
Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron.
Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie,
Who lov'd her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her! let her die.

FRIAR.

Hear me a little;
For I have only been silent so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions
To start into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness bear away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,
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 seal doth warrant
The tenure of my book; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some biting error.

LEONATO.

Friar, it cannot be.
Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Is that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury: she not denies it.
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?

FRIAR.

Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?

HERO.

They know that do accuse me, I know none;
If I know more of any man alive
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy! O, my father!
Prove you that any man with me convers'd
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

FRIAR.

There is some strange misprision in the princes.

BENEDICK.

Two of them have the very bent of honour;
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.

LEONATO.

I know not. If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havoc of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,
Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
Ability in means and choice of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.

FRIAR.

Pause awhile, And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead;
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it that she is dead indeed:
Maintain a mourning ostentation;
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.

LEONATO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

What shall become of this? What will this do?

FRIAR.

Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; that is some good.
But not for that dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pitied and excus'd
Of every hearer; for it so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth
Whiles we enjoy it, but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack the value, then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours. So will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall hear she died upon his words,
The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination,
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving-delicate, and full of life
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she liv'd indeed: then shall he mourn,--
If ever love had interest in his liver,--
And wish he had not so accused her,
No, though be thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy:
And if it sort not well, you may conceal her,--
As best befits her wounded reputation,--
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

BENEDICK.

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

LEONATO.

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

FRIAR.

'Tis well consented: presently away;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.
Come, lady, die to live: this wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd: have patience and endure.

[Exeunt FRIAR, HERO, and LEONATO.]

BENEDICK.

Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

BEATRICE.

Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

BENEDICK.

I will not desire that.

BEATRICE.

You have no reason; I do it freely.

BENEDICK.

Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

BEATRICE.

Ah! how much might the man deserve of me that would right her.

BENEDICK.

Is there any way to show such friendship?

BEATRICE.

A very even way, but no such friend.

BENEDICK.

May a man do it?

BEATRICE.

It is a man's office, but not yours.

BENEDICK.

I do love nothing in the world so well as you: is not that
strange?

BEATRICE.

As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say
I loved nothing so well as you; but believe me not, and yet I lie not;
I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

BENEDICK.

By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

BEATRICE.

Do not swear by it, and eat it.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BENEDICK.

I will swear by it that you love me; and I will make him eat it that says I love not you.

BEATRICE.

Will you not eat your word?

BENEDICK.

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

BEATRICE.

Why then, God forgive me!

BENEDICK.

What offence, sweet Beatrice?

BEATRICE.

You have stayed me in a happy hour: I was about to protest I loved you.

BENEDICK.

And do it with all thy heart.

BEATRICE.

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

BENEDICK.

Come, bid me do anything for thee.

BEATRICE.

Kill Claudio.

BENEDICK.

Ha! not for the wide world.

BEATRICE.

You kill me to deny it. Farewell.

BENEDICK.

Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

BEATRICE.

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

BENEDICK.

Beatrice,--

BEATRICE.

In faith, I will go.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BENEDICK.

We'll be friends first.

BEATRICE.

You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.

BENEDICK.

Is Claudio thine enemy?

BEATRICE.

Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O! that I were a man. What! bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour,—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

BENEDICK.

Hear me, Beatrice,—

BEATRICE.

Talk with a man out at a window! a proper saying!

BENEDICK.

Nay, but Beatrice,—

BEATRICE.

Sweet Hero! she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

BENEDICK.

Beat---

BEATRICE.

Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly Count Comfekt; a sweet 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 manhood is melted into cursies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

BENEDICK.

Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

BEATRICE.

Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

BENEDICK.

Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

BEATRICE.

Yea, as sure is I have a thought or a soul.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BENEDICK.

Enough! I am engaged, I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account. As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin: I must say she is dead; and so, farewell.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 2. A Prison.

[Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and SEXTON, in gowns; and the Watch, with CONRADE and BORACHIO.]

DOGBERRY.

Is our whole dissembly appeared?

VERGES.

O! a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

SEXTON.

Which be the malefactors?

DOGBERRY.

Marry, that am I and my partner.

VERGES.

Nay, that's certain: we have the exhibition to examine.

SEXTON.

But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before Master constable.

DOGBERRY.

Yea, marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend?

BORACHIO.

Borachio.

DOGBERRY.

Pray write down Borachio. Yours, sirrah?

CONRADE.

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

DOGBERRY.

Write down Master gentleman Conrade. Masters, do you serve God?

BOTH.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Yea, sir, we hope.

DOGBERRY.

Write down that they hope they serve God: and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

CONRADE.

Marry, sir, we say we are none.

DOGBERRY.

A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear: sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

BORACHIO.

Sir, I say to you we are none.

DOGBERRY.

Well, stand aside. Fore God, they are both in a tale. Have you writ down, that they are none?

SEXTON.

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

DOGBERRY.

Yea, marry, that's the eftest way. Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

FIRST WATCH.

This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

DOGBERRY.

Write down Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

BORACHIO.

Master Constable,---

DOGBERRY.

Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

SEXTON.

What heard you him say else?

SECOND WATCH.

Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

ACT 4.

DOGBERRY.

Flat burglary as ever was committed.

VERGES.

Yea, by the mass, that it is.

SEXTON.

What else, fellow?

FIRST WATCH.

And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

DOGBERRY.

O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

SEXTON.

What else?

SECOND WATCH.

This is all.

SEXTON.

And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away: Hero was in this manner accused, in this manner refused, and, upon the grief of this, suddenly died. Master Constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's: I will go before and show him their examination.

[Exit.]

DOGBERRY.

Come, let them be opinioned.

VERGES.

Let them be in the hands--

CONRADE.

Off, coxcomb!

DOGBERRY.

God's my life! where's the sexton? let him write down the prince's officer coxcomb. Come, bind them. Thou naughty varlet!

CONRADE.

Away! you are an ass; you are an ass.

DOGBERRY.

Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? O that

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

he were here to write me down an ass! but, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and everything handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had been writ down an ass!

[Exeunt.]

ACT 5.

Scene 1. Before LEONATO'S House.

[Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO.]

ANTONIO.

If you go on thus, you will kill yourself
And 'tis not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

LEONATO.

I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine:
Bring me a father that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak to me of patience;
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form:
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard;
Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem' when he should groan,
Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters; bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man; for, brother, men
Can counsel and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptual medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Charm ache with air and agony with words.
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow,
But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
To be so moral when he shall endure
The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement.

ANTONIO.

Therein do men from children nothing differ.

LEONATO.

I pray thee peace! I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently,
However they have writ the style of gods
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

ANTONIO.

Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those that do offend you suffer too.

LEONATO.

There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so.
My soul doth tell me Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know; so shall the prince,
And all of them that thus dishonour her.

ANTONIO.

Here comes the prince and Claudio hastily.

[Enter DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO.]

DON PEDRO.

Good den, good den.

CLAUDIO.

Good day to both of you.

LEONATO.

Hear you, my lords,--

DON PEDRO.

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.

DON PEDRO.

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

ACT 4.

ANTONIO.

If he could right himself with quarrelling,
Some of us would lie low.

CLAUDIO.

Who wrongs him?

LEONATO.

Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou.
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword; I fear thee not.

CLAUDIO.

Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear.
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

LEONATO.

Tush, tush, man! never fleer and jest at me:
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do,
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me
That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by,
And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child:
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lied buried with her ancestors;
O! in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villany!

CLAUDIO.

My villany?

LEONATO.

Thine, Claudio; thine, I say.

DON PEDRO.

You say not right, old man,

LEONATO.

My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
Despite his nice fence and his active practice,
His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.

CLAUDIO.

Away! I will not have to do with you.

LEONATO.

Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child;
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

ANTONIO.

He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:
But that's no matter; let him kill one first:
Win me and wear me; let him answer me.
Come, follow me, boy; come, sir boy, come, follow me.
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

LEONATO.

Brother,--

ANTONIO.

Content yourself. God knows I lov'd my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
That dare as well answer a man indeed
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue.
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!

LEONATO.

Brother Antony,--

ANTONIO.

Hold your content. What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,
Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boys,
That lie and cog and flout, deprave and slander,
Go antickly, show outward hideousness,
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst;
And this is all!

LEONATO.

But, brother Antony,--

ANTONIO.

Come, 'tis no matter:
Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

DON PEDRO.

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

LEONATO.

My lord, my lord--

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

DON PEDRO.

I will not hear you.

LEONATO.

No? Come, brother, away. I will be heard.--

ANTONIO.

And shall, or some of us will smart for it.

[Exeunt LEONATO and ANTONIO.]

[Enter BENEDICK.]

DON PEDRO.

See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

CLAUDIO.

Now, signior, what news?

BENEDICK.

Good day, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Welcome, signior: you are almost come to part almost a fray.

CLAUDIO.

We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

DON PEDRO.

Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

BENEDICK.

In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

CLAUDIO.

We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

BENEDICK.

It is in my scabbard; shall I draw it?

DON PEDRO.

Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

CLAUDIO.

Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels; draw, to pleasure us.

ACT 4.

DON PEDRO.

As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry?

CLAUDIO.

What, courage, man! What though care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

BENEDICK.

Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, and you charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject.

CLAUDIO.

Nay then, give him another staff: this last was broke cross.

DON PEDRO.

By this light, he changes more and more: I think he be angry indeed.

CLAUDIO.

If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle.

BENEDICK.

Shall I speak a word in your ear?

CLAUDIO.

God bless me from a challenge!

BENEDICK.

[Aside to CLAUDIO.]

You are a villain, I jest not: I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

CLAUDIO.

Well I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

DON PEDRO.

What, a feast, a feast?

CLAUDIO.

I' faith, I thank him; he hath bid me to a calf's-head and a capon, the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught. Shall I not find a woodcock too?

BENEDICK.

Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

DON PEDRO.

I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day. I said,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

thou hadst a fine wit. 'True,' says she, 'a fine little one.'
'No,' said I, 'a great wit.'
'Right,' said she, 'a great gross one.'
'Nay,' said I, 'a good wit.'
'Just,' said she, 'it hurts nobody.'
'Nay,' said I, 'the gentleman is wise.'
'Certain,' said she, 'a wise gentleman.'
'Nay,' said I, 'he hath the tongues.'
'That I believe' said she, 'for he swore a thing to me on Monday
night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning: there's a double tongue;
there's two tongues.'
Thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues;
yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in
Italy.

CLAUDIO.

For the which she wept heartily and said she cared not.

DON PEDRO.

Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him
deadly, she would love him dearly. The old man's daughter told us all.

CLAUDIO.

All, all; and moreover, God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

DON PEDRO.

But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible
Benedick's head?

CLAUDIO.

Yea, and text underneath, 'Here dwells Benedick the married man!'

BENEDICK.

Fare you well, boy: you know my mind. I will leave you now to your
gossip-like humour; you break jests as braggarts do their blades,
which, God be thanked, hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies
I thank you: I must discontinue your company. Your brother the bastard
is fled from Messina: you have, among you, killed a sweet and innocent
lady. For my Lord Lack-beard there, he and I shall meet; and till
then, peace be with him.

[Exit.]

DON PEDRO.

He is in earnest.

CLAUDIO.

In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of
Beatrice.

DON PEDRO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And hath challenged thee?

CLAUDIO.

Most sincerely.

DON PEDRO.

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

CLAUDIO.

He is then a giant to an ape; but then is an ape a doctor to such
a man.

DON PEDRO.

But, soft you; let me be: pluck up, my heart, and be sad! Did he
not say my brother was fled?

[Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and the Watch, with CONRADE and
BORACHIO.]

DOGBERRY.

Come you, sir: if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more
reasons in her balance. Nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you
must be looked to.

DON PEDRO.

How now! two of my brother's men bound! Borachio, one!

CLAUDIO.

Hearken after their offence, my lord.

DON PEDRO.

Officers, what offence have these men done?

DOGBERRY.

Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have
spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly,
they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things;
and to conclude, they are lying knaves.

DON PEDRO.

First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's
their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to
conclude, what you lay to their charge?

CLAUDIO.

Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's
one meaning well suited.

DON PEDRO.

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

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood.
What's your offence?

BORACHIO.

Sweet prince, let me go no further to mine answer: do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have 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; how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments; how you disgraced her, when you should marry her. My villany they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

DON PEDRO.

Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

CLAUDIO.

I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

DON PEDRO.

But did my brother set thee on to this?

BORACHIO.

Yea; and paid me richly for the practice of it.

DON PEDRO.

He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery:
And fled he is upon this villany.

CLAUDIO.

Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that
I lov'd it first.

DOGBERRY.

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 ass.

VERGES.

Here, here comes Master Signior Leonato, and the sexton too.

[Re-enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, and the Sexton.]

LEONATO.

Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes,
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him. Which of these is he?

BORACHIO.

If you would know your wronger, look on me.

LEONATO.

Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

BORACHIO.

Yea, even I alone.

LEONATO.

No, not so, villain; thou beliest thyself:
Here stand a pair of honourable men;
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death:
Record it with your high and worthy deeds.
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

CLAUDIO.

I know not how to pray your patience;
Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself;
Impose me to what penance your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not
But in mistaking.

DON PEDRO.

By my soul, nor I:
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.

LEONATO.

I cannot bid you bid my daughter live;
That were impossible; but, I pray you both,
Possess the people in Messina here
How innocent she died; and if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,
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 copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us:
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

CLAUDIO.

O noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer; and dispose

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

For henceforth of poor Claudio.

LEONATO.

To-morrow then I will expect your coming;
To-night I take my leave. This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who, I believe, was pack'd in all this wrong,
Hir'd to it by your brother.

BORACHIO.

No, by my soul she was not;
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me;
But always hath been just and virtuous
In anything that I do know by her.

DOGBERRY.

Moreover, sir,—which, indeed, is not under white and black,—
this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I beseech you,
let it be remembered in his punishment. And also, the watch heard
them talk of one Deformed: they say he wears a key in his ear and
a lock hanging by it, and borrows money in God's name, the which
he hath used so long and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted,
and will lend nothing for God's sake. Pray you, examine him upon
that point.

LEONATO.

I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

DOGBERRY.

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

LEONATO.

There's for thy pains.

DOGBERRY.

God save the foundation!

LEONATO.

Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

DOGBERRY.

I leave an arrant knave with your worship; which I beseech your
worship to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep
your worship! I wish your worship well; God restore you to health!
I humbly give you leave to depart, and if a merry meeting may be
wished, God prohibit it! Come, neighbour.

[Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES.]

LEONATO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

ANTONIO.

Farewell, my lords: we look for you to-morrow.

DON PEDRO.

We will not fail.

CLAUDIO.

To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

[Exeunt DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO.]

LEONATO.

[To the Watch.] Bring you these fellows on. We'll talk with Margaret, How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 2. LEONATO'S Garden.

[Enter BENEDICK and MARGARET, meeting.]

BENEDICK.

Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

MARGARET.

Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

BENEDICK.

In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

MARGARET.

To have no man come over me! why, shall I always keep below stairs?

BENEDICK.

Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches.

MARGARET.

And yours as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

BENEDICK.

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

MARGARET.

Give us the swords, we have bucklers of our own.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BENEDICK.

If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice;
and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

MARGARET.

Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs.

BENEDICK.

And therefore will come.

[Exit MARGARET.]

The god of love,
That sits above,
And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve,—

I mean, in singing: but in loving, Leander the good swimmer,
Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole book full of
these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the
even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned
over and over as my poor self in love. Marry, I cannot show it in
rime; I have tried: I can find out no rime to 'lady' but 'baby',
an innocent rhyme; for 'scorn,' 'horn', a hard rime; for 'school',
'fool', a babbling rhyme; very ominous endings: no, I was not born
under a riming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms.

[Enter BEATRICE.]

Sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I called thee?

BEATRICE.

Yea, signior; and depart when you bid me.

BENEDICK.

O, stay but till then!

BEATRICE.

'Then' is spoken; fare you well now: and yet, ere I go, let me go with
that I came for; which is, with knowing what hath passed between you
and Claudio.

BENEDICK.

Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

BEATRICE.

Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and
foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkissed.

BENEDICK.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit. But I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge, and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

BEATRICE.

For them all together; which maintained so politic a state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

BENEDICK.

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

BEATRICE.

In spite of your heart, I think. Alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

BENEDICK.

Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

BEATRICE.

It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself.

BENEDICK.

An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

BEATRICE.

And how long is that think you?

BENEDICK.

Question: why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum: therefore is it most expedient for the wise,—if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary,—to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself. So much for praising myself, who, I myself will bear witness, is praiseworthy. And now tell me, how doth your cousin?

BEATRICE.

Very ill.

BENEDICK.

And how do you?

BEATRICE.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Very ill too.

BENEDICK.

Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

[Enter URSULA.]

URSULA.

Madam, you must come to your uncle. Yonder's old coil at home: it is proved, my Lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone. Will you come presently?

BEATRICE.

Will you go hear this news, signior?

BENEDICK.

I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle's.

[Exeunt.]

Scene 3. The Inside of a Church.

[Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and Attendants, with music and tapers,]

CLAUDIO.

Is this the monument of Leonato?

A LORD.

It is, my lord.

CLAUDIO.

[Reads from a scroll.]

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

Hang thou there upon the tomb,
Praising her when I am dumb.

Now, music, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

SONG.

Pardon, goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered,
Heavily, heavily.

CLAUDIO.

Now, unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

DON PEDRO.

Good morrow, masters: put your torches out.
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phoebus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

CLAUDIO.

Good morrow, masters: each his several way.

DON PEDRO.

Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds; And then to Leonato's
we will go.

CLAUDIO.

And Hymen now with luckier issue speed's,
Than this for whom we rend'ed up this woe!

[Exeunt.]

Scene 4. A Room in LEONATO'S House.

[Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, MARGARET, URSULA,
FRIAR FRANCIS, and HERO.]

FRIAR.

Did I not tell you she was innocent?

LEONATO.

So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her
Upon the error that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will, as it appears

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

In the true course of all the question.

ANTONIO.

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

BENEDICK.

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

LEONATO.

Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd:
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me.

[Exeunt Ladies.]

You know your office, brother;
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio.

ANTONIO.

Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

BENEDICK.

Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

FRIAR.

To do what, signior?

BENEDICK.

To bind me, or undo me; one of them.
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

LEONATO.

That eye my daughter lent her: 'tis most true.

BENEDICK.

And I do with an eye of love requite her.

LEONATO.

The sight whereof I think, you had from me,
From Claudio, and the prince. But what's your will?

BENEDICK.

Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:
But, for my will, my will is your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the state of honourable marriage:

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

LEONATO.

My heart is with your liking.

FRIAR.

And my help. Here comes the prince and Claudio.

[Enter DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO, with Attendants.]

DON PEDRO.

Good morrow to this fair assembly.

LEONATO.

Good morrow, prince; good morrow, Claudio:
We here attend you. Are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

CLAUDIO.

I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiop.

LEONATO.

Call her forth, brother: here's the friar ready.

[Exit ANTONIO.]

DON PEDRO.

Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness?

CLAUDIO.

I think he thinks upon the savage bull.
Tush! fear not, man, we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee,
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

BENEDICK.

Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low:
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,
And got a calf in that same noble feat,
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

CLAUDIO.

For this I owe you: here comes other reckonings.

[Re-enter ANTONIO, with the ladies masked.]

Which is the lady I must seize upon?

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

ANTONIO.

This same is she, and I do give you her.

CLAUDIO.

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

LEONATO.

No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

CLAUDIO.

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

HERO.

And when I liv'd, I was your other wife:
[Unmasking.] And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.

CLAUDIO.

Another Hero!

HERO.

Nothing certainer:
One Hero died defil'd, but I do live,
And surely as I live, I am a maid.

DON PEDRO.

The former Hero! Hero that is dead!

LEONATO.

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

FRIAR.

All this amazement can I qualify:
When after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:
Meantime, let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

BENEDICK.

Soft and fair, friar. Which is Beatrice?

BEATRICE.

[Unmasking.] I answer to that name. What is your will?

BENEDICK.

Do not you love me?

BEATRICE.

Why, no; no more than reason.

ACT 4.

BENEDICK.

Why, then, your uncle and the prince and Claudio
Have been deceived; for they swore you did.

BEATRICE.

Do not you love me?

BENEDICK.

Troth, no; no more than reason.

BEATRICE.

Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula,
Are much deceiv'd; for they did swear you did.

BENEDICK.

They swore that you were almost sick for me.

BEATRICE.

They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

BENEDICK.

Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?

BEATRICE.

No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

LEONATO.

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

CLAUDIO.

And I'll be sworn upon 't that he loves her;
For here's a paper written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

HERO.

And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

BENEDICK.

A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts. Come, I will
have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

BEATRICE.

I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great
persuasion, and partly to save your life, for I was told you were
in a consumption.

BENEDICK.

Peace! I will stop your mouth. [Kisses her.]

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BENEDICK.

I'll tell thee what, prince; a college of witcrackers cannot flout me out of my humour. Dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? No; if man will be beaten with brains, a' shall wear nothing handsome about him. In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it, for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but, in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

CLAUDIO.

I had well hoped thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer; which, out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

BENEDICK.

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

LEONATO.

We'll have dancing afterward.

BENEDICK.

First, of my word; therefore play, music! Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverent than one tipped with horn.

[Enter Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

BENEDICK.

Think not on him till to-morrow: I'll devise thee brave
punishments for him.
Strike up, pipers!

[Dance. Exeunt.]

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

by William Shakespeare

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE DUKE OF VENICE

THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, suitor to Portia

THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, suitor to Portia

ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice

BASSANIO, his friend

SALANIO, friend to Antonio and Bassanio

SALARINO, friend to Antonio and Bassanio

GRATIANO, friend to Antonio and Bassanio

LORENZO, in love with Jessica

SHYLOCK, a rich Jew

TUBAL, a Jew, his friend

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, a clown, servant to Shylock

OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot

LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio

BALTHASAR, servant to Portia

STEPHANO, servant to Portia

PORTIA, a rich heiress

NERISSA, her waiting-maid

JESSICA, daughter to Shylock

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice,
Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other Attendants

SCENE: Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of
Portia, on the
Continent

ACT I.

SCENE I. Venice. A street

[Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SALANIO]

ANTONIO.

In sooth, I know not why I am so sad;
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me
That I have much ado to know myself.

ACT 4.

SALARINO.

Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There where your argosies, with portly sail--
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or as it were the pageants of the sea--
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

SALANIO.

Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind,
Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
Would make me sad.

SALARINO.

My wind, cooling my broth
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,
Vailing her high top lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which, touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
And, in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
That such a thing bechanc'd would make me sad?
But tell not me; I know Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

ANTONIO.

Believe me, no; I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year;
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

SALARINO.

Why, then you are in love.

ANTONIO.

Fie, fie!

SALARINO.

Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad
Because you are not merry; and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper;
And other of such vinegar aspect
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

[Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO.]

SALANIO.

Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well;
We leave you now with better company.

SALARINO.

I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

ANTONIO.

Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it your own business calls on you,
And you embrace th' occasion to depart.

SALARINO.

Good morrow, my good lords.

BASSANIO.

Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? Say when.
You grow exceeding strange; must it be so?

SALARINO.

We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO.]

LORENZO.

My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you; but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

BASSANIO.

I will not fail you.

GRATIANO.

You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world;
They lose it that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously chang'd.

ANTONIO.

I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

GRATIANO.

Let me play the fool;
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man whose blood is warm within
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster,
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and 'tis my love that speaks—
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who should say 'I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark.'
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing; when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time.
But fish not with this melancholy bait,
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile;
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

LORENZO.

Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time.
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

GRATIANO.

Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

ANTONIO.

Fare you well; I'll grow a talker for this gear.

GRATIANO.

Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

[Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO.]

ANTONIO.

Is that anything now?

BASSANIO.

Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than
any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid
in, two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find
them, and when you have them they are not worth the search.

ANTONIO.

Well; tell me now what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promis'd to tell me of?

BASSANIO.

'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance;
Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gag'd. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

ANTONIO.

I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assur'd
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

BASSANIO.

In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised watch,
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

ANTONIO.

You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost
Than if you had made waste of all I have.
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it; therefore, speak.

BASSANIO.

In Belmont is a lady richly left,
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia--nothing undervalu'd
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strond,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio! had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift
That I should questionless be fortunate.

ANTONIO.

Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money nor commodity
To raise a present sum; therefore go forth,
Try what my credit can in Venice do;
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont to fair Portia.
Go presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make
To have it of my trust or for my sake.

[Exeunt]

SCENE 2. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.]

PORTIA.

By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

NERISSA.

You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are; and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity come sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

PORTIA.

Good sentences, and well pronounced.

NERISSA.

They would be better, if well followed.

PORTIA.

If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions; I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than to be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree; such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose who I would nor refuse who I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

NERISSA.

Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore the lott'ry that he hath devised in these three chests, of gold, silver, and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

PORTIA.

I pray thee over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and according to my description, level at my affection.

NERISSA.

First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

PORTIA.

Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself; I am much afeard my lady his mother play'd false with a smith.

NERISSA.

Then is there the County Palatine.

PORTIA.

He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'An you will not have me, choose.' He hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

NERISSA.

How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

PORTIA.

God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker, but he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man. If a throstle sing he falls straight a-capering; he will fence with his own shadow; if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him; for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

NERISSA.

What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

PORTIA.

You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture; but alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere.

NERISSA.

What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

PORTIA.

That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able; I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

NERISSA.

How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

PORTIA.

Very vilely in the morning when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast. An the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

NERISSA.

If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

PORTIA.

Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.

NERISSA.

You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords; they have acquainted me with their determinations, which is indeed to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

PORTIA.

If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

NERISSA.

Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

PORTIA.

Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

NERISSA.

True, madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

PORTIA.

I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Enter a SERVANT.]

How now! what news?

SERVANT.

The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the Prince his master will be here to-night.

PORTIA.

If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach; if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me. Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

[Exeunt]

SCENE 3. Venice. A public place

[Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK.]

SHYLOCK.

Three thousand ducats; well?

BASSANIO.

Ay, sir, for three months.

SHYLOCK.

For three months; well?

BASSANIO.

For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

SHYLOCK.

Antonio shall become bound; well?

BASSANIO.

May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

SHYLOCK.

Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

BASSANIO.

Your answer to that.

ACT 4.

SHYLOCK.

Antonio is a good man.

BASSANIO.

Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

SHYLOCK.

Ho, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient; yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves,—I mean pirates,—and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats— I think I may take his bond.

BASSANIO.

Be assured you may.

SHYLOCK.

I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

BASSANIO.

If it please you to dine with us.

SHYLOCK.

Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

[Enter ANTONIO]

BASSANIO.

This is Signior ANTONIO.

SHYLOCK.

[Aside] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian;
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe
If I forgive him!

BASSANIO.

Shylock, do you hear?

SHYLOCK.

I am debating of my present store,
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire? [To ANTONIO] Rest you fair, good signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

ANTONIO.

Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. [To BASSANIO] Is he yet possess'd
How much ye would?

SHYLOCK.

Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

ANTONIO.

And for three months.

SHYLOCK.

I had forgot; three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and, let me see. But hear you,
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

ANTONIO.

I do never use it.

SHYLOCK.

When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep,—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third,—

ANTONIO.

And what of him? Did he take interest?

SHYLOCK.

No, not take interest; not, as you would say,
Directly interest; mark what Jacob did.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

When Laban and himself were compromis'd
That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes, being rank,
In end of autumn turned to the rams;
And when the work of generation was
Between these woolly breeders in the act,
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands,
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

ANTONIO.

This was a venture, sir, that Jacob serv'd for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

SHYLOCK.

I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.
But note me, signior.

ANTONIO.

Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart.
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

SHYLOCK.

Three thousand ducats; 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve; then let me see the rate.

ANTONIO.

Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

SHYLOCK.

Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances;
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe;
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spet upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help;
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say

'Shylock, we would have moneys.' You say so:
You that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and, in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whisp'ring humbleness,
Say this:--
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys?'

ANTONIO.

I am as like to call thee so again,
To spet on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends,--for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?--
But lend it rather to thine enemy;
Who if he break thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.

SHYLOCK.

Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

BASSANIO.

This were kindness.

SHYLOCK.

This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

ANTONIO.

Content, in faith; I'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

BASSANIO.

You shall not seal to such a bond for me;
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

ANTONIO.

Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it;
Within these two months, that's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

SHYLOCK.

O father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others. Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man,
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttens, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship;
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

ANTONIO.

Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

SHYLOCK.

Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight,
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently
I'll be with you.

ANTONIO.

Hie thee, gentle Jew.

[Exit SHYLOCK]

This Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

BASSANIO.

I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

ANTONIO.

Come on; in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day.

[Exeunt]

ACT 2.

SCENE I. Belmont. A room in PORTIA's house.

[Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE of MOROCCO, and his Followers;
PORTIA, NERISSA, and Others of her train.]

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
To whom I am a neighbour, and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath fear'd the valiant; by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have lov'd it too. I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

PORTIA.

In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing;
But, if my father had not scanted me
And hedg'd me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renowned Prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection.

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

Even for that I thank you:
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets
To try my fortune. By this scimitar,—
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince,
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,—
I would o'erstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

So is Alcides beaten by his page;
And so may I, blind Fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

PORTIA.

You must take your chance,
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong,
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage; therefore be advis'd.

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

Nor will not; come, bring me unto my chance.

PORTIA.

First, forward to the temple: after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

Good fortune then!
To make me blest or curs'd'st among men!

[Cornets, and exeunt.]

SCENE 2. Venice. A street

[Enter LAUNCELOT GOBBO.]

LAUNCELOT.

Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this
Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me, saying
to me 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot' or 'good Gobbo' or
'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.'
My conscience says 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot, take heed,
honest Gobbo' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo, do not
run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous
fiend bids me pack. 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the
fiend. 'For the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend
'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my
heart, says very wisely to me 'My honest friend Launcelot, being
an honest man's son'—or rather 'an honest woman's son';—for
indeed my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a
kind of taste;—well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.'
'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience.
'Conscience,' say I, (you counsel well.' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you
counsel well.' To be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with
the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark! is a kind of devil;
and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

who, saving your reverence! is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

[Enter OLD GOBBO, with a basket]

GOBBO.

Master young man, you, I pray you; which is the way to Master Jew's?

LAUNCELOT.

[Aside] O heavens! This is my true-begotten father, who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

GOBBO.

Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

LAUNCELOT.

Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

GOBBO.

Be God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

LAUNCELOT.

Talk you of young Master Launcelot? [Aside] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

GOBBO.

No master, sir, but a poor man's son; his father, though I say't, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

LAUNCELOT.

Well, let his father be what 'a will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

GOBBO.

Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

LAUNCELOT.

But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk
you of young Master Launcelot?

GOBBO.

Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

LAUNCELOT.

Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot,
father; for the young gentleman,--according to Fates and
Destinies
and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of
learning,--is indeed deceased; or, as you would say in plain
terms, gone to heaven.

GOBBO.

Marry, God forbid! The boy was the very staff of my age, my
very prop.

LAUNCELOT.

Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do
you know me, father?

GOBBO.

Alack the day! I know you not, young gentleman; but I pray
you tell me, is my boy--God rest his soul!--alive or dead?

LAUNCELOT.

Do you not know me, father?

GOBBO.

Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

LAUNCELOT.

Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the
knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well,
old man, I will tell you news of your son. Give me your blessing;
truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son
may, but in the end truth will out.

GOBBO.

Pray you, sir, stand up; I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

LAUNCELOT.

Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give
me your blessing; I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son
that is, your child that shall be.

GOBBO.

I cannot think you are my son.

LAUNCELOT.

I know not what I shall think of that; but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

GOBBO.

Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be, what a beard hast thou got! Thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my thill-horse has on his tail.

LAUNCELOT.

It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward; I am sure he had more hair on his tail than I have on my face when I last saw him.

GOBBO.

Lord! how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

LAUNCELOT.

Well, well; but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew. Give him a present! Give him a halter. I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come; give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who indeed gives rare new liveries. If I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune! Here comes the man: to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

[Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO, with and other Followers.]

BASSANIO.

You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered, put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging.

[Exit a SERVANT]

LAUNCELOT.

To him, father.

GOBBO.

God bless your worship!

BASSANIO.

Gramercy; wouldst thou aught with me?

GOBBO.

Here's my son, sir, a poor boy---

LAUNCELOT.

Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man, that would,
sir,--as my father shall specify--

GOBBO.

He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve--

LAUNCELOT.

Indeed the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and
have a desire, as my father shall specify--

GOBBO.

His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are
scarce cater-cousins--

LAUNCELOT.

To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done
me wrong, doth cause me,--as my father, being I hope an old man,
shall frutify unto you--

GOBBO.

I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your
worship; and my suit is--

LAUNCELOT.

In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as
your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say
it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

BASSANIO.

One speak for both. What would you?

LAUNCELOT.

Serve you, sir.

GOBBO.

That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

BASSANIO.

I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit.
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

LAUNCELOT.

The old proverb is very well parted between my master
Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath
enough.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BASSANIO.

Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son.
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire
My lodging out. [To a SERVANT] Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows'; see it done.

LAUNCELOT.

Father, in. I cannot get a service, no! I have ne'er a
tongue in my head! [Looking on his palm] Well; if any man in
Italy have a fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a book,
I
shall have good fortune. Go to; here's a simple line of life:
here's a small trifle of wives; alas, fifteen wives is nothing;
a'leven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man.
And then to scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life
with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple 'scapes. Well, if
Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear. Father,
come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[Exeunt LAUNCELOT and OLD GOBBO.]

BASSANIO.

I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best esteem'd acquaintance; hie thee, go.

LEONARDO.

My best endeavours shall be done herein.

[Enter GRATIANO.]

GRATIANO.

Where's your master?

LEONARDO.

Yonder, sir, he walks.

[Exit.]

GRATIANO.

Signior Bassanio!—

BASSANIO.

Gratiano!

GRATIANO.

I have suit to you.

BASSANIO.

You have obtain'd it.

ACT 4.

GRATIANO.

You must not deny me: I must go with you to Belmont.

BASSANIO.

Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

GRATIANO.

Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say 'amen';
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

BASSANIO.

Well, we shall see your bearing.

GRATIANO.

Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.

BASSANIO.

No, that were pity;
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well;
I have some business.

GRATIANO.

And I must to Lorenzo and the rest;
But we will visit you at supper-time.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 3. The same. A room in SHYLOCK's house.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT.]

JESSICA.

I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee;
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly.
And so farewell. I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.

LAUNCELOT.

Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan,
most sweet Jew! If a Christian do not play the knave and get
thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu! these foolish drops do
something drown my manly spirit; adieu!

JESSICA.

Farewell, good Launcelot.

[Exit LAUNCELOT]

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be asham'd to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo!
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian and thy loving wife.

[Exit]

SCENE 4. The same. A street

[Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.]

LORENZO.

Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,
Disguise us at my lodging, and return
All in an hour.

GRATIANO.

We have not made good preparation.

SALARINO.

We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

SALANIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,
And better in my mind not undertook.

LORENZO.

'Tis now but four o'clock; we have two hours
To furnish us.

[Enter LAUNCELOT, With a letter.]

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

LAUNCELOT.

An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem
to signify.

LORENZO.

I know the hand; in faith, 'tis a fair hand,
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.

GRATIANO.

Love news, in faith.

LAUNCELOT.

By your leave, sir.

LORENZO.

Whither goest thou?

LAUNCELOT.

Marry, sir, to bid my old master, the Jew, to sup
to-night with my new master, the Christian.

LORENZO.

Hold, here, take this. Tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately.
Go, gentlemen,

[Exit LAUNCELOT]

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

SALARINO.

Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

SALANIO.

And so will I.

LORENZO.

Meet me and Gratiano

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

SALARINO.

'Tis good we do so.

[Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO.]

GRATIANO.

Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

LORENZO.

I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house;
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with;
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me, peruse this as thou goest;
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

[Exeunt]

SCENE 5. The same. Before SHYLOCK'S house

[Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT.]

SHYLOCK.

Well, thou shalt see; thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:--
What, Jessica!--Thou shalt not gormandize,
As thou hast done with me;--What, Jessica!--
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out--
Why, Jessica, I say!

LAUNCELOT.

Why, Jessica!

SHYLOCK.

Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

LAUNCELOT.

Your worship was wont to tell me I could do nothing
without bidding.

[Enter JESSICA.]

ACT 4.

JESSICA.

Call you? What is your will?

SHYLOCK.

I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me;
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house. I am right loath to go;
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

LAUNCELOT.

I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth expect your
reproach.

SHYLOCK.

So do I his.

LAUNCELOT.

And they have conspired together; I will not say you
shall see a masque, but if you do, then it was not for nothing
that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black Monday last at six o'clock
i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four
year in the afternoon.

SHYLOCK.

What! are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors, and when you hear the drum,
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces;
But stop my house's ears-- I mean my casements;
Let not the sound of shallow fopp'ry enter
My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night;
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;
Say I will come.

LAUNCELOT.

I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window for all this;
There will come a Christian by
Will be worth a Jewess' eye.

[Exit LAUNCELOT.]

SHYLOCK.

What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

JESSICA.

His words were 'Farewell, mistress'; nothing else.

SHYLOCK.

The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder;
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat; drones hive not with me,
Therefore I part with him; and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse. Well, Jessica, go in;
Perhaps I will return immediately:
Do as I bid you, shut doors after you:
'Fast bind, fast find,'
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.

[Exit.]

JESSICA.

Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost.

[Exit.]

SCENE 6. The same.

[Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, masqued.]

GRATIANO.

This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desir'd us to make stand.

SALARINO.

His hour is almost past.

GRATIANO.

And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

SALARINO.

O! ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new made than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

GRATIANO.

That ever holds: who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!

SALARINO.

Here comes Lorenzo; more of this hereafter.

[Enter LORENZO.]

LORENZO.

Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who's within?

[Enter JESSICA, above, in boy's clothes.]

JESSICA.

Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

LORENZO.

Lorenzo, and thy love.

JESSICA.

Lorenzo, certain; and my love indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

LORENZO.

Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

JESSICA.

Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much asham'd of my exchange;
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit,
For, if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

LORENZO.

Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

JESSICA.

What! must I hold a candle to my shames?

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

They in themselves, good sooth, are too-too light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love,
And I should be obscur'd.

LORENZO.

So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

JESSICA.

I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some moe ducats, and be with you straight.

[Exit above.]

GRATIANO.

Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.

LORENZO.

Beshrew me, but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
And true she is, as she hath prov'd herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

[Enter JESSICA.]

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen, away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

[Exit with JESSICA and SALARINO.]

[Enter ANTONIO]

ANTONIO.

Who's there?

GRATIANO.

Signior Antonio!

ANTONIO.

Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?
'Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night: the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard:
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

GRATIANO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I am glad on't: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 7. Belmont. A room in PORTIA's house.

[Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA, with the PRINCE OF MOROCCO,
and their trains.]

PORTIA.

Go draw aside the curtains and discover
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

The first, of gold, who this inscription bears:
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
The second, silver, which this promise carries:
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt:
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
How shall I know if I do choose the right?

PORTIA.

The one of them contains my picture, prince;
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
Must give: for what? For lead? Hazard for lead!
This casket threatens; men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross;
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand.
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough, and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady;
And yet to be afraid of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

In graces, and in qualities of breeding;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I stray'd no farther, but chose here?
Let's see once more this saying grav'd in gold:
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
Why, that's the lady: all the world desires her;
From the four corners of the earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint:
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia:
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits, but they come
As o'er a brook to see fair Portia.
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation
To think so base a thought; it were too gross
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
Or shall I think in silver she's immur'd,
Being ten times undervalu'd to tried gold?
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamped in gold; but that's insculp'd upon;
But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. Deliver me the key;
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

PORTIA.

There, take it, prince, and if my form lie there,
Then I am yours.

[He unlocks the golden casket.]

PRINCE OF MOROCCO.

O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.

'All that glisters is not gold,
Often have you heard that told;
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd:
Fare you well, your suit is cold.'

Cold indeed; and labour lost:

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu! I have too griev'd a heart
To take a tedious leave; thus losers part.

[Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.]

PORTIA.

A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains: go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 8. Venice. A street

[Enter SALARINO and SALANIO.]

SALARINO.

Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail;
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

SALANIO.

The villain Jew with outcries rais'd the Duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

SALARINO.

He came too late, the ship was under sail;
But there the duke was given to understand
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica.
Besides, Antonio certified the duke
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

SALANIO.

I never heard a passion so confus'd,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets.
'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter!
And jewels! two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stol'n by my daughter! Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her and the ducats.'

SALARINO.

Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

ACT 4.

SALANIO.

Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

SALARINO.

Marry, well remember'd.
I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me,—in the narrow seas that part
The French and English,—there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught.
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

SALANIO.

You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

SALARINO.

A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return. He answer'd 'Do not so;
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love:
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there.'
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

SALANIO.

I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,
And quicken his embraced heaviness
With some delight or other.

SALARINO.

Do we so.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 9. Belmont. A room in PORTIA's house.

[Enter NERISSA, with a SERVITOR.]

ACT 4.

NERISSA.

Quick, quick, I pray thee, draw the curtain straight;
The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently.

[Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON, PORTIA, and their Trains.]

PORTIA.

Behold, there stand the caskets, noble Prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemniz'd;
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

ARRAGON.

I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage;
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

PORTIA.

To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

ARRAGON.

And so have I address'd me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope! Gold, silver, and base lead.
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'
You shall look fairer ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? Ha! let me see:
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.'
What many men desire! that 'many' may be meant
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
Which pries not to th' interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune, and be honourable

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O! that estates, degrees, and offices
Were not deriv'd corruptly, and that clear honour
Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare;
How many be commanded that command;
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd
From the true seed of honour; and how much honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times
To be new varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[He opens the silver casket.]

PORTIA.

Too long a pause for that which you find there.

ARRAGON.

What's here? The portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
'Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves.'
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? Are my deserts no better?

PORTIA.

To offend, and judge, are distinct offices,
And of opposed natures.

ARRAGON.

What is here?

'The fire seven times tried this;
Seven times tried that judgment is
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss;
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver'd o'er, and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head:
So be gone; you are sped.'

Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here;
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Sweet, adieu! I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.

[Exit ARAGON with his train.]

PORTIA.

Thus hath the candle sing'd the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! When they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

NERISSA.

The ancient saying is no heresy:
'Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.'

PORTIA.

Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

[Enter a SERVANT.]

SERVANT.

Where is my lady?

PORTIA.

Here; what would my lord?

SERVANT.

Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify th' approaching of his lord;
From whom he bringeth sensible regrets;
To wit,--besides commends and courteous breath,--
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love.
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

PORTIA.

No more, I pray thee; I am half afeard
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa, for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

NERISSA.

Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!

[Exeunt.]

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

ACT 3.

SCENE I. Venice. A street

[Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.]

SALANIO.

Now, what news on the Rialto?

SALARINO.

Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship
of rich lading wrack'd on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think
they call the place, a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the
carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my
gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

SALANIO.

I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped
ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a
third husband. But it is true,--without any slips of prolixity or
crossing the plain highway of talk,--that the good Antonio, the
honest Antonio,--O that I had a title good enough to keep his
name
company!--

SALARINO.

Come, the full stop.

SALANIO.

Ha! What sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a
ship.

SALARINO.

I would it might prove the end of his losses.

SALANIO.

Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer,
for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

[Enter SHYLOCK.]

How now, Shylock! What news among the merchants?

SHYLOCK.

You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my
daughter's flight.

SALARINO.

That's certain; I, for my part, knew the tailor that made
the wings she flew withal.

ACT 4.

SALANIO.

And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged;
and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

SHYLOCK.

She is damned for it.

SALARINO.

That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

SHYLOCK.

My own flesh and blood to rebel!

SALANIO.

Out upon it, old carrion! Rebels it at these years?

SHYLOCK.

I say my daughter is my flesh and my blood.

SALARINO.

There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than
between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is
between red wine and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether
Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

SHYLOCK.

There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal,
who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that used
to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he
was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont
to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

SALARINO.

Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his
flesh: what's that good for?

SHYLOCK.

To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will
feed my revenge. He hath disgrac'd me and hind'ed me half a
million; laugh'd at my losses, mock'd at my gains, scorned my
nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine
enemies. And what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes?
Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections,
passions, fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons,
subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed
and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If
you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh?
If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we
not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you
in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility?

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villaiy you teach me I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

[Enter a Servant.]

SERVANT.

Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

SALARINO.

We have been up and down to seek him.

[Enter TUBAL.]

SALANIO.

Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be match'd, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[Exeunt SALANIO, SALARINO, and Servant.]

SHYLOCK.

How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter?

TUBAL.

I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

SHYLOCK.

Why there, there, there, there! A diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now. Two thousand ducats in that, and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear; would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's spent in the search. Why, thou--loss upon loss! The thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge; nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

TUBAL.

Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,--

SHYLOCK.

What, what, what? Ill luck, ill luck?

TUBAL.

--hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

ACT 4.

SHYLOCK.

I thank God! I thank God! Is it true, is it true?

TUBAL.

I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wrack.

SHYLOCK.

I thank thee, good Tubal. Good news, good news! ha, ha!
Where? in Genoa?

TUBAL.

Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night,
fourscore ducats.

SHYLOCK.

Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold
again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! Fourscore ducats!

TUBAL.

There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to
Venice that swear he cannot choose but break.

SHYLOCK.

I am very glad of it; I'll plague him, I'll torture him; I
am glad of it.

TUBAL.

One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter
for a monkey.

SHYLOCK.

Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: It was my
turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor; I would not
have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

TUBAL.

But Antonio is certainly undone.

SHYLOCK.

Nay, that's true; that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an
officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of
him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what
merchandise I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go,
good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 2. Belmont. A room in PORTIA's house.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and Attendants.]

PORTIA.

I pray you tarry; pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company; therefore forbear a while.
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well,--
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,--
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be; so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me:
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours. O! these naughty times
Puts bars between the owners and their rights;
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
I speak too long, but 'tis to peise the time,
To eke it, and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

BASSANIO.

Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.

PORTIA.

Upon the rack, Bassanio! Then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

BASSANIO.

None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear th' enjoying of my love:
There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire as treason and my love.

PORTIA.

Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak anything.

BASSANIO.

Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

PORTIA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Well then, confess and live.

BASSANIO.

'Confess' and 'love'
Had been the very sum of my confession:
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

PORTIA.

Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof;
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch; such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages come forth to view
The issue of th' exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live. With much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that mak'st the fray.

[A Song, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself.]

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head,
How begot, how nourished?
Reply, reply.

It is engend'ed in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell:
I'll begin it.--Ding, dong, bell.

[ALL.] Ding, dong, bell.

BASSANIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

So may the outward shows be least themselves:
The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty
And you shall see 'tis purchas'd by the weight:
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:
So are those crisped snaky golden locks
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them, in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threaten'st than dost promise aught,
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence,
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

PORTIA.

[Aside] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embac'd despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-ey'd jealousy!
O love! be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess;
I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

BASSANIO.

What find I here? [Opening the leaden casket.]
Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
A golden mesh t' entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes!--
How could he see to do them? Having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfurnish'd: yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

'You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleas'd with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn to where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.'

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave; {Kissing her.}
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so,
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

PORTIA.

You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish
To wish myself much better, yet for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself,
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account. But the full sum of me
Is sum of something which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted. But now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours-- my lord's. I give them with this ring,
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

BASSANIO.

Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O! then be bold to say Bassanio's dead.

NERISSA.

My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy. Good joy, my lord and lady!

GRATIANO.

My Lord Bassanio, and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me;
And when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you
Even at that time I may be married too.

BASSANIO.

With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

GRATIANO.

I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You lov'd, I lov'd; for intermission
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achiev'd her mistress.

PORTIA.

Is this true, Nerissa?

NERISSA.

Madam, it is, so you stand pleas'd withal.

BASSANIO.

And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

GRATIANO.

Yes, faith, my lord.

BASSANIO.

Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

GRATIANO.

We'll play with them the first boy for a thousand
ducats.

NERISSA.

What! and stake down?

GRATIANO.

No; we shall ne'er win at that sport, and stake down.
But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend, Salanio!

[Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SALANIO.]

BASSANIO.

Lorenzo and Salanio, welcome hither,
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

PORTIA.

So do I, my lord;
They are entirely welcome.

LORENZO.

I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salanio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

SALANIO.

I did, my lord,
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you.

[Gives BASSANIO a letter]

BASSANIO.

Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you tell me how my good friend doth.

SALANIO.

Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind; his letter there
Will show you his estate.

GRATIANO.

Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salanio. What's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success:
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

SALANIO.

I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.

PORTIA.

There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper.
That steal the colour from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead, else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio: I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.

BASSANIO.

O sweet Portia!
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper. Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true. And yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for indeed
I have engag'd myself to a dear friend,
Engag'd my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady,

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound
Issuing life--blood. But is it true, Salanio?
Hath all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?
And not one vessel scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant--marring rocks?

SALANIO.

Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear that, if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man.
He plies the duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice. Twenty merchants,
The duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

JESSICA.

When I was with him, I have heard him swear
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him; and I know, my lord,
If law, authority, and power, deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

PORTIA.

Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

BASSANIO.

The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

PORTIA.

What sum owes he the Jew?

BASSANIO.

For me, three thousand ducats.

PORTIA.

What! no more?

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime,
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding day.
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer;
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

BASSANIO.

'Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried,
my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the
Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I
should live, all debts are clear'd between you and I, if I might
but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if
your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.'

PORTIA.

O love, dispatch all business and be gone!

BASSANIO.

Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste; but, till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 3. Venice. A street

[Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, and Gaoler.]

SHYLOCK.

Gaoler, look to him. Tell not me of mercy;
This is the fool that lent out money gratis:
Gaoler, look to him.

ANTONIO.

Hear me yet, good Shylock.

SHYLOCK.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond.
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause,
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs;
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.

ANTONIO.

I pray thee hear me speak.

SHYLOCK.

I'll have my bond. I will not hear thee speak;
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond.

[Exit.]

SALARINO.

It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

ANTONIO.

Let him alone;
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

SALARINO.

I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

ANTONIO.

The Duke cannot deny the course of law;
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
'Twill much impeach the justice of the state,
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go;
These griefs and losses have so bated me
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on; pray God Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 4.

SCENE 4. Belmont. A room in PORTIA's house.

[Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and BALTHASAR.]

LORENZO.

Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of godlike amity, which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

PORTIA.

I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now; for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit,
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestowed
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish cruelty!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore, no more of it; hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
Until my lord's return; for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breath'd a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return.
There is a monastery two miles off,
And there we will abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

LORENZO.

Madam, with all my heart
I shall obey you in an fair commands.

PORTIA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
So fare you well till we shall meet again.

LORENZO.

Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

JESSICA.

I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

PORTIA.

I thank you for your wish, and am well pleas'd
To wish it back on you. Fare you well, Jessica.

[Exeunt JESSICA and LORENZO.]

Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all th' endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua; see thou render this
Into my cousin's hands, Doctor Bellario;
And look what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd speed
Unto the trajet, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone; I shall be there before thee.

BALTHASAR.

Madam, I go with all convenient speed.

[Exit.]

PORTIA.

Come on, Nerissa, I have work in hand
That you yet know not of; we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

NERISSA.

Shall they see us?

PORTIA.

They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Into a manly stride; and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal. Then I'll repent,
And wish for all that, that I had not kill'd them.
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinu'd school
About a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.

NERISSA.

Why, shall we turn to men?

PORTIA.

Fie, what a question's that,
If thou wert near a lewd interpreter!
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 5. The same. A garden.

[Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA.]

LAUNCELOT.

Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to
be laid upon the children; therefore, I promise you, I fear you.
I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of
the matter; therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are
damn'd. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good, and
that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

JESSICA.

And what hope is that, I pray thee?

LAUNCELOT.

Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not,
that you are not the Jew's daughter.

JESSICA.

That were a kind of bastard hope indeed; so the sins of my
mother should be visited upon me.

LAUNCELOT.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Truly then I fear you are damn'd both by father and mother; thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother; well, you are gone both ways.

JESSICA.

I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

LAUNCELOT.

Truly, the more to blame he; we were Christians enow before, e'en as many as could well live one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

JESSICA.

I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say; here he comes.

[Enter LORENZO.]

LORENZO.

I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

JESSICA.

Nay, you need nor fear us, Lorenzo; Launcelot and I are out; he tells me flatly there's no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter; and he says you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in converting Jews to Christians you raise the price of pork.

LORENZO.

I shall answer that better to the commonwealth than you can the getting up of the negro's belly; the Moor is with child by you, Launcelot.

LAUNCELOT.

It is much that the Moor should be more than reason; but if she be less than an honest woman, she is indeed more than I took her for.

LORENZO.

How every fool can play upon the word! I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

LAUNCELOT.

That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

LORENZO.

Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! Then bid them

ACT 4.

prepare dinner.

LAUNCELOT.

That is done too, sir, only 'cover' is the word.

LORENZO.

Will you cover, then, sir?

LAUNCELOT.

Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

LORENZO.

Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows, bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

LAUNCELOT.

For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern.

[Exit.]

LORENZO.

O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricky word
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

JESSICA.

Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life,
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not merit it,
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

LORENZO.

Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

JESSICA.

Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

LORENZO.

I will anon; first let us go to dinner.

JESSICA.

Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.

LORENZO.

No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.

JESSICA.

Well, I'll set you forth.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 4.

SCENE I. Venice. A court of justice

[Enter the DUKE: the Magnificoes; ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO,
SALARINO, SALANIO, and Others.]

DUKE.

What, is Antonio here?

ANTONIO.

Ready, so please your Grace.

DUKE.

I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch,
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

ANTONIO.

I have heard
Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer with a quietness of spirit
The very tyranny and rage of his.

ACT 4.

DUKE.

Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

SALARINO.

He is ready at the door; he comes, my lord.

[Enter SHYLOCK.]

DUKE.

Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but leadest this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then, 'tis thought,
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exacts the penalty,--
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,--
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal,
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

SHYLOCK.

I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose,
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats. I'll not answer that,
But say it is my humour: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleas'd to give ten thousand ducats
To have it ban'd? What, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some that are mad if they behold a cat;
And others, when the bagpipe sings i' the nose,
Cannot contain their urine; for affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
Why he, a wauling bagpipe; but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodg'd hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answered?

BASSANIO.

This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

SHYLOCK.

I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

BASSANIO.

Do all men kill the things they do not love?

SHYLOCK.

Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

BASSANIO.

Every offence is not a hate at first.

SHYLOCK.

What! wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

ANTONIO.

I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops and to make no noise
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do anything most hard
As seek to soften that--than which what's harder?--
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency.
Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will.

BASSANIO.

For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

SHYLOCK.

If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

ACT 4.

DUKE.

How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

SHYLOCK.

What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchas'd slave,
Which, fike your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them; shall I say to you
'Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burdens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer
'The slaves are ours.' So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh which I demand of him
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

DUKE.

Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

SALARINO.

My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

DUKE.

Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

BASSANIO.

Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

ANTONIO.

I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death; the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

[Enter NERISSA dressed like a lawyer's clerk.]

DUKE.

Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

ACT 4.

NERISSA.

From both, my lord. Bellario greets your Grace.

[Presents a letter.]

BASSANIO.

Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

SHYLOCK.

To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

GRATIANO.

Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

SHYLOCK.

No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

GRATIANO.

O, be thou damn'd, execrable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accus'd.
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf who, hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infus'd itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd and ravenous.

SHYLOCK.

Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud;
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

DUKE.

This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?

NERISSA.

He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

DUKE OF VENICE.

With all my heart: some three or four of you

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Go give him courteous conduct to this place.
Meantime, the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

CLERK.

'Your Grace shall understand that at the receipt
of your letter I am very sick; but in the instant that your
messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor
of Rome; his name is Balthazar. I acquainted him with the cause
in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant; we
turn'd o'er many books together; he is furnished with my opinion
which, bettered with his own learning,—the greatness whereof I
cannot enough commend,—comes with him at my importunity to fill
up your Grace's request in my stead. I beseech you let his lack
of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation,
for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him
to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his
commendation.'

DUKE.

YOU hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes;
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

[Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws.]

Give me your hand; come you from old Bellario?

PORTIA.

I did, my lord.

DUKE.

You are welcome; take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

PORTIA.

I am informed throughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

DUKE OF VENICE.

Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

PORTIA.

Is your name Shylock?

SHYLOCK.

Shylock is my name.

PORTIA.

Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[To ANTONIO.] You stand within his danger, do you not?

ANTONIO.

Ay, so he says.

PORTIA.

Do you confess the bond?

ANTONIO.

I do.

PORTIA.

Then must the Jew be merciful.

SHYLOCK.

On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.

PORTIA.

The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That in the course of justice none of us
Should see salvation; we do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea,
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

SHYLOCK.

My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

PORTIA.

Is he not able to discharge the money?

BASSANIO.

Yes; here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum; if that will not suffice,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart;
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And, I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority;
To do a great right do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

PORTIA.

It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established;
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

SHYLOCK.

A Daniel come to judgment! Yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!

PORTIA.

I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

SHYLOCK.

Here 'tis, most reverend doctor; here it is.

PORTIA.

Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.

SHYLOCK.

An oath, an oath! I have an oath in heaven.
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

PORTIA.

Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful.
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

SHYLOCK.

When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law; your exposition
Hath been most sound; I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.

ANTONIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

PORTIA.

Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

SHYLOCK.

O noble judge! O excellent young man!

PORTIA.

For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

SHYLOCK.

'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge,
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

PORTIA.

Therefore, lay bare your bosom.

SHYLOCK.

Ay, 'his breast':
So says the bond:--doth it not, noble judge?--
'Nearest his heart': those are the very words.

PORTIA.

It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

SHYLOCK.

I have them ready.

PORTIA.

Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

SHYLOCK.

Is it so nominated in the bond?

PORTIA.

It is not so express'd; but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

SHYLOCK.

I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

PORTIA.

You, merchant, have you anything to say?

ANTONIO.

But little: I am arm'd and well prepar'd.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you,
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I lov'd you; speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

BASSANIO.

Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life;
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

PORTIA.

Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by to hear you make the offer.

GRATIANO.

I have a wife whom, I protest, I love;
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

NERISSA.

'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

SHYLOCK.

These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barabbas
Had been her husband, rather than a Christian!
We trifle time; I pray thee, pursue sentence.

PORTIA.

A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine.
The court awards it and the law doth give it.

SHYLOCK.

Most rightful judge!

PORTIA.

And you must cut this flesh from off his breast.
The law allows it and the court awards it.

SHYLOCK.

Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare.

PORTIA.

Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh':
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

GRATIANO.

O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!

SHYLOCK.

Is that the law?

PORTIA.

Thyself shalt see the act;
For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st.

GRATIANO.

O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!

SHYLOCK.

I take this offer then: pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.

BASSANIO.

Here is the money.

PORTIA.

Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:—
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

GRATIANO.

O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

PORTIA.

Therefore, prepare thee to cut off the flesh.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more,
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more,
Or less, than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple; nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

GRATIANO.

A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

PORTIA.

Why doth the Jew pause? Take thy forfeiture.

SHYLOCK.

Give me my principal, and let me go.

BASSANIO.

I have it ready for thee; here it is.

PORTIA.

He hath refus'd it in the open court;
He shall have merely justice, and his bond.

GRATIANO.

A Daniel still say I; a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

SHYLOCK.

Shall I not have barely my principal?

PORTIA.

Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

SHYLOCK.

Why, then the devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer question.

PORTIA.

Tarry, Jew.
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be prov'd against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears by manifest proceeding
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehears'd.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

GRATIANO.

Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself;
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

DUKE.

That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

PORTIA.

Ay, for the state; not for Antonio.

SHYLOCK.

Nay, take my life and all, pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

PORTIA.

What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

GRATIANO.

A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake!

ANTONIO.

So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods;
I am content, so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it
Upon his death unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

DUKE.

He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

PORTIA.

Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?

SHYLOCK.

I am content.

PORTIA.

Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

SHYLOCK.

I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well; send the deed after me
And I will sign it.

DUKE.

Get thee gone, but do it.

GRATIANO.

In christening shalt thou have two god-fathers;
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not to the font.

[Exit SHYLOCK.]

DUKE.

Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

PORTIA.

I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon;
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

DUKE.

I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For in my mind you are much bound to him.

[Exeunt DUKE, Magnificoes, and Train.]

BASSANIO.

Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

ANTONIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

PORTIA.

He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied,
And therein do account myself well paid:
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again:
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

BASSANIO.

Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further;
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as fee. Grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

PORTIA.

You press me far, and therefore I will yield.

[To ANTONIO]

Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake.

[To BASSANIO]

And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you.
Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

BASSANIO.

This ring, good sir? alas, it is a trifle;
I will not shame myself to give you this.

PORTIA.

I will have nothing else but only this;
And now, methinks, I have a mind to it.

BASSANIO.

There's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

PORTIA.

I see, sir, you are liberal in offers;
You taught me first to beg, and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

BASSANIO.

Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And, when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell, nor give, nor lose it.

ACT 4.

PORTIA.

That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
And if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserv'd this ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[Exeunt PORTIA and NERISSA.]

ANTONIO.

My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:
Let his deservings, and my love withal,
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

BASSANIO.

Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring, and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house. Away! make haste.

[Exit GRATIANO.]

Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont. Come, Antonio.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. The same. A street

[Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.]

PORTIA.

Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed,
And let him sign it; we'll away tonight,
And be a day before our husbands home.
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

[Enter GRATIANO.]

GRATIANO.

Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en.
My Lord Bassanio, upon more advice,
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.

PORTIA.

That cannot be:
His ring I do accept most thankfully;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore,
I pray you show my youth old Shylock's house.

GRATIANO.

That will I do.

NERISSA.

Sir, I would speak with you.

[Aside to PORTIA.]

I'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

PORTIA.[To NERISSA]

Thou Mayst, I warrant. We shall have old swearing
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.
Away! make haste: thou know'st where I will tarry.

NERISSA.

Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?

[Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I. Belmont. The avenue to PORTIA's house.

[Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.]

LORENZO.

The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise, in such a night,
Troilus methinks mounted the Troyan walls,
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

JESSICA.

In such a night
Did Thisby fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismay'd away.

LORENZO.

In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waft her love

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

To come again to Carthage.

JESSICA.

In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old AEson.

LORENZO.

In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

JESSICA.

In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,—
And ne'er a true one.

LORENZO.

In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

JESSICA.

I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

[Enter STEPHANO.]

LORENZO.

Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

STEPHANO.

A friend.

LORENZO.

A friend! What friend? Your name, I pray you, friend?

STEPHANO.

Stephano is my name, and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont; she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

LORENZO.

Who comes with her?

STEPHANO.

None but a holy hermit and her maid.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

LORENZO.

He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

[Enter LAUNCELOT.]

LAUNCELOT.

Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

LORENZO.

Who calls?

LAUNCELOT.

Sola! Did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo! Sola, sola!

LORENZO.

Leave holloaing, man. Here!

LAUNCELOT.

Sola! Where? where?

LORENZO.

Here!

LAUNCELOT.

Tell him there's a post come from my master with his
horn full of good news; my master will be here ere morning.

[Exit]

LORENZO.

Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter; why should we go in?
My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air.

[Exit STEPHANO.]

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica: look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

[Enter Musicians.]

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn;
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear.
And draw her home with music.

[Music.]

JESSICA.

I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

LORENZO.

The reason is, your spirits are attentive;
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus.
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

[Enter PORTIA and NERISSA, at a distance.]

PORTIA.

That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

NERISSA.

When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

PORTIA.

So doth the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until a king be by, and then his state

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

NERISSA.

It is your music, madam, of the house.

PORTIA.

Nothing is good, I see, without respect:
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

NERISSA.

Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

PORTIA.

The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark
When neither is attended; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace, ho! The moon sleeps with Endymion,
And would not be awak'd!

[Music ceases.]

LORENZO.

That is the voice,
Or I am much deceiv'd, of Portia.

PORTIA.

He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.

LORENZO.

Dear lady, welcome home.

PORTIA.

We have been praying for our husbands' welfare,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they return'd?

LORENZO.

Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming.

PORTIA.

Go in, Nerissa:
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.

[A tucket sounds.]

LORENZO.

Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet.
We are no tell-tales, madam, fear you not.

PORTIA.

This night methinks is but the daylight sick;
It looks a little paler; 'tis a day
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

[Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their Followers.]

BASSANIO.

We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

PORTIA.

Let me give light, but let me not be light,
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me:
But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.

BASSANIO.

I thank you, madam; give welcome to my friend:
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

PORTIA.

You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

ANTONIO.

No more than I am well acquitted of.

PORTIA.

Sir, you are very welcome to our house.
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

GRATIANO. [To NERISSA]

By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk.
Would he were gelt that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.

PORTIA.

A quarrel, ho, already! What's the matter?

GRATIANO.

About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutlers' poetry
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'

NERISSA.

What talk you of the posy, or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave;
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! No, God's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

GRATIANO.

He will, an if he live to be a man.

NERISSA.

Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

GRATIANO.

Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk;
A prating boy that begg'd it as a fee;
I could not for my heart deny it him.

PORTIA.

You were to blame,--I must be plain with you,--
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift,
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it, and here he stands,
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it
Nor pluck it from his finger for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;
An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

BASSANIO.[Aside]

Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

GRATIANO.

My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it, and indeed
Deserv'd it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine;

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

PORTIA.

What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you receiv'd of me.

BASSANIO.

If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.

PORTIA.

Even so void is your false heart of truth;
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed
Until I see the ring.

NERISSA.

Nor I in yours
Till I again see mine.

BASSANIO.

Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

PORTIA.

If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleas'd to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

BASSANIO.

No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,
And suffer'd him to go displeas'd away;
Even he that had held up the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
I was enforc'd to send it after him;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honour would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

PORTIA.

Let not that doctor e'er come near my house;
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you;
I'll not deny him anything I have,
No, not my body, nor my husband's bed.
Know him I shall, I am well sure of it.
Lie not a night from home; watch me like Argus;
If you do not, if I be left alone,
Now, by mine honour which is yet mine own,
I'll have that doctor for mine bedfellow.

NERISSA.

And I his clerk; therefore be well advis'd
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

GRATIANO.

Well, do you so: let not me take him then;
For, if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

ANTONIO.

I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

PORTIA.

Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

BASSANIO.

Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong;
And in the hearing of these many friends
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself,—

PORTIA.

Mark you but that!
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself,
In each eye one; swear by your double self,
And there's an oath of credit.

BASSANIO.

Nay, but hear me:
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.

ANTONIO.

I once did lend my body for his wealth,
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried; I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.

PORTIA.

Then you shall be his surety. Give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.

ANTONIO.

Here, Lord Bassanio, swear to keep this ring.

BASSANIO.

By heaven! it is the same I gave the doctor!

PORTIA.

I had it of him: pardon me, Bassanio,
For, by this ring, the doctor lay with me.

NERISSA.

And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano,
For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this, last night did lie with me.

GRATIANO.

Why, this is like the mending of high ways
In summer, where the ways are fair enough.
What! are we cuckolds ere we have deserv'd it?

PORTIA.

Speak not so grossly. You are all amaz'd:
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there, her clerk: Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,
And even but now return'd; I have not yet
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly.
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.

ANTONIO.

I am dumb.

BASSANIO.

ACT 4.

Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?

GRATIANO.

Were you the clerk that is to make me cuckold?

NERISSA.

Ay, but the clerk that never means to do it,
Unless he live until he be a man.

BASSANIO.

Sweet doctor, you shall be my bedfellow:
When I am absent, then lie with my wife.

ANTONIO.

Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road.

PORTIA.

How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

NERISSA.

Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.
There do I give to you and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

LORENZO.

Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.

PORTIA.

It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.

GRATIANO.

Let it be so: he first inter'gatory
That my Nerissa shall be sworn on is,
Wher till the next night she had rather stay,
Or go to bed now, being two hours to day:
But were the day come, I should wish it dark,
Till I were couching with the doctor's clerk.
Well, while I live, I'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

[Exeunt.]

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

by William Shakespeare

Dramatis Personae

Persons in the Induction

A LORD

CHRISTOPHER SLY, a tinker

HOSTESS

PAGE

PLAYERS

HUNTSMEN

SERVANTS

BAPTISTA MINOLA, a rich eman of Padua

VINCENTIO, an old gentleman of Pisa

LUCENTIO, son to Vincentio; in love with Bianca

PETRUCHIO, a gentleman of Verona; suitor to Katherina

Suitors to Bianca

GREMIO

HORTENSIO

Servants to Lucentio

TRANIO

BIONDELLO

Servants to Petruchio

GRUMIO

CURTIS

PEDANT, set up to personate Vincentio

Daughters to Baptista

KATHERINA, the shrew

BIANCA

WIDOW

Tailor, Haberdasher, and Servants attending on Baptista and Petruchio

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

SCENE: Sometimes in Padua, and sometimes in PETRUCHIO'S house in the country.

INDUCTION.

SCENE I. Before an alehouse on a heath.

[Enter HOSTESS and SLY.]

SLY.

I'll pheeze you, in faith.

HOSTESS.

A pair of stocks, you rogue!

SLY.

Y'are a baggage; the Slys are no rogues; look in the chronicles: we came in with Richard Conqueror. Therefore, paucas pallabris; let the world slide. Sessa!

HOSTESS.

You will not pay for the glasses you have burst?

SLY.

No, not a denier. Go by, Saint Jeronimy, go to thy cold bed and warm thee.

HOSTESS.

I know my remedy; I must go fetch the third-borough.

[Exit.]

SLY.

Third, or fourth, or fifth borough, I'll answer him by law. I'll not budge an inch, boy: let him come, and kindly.

[Lies down on the ground, and falls asleep.]

[Horns winded. Enter a LORD from hunting, with Huntsmen and Servants.]

LORD.

Huntsman, I charge thee, tender well my hounds;
Brach Merriman, the poor cur, is emboss'd,
And couple Clowder with the deep-mouth'd brach.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Saw'st thou not, boy, how Silver made it good
At the hedge-corner, in the coldest fault?
I would not lose the dog for twenty pound.

FIRST HUNTSMAN.

Why, Bellman is as good as he, my lord;
He cried upon it at the merest loss,
And twice to-day pick'd out the dullest scent;
Trust me, I take him for the better dog.

LORD.

Thou art a fool: if Echo were as fleet,
I would esteem him worth a dozen such.
But sup them well, and look unto them all;
To-morrow I intend to hunt again.

FIRST HUNTSMAN.

I will, my lord.

LORD.

[Sees Sly.] What's here? One dead, or drunk?
See, doth he breathe?

SECOND HUNTSMAN.

He breathes, my lord. Were he not warm'd with ale,
This were a bed but cold to sleep so soundly.

LORD.

O monstrous beast! how like a swine he lies!
Grim death, how foul and loathsome is thine image!
Sirs, I will practise on this drunken man.
What think you, if he were convey'd to bed,
Wrapp'd in sweet clothes, rings put upon his fingers,
A most delicious banquet by his bed,
And brave attendants near him when he wakes,
Would not the beggar then forget himself?

FIRST HUNTSMAN.

Believe me, lord, I think he cannot choose.

SECOND HUNTSMAN.

It would seem strange unto him when he wak'd.

LORD.

Even as a flattering dream or worthless fancy.
Then take him up, and manage well the jest.
Carry him gently to my fairest chamber,
And hang it round with all my wanton pictures;
Balm his foul head in warm distilled waters,
And burn sweet wood to make the lodging sweet.
Procure me music ready when he wakes,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound;
And if he chance to speak, be ready straight,
And with a low submissive reverence
Say 'What is it your honour will command?'
Let one attend him with a silver basin
Full of rose-water and bestrew'd with flowers;
Another bear the ewer, the third a diaper,
And say 'Will't please your lordship cool your hands?'
Some one be ready with a costly suit,
And ask him what apparel he will wear;
Another tell him of his hounds and horse,
And that his lady mourns at his disease.
Persuade him that he hath been lunatic;
And, when he says he is--say that he dreams,
For he is nothing but a mighty lord.
This do, and do it kindly, gentle sirs;
It will be pastime passing excellent,
If it be husbanded with modesty.

FIRST HUNTSMAN.

My lord, I warrant you we will play our part,
As he shall think by our true diligence,
He is no less than what we say he is.

LORD.

Take him up gently, and to bed with him,
And each one to his office when he wakes.

[SLY is bourne out. A trumpet sounds.]

Sirrah, go see what trumpet 'tis that sounds:

[Exit SERVANT.]

Belike some noble gentleman that means,
Travelling some journey, to repose him here.

[Re-enter SERVANT.]

How now! who is it?

SERVANT.

An it please your honour, players
That offer service to your lordship.

LORD.

Bid them come near.

[Enter PLAYERS.]

Now, fellows, you are welcome.

ACT 4.

PLAYERS.

We thank your honour.

LORD.

Do you intend to stay with me to-night?

PLAYER.

So please your lordship to accept our duty.

LORD.

With all my heart. This fellow I remember
Since once he play'd a farmer's eldest son;
'Twas where you woo'd the gentlewoman so well.
I have forgot your name; but, sure, that part
Was aptly fitted and naturally perform'd.

PLAYER.

I think 'twas Soto that your honour means.

LORD.

'Tis very true; thou didst it excellent.
Well, you are come to me in happy time,
The rather for I have some sport in hand
Wherein your cunning can assist me much.
There is a lord will hear you play to-night;
But I am doubtful of your modesties,
Lest, over-eying of his odd behaviour,--
For yet his honour never heard a play,--
You break into some merry passion
And so offend him; for I tell you, sirs,
If you should smile, he grows impatient.

PLAYER.

Fear not, my lord; we can contain ourselves,
Were he the veriest antick in the world.

LORD.

Go, sirrah, take them to the buttery,
And give them friendly welcome every one:
Let them want nothing that my house affords.

[Exit one with the PLAYERS.]

Sirrah, go you to Barthol'mew my page,
And see him dress'd in all suits like a lady;
That done, conduct him to the drunkard's chamber,
And call him 'madam,' do him obeisance.
Tell him from me--as he will win my love,--
He bear himself with honourable action,
Such as he hath observ'd in noble ladies

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Unto their lords, by them accomplished;
Such duty to the drunkard let him do,
With soft low tongue and lowly courtesy,
And say 'What is't your honour will command,
Wherein your lady and your humble wife
May show her duty and make known her love?'
And then with kind embracements, tempting kisses,
And with declining head into his bosom,
Bid him shed tears, as being overjoy'd
To see her noble lord restor'd to health,
Who for this seven years hath esteemed him
No better than a poor and loathsome beggar.
And if the boy have not a woman's gift
To rain a shower of commanded tears,
An onion will do well for such a shift,
Which, in a napkin being close convey'd,
Shall in despite enforce a watery eye.
See this dispatch'd with all the haste thou canst;
Anon I'll give thee more instructions.

[Exit SERVANT.]

I know the boy will well usurp the grace,
Voice, gait, and action, of a gentlewoman;
I long to hear him call the drunkard husband;
And how my men will stay themselves from laughter
When they do homage to this simple peasant.
I'll in to counsel them; haply my presence
May well abate the over-merry spleen,
Which otherwise would grow into extremes.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. A bedchamber in the LORD'S house.

[SLY is discovered in a rich nightgown, with ATTENDANTS: some with apparel, basin, ewer, and other appurtenances; and LORD, dressed like a servant.]

SLY.

For God's sake! a pot of small ale.

FIRST SERVANT.

Will't please your lordship drink a cup of sack?

SECOND SERVANT.

Will't please your honour taste of these conserves?

THIRD SERVANT.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

What raiment will your honour wear to-day?

SLY.

I am Christophero Sly; call not me honour nor lordship. I ne'er drank sack in my life; and if you give me any conserves, give me conserves of beef. Ne'er ask me what raiment I'll wear, for I have no more doublets than backs, no more stockings than legs, nor no more shoes than feet: nay, sometime more feet than shoes, or such shoes as my toes look through the over-leather.

LORD.

Heaven cease this idle humour in your honour!
O, that a mighty man of such descent,
Of such possessions, and so high esteem,
Should be infused with so foul a spirit!

SLY.

What! would you make me mad? Am not I Christopher Sly, old Sly's son of Burton-heath; by birth a pedlar, by education a card-maker, by transmutation a bear-herd, and now by present profession a tinker? Ask Marian Hacket, the fat ale-wife of Wincot, if she know me not: if she say I am not fourteen pence on the score for sheer ale, score me up for the lyingest knave in Christendom. What! I am not bestraught. Here's--

THIRD SERVANT.

O! this it is that makes your lady mourn.

SECOND SERVANT.

O! this is it that makes your servants droop.

LORD.

Hence comes it that your kindred shuns your house,
As beaten hence by your strange lunacy.
O noble lord, bethink thee of thy birth,
Call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment,
And banish hence these abject lowly dreams.
Look how thy servants do attend on thee,
Each in his office ready at thy beck:
Wilt thou have music? Hark! Apollo plays,

[Music]

And twenty caged nightingales do sing:
Or wilt thou sleep? We'll have thee to a couch
Softer and sweeter than the lustful bed
On purpose trimm'd up for Semiramis.
Say thou wilt walk: we will bestrew the ground:
Or wilt thou ride? Thy horses shall be trapp'd,
Their harness studded all with gold and pearl.
Dost thou love hawking? Thou hast hawks will soar

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Above the morning lark: or wilt thou hunt?
Thy hounds shall make the welkin answer them
And fetch shall echoes from the hollow earth.

FIRST SERVANT.

Say thou wilt course; thy greyhounds are as swift
As breathed stags; ay, fleeter than the roe.

SECOND SERVANT.

Dost thou love pictures? We will fetch thee straight
Adonis painted by a running brook,
And Cytherea all in sedges hid,
Which seem to move and wanton with her breath
Even as the waving sedges play with wind.

LORD.

We'll show thee Io as she was a maid
And how she was beguiled and surpris'd,
As lively painted as the deed was done.

THIRD SERVANT.

Or Daphne roaming through a thorny wood,
Scratching her legs, that one shall swear she bleeds
And at that sight shall sad Apollo weep,
So workmanly the blood and tears are drawn.

LORD.

Thou art a lord, and nothing but a lord:
Thou hast a lady far more beautiful
Than any woman in this waning age.

FIRST SERVANT.

And, till the tears that she hath shed for thee
Like envious floods o'er-run her lovely face,
She was the fairest creature in the world;
And yet she is inferior to none.

SLY.

Am I a lord? and have I such a lady?
Or do I dream? Or have I dream'd till now?
I do not sleep: I see, I hear, I speak;
I smell sweet savours, and I feel soft things:
Upon my life, I am a lord indeed;
And not a tinker, nor Christophero Sly.
Well, bring our lady hither to our sight;
And once again, a pot o' the smallest ale.

SECOND SERVANT.

Will't please your mightiness to wash your hands?

[Servants present a ewer, basin, and napkin.]

ACT 4.

O, how we joy to see your wit restor'd!
O, that once more you knew but what you are!
These fifteen years you have been in a dream,
Or, when you wak'd, so wak'd as if you slept.

SLY.

These fifteen years! by my fay, a goodly nap.
But did I never speak of all that time?

FIRST SERVANT.

O! yes, my lord, but very idle words;
For though you lay here in this goodly chamber,
Yet would you say ye were beaten out of door,
And rail upon the hostess of the house,
And say you would present her at the leet,
Because she brought stone jugs and no seal'd quarts.
Sometimes you would call out for Cicely Hacket.

SLY.

Ay, the woman's maid of the house.

THIRD SERVANT.

Why, sir, you know no house nor no such maid,
Nor no such men as you have reckon'd up,
As Stephen Sly, and old John Naps of Greece,
And Peter Turf, and Henry Pimpernell;
And twenty more such names and men as these,
Which never were, nor no man ever saw.

SLY.

Now, Lord be thanked for my good amends!

ALL.

Amen.

SLY.

I thank thee; thou shalt not lose by it.

[Enter the PAGE, as a lady, with ATTENDANTS.]

PAGE.

How fares my noble lord?

SLY.

Marry, I fare well; for here is cheer enough.
Where is my wife?

PAGE.

Here, noble lord: what is thy will with her?

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

SLY.

Are you my wife, and will not call me husband?
My men should call me lord: I am your goodman.

PAGE.

My husband and my lord, my lord and husband;
I am your wife in all obedience.

SLY.

I know it well. What must I call her?

LORD.

Madam.

SLY.

Al'ce madam, or Joan madam?

LORD.

Madam, and nothing else; so lords call ladies.

SLY.

Madam wife, they say that I have dream'd
And slept above some fifteen year or more.

PAGE.

Ay, and the time seems thirty unto me,
Being all this time abandon'd from your bed.

SLY.

'Tis much. Servants, leave me and her alone.
Madam, undress you, and come now to bed.

PAGE.

Thrice noble lord, let me entreat of you
To pardon me yet for a night or two;
Or, if not so, until the sun be set:
For your physicians have expressly charg'd,
In peril to incur your former malady,
That I should yet absent me from your bed:
I hope this reason stands for my excuse.

SLY.

Ay, it stands so that I may hardly tarry so long; but I would
be loath to fall into my dreams again: I will therefore tarry, in
despite of the flesh and the blood.

[Enter a SERVANT.]

SERVANT.

Your honour's players, hearing your amendment,
Are come to play a pleasant comedy;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

For so your doctors hold it very meet,
Seeing too much sadness hath congeal'd your blood,
And melancholy is the nurse of frenzy:
Therefore they thought it good you hear a play,
And frame your mind to mirth and merriment,
Which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life.

SLY.

Marry, I will; let them play it. Is not a commonty a
Christmas gambold or a tumbling-trick?

PAGE.

No, my good lord; it is more pleasing stuff.

SLY.

What! household stuff?

PAGE.

It is a kind of history.

SLY.

Well, we'll see't. Come, madam wife, sit by my side and let
the world slip: we shall ne'er be younger.

[Flourish.]

ACT I.

SCENE I. Padua. A public place.

[Enter LUCENTIO and TRANIO.]

LUCENTIO.

Tranio, since for the great desire I had
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,
I am arriv'd for fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy,
And by my father's love and leave am arm'd
With his good will and thy good company,
My trusty servant well approv'd in all,
Here let us breathe, and haply institute
A course of learning and ingenious studies.
Pisa, renowned for grave citizens,
Gave me my being and my father first,
A merchant of great traffic through the world,
Vincentio, come of the Bentivolii,
Vincentio's son, brought up in Florence,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

It shall become to serve all hopes conceiv'd,
To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds:
And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study,
Virtue and that part of philosophy
Will I apply that treats of happiness
By virtue specially to be achiev'd.
Tell me thy mind; for I have Pisa left
And am to Padua come as he that leaves
A shallow splash to plunge him in the deep,
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.

TRANIO.

Mi perdonato, gentle master mine;
I am in all affected as yourself;
Glad that you thus continue your resolve
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
Only, good master, while we do admire
This virtue and this moral discipline,
Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray;
Or so devote to Aristotle's checks
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjur'd.
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,
And practise rhetoric in your common talk;
Music and poesy use to quicken you;
The mathematics and the metaphysics,
Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you:
No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en;
In brief, sir, study what you most affect.

LUCENTIO.

Gramercies, Tranio, well dost thou advise.
If, Biondello, thou wert come ashore,
We could at once put us in readiness,
And take a lodging fit to entertain
Such friends as time in Padua shall beget.
But stay awhile; what company is this?

TRANIO.

Master, some show to welcome us to town.

[Enter BAPTISTA, KATHERINA, BIANCA, GREMIO, and HORTENSIO.
LUCENTIO and TRANIO stand aside.]

BAPTISTA.

Gentlemen, importune me no further,
For how I firmly am resolv'd you know;
That is, not to bestow my youngest daughter
Before I have a husband for the elder.
If either of you both love Katherina,
Because I know you well and love you well,
Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.

GREMIO.

To cart her rather: she's too rough for me.
There, there, Hortensio, will you any wife?

KATHERINA.

[To BAPTISTA] I pray you, sir, is it your will
To make a stale of me amongst these mates?

HORTENSIO.

Mates, maid! How mean you that? No mates for you,
Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.

KATHERINA.

I' faith, sir, you shall never need to fear;
I wis it is not halfway to her heart;
But if it were, doubt not her care should be
To comb your noddle with a three-legg'd stool,
And paint your face, and use you like a fool.

HORTENSIO.

From all such devils, good Lord deliver us!

GREMIO.

And me, too, good Lord!

TRANIO.

Husht, master! Here's some good pastime toward:
That wench is stark mad or wonderful froward.

LUCENTIO.

But in the other's silence do I see
Maid's mild behaviour and sobriety.
Peace, Tranio!

TRANIO.

Well said, master; mum! and gaze your fill.

BAPTISTA.

Gentlemen, that I may soon make good
What I have said,—Bianca, get you in:
And let it not displease thee, good Bianca,
For I will love thee ne'er the less, my girl.

KATHERINA.

A pretty peat! it is best
Put finger in the eye, an she knew why.

BIANCA.

Sister, content you in my discontent.
Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe:

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

My books and instruments shall be my company,
On them to look, and practise by myself.

LUCENTIO.

Hark, Tranio! thou mayst hear Minerva speak.

HORTENSIO.

Signior Baptista, will you be so strange?
Sorry am I that our good will effects
Bianca's grief.

GREMIO.

Why will you mew her up,
Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell,
And make her bear the penance of her tongue?

BAPTISTA.

Gentlemen, content ye; I am resolv'd.
Go in, Bianca.

[Exit BIANCA.]

And for I know she taketh most delight
In music, instruments, and poetry,
Schoolmasters will I keep within my house
Fit to instruct her youth. If you, Hortensio,
Or, Signior Gremio, you, know any such,
Prefer them hither; for to cunning men
I will be very kind, and liberal
To mine own children in good bringing up;
And so, farewell. Katherina, you may stay;
For I have more to commune with Bianca.

[Exit.]

KATHERINA.

Why, and I trust I may go too, may I not?
What! shall I be appointed hours, as though, belike,
I knew not what to take and what to leave? Ha!

[Exit.]

GREMIO.

You may go to the devil's dam: your gifts are so good
here's none will hold you. Their love is not so great,
Hortensio, but we may blow our nails together, and fast it fairly
out; our cake's dough on both sides. Farewell: yet, for the love I
bear my sweet Bianca, if I can by any means light on a fit man to
teach her that wherein she delights, I will wish him to her
father.

HORTENSIO.

So will I, Signior Gremio: but a word, I pray. Though the nature of our quarrel yet never brooked parle, know now, upon advice, it toucheth us both,—that we may yet again have access to our fair mistress, and be happy rivals in Bianca's love,—to labour and effect one thing specially.

GREMIO.

What's that, I pray?

HORTENSIO.

Marry, sir, to get a husband for her sister.

GREMIO.

A husband! a devil.

HORTENSIO.

I say, a husband.

GREMIO.

I say, a devil. Thinkest thou, Hortensio, though her father be very rich, any man is so very a fool to be married to hell?

HORTENSIO.

Tush, Gremio! Though it pass your patience and mine to endure her loud alarums, why, man, there be good fellows in the world, an a man could light on them, would take her with all faults, and money enough.

GREMIO.

I cannot tell; but I had as lief take her dowry with this condition: to be whipp'd at the high cross every morning.

HORTENSIO.

Faith, as you say, there's small choice in rotten apples. But, come; since this bar in law makes us friends, it shall be so far forth friendly maintained, till by helping Baptista's eldest daughter to a husband, we set his youngest free for a husband, and then have to't afresh. Sweet Bianca! Happy man be his dole! He that runs fastest gets the ring. How say you, Signior Gremio?

GREMIO.

I am agreed; and would I had given him the best horse in Padua to begin his wooing, that would thoroughly woo her, wed her, and bed her, and rid the house of her. Come on.

[Exeunt GREMIO and HORTENSIO.]

TRANIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I pray, sir, tell me, is it possible
That love should of a sudden take such hold?

LUCENTIO.

O Tranio! till I found it to be true,
I never thought it possible or likely;
But see, while idly I stood looking on,
I found the effect of love in idleness;
And now in plainness do confess to thee,
That art to me as secret and as dear
As Anna to the Queen of Carthage was,
Tranio, I burn, I pine, I perish, Tranio,
If I achieve not this young modest girl.
Counsel me, Tranio, for I know thou canst:
Assist me, Tranio, for I know thou wilt.

TRANIO.

Master, it is no time to chide you now;
Affection is not rated from the heart:
If love have touch'd you, nought remains but so:
Redime te captum quam queas minimo.

LUCENTIO.

Gramercies, lad; go forward; this contents;
The rest will comfort, for thy counsel's sound.

TRANIO.

Master, you look'd so longly on the maid.
Perhaps you mark'd not what's the pith of all.

LUCENTIO.

O, yes, I saw sweet beauty in her face,
Such as the daughter of Agenor had,
That made great Jove to humble him to her hand,
When with his knees he kiss'd the Cretan strand.

TRANIO.

Saw you no more? mark'd you not how her sister
Began to scold and raise up such a storm
That mortal ears might hardly endure the din?

LUCENTIO.

Tranio, I saw her coral lips to move,
And with her breath she did perfume the air;
Sacred and sweet was all I saw in her.

TRANIO.

Nay, then, 'tis time to stir him from his trance.
I pray, awake, sir: if you love the maid,
Bend thoughts and wits to achieve her. Thus it stands:
Her elder sister is so curst and shrewd,

ACT 4.

That till the father rid his hands of her,
Master, your love must live a maid at home;
And therefore has he closely mew'd her up,
Because she will not be annoy'd with suitors.

LUCENTIO.

Ah, Tranio, what a cruel father's he!
But art thou not advis'd he took some care
To get her cunning schoolmasters to instruct her?

TRANIO.

Ay, marry, am I, sir, and now 'tis plotted.

LUCENTIO.

I have it, Tranio.

TRANIO.

Master, for my hand,
Both our inventions meet and jump in one.

LUCENTIO.

Tell me thine first.

TRANIO.

You will be schoolmaster,
And undertake the teaching of the maid:
That's your device.

LUCENTIO.

It is: may it be done?

TRANIO.

Not possible; for who shall bear your part
And be in Padua here Vincentio's son;
Keep house and ply his book, welcome his friends;
Visit his countrymen, and banquet them?

LUCENTIO.

Basta; content thee, for I have it full.
We have not yet been seen in any house,
Nor can we be distinguish'd by our faces
For man or master: then it follows thus:
Thou shalt be master, Tranio, in my stead,
Keep house and port and servants, as I should;
I will some other be; some Florentine,
Some Neapolitan, or meaner man of Pisa.
'Tis hatch'd, and shall be so: Tranio, at once
Uncase thee; take my colour'd hat and cloak.
When Biondello comes, he waits on thee;
But I will charm him first to keep his tongue.

[They exchange habits]

TRANIO.

So had you need.
In brief, sir, sith it your pleasure is,
And I am tied to be obedient;
For so your father charg'd me at our parting,
'Be serviceable to my son,' quoth he,
Although I think 'twas in another sense:
I am content to be Lucentio,
Because so well I love Lucentio.

LUCENTIO.

Tranio, be so, because Lucentio loves;
And let me be a slave, to achieve that maid
Whose sudden sight hath thrall'd my wounded eye.
Here comes the rogue.

[Enter BIONDELLO.]

Sirrah, where have you been?

BIONDELLO.

Where have I been! Nay, how now! where are you?
Master, has my fellow Tranio stol'n your clothes?
Or you stol'n his? or both? Pray, what's the news?

LUCENTIO.

Sirrah, come hither: 'tis no time to jest,
And therefore frame your manners to the time.
Your fellow Tranio here, to save my life,
Puts my apparel and my count'nance on,
And I for my escape have put on his;
For in a quarrel since I came ashore
I kill'd a man, and fear I was descried.
Wait you on him, I charge you, as becomes,
While I make way from hence to save my life.
You understand me?

BIONDELLO.

I, sir! Ne'er a whit.

LUCENTIO.

And not a jot of Tranio in your mouth:
Tranio is changed to Lucentio.

BIONDELLO.

The better for him: would I were so too!

TRANIO.

So could I, faith, boy, to have the next wish after,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

That Lucentio indeed had Baptista's youngest daughter.
But, sirrah, not for my sake but your master's, I advise
You use your manners discreetly in all kind of companies:
When I am alone, why, then I am Tranio;
But in all places else your master, Lucentio.

LUCENTIO.

Tranio, let's go. One thing more rests, that thyself execute,
to make one among these wooers: if thou ask me why,
sufficeth my reasons are both good and weighty.

[Exeunt.]

[The Presenters above speak.]

FIRST SERVANT.

My lord, you nod; you do not mind the play.

SLY.

Yes, by Saint Anne, I do. A good matter, surely: comes there
any more of it?

PAGE.

My lord, 'tis but begun.

SLY.

'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady: would
'twere done!

[They sit and mark.]

SCENE II. Padua. Before HORTENSIO'S house.

[Enter PETRUCHIO and his man GRUMIO.]

PETRUCHIO.

Verona, for a while I take my leave,
To see my friends in Padua; but of all
My best beloved and approved friend,
Hortensio; and I trow this is his house.
Here, sirrah Grumio, knock, I say.

GRUMIO.

Knock, sir! Whom should I knock? Is there any man has rebused
your worship?

PETRUCHIO.

Villain, I say, knock me here soundly.

ACT 4.

GRUMIO.

Knock you here, sir! Why, sir, what am I, sir, that I should knock you here, sir?

PETRUCHIO.

Villain, I say, knock me at this gate;
And rap me well, or I'll knock your knave's pate.

GRUMIO.

My master is grown quarrelsome. I should knock you first,
And then I know after who comes by the worst.

PETRUCHIO.

Will it not be?
Faith, sirrah, an you'll not knock, I'll ring it;
I'll try how you can sol,fa, and sing it.

[He wrings GRUMIO by the ears.]

GRUMIO.

Help, masters, help! my master is mad.

PETRUCHIO.

Now, knock when I bid you, sirrah villain!

[Enter HORTENSIO.]

HORTENSIO.

How now! what's the matter? My old friend Grumio! and my good friend Petruchio! How do you all at Verona?

PETRUCHIO.

Signior Hortensio, come you to part the fray?
Con tutto il cuore ben trovato, may I say.

HORTENSIO.

Alla nostra casa ben venuto; molto honorato signor mio Petruchio.
Rise, Grumio, rise: we will compound this quarrel.

GRUMIO.

Nay, 'tis no matter, sir, what he 'leges in Latin. If this be not a lawful cause for me to leave his service, look you, sir, he bid me knock him and rap him soundly, sir: well, was it fit for a servant to use his master so; being, perhaps, for aught I see, two-and-thirty, a pip out?
Whom would to God I had well knock'd at first,
Then had not Grumio come by the worst.

PETRUCHIO.

A senseless villain! Good Hortensio,
I bade the rascal knock upon your gate,

And could not get him for my heart to do it.

GRUMIO.

Knock at the gate! O heavens! Spake you not these words plain: 'Sirrah knock me here, rap me here, knock me well, and knock me soundly'? And come you now with 'knocking at the gate'?

PETRUCHIO.

Sirrah, be gone, or talk not, I advise you.

HORTENSIO.

Petruchio, patience; I am Grumio's pledge;
Why, this's a heavy chance 'twixt him and you,
Your ancient, trusty, pleasant servant Grumio.
And tell me now, sweet friend, what happy gale
Blows you to Padua here from old Verona?

PETRUCHIO.

Such wind as scatters young men through the world
To seek their fortunes farther than at home,
Where small experience grows. But in a few,
Signior Hortensio, thus it stands with me:
Antonio, my father, is deceas'd,
And I have thrust myself into this maze,
Haply to wive and thrive as best I may;
Crowns in my purse I have, and goods at home,
And so am come abroad to see the world.

HORTENSIO.

Petruchio, shall I then come roundly to thee
And wish thee to a shrewd ill-favour'd wife?
Thou'dst thank me but a little for my counsel;
And yet I'll promise thee she shall be rich,
And very rich: but th'art too much my friend,
And I'll not wish thee to her.

PETRUCHIO.

Signior Hortensio, 'twixt such friends as we
Few words suffice; and therefore, if thou know
One rich enough to be Petruchio's wife,
As wealth is burden of my wooing dance,
Be she as foul as was Florentius' love,
As old as Sibyl, and as curst and shrewd
As Socrates' Xanthippe or a worse,
She moves me not, or not removes, at least,
Affection's edge in me, were she as rough
As are the swelling Adriatic seas:
I come to wive it wealthily in Padua;
If wealthily, then happily in Padua.

GRUMIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Nay, look you, sir, he tells you flatly what his mind is: why, give him gold enough and marry him to a puppet or an aglet-baby; or an old trot with ne'er a tooth in her head, though she has as many diseases as two-and-fifty horses: why, nothing comes amiss, so money comes withal.

HORTENSIO.

Petruchio, since we are stepp'd thus far in,
I will continue that I broach'd in jest.
I can, Petruchio, help thee to a wife
With wealth enough, and young and beauteous;
Brought up as best becomes a gentlewoman:
Her only fault,—and that is faults enough,—
Is, that she is intolerable curst
And shrewd and froward, so beyond all measure,
That, were my state far worsen than it is,
I would not wed her for a mine of gold.

PETRUCHIO.

Hortensio, peace! thou know'st not gold's effect:
Tell me her father's name, and 'tis enough;
For I will board her, though she chide as loud
As thunder when the clouds in autumn crack.

HORTENSIO.

Her father is Baptista Minola,
An affable and courteous gentleman;
Her name is Katherina Minola,
Renown'd in Padua for her scolding tongue.

PETRUCHIO.

I know her father, though I know not her;
And he knew my deceased father well.
I will not sleep, Hortensio, till I see her;
And therefore let me be thus bold with you,
To give you over at this first encounter,
Unless you will accompany me thither.

GRUMIO.

I pray you, sir, let him go while the humour lasts. O' my word, an she knew him as well as I do, she would think scolding would do little good upon him. She may perhaps call him half a score knaves or so; why, that's nothing; and he begin once, he'll rail in his rope-tricks. I'll tell you what, sir, an she stand him but a little, he will throw a figure in her face, and so disfigure her with it that she shall have no more eyes to see withal than a cat. You know him not, sir.

HORTENSIO.

Tarry, Petruchio, I must go with thee,
For in Baptista's keep my treasure is:

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

He hath the jewel of my life in hold,
His youngest daughter, beautiful Bianca,
And her withholds from me and other more,
Suitors to her and rivals in my love;
Supposing it a thing impossible,
For those defects I have before rehears'd,
That ever Katherina will be woo'd:
Therefore this order hath Baptista ta'en,
That none shall have access unto Bianca
Till Katherine the curst have got a husband.

GRUMIO.

Katherine the curst!
A title for a maid of all titles the worst.

HORTENSIO.

Now shall my friend Petruchio do me grace,
And offer me disguis'd in sober robes,
To old Baptista as a schoolmaster
Well seen in music, to instruct Bianca;
That so I may, by this device at least
Have leave and leisure to make love to her,
And unsuspected court her by herself.

GRUMIO.

Here's no knavery! See, to beguile the old folks, how the
young folks lay their heads together!

[Enter GREMIO, and LUCENTIO disguised, with books under his arm.]

Master, master, look about you: who goes there, ha?

HORTENSIO.

Peace, Grumio! 'tis the rival of my love. Petruchio,
stand by awhile.

GRUMIO.

A proper stripling, and an amorous!

GREMIO.

O! very well; I have perus'd the note.
Hark you, sir; I'll have them very fairly bound:
All books of love, see that at any hand,
And see you read no other lectures to her.
You understand me. Over and beside
Signior Baptista's liberality,
I'll mend it with a largess. Take your papers too,
And let me have them very well perfum'd;
For she is sweeter than perfume itself
To whom they go to. What will you read to her?

LUCENTIO.

Whate'er I read to her, I'll plead for you,
As for my patron, stand you so assur'd,
As firmly as yourself were still in place;
Yea, and perhaps with more successful words
Than you, unless you were a scholar, sir.

GREMIO.

O! this learning, what a thing it is.

GRUMIO.

O! this woodcock, what an ass it is.

PETRUCHIO.

Peace, sirrah!

HORTENSIO.

Grumio, mum! God save you, Signior Gremio!

GREMIO.

And you are well met, Signior Hortensio.
Trow you whither I am going? To Baptista Minola.
I promis'd to enquire carefully
About a schoolmaster for the fair Bianca;
And by good fortune I have lighted well
On this young man; for learning and behaviour
Fit for her turn, well read in poetry
And other books, good ones, I warrant ye.

HORTENSIO.

'Tis well; and I have met a gentleman
Hath promis'd me to help me to another,
A fine musician to instruct our mistress:
So shall I no whit be behind in duty
To fair Bianca, so belov'd of me.

GREMIO.

Belov'd of me, and that my deeds shall prove.

GRUMIO.

[Aside.] And that his bags shall prove.

HORTENSIO.

Gremio, 'tis now no time to vent our love:
Listen to me, and if you speak me fair,
I'll tell you news indifferent good for either.
Here is a gentleman whom by chance I met,
Upon agreement from us to his liking,
Will undertake to woo curst Katherine;
Yea, and to marry her, if her dowry please.

GREMIO.

So said, so done, is well.
Hortensio, have you told him all her faults?

PETRUCHIO.

I know she is an irksome brawling scold;
If that be all, masters, I hear no harm.

GREMIO.

No, say'st me so, friend? What countryman?

PETRUCHIO.

Born in Verona, old Antonio's son.
My father dead, my fortune lives for me;
And I do hope good days and long to see.

GREMIO.

O Sir, such a life, with such a wife, were strange!
But if you have a stomach, to't i' God's name;
You shall have me assisting you in all.
But will you woo this wild-cat?

PETRUCHIO.

Will I live?

GRUMIO.

Will he woo her? Ay, or I'll hang her.

PETRUCHIO.

Why came I hither but to that intent?
Think you a little din can daunt mine ears?
Have I not in my time heard lions roar?
Have I not heard the sea, puff'd up with winds,
Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat?
Have I not heard great ordnance in the field,
And heaven's artillery thunder in the skies?
Have I not in a pitched battle heard
Loud 'larums, neighing steeds, and trumpets' clang?
And do you tell me of a woman's tongue,
That gives not half so great a blow to hear
As will a chestnut in a farmer's fire?
Tush, tush! fear boys with bugs.

GRUMIO.

[Aside] For he fears none.

GREMIO.

Hortensio, hark:
This gentleman is happily arriv'd,
My mind presumes, for his own good and ours.

HORTENSIO.

I promis'd we would be contributors,
And bear his charge of wooing, whatsoe'er.

GREMIO.

And so we will, provided that he win her.

GRUMIO.

I would I were as sure of a good dinner.

[Enter TRANIO, bravely apparelled;and BIONDELLO.]

TRANIO.

Gentlemen, God save you! If I may be bold,
Tell me, I beseech you, which is the readiest way
To the house of Signior Baptista Minola?

BIONDELLO.

He that has the two fair daughters; is't he you mean?

TRANIO.

Even he, Biondello!

GREMIO.

Hark you, sir, you mean not her to--

TRANIO.

Perhaps him and her, sir; what have you to do?

PETRUCHIO.

Not her that chides, sir, at any hand, I pray.

TRANIO.

I love no chiders, sir. Biondello, let's away.

LUCENTIO.

[Aside] Well begun, Tranio.

HORTENSIO.

Sir, a word ere you go.
Are you a suitor to the maid you talk of, yea or no?

TRANIO.

And if I be, sir, is it any offence?

GREMIO.

No; if without more words you will get you hence.

TRANIO.

Why, sir, I pray, are not the streets as free
For me as for you?

GREMIO.

But so is not she.

TRANIO.

For what reason, I beseech you?

GREMIO.

For this reason, if you'll know,
That she's the choice love of Signior Gremio.

HORTENSIO.

That she's the chosen of Signior Hortensio.

TRANIO.

Softly, my masters! If you be gentlemen,
Do me this right; hear me with patience.
Baptista is a noble gentleman,
To whom my father is not all unknown;
And were his daughter fairer than she is,
She may more suitors have, and me for one.
Fair Leda's daughter had a thousand wooers;
Then well one more may fair Bianca have;
And so she shall: Lucentio shall make one,
Though Paris came in hope to speed alone.

GREMIO.

What! this gentleman will out-talk us all.

LUCENTIO.

Sir, give him head; I know he'll prove a jade.

PETRUCHIO.

Hortensio, to what end are all these words?

HORTENSIO.

Sir, let me be so bold as ask you,
Did you yet ever see Baptista's daughter?

TRANIO.

No, sir, but hear I do that he hath two,
The one as famous for a scolding tongue
As is the other for beauteous modesty.

PETRUCHIO.

Sir, sir, the first's for me; let her go by.

GREMIO.

Yea, leave that labour to great Hercules,
And let it be more than Alcides' twelve.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

PETRUCHIO.

Sir, understand you this of me, in sooth:
The youngest daughter, whom you hearken for,
Her father keeps from all access of suitors,
And will not promise her to any man
Until the elder sister first be wed;
The younger then is free, and not before.

TRANIO.

If it be so, sir, that you are the man
Must stead us all, and me amongst the rest;
And if you break the ice, and do this feat,
Achieve the elder, set the younger free
For our access, whose hap shall be to have her
Will not so graceless be to be ingrate.

HORTENSIO.

Sir, you say well, and well you do conceive;
And since you do profess to be a suitor,
You must, as we do, gratify this gentleman,
To whom we all rest generally beholding.

TRANIO.

Sir, I shall not be slack; in sign whereof,
Please ye we may contrive this afternoon,
And quaff carouses to our mistress' health;
And do as adversaries do in law,
Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends.

GRUMIO, BIONDELLO.

O excellent motion! Fellows, let's be gone.

HORTENSIO.

The motion's good indeed, and be it so:--
Petruccio, I shall be your ben venuto.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I. Padua. A room in BAPTISTA'S house.

[Enter KATHERINA and BIANCA.]

BIANCA.

Good sister, wrong me not, nor wrong yourself,
To make a bondmaid and a slave of me;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

That I disdain; but for these other gawds,
Unbind my hands, I'll pull them off myself,
Yea, all my raiment, to my petticoat;
Or what you will command me will I do,
So well I know my duty to my elders.

KATHERINA.

Of all thy suitors here I charge thee tell
Whom thou lov'st best: see thou dissemble not.

BIANCA.

Believe me, sister, of all the men alive
I never yet beheld that special face
Which I could fancy more than any other.

KATHERINA.

Minion, thou liest. Is't not Hortensio?

BIANCA.

If you affect him, sister, here I swear
I'll plead for you myself but you shall have him.

KATHERINA.

O! then, belike, you fancy riches more:
You will have Gremio to keep you fair.

BIANCA.

Is it for him you do envy me so?
Nay, then you jest; and now I well perceive
You have but jested with me all this while:
I prithee, sister Kate, untie my hands.

KATHERINA.

If that be jest, then an the rest was so.

[Strikes her.]

[Enter BAPTISTA.]

BAPTISTA.

Why, how now, dame! Whence grows this insolence?
Bianca, stand aside. Poor girl! she weeps.
Go ply thy needle; meddle not with her.
For shame, thou hilding of a devilish spirit,
Why dost thou wrong her that did ne'er wrong thee?
When did she cross thee with a bitter word?

KATHERINA.

Her silence flouts me, and I'll be reveng'd.

[Flies after BIANCA.]

ACT 4.

BAPTISTA.

What! in my sight? Bianca, get thee in.

[Exit BIANCA.]

KATHERINA.

What! will you not suffer me? Nay, now I see
She is your treasure, she must have a husband;
I must dance bare-foot on her wedding-day,
And, for your love to her, lead apes in hell.
Talk not to me: I will go sit and weep
Till I can find occasion of revenge.

[Exit.]

BAPTISTA.

Was ever gentleman thus griev'd as I?
But who comes here?

[Enter GREMIO, with LUCENTIO in the habit of a mean man;
PETRUCHIO, with HORTENSIO as a musician; and TRANIO, with
BIONDELLO bearing a lute and books.]

GREMIO.

Good morrow, neighbour Baptista.

BAPTISTA.

Good morrow, neighbour Gremio. God save you, gentlemen!

PETRUCHIO.

And you, good sir! Pray, have you not a daughter
Call'd Katherina, fair and virtuous?

BAPTISTA.

I have a daughter, sir, call'd Katherina.

GREMIO.

You are too blunt: go to it orderly.

PETRUCHIO.

You wrong me, Signior Gremio: give me leave.
I am a gentleman of Verona, sir,
That, hearing of her beauty and her wit,
Her affability and bashful modesty,
Her wondrous qualities and mild behaviour,
Am bold to show myself a forward guest
Within your house, to make mine eye the witness
Of that report which I so oft have heard.
And, for an entrance to my entertainment,
I do present you with a man of mine,

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Presenting HORTENSIO.]

Cunning in music and the mathematics,
To instruct her fully in those sciences,
Whereof I know she is not ignorant.
Accept of him, or else you do me wrong:
His name is Licio, born in Mantua.

BAPTISTA.

You're welcome, sir, and he for your good sake;
But for my daughter Katherine, this I know,
She is not for your turn, the more my grief.

PETRUCHIO.

I see you do not mean to part with her;
Or else you like not of my company.

BAPTISTA.

Mistake me not; I speak but as I find.
Whence are you, sir? What may I call your name?

PETRUCHIO.

Petruchio is my name, Antonio's son;
A man well known throughout all Italy.

BAPTISTA.

I know him well: you are welcome for his sake.

GREMIO.

Saving your tale, Petruchio, I pray,
Let us, that are poor petitioners, speak too.
Backare! you are marvellous forward.

PETRUCHIO.

O, pardon me, Signior Gremio; I would fain be doing.

GREMIO.

I doubt it not, sir; but you will curse your wooing.
Neighbour, this is a gift very grateful, I am sure of it. To
express the like kindness, myself, that have been more kindly
beholding to you than any, freely give unto you this young
scholar,

[Presenting LUCENTIO.]

that has been long studying at Rheims; as cunning in Greek,
Latin, and other languages, as the other in music and
mathematics. His name is Cambio; pray accept his service.

BAPTISTA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

A thousand thanks, Signior Gremio; welcome, good Cambio.--

[To TRANIO.]

But, gentle sir, methinks you walk like a stranger: may
I be so bold to know the cause of your coming?

TRANIO.

Pardon me, sir, the boldness is mine own,
That, being a stranger in this city here,
Do make myself a suitor to your daughter,
Unto Bianca, fair and virtuous.
Nor is your firm resolve unknown to me,
In the preferment of the eldest sister.
This liberty is all that I request,
That, upon knowledge of my parentage,
I may have welcome 'mongst the rest that woo,
And free access and favour as the rest:
And, toward the education of your daughters,
I here bestow a simple instrument,
And this small packet of Greek and Latin books:
If you accept them, then their worth is great.

BAPTISTA.

Lucentio is your name, of whence, I pray?

TRANIO.

Of Pisa, sir; son to Vincentio.

BAPTISTA.

A mighty man of Pisa: by report
I know him well: you are very welcome, sir.
[To HORTENSIO.] Take you the lute,
[To LUCENTIO.] and you the set of books;
You shall go see your pupils presently.
Holla, within!

[Enter a SERVANT.]

Sirrah, lead these gentlemen
To my two daughters, and tell them both
These are their tutors: bid them use them well.

[Exit SERVANT, with HORTENSIO, LUCENTIO, and BIONDELLO.]

We will go walk a little in the orchard,
And then to dinner. You are passing welcome,
And so I pray you all to think yourselves.

PETRUCHIO.

Signior Baptista, my business asketh haste,
And every day I cannot come to woo.
You knew my father well, and in him me,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Left solely heir to all his lands and goods,
Which I have bettered rather than decreas'd:
Then tell me, if I get your daughter's love,
What dowry shall I have with her to wife?

BAPTISTA.

After my death, the one half of my lands,
And in possession twenty thousand crowns.

PETRUCHIO.

And, for that dowry, I'll assure her of
Her widowhood, be it that she survive me,
In all my lands and leases whatsoever.
Let specialities be therefore drawn between us,
That covenants may be kept on either hand.

BAPTISTA.

Ay, when the special thing is well obtain'd,
That is, her love; for that is all in all.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, that is nothing; for I tell you, father,
I am as peremptory as she proud-minded;
And where two raging fires meet together,
They do consume the thing that feeds their fury:
Though little fire grows great with little wind,
Yet extreme gusts will blow out fire and all;
So I to her, and so she yields to me;
For I am rough and woo not like a babe.

BAPTISTA.

Well mayst thou woo, and happy be thy speed!
But be thou arm'd for some unhappy words.

PETRUCHIO.

Ay, to the proof, as mountains are for winds,
That shake not though they blow perpetually.

[Re-enter HORTENSIO, with his head broke.]

BAPTISTA.

How now, my friend! Why dost thou look so pale?

HORTENSIO.

For fear, I promise you, if I look pale.

BAPTISTA.

What, will my daughter prove a good musician?

HORTENSIO.

I think she'll sooner prove a soldier:

ACT 4.

Iron may hold with her, but never lutes.

BAPTISTA.

Why, then thou canst not break her to the lute?

HORTENSIO.

Why, no; for she hath broke the lute to me.
I did but tell her she mistook her frets,
And bow'd her hand to teach her fingering;
When, with a most impatient devilish spirit,
'Frets, call you these?' quoth she 'I'll fume with them';
And with that word she struck me on the head,
And through the instrument my pate made way;
And there I stood amazed for a while,
As on a pillory, looking through the lute;
While she did call me rascal fiddler,
And twangling Jack, with twenty such vile terms,
As she had studied to misuse me so.

PETRUCHIO.

Now, by the world, it is a lusty wench!
I love her ten times more than e'er I did:
O! how I long to have some chat with her!

BAPTISTA.

[To HORTENSIO.] Well, go with me, and be not so discomfited;
Proceed in practice with my younger daughter;
She's apt to learn, and thankful for good turns.
Signior Petruchio, will you go with us,
Or shall I send my daughter Kate to you?

PETRUCHIO.

I pray you do. I will attend her here.

[Exeunt BAPTISTA, GREMIO, TRANIO, and HORTENSIO.]

And woo her with some spirit when she comes.
Say that she rail; why, then I'll tell her plain
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale:
Say that she frown; I'll say she looks as clear
As morning roses newly wash'd with dew:
Say she be mute, and will not speak a word;
Then I'll commend her volubility,
And say she uttereth piercing eloquence:
If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,
As though she bid me stay by her a week:
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day
When I shall ask the banns, and when be married.
But here she comes; and now, Petruchio, speak.

[Enter KATHERINA.]

Good morrow, Kate; for that's your name, I hear.

KATHERINA.

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing:
They call me Katherine that do talk of me.

PETRUCHIO.

You lie, in faith, for you are call'd plain Kate,
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst;
But, Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,
Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate,
For dainties are all cates: and therefore, Kate,
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation;
Hearing thy mildness prais'd in every town,
Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,—
Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,—
Myself am mov'd to woo thee for my wife.

KATHERINA.

Mov'd! in good time: let him that mov'd you hither
Remove you hence. I knew you at the first,
You were a moveable.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, what's a moveable?

KATHERINA.

A joint-stool.

PETRUCHIO.

Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.

KATHERINA.

Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO.

Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATHERINA.

No such jade as bear you, if me you mean.

PETRUCHIO.

Alas! good Kate, I will not burden thee;
For, knowing thee to be but young and light,—

KATHERINA.

Too light for such a swain as you to catch;
And yet as heavy as my weight should be.

PETRUCHIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Should be! should buz!

KATHERINA.

Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO.

O, slow-wing'd turtle! shall a buzzard take thee?

KATHERINA.

Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO.

Come, come, you wasp; i' faith, you are too angry.

KATHERINA.

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

PETRUCHIO.

My remedy is, then, to pluck it out.

KATHERINA.

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.

PETRUCHIO.

Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting?
In his tail.

KATHERINA.

In his tongue.

PETRUCHIO. Whose tongue?

KATHERINA.

Yours, if you talk of tales; and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO.

What! with my tongue in your tail? Nay, come again,
Good Kate; I am a gentleman.

KATHERINA.

That I'll try.

[Striking him.]

PETRUCHIO.

I swear I'll cuff you if you strike again.

KATHERINA.

So may you lose your arms:
If you strike me, you are no gentleman;
And if no gentleman, why then no arms.

ACT 4.

PETRUCHIO.

A herald, Kate? O! put me in thy books.

KATHERINA.

What is your crest? a coxcomb?

PETRUCHIO.

A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

KATHERINA.

No cock of mine; you crow too like a craven.

PETRUCHIO.

Nay, come, Kate, come; you must not look so sour.

KATHERINA.

It is my fashion when I see a crab.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, here's no crab, and therefore look not sour.

KATHERINA.

There is, there is.

PETRUCHIO.

Then show it me.

KATHERINA.

Had I a glass I would.

PETRUCHIO.

What, you mean my face?

KATHERINA.

Well aim'd of such a young one.

PETRUCHIO.

Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

KATHERINA.

Yet you are wither'd.

PETRUCHIO.

'Tis with cares.

KATHERINA.

I care not.

PETRUCHIO.

Nay, hear you, Kate: in sooth, you 'scape not so.

ACT 4.

KATHERINA.

I chafe you, if I tarry; let me go.

PETRUCHIO.

No, not a whit; I find you passing gentle.
'Twas told me you were rough, and coy, and sullen,
And now I find report a very liar;
For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,
But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers.
Thou canst not frown, thou canst not look askance,
Nor bite the lip, as angry wenches will,
Nor hast thou pleasure to be cross in talk;
But thou with mildness entertain'st thy wooers;
With gentle conference, soft and affable.
Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?
O sland'rous world! Kate like the hazel-twig
Is straight and slender, and as brown in hue
As hazel-nuts, and sweeter than the kernels.
O! let me see thee walk: thou dost not halt.

KATHERINA.

Go, fool, and whom thou keep'st command.

PETRUCHIO.

Did ever Dian so become a grove
As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?
O! be thou Dian, and let her be Kate,
And then let Kate be chaste, and Dian sportful!

KATHERINA.

Where did you study all this goodly speech?

PETRUCHIO.

It is extempore, from my mother-wit.

KATHERINA.

A witty mother! witless else her son.

PETRUCHIO.

Am I not wise?

KATHERINA.

Yes; keep you warm.

PETRUCHIO.

Marry, so I mean, sweet Katherine, in thy bed;
And therefore, setting all this chat aside,
Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented
That you shall be my wife your dowry 'greed on;
And will you, nill you, I will marry you.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn;
For, by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,--
Thy beauty that doth make me like thee well,--
Thou must be married to no man but me;
For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,
And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate
Conformable as other household Kates.
Here comes your father. Never make denial;
I must and will have Katherine to my wife.

[Re-enter BAPTISTA, GREMIO, and TRANIO.]

BAPTISTA.

Now, Signior Petruchio, how speed you with my daughter?

PETRUCHIO.

How but well, sir? how but well?
It were impossible I should speed amiss.

BAPTISTA.

Why, how now, daughter Katherine, in your dumps?

KATHERINA.

Call you me daughter? Now I promise you
You have show'd a tender fatherly regard
To wish me wed to one half lunatic,
A mad-cap ruffian and a swearing Jack,
That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.

PETRUCHIO.

Father, 'tis thus: yourself and all the world
That talk'd of her have talk'd amiss of her:
If she be curst, it is for policy,
For she's not froward, but modest as the dove;
She is not hot, but temperate as the morn;
For patience she will prove a second Grissel,
And Roman Lucrece for her chastity;
And to conclude, we have 'greed so well together
That upon Sunday is the wedding-day.

KATHERINA.

I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday first.

GREMIO.

Hark, Petruchio; she says she'll see thee hang'd first.

TRANIO.

Is this your speeding? Nay, then good-night our part!

PETRUCHIO.

Be patient, gentlemen. I choose her for myself;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

If she and I be pleas'd, what's that to you?
'Tis bargain'd 'twixt us twain, being alone,
That she shall still be curst in company.
I tell you, 'tis incredible to believe
How much she loves me: O! the kindest Kate
She hung about my neck, and kiss on kiss
She vied so fast, protesting oath on oath,
That in a twink she won me to her love.
O! you are novices: 'tis a world to see,
How tame, when men and women are alone,
A meacock wretch can make the curstest shrew.
Give me thy hand, Kate; I will unto Venice,
To buy apparel 'gainst the wedding-day.
Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests;
I will be sure my Katherine shall be fine.

BAPTISTA.

I know not what to say; but give me your hands.
God send you joy, Petruchio! 'Tis a match.

GREMIO, TRANIO.

Amen, say we; we will be witnesses.

PETRUCHIO.

Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu.
I will to Venice; Sunday comes apace;
We will have rings and things, and fine array;
And kiss me, Kate; we will be married o' Sunday.

[Exeunt PETRUCHIO and KATHERINA, severally.]

GREMIO.

Was ever match clapp'd up so suddenly?

BAPTISTA.

Faith, gentlemen, now I play a merchant's part,
And venture madly on a desperate mart.

TRANIO.

'Twas a commodity lay fretting by you;
'Twill bring you gain, or perish on the seas.

BAPTISTA.

The gain I seek is, quiet in the match.

GREMIO.

No doubt but he hath got a quiet catch.
But now, Baptista, to your younger daughter:
Now is the day we long have looked for;
I am your neighbour, and was suitor first.

TRANIO.

And I am one that love Bianca more
Than words can witness or your thoughts can guess.

GREMIO.

Youngling, thou canst not love so dear as I.

TRANIO.

Greybeard, thy love doth freeze.

GREMIO.

But thine doth fry.
Skipper, stand back; 'tis age that nourisheth.

TRANIO.

But youth in ladies' eyes that flourisheth.

BAPTISTA.

Content you, gentlemen; I'll compound this strife:
'Tis deeds must win the prize, and he of both
That can assure my daughter greatest dower
Shall have my Bianca's love.
Say, Signior Gremio, what can you assure her?

GREMIO.

First, as you know, my house within the city
Is richly furnished with plate and gold:
Basins and ewers to lave her dainty hands;
My hangings all of Tyrian tapestry;
In ivory coffers I have stuff'd my crowns;
In cypress chests my arras counterpoints,
Costly apparel, tents, and canopies,
Fine linen, Turkey cushions boss'd with pearl,
Valance of Venice gold in needle-work;
Pewter and brass, and all things that belong
To house or housekeeping: then, at my farm
I have a hundred milch-kine to the pail,
Six score fat oxen standing in my stalls,
And all things answerable to this portion.
Myself am struck in years, I must confess;
And if I die to-morrow this is hers,
If whilst I live she will be only mine.

TRANIO.

That 'only' came well in. Sir, list to me:
I am my father's heir and only son;
If I may have your daughter to my wife,
I'll leave her houses three or four as good
Within rich Pisa's walls as any one
Old Signior Gremio has in Padua;
Besides two thousand ducats by the year

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Of fruitful land, all which shall be her jointure.
What, have I pinch'd you, Signior Gremio?

GREMIO.

Two thousand ducats by the year of land!
My land amounts not to so much in all:
That she shall have, besides an argosy
That now is lying in Marseilles' road.
What, have I chok'd you with an argosy?

TRANIO.

Gremio, 'tis known my father hath no less
Than three great argosies, besides two galliasses,
And twelve tight galleys; these I will assure her,
And twice as much, whate'er thou offer'st next.

GREMIO.

Nay, I have offer'd all; I have no more;
And she can have no more than all I have;
If you like me, she shall have me and mine.

TRANIO.

Why, then the maid is mine from all the world,
By your firm promise; Gremio is out-vied.

BAPTISTA.

I must confess your offer is the best;
And let your father make her the assurance,
She is your own; else, you must pardon me;
If you should die before him, where's her dower?

TRANIO.

That's but a cavil; he is old, I young.

GREMIO.

And may not young men die as well as old?

BAPTISTA.

Well, gentlemen,
I am thus resolv'd. On Sunday next, you know,
My daughter Katherine is to be married;
Now, on the Sunday following, shall Bianca
Be bride to you, if you make this assurance;
If not, to Signior Gremio.
And so I take my leave, and thank you both.

GREMIO.

Adieu, good neighbour.

[Exit BAPTISTA.]

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Now, I fear thee not:
Sirrah young gamester, your father were a fool
To give thee all, and in his waning age
Set foot under thy table. Tut! a toy!
An old Italian fox is not so kind, my boy.

[Exit.]

TRANIO.

A vengeance on your crafty wither'd hide!
Yet I have fac'd it with a card of ten.
'Tis in my head to do my master good:
I see no reason but suppos'd Lucentio
Must get a father, call'd 'suppos'd Vincentio';
And that's a wonder: fathers commonly
Do get their children; but in this case of wooing
A child shall get a sire, if I fail not of my cunning.

[Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I. Padua. A room in BAPTISTA'S house.

[Enter LUCENTIO, HORTENSIO, and BIANCA.]

LUCENTIO.

Fiddler, forbear; you grow too forward, sir.
Have you so soon forgot the entertainment
Her sister Katherine welcome'd you withal?

HORTENSIO.

But, wrangling pedant, this is
The patroness of heavenly harmony:
Then give me leave to have prerogative;
And when in music we have spent an hour,
Your lecture shall have leisure for as much.

LUCENTIO.

Preposterous ass, that never read so far
To know the cause why music was ordain'd!
Was it not to refresh the mind of man
After his studies or his usual pain?
Then give me leave to read philosophy,
And while I pause serve in your harmony.

HORTENSIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Sirrah, I will not bear these braves of thine.

BIANCA.

Why, gentlemen, you do me double wrong,
To strive for that which resteth in my choice.
I am no breeching scholar in the schools,
I'll not be tied to hours nor 'pointed times,
But learn my lessons as I please myself.
And, to cut off all strife, here sit we down;
Take you your instrument, play you the whiles;
His lecture will be done ere you have tun'd.

HORTENSIO.

You'll leave his lecture when I am in tune?

[Retires.]

LUCENTIO.

That will be never: tune your instrument.

BIANCA.

Where left we last?

LUCENTIO.

Here, madam:--
Hic ibat Simois; hic est Sigeia tellus;
Hic steterat Priami regia celsa senis.

BIANCA.

Construe them.

LUCENTIO.

'Hic ibat,' as I told you before, 'Simois,' I am Lucentio, 'hic est,' son unto Vincentio of Pisa, 'Sigeia tellus,' disguised thus to get your love, 'Hic steterat,' and that Lucentio that comes a-wooing, 'Priami,' is my man Tranio, 'regia,' bearing my port, 'celsa senis,' that we might beguile the old pantaloon.

HORTENSIO. [Returning.]

Madam, my instrument's in tune.

BIANCA.

Let's hear.--

[HORTENSIO plays.]

O fie! the treble jars.

LUCENTIO.

Spit in the hole, man, and tune again.

BIANCA.

Now let me see if I can construe it: 'Hic ibat Simois,' I know you not; 'hic est Sigeia tellus,' I trust you not; 'Hic steterat Priami,' take heed he hear us not; 'regia,' presume not; 'celsa senis,' despair not.

HORTENSIO.

Madam, 'tis now in tune.

LUCENTIO.

All but the base.

HORTENSIO.

The base is right; 'tis the base knave that jars.
How fiery and forward our pedant is!
[Aside] Now, for my life, the knave doth court my love:
Pedasculè, I'll watch you better yet.

BIANCA.

In time I may believe, yet I mistrust.

LUCENTIO.

Mistrust it not; for sure, ÆEacides
Was Ajax, call'd so from his grandfather.

BIANCA.

I must believe my master; else, I promise you,
I should be arguing still upon that doubt;
But let it rest. Now, Licio, to you.
Good master, take it not unkindly, pray,
That I have been thus pleasant with you both.

HORTENSIO.

[To LUCENTIO] You may go walk and give me leave awhile;
My lessons make no music in three parts.

LUCENTIO.

Are you so formal, sir?
[Aside] Well, I must wait,
And watch withal; for, but I be deceiv'd,
Our fine musician groweth amorous.

HORTENSIO.

Madam, before you touch the instrument,
To learn the order of my fingering,
I must begin with rudiments of art;
To teach you gamut in a briefer sort,
More pleasant, pithy, and effectual,
Than hath been taught by any of my trade:
And there it is in writing, fairly drawn.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BIANCA.

Why, I am past my gamut long ago.

HORTENSIO.

Yet read the gamut of Hortensio.

BIANCA.

'Gamut' I am, the ground of all accord,
'A re,' to plead Hortensio's passion;
'B mi,' Bianca, take him for thy lord,
'C fa ut,' that loves with all affection:
'D sol re,' one clef, two notes have I
'E la mi,' show pity or I die.
Call you this gamut? Tut, I like it not:
Old fashions please me best; I am not so nice,
To change true rules for odd inventions.

[Enter a SERVANT.]

SERVANT.

Mistress, your father prays you leave your books,
And help to dress your sister's chamber up:
You know to-morrow is the wedding-day.

BIANCA.

Farewell, sweet masters, both: I must be gone.

[Exeunt BIANCA and SERVANT.]

LUCENTIO.

Faith, mistress, then I have no cause to stay.

[Exit.]

HORTENSIO.

But I have cause to pry into this pedant:
Methinks he looks as though he were in love.
Yet if thy thoughts, Bianca, be so humble
To cast thy wand'ring eyes on every stale,
Seize thee that list: if once I find thee ranging,
Hortensio will be quit with thee by changing.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. The same. Before BAPTISTA'S house.

[Enter BAPTISTA, GREMIO, TRANIO, KATHERINA, BIANCA, LUCENTIO, and ATTENDANTS.]

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

BAPTISTA. [To TRANIO.]

Signior Lucentio, this is the 'pointed day
That Katherine and Petruchio should be married,
And yet we hear not of our son-in-law.
What will be said? What mockery will it be
To want the bridegroom when the priest attends
To speak the ceremonial rites of marriage!
What says Lucentio to this shame of ours?

KATHERINA.

No shame but mine; I must, forsooth, be forc'd
To give my hand, oppos'd against my heart,
Unto a mad-brain rudesby, full of spleen;
Who woo'd in haste and means to wed at leisure.
I told you, I, he was a frantic fool,
Hiding his bitter jests in blunt behaviour;
And to be noted for a merry man,
He'll woo a thousand, 'point the day of marriage,
Make friends invited, and proclaim the banns;
Yet never means to wed where he hath woo'd.
Now must the world point at poor Katherine,
And say 'Lo! there is mad Petruchio's wife,
If it would please him come and marry her.'

TRANIO.

Patience, good Katherine, and Baptista too.
Upon my life, Petruchio means but well,
Whatever fortune stays him from his word:
Though he be blunt, I know him passing wise;
Though he be merry, yet withal he's honest.

KATHERINA.

Would Katherine had never seen him though!

[Exit, weeping, followed by BIANCA and others.]

BAPTISTA.

Go, girl, I cannot blame thee now to weep,
For such an injury would vex a very saint;
Much more a shrew of thy impatient humour.

[Enter BIONDELLO.]

Master, master! News! old news, and such news as you never heard
of!

BAPTISTA.

Is it new and old too? How may that be?

BIONDELLO.

Why, is it not news to hear of Petruchio's coming?

ACT 4.

BAPTISTA.

Is he come?

BIONDELLO.

Why, no, sir.

BAPTISTA.

What then?

BIONDELLO.

He is coming.

BAPTISTA.

When will he be here?

BIONDELLO.

When he stands where I am and sees you there.

TRANIO.

But, say, what to thine old news?

BIONDELLO.

Why, Petruchio is coming, in a new hat and an old jerkin; a pair of old breeches thrice turned; a pair of boots that have been candle-cases, one buckled, another laced; an old rusty sword ta'en out of the town armoury, with a broken hilt, and chapeless; with two broken points: his horsehipped with an old mothy saddle and stirrups of no kindred; besides, possessed with the glanders and like to mose in the chine; troubled with the lampass, infected with the fashions, full of windgalls, sped with spavins, rayed with the yellows, past cure of the fives, stark spoiled with the staggers, begnawn with the bots, swayed in the back and shoulder-shotten; near-legged before, and with a half-checked bit, and a head-stall of sheep's leather, which, being restrained to keep him from stumbling, hath been often burst, and now repaired with knots; one girth six times pieced, and a woman's crupper of velure, which hath two letters for her name fairly set down in studs, and here and there pieced with pack-thread.

BAPTISTA.

Who comes with him?

BIONDELLO.

O, sir! his lackey, for all the world caparisoned like the horse; with a linen stock on one leg and a kersey boot-hose on the other, gartered with a red and blue list; an old hat, and the 'humour of forty fancies' prick'd in't for a feather: a monster, a very monster in apparel, and not like a Christian footboy or a gentleman's lackey.

ACT 4.

TRANIO.

'Tis some odd humour pricks him to this fashion;
Yet oftentimes lie goes but mean-apparell'd.

BAPTISTA.

I am glad he's come, howsoe'er he comes.

BIONDELLO.

Why, sir, he comes not.

BAPTISTA.

Didst thou not say he comes?

BIONDELLO.

Who? that Petruchio came?

BAPTISTA.

Ay, that Petruchio came.

BIONDELLO.

No, sir; I say his horse comes, with him on his back.

BAPTISTA.

Why, that's all one.

BIONDELLO.

Nay, by Saint Jamy,
I hold you a penny,
A horse and a man
Is more than one,
And yet not many.

[Enter PETRUCHIO and GRUMIO.]

PETRUCHIO.

Come, where be these gallants? Who is at home?

BAPTISTA.

You are welcome, sir.

PETRUCHIO.

And yet I come not well.

BAPTISTA.

And yet you halt not.

TRANIO.

Not so well apparell'd
As I wish you were.

PETRUCHIO.

Were it better, I should rush in thus.
But where is Kate? Where is my lovely bride?
How does my father? Gentles, methinks you frown;
And wherefore gaze this goodly company,
As if they saw some wondrous monument,
Some comet or unusual prodigy?

BAPTISTA.

Why, sir, you know this is your wedding-day:
First were we sad, fearing you would not come;
Now sadder, that you come so unprovided.
Fie! doff this habit, shame to your estate,
An eye-sore to our solemn festival.

TRANIO.

And tell us what occasion of import
Hath all so long detain'd you from your wife,
And sent you hither so unlike yourself?

PETRUCHIO.

Tedious it were to tell, and harsh to hear;
Sufficeth, I am come to keep my word,
Though in some part enforced to digress;
Which at more leisure I will so excuse
As you shall well be satisfied withal.
But where is Kate? I stay too long from her;
The morning wears, 'tis time we were at church.

TRANIO.

See not your bride in these unreverent robes;
Go to my chamber, put on clothes of mine.

PETRUCHIO.

Not I, believe me: thus I'll visit her.

BAPTISTA.

But thus, I trust, you will not marry her.

PETRUCHIO.

Good sooth, even thus; therefore ha' done with words;
To me she's married, not unto my clothes.
Could I repair what she will wear in me
As I can change these poor accoutrements,
'Twere well for Kate and better for myself.
But what a fool am I to chat with you
When I should bid good-morrow to my bride,
And seal the title with a lovely kiss!

[Exeunt PETRUCHIO, GRUMIO, and BIODELLO.]

TRANIO.

He hath some meaning in his mad attire.
We will persuade him, be it possible,
To put on better ere he go to church.

BAPTISTA.

I'll after him and see the event of this.

[Exeunt BAPTISTA, GREMIO and ATTENDENTS.]

TRANIO.

But to her love concerneth us to add
Her father's liking; which to bring to pass,
As I before imparted to your worship,
I am to get a man,--whate'er he be
It skills not much; we'll fit him to our turn,--
And he shall be Vincentio of Pisa,
And make assurance here in Padua,
Of greater sums than I have promised.
So shall you quietly enjoy your hope,
And marry sweet Bianca with consent.

LUCENTIO.

Were it not that my fellow schoolmaster
Doth watch Bianca's steps so narrowly,
'Twere good, methinks, to steal our marriage;
Which once perform'd, let all the world say no,
I'll keep mine own despite of all the world.

TRANIO.

That by degrees we mean to look into,
And watch our vantage in this business.
We'll over-reach the greybeard, Gremio,
The narrow-prying father, Minola,
The quaint musician, amorous Licio;
All for my master's sake, Lucentio.

[Re-enter GREMIO.]

Signior Gremio, came you from the church?

GREMIO.

As willingly as e'er I came from school.

TRANIO.

And is the bride and bridegroom coming home?

GREMIO.

A bridegroom, say you? 'Tis a groom indeed,
A grumbling groom, and that the girl shall find.

TRANIO.

Curster than she? Why, 'tis impossible.

GREMIO.

Why, he's a devil, a devil, a very fiend.

TRANIO.

Why, she's a devil, a devil, the devil's dam.

GREMIO.

Tut! she's a lamb, a dove, a fool, to him.
I'll tell you, Sir Lucentio: when the priest
Should ask if Katherine should be his wife,
'Ay, by gogs-wouns' quoth he, and swore so loud
That, all amaz'd, the priest let fall the book;
And as he stoop'd again to take it up,
The mad-brain'd bridegroom took him such a cuff
That down fell priest and book, and book and priest:
'Now take them up,' quoth he 'if any list.'

TRANIO.

What said the wench, when he rose again?

GREMIO.

Trembled and shook, for why, he stamp'd and swore
As if the vicar meant to cozen him.
But after many ceremonies done,
He calls for wine: 'A health!' quoth he, as if
He had been abroad, carousing to his mates
After a storm; quaff'd off the muscadel,
And threw the sops all in the sexton's face,
Having no other reason
But that his beard grew thin and hungerly
And seem'd to ask him sops as he was drinking.
This done, he took the bride about the neck,
And kiss'd her lips with such a clamorous smack
That at the parting all the church did echo.
And I, seeing this, came thence for very shame;
And after me, I know, the rout is coming.
Such a mad marriage never was before.
Hark, hark! I hear the minstrels play.

[Music.]

[Enter PETRUCHIO, KATHERINA, BIANCA, BAPTISTA, HORTENSIO,
GRUMIO, and Train.]

PETRUCHIO.

Gentlemen and friends, I thank you for your pains:
I know you think to dine with me to-day,
And have prepar'd great store of wedding cheer

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

But so it is-- my haste doth call me hence,
And therefore here I mean to take my leave.

BAPTISTA.

Is't possible you will away to--night?

PETRUCHIO.

I must away to--day before night come.
Make it no wonder: if you knew my business,
You would entreat me rather go than stay.
And, honest company, I thank you all,
That have beheld me give away myself
To this most patient, sweet, and virtuous wife.
Dine with my father, drink a health to me.
For I must hence; and farewell to you all.

TRANIO.

Let us entreat you stay till after dinner.

PETRUCHIO.

It may not be.

GREMIO.

Let me entreat you.

PETRUCHIO.

It cannot be.

KATHERINA.

Let me entreat you.

PETRUCHIO.

I am content.

KATHERINA.

Are you content to stay?

PETRUCHIO.

I am content you shall entreat me stay;
But yet not stay, entreat me how you can.

KATHERINA.

Now, if you love me, stay.

PETRUCHIO.

Grumio, my horse!

GRUMIO.

Ay, sir, they be ready; the oats have eaten the horses.

KATHERINA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Nay, then,
Do what thou canst, I will not go to-day;
No, nor to-morrow, not till I please myself.
The door is open, sir; there lies your way;
You may be jogging whiles your boots are green;
For me, I'll not be gone till I please myself.
'Tis like you'll prove a jolly surly groom
That take it on you at the first so roundly.

PETRUCHIO.

O Kate! content thee: prithee be not angry.

KATHERINA.

I will be angry: what hast thou to do?
Father, be quiet; he shall stay my leisure.

GREMIO.

Ay, marry, sir, now it begins to work.

KATHERINA.

Gentlemen, forward to the bridal dinner:
I see a woman may be made a fool,
If she had not a spirit to resist.

PETRUCHIO.

They shall go forward, Kate, at thy command.
Obey the bride, you that attend on her;
Go to the feast, revel and domineer,
Carouse full measure to her maidenhead,
Be mad and merry, or go hang yourselves:
But for my bonny Kate, she must with me.
Nay, look not big, nor stamp, nor stare, nor fret;
I will be master of what is mine own.
She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house,
My household stuff, my field, my barn,
My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything;
And here she stands, touch her whoever dare;
I'll bring mine action on the proudest he
That stops my way in Padua. Grumio,
Draw forth thy weapon; we are beset with thieves;
Rescue thy mistress, if thou be a man.
Fear not, sweet wench; they shall not touch thee, Kate;
I'll buckler thee against a million.

[Exeunt PETRUCHIO, KATHERINA, and GRUMIO.]

BAPTISTA.

Nay, let them go, a couple of quiet ones.

GREMIO.

Went they not quickly, I should die with laughing.

ACT 4.

TRANIO.

Of all mad matches, never was the like.

LUCENTIO.

Mistress, what's your opinion of your sister?

BIANCA.

That, being mad herself, she's madly mated.

GREMIO.

I warrant him, Petruchio is Kated.

BAPTISTA.

Neighbours and friends, though bride and bridegroom wants
For to supply the places at the table,
You know there wants no junkets at the feast.
Lucentio, you shall supply the bridegroom's place;
And let Bianca take her sister's room.

TRANIO.

Shall sweet Bianca practise how to bride it?

BAPTISTA.

She shall, Lucentio. Come, gentlemen, let's go.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. A hall in PETRUCHIO'S country house.

[Enter GRUMIO.]

GRUMIO.

Fie, fie on all tired jades, on all mad masters, and all
foul ways! Was ever man so beaten? Was ever man so ray'd? Was
ever man so weary? I am sent before to make a fire, and they are
coming after to warm them. Now, were not I a little pot and soon
hot, my very lips might freeze to my teeth, my tongue to the roof
of my mouth, my heart in my belly, ere I should come by a fire to
thaw me. But I with blowing the fire shall warm myself; for,
considering the weather, a taller man than I will take cold.
Holla, ho! Curtis!

[Enter CURTIS.]

CURTIS.

Who is that calls so coldly?

GRUMIO.

A piece of ice: if thou doubt it, thou mayst slide from my shoulder to my heel with no greater a run but my head and my neck. A fire, good Curtis.

CURTIS.

Is my master and his wife coming, Grumio?

GRUMIO.

O, ay! Curtis, ay; and therefore fire, fire; cast on no water.

CURTIS.

Is she so hot a shrew as she's reported?

GRUMIO.

She was, good Curtis, before this frost; but thou knowest winter tames man, woman, and beast; for it hath tamed my old master, and my new mistress, and myself, fellow Curtis.

CURTIS.

Away, you three-inch fool! I am no beast.

GRUMIO.

Am I but three inches? Why, thy horn is a foot; and so long am I at the least. But wilt thou make a fire, or shall I complain on thee to our mistress, whose hand,--she being now at hand,-- thou shalt soon feel, to thy cold comfort, for being slow in thy hot office?

CURTIS.

I prithee, good Grumio, tell me, how goes the world?

GRUMIO.

A cold world, Curtis, in every office but thine; and therefore fire. Do thy duty, and have thy duty, for my master and mistress are almost frozen to death.

CURTIS.

There's fire ready; and therefore, good Grumio, the news?

GRUMIO.

Why, 'Jack boy! ho, boy!' and as much news as thou wilt.

CURTIS.

Come, you are so full of cony-catching.

GRUMIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Why, therefore, fire; for I have caught extreme cold.
Where's the cook? Is supper ready, the house trimmed, rushes
strewed, cobwebs swept, the serving-men in their new fustian,
their white stockings, and every officer his wedding-garment on?
Be the Jacks fair within, the Jills fair without, and carpets
laid, and everything in order?

CURTIS.

All ready; and therefore, I pray thee, news?

GRUMIO.

First, know my horse is tired; my master and mistress fallen out.

CURTIS.

How?

GRUMIO.

Out of their saddles into the dirt; and thereby hangs a tale.

CURTIS.

Let's ha't, good Grumio.

GRUMIO.

Lend thine ear.

CURTIS.

Here.

GRUMIO.

[Striking him.] There.

CURTIS.

This 'tis to feel a tale, not to hear a tale.

GRUMIO.

And therefore 'tis called a sensible tale; and this cuff
was but to knock at your ear and beseech listening. Now I begin:
Imprimis, we came down a foul hill, my master riding behind my
mistress,--

CURTIS.

Both of one horse?

GRUMIO.

What's that to thee?

CURTIS.

Why, a horse.

GRUMIO.

Tell thou the tale: but hadst thou not crossed me, thou

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

shouldst have heard how her horse fell and she under her horse;
thou shouldst have heard in how miry a place, how she was
bemoiled; how he left her with the horse upon her; how he beat me
because her horse stumbled; how she waded through the dirt to
pluck him off me: how he swore; how she prayed, that never prayed
before; how I cried; how the horses ran away; how her bridle was
burst; how I lost my crupper; with many things of worthy memory,
which now shall die in oblivion, and thou return unexperienced to
thy grave.

CURTIS.

By this reckoning he is more shrew than she.

GRUMIO.

Ay; and that thou and the proudest of you all shall find
when he comes home. But what talk I of this? Call forth
Nathaniel, Joseph, Nicholas, Philip, Walter, Sugarsop, and the
rest; let their heads be sleekly combed, their blue coats brush'd
and their garters of an indifferent knit; let them curtsy with
their left legs, and not presume to touch a hair of my master's
horse-tail till they kiss their hands. Are they all ready?

CURTIS.

They are.

GRUMIO.

Call them forth.

CURTIS.

Do you hear? ho! You must meet my master to countenance my
mistress.

GRUMIO.

Why, she hath a face of her own.

CURTIS.

Who knows not that?

GRUMIO.

Thou, it seems, that calls for company to countenance her.

CURTIS.

I call them forth to credit her.

GRUMIO.

Why, she comes to borrow nothing of them.

[Enter several SERVANTS.]

NATHANIEL.

Welcome home, Grumio!

ACT 4.

PHILIP.

How now, Grumio!

JOSEPH.

What, Grumio!

NICHOLAS.

Fellow Grumio!

NATHANIEL.

How now, old lad!

GRUMIO.

Welcome, you; how now, you; what, you; fellow, you;
and thus much for greeting. Now, my spruce companions, is all
ready, and all things neat?

NATHANIEL.

All things is ready. How near is our master?

GRUMIO.

E'en at hand, alighted by this; and therefore be not,--
Cock's passion, silence! I hear my master.

[Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHERINA.]

PETRUCHIO.

Where be these knaves? What! no man at door
To hold my stirrup nor to take my horse?
Where is Nathaniel, Gregory, Philip?--

ALL SERVANTS.

Here, here, sir; here, sir.

PETRUCHIO.

Here, sir! here, sir! here, sir! here, sir!
You logger-headed and unpolish'd grooms!
What, no attendance? no regard? no duty?
Where is the foolish knave I sent before?

GRUMIO.

Here, sir; as foolish as I was before.

PETRUCHIO.

You peasant swain! you whoreson malt-horse drudge!
Did I not bid thee meet me in the park,
And bring along these rascal knaves with thee?

GRUMIO.

Nathaniel's coat, sir, was not fully made,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And Gabriel's pumps were all unpink'd i' the heel;
There was no link to colour Peter's hat,
And Walter's dagger was not come from sheathing;
There was none fine but Adam, Ralph, and Gregory;
The rest were ragged, old, and beggarly;
Yet, as they are, here are they come to meet you.

PETRUCHIO.

Go, rascals, go and fetch my supper in.

[Exeunt some of the SERVANTS.]

Where is the life that late I led?
Where are those--? Sit down, Kate, and welcome.
Soud, soud, soud, soud!

[Re-enter SERVANTS with supper.]

Why, when, I say?--Nay, good sweet Kate, be merry.--
Off with my boots, you rogues! you villains! when?
It was the friar of orders grey,
As he forth walked on his way:
Out, you rogue! you pluck my foot awry:

[Strikes him.]

Take that, and mend the plucking off the other.
Be merry, Kate. Some water, here; what, ho!
Where's my spaniel Troilus? Sirrah, get you hence
And bid my cousin Ferdinand come hither:

[Exit SERVANT.]

One, Kate, that you must kiss and be acquainted with.
Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?
Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.--

[SERVANT lets the ewer fall. PETRUCHIO strikes him.]

You whoreson villain! will you let it fall?

KATHERINA.

Patience, I pray you; 'twas a fault unwilling.

PETRUCHIO.

A whoreson, beetle-headed, flap-ear'd knave!
Come, Kate, sit down; I know you have a stomach.
Will you give thanks, sweet Kate, or else shall I?--
What's this? Mutton?

FIRST SERVANT.

ACT 4.

Ay.

PETRUCHIO.

Who brought it?

PETER.

I.

PETRUCHIO.

'Tis burnt; and so is all the meat.
What dogs are these! Where is the rascal cook?
How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser,
And serve it thus to me that love it not?

[Throws the meat, etc., at them.]

There, take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all.
You heedless joltheads and unmanner'd slaves!
What! do you grumble? I'll be with you straight.

KATHERINA.

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet;
The meat was well, if you were so contented.

PETRUCHIO.

I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away,
And I expressly am forbid to touch it;
For it engenders choler, planteth anger;
And better 'twere that both of us did fast,
Since, of ourselves, ourselves are choleric,
Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.
Be patient; to-morrow 't shall be mended.
And for this night we'll fast for company:
Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

[Exeunt PETRUCHIO, KATHERINA, and CURTIS.]

NATHANIEL.

Peter, didst ever see the like?

PETER.

He kills her in her own humour.

[Re-enter CURTIS.]

GRUMIO.

Where is he?

CURTIS.

In her chamber, making a sermon of continency to her;
And rails, and swears, and rates, that she, poor soul,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Knows not which way to stand, to look, to speak,
And sits as one new risen from a dream.
Away, away! for he is coming hither.

[Exeunt.]

[Re-enter PETRUCHIO.]

PETRUCHIO.

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,
And 'tis my hope to end successfully.
My falcon now is sharp and passing empty.
And till she stoop she must not be full-gorg'd,
For then she never looks upon her lure.
Another way I have to man my haggard,
To make her come, and know her keeper's call,
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
That bate and beat, and will not be obedient.
She eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;
Last night she slept not, nor to-night she shall not;
As with the meat, some undeserved fault
I'll find about the making of the bed;
And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,
This way the coverlet, another way the sheets;
Ay, and amid this hurly I intend
That all is done in reverend care of her;
And, in conclusion, she shall watch all night:
And if she chance to nod I'll rail and brawl,
And with the clamour keep her still awake.
This is a way to kill a wife with kindness;
And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humour.
He that knows better how to tame a shrew,
Now let him speak; 'tis charity to show.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. Padua. Before BAPTISTA'S house.

[Enter TRANIO and HORTENSIO.]

TRANIO.

Is 't possible, friend Licio, that Mistress Bianca
Doth fancy any other but Lucentio?
I tell you, sir, she bears me fair in hand.

HORTENSIO.

Sir, to satisfy you in what I have said,
Stand by and mark the manner of his teaching.

ACT 4.

[They stand aside.]

[Enter BIANCA and LUCENTIO.]

LUCENTIO.

Now, mistress, profit you in what you read?

BIANCA.

What, master, read you, First resolve me that.

LUCENTIO.

I read that I profess, the Art to Love.

BIANCA.

And may you prove, sir, master of your art!

LUCENTIO.

While you, sweet dear, prove mistress of my heart.

[They retire.]

HORTENSIO.

Quick proceeders, marry! Now tell me, I pray,
You that durst swear that your Mistress Bianca
Lov'd none in the world so well as Lucentio.

TRANIO.

O spiteful love! unconstant womankind!
I tell thee, Licio, this is wonderful.

HORTENSIO.

Mistake no more; I am not Licio.
Nor a musician as I seem to be;
But one that scorn to live in this disguise
For such a one as leaves a gentleman
And makes a god of such a cullion:
Know, sir, that I am call'd Hortensio.

TRANIO.

Signior Hortensio, I have often heard
Of your entire affection to Bianca;
And since mine eyes are witness of her lightness,
I will with you, if you be so contented,
Forswear Bianca and her love for ever.

HORTENSIO.

See, how they kiss and court! Signior Lucentio,
Here is my hand, and here I firmly vow
Never to woo her more, but do forswear her,
As one unworthy all the former favours
That I have fondly flatter'd her withal.

ACT 4.

TRANIO.

And here I take the like unfeigned oath,
Never to marry with her though she would entreat;
Fie on her! See how beastly she doth court him!

HORTENSIO.

Would all the world but he had quite forsworn!
For me, that I may surely keep mine oath,
I will be married to a wealthy widow
Ere three days pass, which hath as long lov'd me
As I have lov'd this proud disdainful haggard.
And so farewell, Signior Lucentio.
Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks,
Shall win my love; and so I take my leave,
In resolution as I swore before.

[Exit HORTENSIO. LUCENTIO and BIANCA advance.]

TRANIO.

Mistress Bianca, bless you with such grace
As 'longeth to a lover's blessed case!
Nay, I have ta'en you napping, gentle love,
And have forsworn you with Hortensio.

BIANCA.

Tranio, you jest; but have you both forsworn me?

TRANIO.

Mistress, we have.

LUCENTIO.

Then we are rid of Licio.

TRANIO.

I' faith, he'll have a lusty widow now,
That shall be woo'd and wedded in a day.

BIANCA.

God give him joy!

TRANIO.

Ay, and he'll tame her.

BIANCA.

He says so, Tranio.

TRANIO.

Faith, he is gone unto the taming-school.

BIANCA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

The taming-school! What, is there such a place?

TRANIO.

Ay, mistress; and Petruchio is the master,
That teacheth tricks eleven and twenty long,
To tame a shrew and charm her chattering tongue.

[Enter BIONDELLO, running.]

BIONDELLO.

O master, master! I have watch'd so long
That I am dog-weary; but at last I spied
An ancient angel coming down the hill
Will serve the turn.

TRANIO.

What is he, Biondello?

BIONDELLO.

Master, a mercatante or a pedant,
I know not what; but formal in apparel,
In gait and countenance surely like a father.

LUCENTIO.

And what of him, Tranio?

TRANIO.

If he be credulous and trust my tale,
I'll make him glad to seem Vincentio,
And give assurance to Baptista Minola,
As if he were the right Vincentio.
Take in your love, and then let me alone.

[Exeunt LUCENTIO and BIANCA.]

[Enter a PEDANT.]

PEDANT.

God save you, sir!

TRANIO.

And you, sir! you are welcome.
Travel you far on, or are you at the farthest?

PEDANT.

Sir, at the farthest for a week or two;
But then up farther, and as far as Rome;
And so to Tripoli, if God lend me life.

TRANIO.

What countryman, I pray?

ACT 4.

PEDANT.

Of Mantua.

TRANIO.

Of Mantua, sir? Marry, God forbid,
And come to Padua, careless of your life!

PEDANT.

My life, sir! How, I pray? for that goes hard.

TRANIO.

'Tis death for any one in Mantua
To come to Padua. Know you not the cause?
Your ships are stay'd at Venice; and the duke,---
For private quarrel 'twixt your duke and him,---
Hath publish'd and proclaim'd it openly.
'Tis marvel, but that you are but newly come
You might have heard it else proclaim'd about.

PEDANT.

Alas, sir! it is worse for me than so;
For I have bills for money by exchange
From Florence, and must here deliver them.

TRANIO.

Well, sir, to do you courtesy,
This will I do, and this I will advise you:
First, tell me, have you ever been at Pisa?

PEDANT.

Ay, sir, in Pisa have I often been,
Pisa renowned for grave citizens.

TRANIO.

Among them know you one Vincentio?

PEDANT.

I know him not, but I have heard of him,
A merchant of incomparable wealth.

TRANIO.

He is my father, sir; and, sooth to say,
In countenance somewhat doth resemble you.

BIONDELLO.

[Aside.] As much as an apple doth an oyster, and all one.

TRANIO.

To save your life in this extremity,
This favour will I do you for his sake;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And think it not the worst of all your fortunes
That you are like to Sir Vincentio.
His name and credit shall you undertake,
And in my house you shall be friendly lodg'd;
Look that you take upon you as you should!
You understand me, sir; so shall you stay
Till you have done your business in the city.
If this be courtesy, sir, accept of it.

PEDANT.

O, sir, I do; and will repute you ever
The patron of my life and liberty.

TRANIO.

Then go with me to make the matter good.
This, by the way, I let you understand:
My father is here look'd for every day
To pass assurance of a dower in marriage
'Twixt me and one Baptista's daughter here:
In all these circumstances I'll instruct you.
Go with me to clothe you as becomes you.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. A room in PETRUCHIO'S house.

[Enter KATHERINA and GRUMIO.]

GRUMIO.

No, no, forsooth; I dare not for my life.

KATHERINA.

The more my wrong, the more his spite appears.
What, did he marry me to famish me?
Beggars that come unto my father's door
Upon entreaty have a present alms;
If not, elsewhere they meet with charity;
But I, who never knew how to entreat,
Nor never needed that I should entreat,
Am starv'd for meat, giddy for lack of sleep;
With oaths kept waking, and with brawling fed.
And that which spites me more than all these wants,
He does it under name of perfect love;
As who should say, if I should sleep or eat
'Twere deadly sickness, or else present death.
I prithee go and get me some repast;
I care not what, so it be wholesome food.

GRUMIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

What say you to a neat's foot?

KATHERINA.

'Tis passing good; I prithee let me have it.

GRUMIO.

I fear it is too choleric a meat.
How say you to a fat tripe finely broil'd?

KATHERINA.

I like it well; good Grumio, fetch it me.

GRUMIO.

I cannot tell; I fear 'tis choleric.
What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?

KATHERINA.

A dish that I do love to feed upon.

GRUMIO.

Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.

KATHERINA.

Why then the beef, and let the mustard rest.

GRUMIO.

Nay, then I will not: you shall have the mustard,
Or else you get no beef of Grumio.

KATHERINA.

Then both, or one, or anything thou wilt.

GRUMIO.

Why then the mustard without the beef.

KATHERINA.

Go, get thee gone, thou false deluding slave,

[Beats him.]

That feed'st me with the very name of meat.
Sorrow on thee and all the pack of you
That triumph thus upon my misery!
Go, get thee gone, I say.

[Enter PETRUCHIO with a dish of meat; and HORTENSIO.]

PETRUCHIO.

How fares my Kate? What, sweeting, all amorf?

HORTENSIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Mistress, what cheer?

KATHERINA.

Faith, as cold as can be.

PETRUCHIO.

Pluck up thy spirits; look cheerfully upon me.
Here, love; thou seest how diligent I am,
To dress thy meat myself, and bring it thee:

[Sets the dish on a table.]

I am sure, sweet Kate, this kindness merits thanks.
What! not a word? Nay, then thou lov'st it not,
And all my pains is sorted to no proof.
Here, take away this dish.

KATHERINA.

I pray you, let it stand.

PETRUCHIO.

The poorest service is repaid with thanks;
And so shall mine, before you touch the meat.

KATHERINA.

I thank you, sir.

HORTENSIO.

Signior Petruchio, fie! you are to blame.
Come, Mistress Kate, I'll bear you company.

PETRUCHIO.

[Aside.] Eat it up all, Hortensio, if thou lovest me.
Much good do it unto thy gentle heart!
Kate, eat apace: and now, my honey love,
Will we return unto thy father's house
And revel it as bravely as the best,
With silken coats and caps, and golden rings,
With ruffs and cuffs and farthingales and things;
With scarfs and fans and double change of bravery,
With amber bracelets, beads, and all this knavery.
What! hast thou din'd? The tailor stays thy leisure,
To deck thy body with his ruffling treasure.

[Enter TAILOR.]

Come, tailor, let us see these ornaments;
Lay forth the gown.--

[Enter HABERDASHER.]

What news with you, sir?

HABERDASHER.

Here is the cap your worship did bespeak.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, this was moulded on a porringer;
A velvet dish: fie, fie! 'tis lewd and filthy:
Why, 'tis a cockle or a walnut-shell,
A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap:
Away with it! come, let me have a bigger.

KATHERINA.

I'll have no bigger; this doth fit the time,
And gentlewomen wear such caps as these.

PETRUCHIO.

When you are gentle, you shall have one too,
And not till then.

HORTENSIO.

[Aside] That will not be in haste.

KATHERINA.

Why, sir, I trust I may have leave to speak;
And speak I will. I am no child, no babe.
Your betters have endur'd me say my mind,
And if you cannot, best you stop your ears.
My tongue will tell the anger of my heart,
Or else my heart, concealing it, will break;
And rather than it shall, I will be free
Even to the uttermost, as I please, in words.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, thou say'st true; it is a paltry cap,
A custard-coffin, a bauble, a silken pie;
I love thee well in that thou lik'st it not.

KATHERINA.

Love me or love me not, I like the cap;
And it I will have, or I will have none.

[Exit HABERDASHER.]

PETRUCHIO.

Thy gown? Why, ay: come, tailor, let us see't.
O mercy, God! what masquing stuff is here?
What's this? A sleeve? 'Tis like a demi-cannon.
What, up and down, carv'd like an appletart?
Here's snip and nip and cut and slish and slash,
Like to a censer in a barber's shop.

Why, what i' devil's name, tailor, call'st thou this?

HORTENSIO.

[Aside] I see she's like to have neither cap nor gown.

TAILOR.

You bid me make it orderly and well,
According to the fashion and the time.

PETRUCHIO.

Marry, and did; but if you be remember'd,
I did not bid you mar it to the time.
Go, hop me over every kennel home,
For you shall hop without my custom, sir.
I'll none of it: hence! make your best of it.

KATHERINA.

I never saw a better fashion'd gown,
More quaint, more pleasing, nor more commendable;
Belike you mean to make a puppet of me.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, true; he means to make a puppet of thee.

TAILOR.

She says your worship means to make a puppet of her.

PETRUCHIO.

O monstrous arrogance! Thou liest, thou thread,
Thou thimble,
Thou yard, three-quarters, half-yard, quarter, nail!
Thou flea, thou nit, thou winter-cricket thou!
Brav'd in mine own house with a skein of thread!
Away! thou rag, thou quantity, thou remnant,
Or I shall so be-mete thee with thy yard
As thou shalt think on prating whilst thou liv'st!
I tell thee, I, that thou hast marr'd her gown.

TAILOR.

Your worship is deceiv'd: the gown is made
Just as my master had direction.
Grumio gave order how it should be done.

GRUMIO.

I gave him no order; I gave him the stuff.

TAILOR.

But how did you desire it should be made?

GRUMIO.

Marry, sir, with needle and thread.

ACT 4.

TAILOR.

But did you not request to have it cut?

GRUMIO.

Thou hast faced many things.

TAILOR.

I have.

GRUMIO.

Face not me. Thou hast braved many men; brave not me: I will neither be fac'd nor brav'd. I say unto thee, I bid thy master cut out the gown; but I did not bid him cut it to pieces: ergo, thou liest.

TAILOR.

Why, here is the note of the fashion to testify.

PETRUCHIO.

Read it.

GRUMIO.

The note lies in 's throat, if he say I said so.

TAILOR.

'Imprimis, a loose-bodied gown.'

GRUMIO.

Master, if ever I said loose-bodied gown, sew me in the skirts of it and beat me to death with a bottom of brown thread; I said, a gown.

PETRUCHIO.

Proceed.

TAILOR.

'With a small compassed cape.'

GRUMIO.

I confess the cape.

TAILOR.

'With a trunk sleeve.'

GRUMIO.

I confess two sleeves.

TAILOR.

'The sleeves curiously cut.'

PETRUCHIO.

Ay, there's the villainy.

GRUMIO.

Error i' the bill, sir; error i' the bill. I commanded the sleeves should be cut out, and sew'd up again; and that I'll prove upon thee, though thy little finger be armed in a thimble.

TAILOR.

This is true that I say; an I had thee in place where thou shouldst know it.

GRUMIO.

I am for thee straight; take thou the bill, give me thy mete-yard, and spare not me.

HORTENSIO.

God-a-mercy, Grumio! Then he shall have no odds.

PETRUCHIO.

Well, sir, in brief, the gown is not for me.

GRUMIO.

You are i' the right, sir; 'tis for my mistress.

PETRUCHIO.

Go, take it up unto thy master's use.

GRUMIO.

Villain, not for thy life! Take up my mistress' gown for thy master's use!

PETRUCHIO.

Why, sir, what's your conceit in that?

GRUMIO.

O, sir, the conceit is deeper than you think for.
Take up my mistress' gown to his master's use!
O fie, fie, fie!

PETRUCHIO.

[Aside] Hortensio, say thou wilt see the tailor paid.
[To Tailor.] Go take it hence; be gone, and say no more.

HORTENSIO.

[Aside to Tailor.] Tailor, I'll pay thee for thy gown to-morrow;
Take no unkindness of his hasty words.
Away, I say! commend me to thy master.

[Exit TAILOR.]

PETRUCHIO.

Well, come, my Kate; we will unto your father's
Even in these honest mean habiliments.
Our purses shall be proud, our garments poor
For 'tis the mind that makes the body rich;
And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
So honour peereth in the meanest habit.
What, is the jay more precious than the lark
Because his feathers are more beautiful?
Or is the adder better than the eel
Because his painted skin contents the eye?
O no, good Kate; neither art thou the worse
For this poor furniture and mean array.
If thou account'st it shame, lay it on me;
And therefore frolic; we will hence forthwith,
To feast and sport us at thy father's house.
Go call my men, and let us straight to him;
And bring our horses unto Long-lane end;
There will we mount, and thither walk on foot.
Let's see; I think 'tis now some seven o'clock,
And well we may come there by dinner-time.

KATHERINA.

I dare assure you, sir, 'tis almost two,
And 'twill be supper-time ere you come there.

PETRUCHIO.

It shall be seven ere I go to horse.
Look what I speak, or do, or think to do,
You are still crossing it. Sirs, let 't alone:
I will not go to-day; and ere I do,
It shall be what o'clock I say it is.

HORTENSIO.

Why, so this gallant will command the sun.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. Padua. Before BAPTISTA'S house.

[Enter TRANIO, and the PEDANT dressed like VINCENTIO.]

TRANIO.

Sir, this is the house; please it you that I call?

PEDANT.

Ay, what else? and, but I be deceived,
Signior Baptista may remember me,
Near twenty years ago in Genoa,

ACT 4.

Where we were lodgers at the Pegasus.

TRANIO.

'Tis well; and hold your own, in any case,
With such austerity as 'longeth to a father.

PEDANT.

I warrant you. But, sir, here comes your boy;
'Twere good he were school'd.

[Enter BIONDELLO.]

TRANIO.

Fear you not him. Sirrah Biondello,
Now do your duty throughly, I advise you.
Imagine 'twere the right Vincentio.

BIONDELLO.

Tut! fear not me.

TRANIO.

But hast thou done thy errand to Baptista?

BIONDELLO.

I told him that your father was at Venice,
And that you look'd for him this day in Padua.

TRANIO.

Thou'rt a tall fellow; hold thee that to drink.
Here comes Baptista. Set your countenance, sir.

[Enter BAPTISTA and LUCENTIO.]

Signior Baptista, you are happily met.

[To the PEDANT] Sir, this is the gentleman I told you of;
I pray you stand good father to me now;
Give me Bianca for my patrimony.

PEDANT.

Soft, son!

Sir, by your leave: having come to Padua
To gather in some debts, my son Lucentio
Made me acquainted with a weighty cause
Of love between your daughter and himself:
And,--for the good report I hear of you,
And for the love he beareth to your daughter,
And she to him,--to stay him not too long,
I am content, in a good father's care,
To have him match'd; and, if you please to like
No worse than I, upon some agreement
Me shall you find ready and willing

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

With one consent to have her so bestow'd;
For curious I cannot be with you,
Signior Baptista, of whom I hear so well.

BAPTISTA.

Sir, pardon me in what I have to say.
Your plainness and your shortness please me well.
Right true it is your son Lucentio here
Doth love my daughter, and she loveth him,
Or both dissemble deeply their affections;
And therefore, if you say no more than this,
That like a father you will deal with him,
And pass my daughter a sufficient dower,
The match is made, and all is done:
Your son shall have my daughter with consent.

TRANIO.

I thank you, sir. Where then do you know best
We be affied, and such assurance ta'en
As shall with either part's agreement stand?

BAPTISTA.

Not in my house, Lucentio, for you know
Pitchers have ears, and I have many servants;
Besides, old Gremio is hearkening still,
And happily we might be interrupted.

TRANIO.

Then at my lodging, an it like you:
There doth my father lie; and there this night
We'll pass the business privately and well.
Send for your daughter by your servant here;
My boy shall fetch the scrivener presently.
The worst is this, that at so slender warning
You are like to have a thin and slender pittance.

BAPTISTA.

It likes me well. Cambio, hie you home,
And bid Bianca make her ready straight;
And, if you will, tell what hath happened:
Lucentio's father is arriv'd in Padua,
And how she's like to be Lucentio's wife.

LUCENTIO.

I pray the gods she may, with all my heart!

TRANIO.

Dally not with the gods, but get thee gone.
Signior Baptista, shall I lead the way?
Welcome! One mess is like to be your cheer;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Come, sir; we will better it in Pisa.

BAPTISTA.

I follow you.

[Exeunt TRANIO, Pedant, and BAPTISTA.]

BIONDELLO.

Cambio!

LUCENTIO.

What say'st thou, Biondello?

BIONDELLO.

You saw my master wink and laugh upon you?

LUCENTIO.

Biondello, what of that?

BIONDELLO.

Faith, nothing; but has left me here behind to expound the meaning or moral of his signs and tokens.

LUCENTIO.

I pray thee moralize them.

BIONDELLO.

Then thus: Baptista is safe, talking with the deceiving father of a deceitful son.

LUCENTIO.

And what of him?

BIONDELLO.

His daughter is to be brought by you to the supper.

LUCENTIO.

And then?

BIONDELLO.

The old priest at Saint Luke's church is at your command at all hours.

LUCENTIO.

And what of all this?

BIONDELLO.

I cannot tell, except they are busied about a counterfeit assurance. Take your assurance of her, cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum; to the church! take the priest, clerk, and some sufficient honest witnesses.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

If this be not that you look for, I have more to say,
But bid Bianca farewell for ever and a day.

[Going.]

LUCENTIO.

Hear'st thou, Biondello?

BIONDELLO.

I cannot tarry: I knew a wench married in an afternoon
as she went to the garden for parsley to stuff a rabbit; and so
may you, sir; and so adieu, sir. My master hath appointed me to
go to Saint Luke's to bid the priest be ready to come against you
come with your appendix.

[Exit.]

LUCENTIO.

I may, and will, if she be so contented.
She will be pleas'd; then wherefore should I doubt?
Hap what hap may, I'll roundly go about her;
It shall go hard if Cambio go without her:

[Exit.]

SCENE V. A public road

[Enter PETRUCHIO, KATHERINA, HORTENSIO, and SERVANTS.]

PETRUCHIO.

Come on, i' God's name; once more toward our father's.
Good Lord, how bright and goodly shines the moon!

KATHERINA.

The moon! The sun; it is not moonlight now.

PETRUCHIO.

I say it is the moon that shines so bright.

KATHERINA.

I know it is the sun that shines so bright.

PETRUCHIO.

Now by my mother's son, and that's myself,
It shall be moon, or star, or what I list,
Or ere I journey to your father's house.
Go on and fetch our horses back again.
Evermore cross'd and cross'd; nothing but cross'd!

ACT 4.

HORTENSIO.

Say as he says, or we shall never go.

KATHERINA.

Forward, I pray, since we have come so far,
And be it moon, or sun, or what you please;
And if you please to call it a rush-candle,
Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.

PETRUCHIO.

I say it is the moon.

KATHERINA.

I know it is the moon.

PETRUCHIO.

Nay, then you lie; it is the blessed sun.

KATHERINA.

Then, God be bless'd, it is the blessed sun;
But sun it is not when you say it is not,
And the moon changes even as your mind.
What you will have it nam'd, even that it is,
And so it shall be so for Katherine.

HORTENSIO.

Petruchio, go thy ways; the field is won.

PETRUCHIO.

Well, forward, forward! thus the bowl should run,
And not unluckily against the bias.
But, soft! Company is coming here.

[Enter VINCENTIO, in a travelling dress.]

[To VINCENTIO] Good-morrow, gentle mistress; where away?
Tell me, sweet Kate, and tell me truly too,
Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman?
Such war of white and red within her cheeks!
What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty
As those two eyes become that heavenly face?
Fair lovely maid, once more good day to thee.
Sweet Kate, embrace her for her beauty's sake.

HORTENSIO.

'A will make the man mad, to make a woman of him.

KATHERINA.

Young budding virgin, fair and fresh and sweet,
Whither away, or where is thy abode?
Happy the parents of so fair a child;

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Happier the man whom favourable stars
Allot thee for his lovely bed-fellow.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, how now, Kate! I hope thou art not mad:
This is a man, old, wrinkled, faded, wither'd,
And not a maiden, as thou sayst he is.

KATHERINA.

Pardon, old father, my mistaking eyes,
That have been so bedazzled with the sun
That everything I look on seemeth green:
Now I perceive thou art a reverend father;
Pardon, I pray thee, for my mad mistaking.

PETRUCHIO.

Do, good old grandsire, and withal make known
Which way thou travellest: if along with us,
We shall be joyful of thy company.

VINCENTIO.

Fair sir, and you my merry mistress,
That with your strange encounter much amaz'd me,
My name is called Vincentio; my dwelling Pisa;
And bound I am to Padua, there to visit
A son of mine, which long I have not seen.

PETRUCHIO.

What is his name?

VINCENTIO.

Lucentio, gentle sir.

PETRUCHIO.

Happily met; the happier for thy son.
And now by law, as well as reverend age,
I may entitle thee my loving father:
The sister to my wife, this gentlewoman,
Thy son by this hath married. Wonder not,
Nor be not griev'd: she is of good esteem,
Her dowry wealthy, and of worthy birth;
Beside, so qualified as may beseem
The spouse of any noble gentleman.
Let me embrace with old Vincentio;
And wander we to see thy honest son,
Who will of thy arrival be full joyous.

VINCENTIO.

But is this true? or is it else your pleasure,
Like pleasant travellers, to break a jest
Upon the company you overtake?

ACT 4.

HORTENSIO.

I do assure thee, father, so it is.

PETRUCHIO.

Come, go along, and see the truth hereof;
For our first merriment hath made thee jealous.

[Exeunt all but HORTENSIO.]

HORTENSIO.

Well, Petruchio, this has put me in heart.
Have to my widow! and if she be froward,
Then hast thou taught Hortensio to be untoward.

[Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I. Padua. Before LUCENTIO'S house.

[Enter on one side BIONDELLO, LUCENTIO, and BIANCA; GREMIO walking on other side.]

BIONDELLO.

Softly and swiftly, sir, for the priest is ready.

LUCENTIO.

I fly, Biondello; but they may chance to need the at home, therefore leave us.

BIONDELLO.

Nay, faith, I'll see the church o' your back; and then come back to my master's as soon as I can.

[Exeunt LUCENTIO, BIANCA, and BIONDELLO.]

GREMIO.

I marvel Cambio comes not all this while.

[Enter PETRUCHIO, KATHERINA, VINCENTIO, and ATTENDANTS.]

PETRUCHIO.

Sir, here's the door; this is Lucentio's house:
My father's bears more toward the market-place;
Thither must I, and here I leave you, sir.

VINCENTIO.

You shall not choose but drink before you go.
I think I shall command your welcome here,
And by all likelihood some cheer is toward.

[Knocks.]

GREMIO.

They're busy within; you were best knock louder.

[Enter PEDANT above, at a window.]

PEDANT.

What's he that knocks as he would beat down the gate?

VINCENTIO.

Is Signior Lucentio within, sir?

PEDANT.

He's within, sir, but not to be spoken withal.

VINCENTIO.

What if a man bring him a hundred pound or two to make
merry withal?

PEDANT.

Keep your hundred pounds to yourself: he shall need none so
long as I live.

PETRUCHIO.

Nay, I told you your son was well beloved in Padua. Do
you hear, sir? To leave frivolous circumstances, I pray you tell
Signior Lucentio that his father is come from Pisa, and is here
at the door to speak with him.

PEDANT.

Thou liest: his father is come from Padua, and here looking
out at the window.

VINCENTIO.

Art thou his father?

PEDANT.

Ay, sir; so his mother says, if I may believe her.

PETRUCHIO.

[To VINCENTIO] Why, how now, gentleman! why, this is flat
knavery to take upon you another man's name.

PEDANT.

Lay hands on the villain: I believe 'a means to cozen

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

somebody in this city under my countenance.

[Re-enter BIONDELLO.]

BIONDELLO.

I have seen them in the church together: God send 'em good shipping! But who is here? Mine old master, Vincentio! Now we are undone and brought to nothing.

VINCENTIO.

[Seeing BIONDELLO.] Come hither, crack-hemp.

BIONDELLO.

I hope I may choose, sir.

VINCENTIO.

Come hither, you rogue. What, have you forgot me?

BIONDELLO.

Forgot you! No, sir: I could not forget you, for I never saw you before in all my life.

VINCENTIO.

What, you notorious villain! didst thou never see thy master's father, Vincentio?

BIONDELLO.

What, my old worshipful old master? Yes, marry, sir; see where he looks out of the window.

VINCENTIO.

Is't so, indeed?

[He beats BIONDELLO.]

BIONDELLO.

Help, help, help! here's a madman will murder me.

[Exit.]

PEDANT.

Help, son! help, Signior Baptista!

[Exit from the window.]

PETRUCHIO.

Prithee, Kate, let's stand aside and see the end of this controversy.

[They retire.]

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Re--enter PEDANT below; BAPTISTA, TRANIO, and SERVANTS.]

TRANIO.

Sir, what are you that offer to beat my servant?

VINCENTIO.

What am I, sir! nay, what are you, sir? O immortal gods!
O fine villain! A silken doublet, a velvet hose, a scarlet cloak,
and a copatain hat! O, I am undone! I am undone! While I play the
good husband at home, my son and my servant spend all at the
university.

TRANIO.

How now! what's the matter?

BAPTISTA.

What, is the man lunatic?

TRANIO.

Sir, you seem a sober ancient gentleman by your habit, but
your words show you a madman. Why, sir, what 'cerns it you if I
wear pearl and gold? I thank my good father, I am able to
maintain it.

VINCENTIO.

Thy father! O villain! he is a sailmaker in Bergamo.

BAPTISTA.

You mistake, sir; you mistake, sir. Pray, what do you
think is his name?

VINCENTIO.

His name! As if I knew not his name! I have brought him
up ever since he was three years old, and his name is Tranio.

PEDANT.

Away, away, mad ass! His name is Lucentio; and he is mine
only son, and heir to the lands of me, Signior Vicentio.

VINCENTIO.

Lucentio! O, he hath murdered his master! Lay hold on
him, I charge you, in the Duke's name. O, my son, my son! Tell
me, thou villain, where is my son, Lucentio?

TRANIO.

Call forth an officer.

[Enter one with an OFFICER.]

Carry this mad knave to the gaol. Father Baptista, I charge you
see that he be forthcoming.

ACT 4.

VINCENTIO.

Carry me to the gaol!

GREMIO.

Stay, officer; he shall not go to prison.

BAPTISTA.

Talk not, Signior Gremio; I say he shall go to prison.

GREMIO.

Take heed, Signior Baptista, lest you be cony-catched in this business; I dare swear this is the right Vincentio.

PEDANT.

Swear if thou darest.

GREMIO.

Nay, I dare not swear it.

TRANIO.

Then thou wert best say that I am not Lucentio.

GREMIO.

Yes, I know thee to be Signior Lucentio.

BAPTISTA.

Away with the dotard! to the gaol with him!

VINCENTIO.

Thus strangers may be haled and abus'd: O monstrous villain!

[Re-enter BIONDELLO, with LUCENTIO and BIANCA.]

BIONDELLO.

O! we are spoiled; and yonder he is: deny him, forswear him, or else we are all undone.

LUCENTIO.

[Kneeling.] Pardon, sweet father.

VINCENTIO.

Lives my sweetest son?

[BIONDELLO, TRANIO, and PEDANT, run out.]

BIANCA.

[Kneeling.] Pardon, dear father.

BAPTISTA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

How hast thou offended?
Where is Lucentio?

LUCENTIO.

Here's Lucentio,
Right son to the right Vincentio;
That have by marriage made thy daughter mine,
While counterfeit supposes blear'd thine eyne.

GREMIO.

Here 's packing, with a witness, to deceive us all!

VINCENTIO.

Where is that damned villain, Tranio,
That fac'd and brav'd me in this matter so?

BAPTISTA.

Why, tell me, is not this my Cambio?

BIANCA.

Cambio is chang'd into Lucentio.

LUCENTIO.

Love wrought these miracles. Bianca's love
Made me exchange my state with Tranio,
While he did bear my countenance in the town;
And happily I have arriv'd at the last
Unto the wished haven of my bliss.
What Tranio did, myself enforc'd him to;
Then pardon him, sweet father, for my sake.

VINCENTIO.

I'll slit the villain's nose that would have sent me to
the gaol.

BAPTISTA.

[To LUCENTIO.] But do you hear, sir? Have you married my
daughter without asking my good will?

VINCENTIO.

Fear not, Baptista; we will content you, go to: but I
will in, to be revenged for this villainy.

[Exit.]

BAPTISTA.

And I to sound the depth of this knavery.

[Exit.]

LUCENTIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Look not pale, Bianca; thy father will not frown.

[Exeunt LUCENTIO and BIANCA.]

GREMIO.

My cake is dough, but I'll in among the rest;
Out of hope of all but my share of the feast.

[Exit.]

[PETRUCHIO and KATHERINA advance.]

KATHERINA.

Husband, let's follow to see the end of this ado.

PETRUCHIO.

First kiss me, Kate, and we will.

KATHERINA.

What! in the midst of the street?

PETRUCHIO.

What! art thou ashamed of me?

KATHERINA.

No, sir; God forbid; but ashamed to kiss.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, then, let's home again. Come, sirrah, let's away.

KATHERINA.

Nay, I will give thee a kiss: now pray thee, love, stay.

PETRUCHIO.

Is not this well? Come, my sweet Kate:
Better once than never, for never too late.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. A room in LUCENTIO'S house.

[Enter BAPTISTA, VINCENTIO, GREMIO, the PEDANT, LUCENTIO, BIANCA, PETRUCHIO, KATHERINA, HORTENSIO, and WIDOW. TRANIO, BIONDELLO, and GRUMIO, and Others, attending.]

LUCENTIO.

At last, though long, our jarring notes agree:
And time it is when raging war is done,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

To smile at 'scapes and perils overblown.
My fair Bianca, bid my father welcome,
While I with self-same kindness welcome thine.
Brother Petruchio, sister Katherina,
And thou, Hortensio, with thy loving widow,
Feast with the best, and welcome to my house:
My banquet is to close our stomachs up,
After our great good cheer. Pray you, sit down;
For now we sit to chat as well as eat.

[They sit at table.]

PETRUCHIO.

Nothing but sit and sit, and eat and eat!

BAPTISTA.

Padua affords this kindness, son Petruchio.

PETRUCHIO.

Padua affords nothing but what is kind.

HORTENSIO.

For both our sakes I would that word were true.

PETRUCHIO.

Now, for my life, Hortensio fears his widow.

WIDOW.

Then never trust me if I be afeard.

PETRUCHIO.

You are very sensible, and yet you miss my sense:
I mean Hortensio is afeard of you.

WIDOW.

He that is giddy thinks the world turns round.

PETRUCHIO.

Roundly replied.

KATHERINA.

Mistress, how mean you that?

WIDOW.

Thus I conceive by him.

PETRUCHIO.

Conceives by me! How likes Hortensio that?

HORTENSIO.

My widow says thus she conceives her tale.

ACT 4.

PETRUCHIO.

Very well mended. Kiss him for that, good widow.

KATHERINA.

'He that is giddy thinks the world turns round':
I pray you tell me what you meant by that.

WIDOW.

Your husband, being troubled with a shrew,
Measures my husband's sorrow by his woe;
And now you know my meaning.

KATHERINA.

A very mean meaning.

WIDOW.

Right, I mean you.

KATHERINA.

And I am mean, indeed, respecting you.

PETRUCHIO.

To her, Kate!

HORTENSIO.

To her, widow!

PETRUCHIO.

A hundred marks, my Kate does put her down.

HORTENSIO.

That's my office.

PETRUCHIO.

Spoke like an officer: ha' to thee, lad.

[Drinks to HORTENSIO.]

BAPTISTA.

How likes Gremio these quick-witted folks?

GREMIO.

Believe me, sir, they butt together well.

BIANCA.

Head and butt! An hasty-witted body
Would say your head and butt were head and horn.

VINCENTIO.

Ay, mistress bride, hath that awaken'd you?

ACT 4.

BIANCA.

Ay, but not frighted me; therefore I'll sleep again.

PETRUCHIO.

Nay, that you shall not; since you have begun,
Have at you for a bitter jest or two.

BIANCA.

Am I your bird? I mean to shift my bush,
And then pursue me as you draw your bow.
You are welcome all.

[Exeunt BIANCA, KATHERINA, and WIDOW.]

PETRUCHIO.

She hath prevented me. Here, Signior Tranio;
This bird you aim'd at, though you hit her not:
Therefore a health to all that shot and miss'd.

TRANIO.

O, sir! Lucentio slipp'd me like his greyhound,
Which runs himself, and catches for his master.

PETRUCHIO.

A good swift simile, but something currish.

TRANIO.

'Tis well, sir, that you hunted for yourself:
'Tis thought your deer does hold you at a bay.

BAPTISTA.

O ho, Petruchio! Tranio hits you now.

LUCENTIO.

I thank thee for that gird, good Tranio.

HORTENSIO.

Confess, confess; hath he not hit you here?

PETRUCHIO.

A' has a little gall'd me, I confess;
And, as the jest did glance away from me,
'Tis ten to one it maim'd you two outright.

BAPTISTA.

Now, in good sadness, son Petruchio,
I think thou hast the veriest shrew of all.

PETRUCHIO.

Well, I say no; and therefore, for assurance,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Let's each one send unto his wife,
And he whose wife is most obedient,
To come at first when he doth send for her,
Shall win the wager which we will propose.

HORTENSIO.

Content. What's the wager?

LUCENTIO.

Twenty crowns.

PETRUCHIO.

Twenty crowns!

I'll venture so much of my hawk or hound,
But twenty times so much upon my wife.

LUCENTIO.

A hundred then.

HORTENSIO.

Content.

PETRUCHIO.

A match! 'tis done.

HORTENSIO.

Who shall begin?

LUCENTIO.

That will I.

Go, Biondello, bid your mistress come to me.

BIONDELLO.

I go.

[Exit.]

BAPTISTA.

Son, I'll be your half, Bianca comes.

LUCENTIO.

I'll have no halves; I'll bear it all myself.

[Re-enter BIONDELLO.]

How now! what news?

BIONDELLO.

Sir, my mistress sends you word
That she is busy and she cannot come.

PETRUCHIO.

How! She's busy, and she cannot come!
Is that an answer?

GREMIO.

Ay, and a kind one too:
Pray God, sir, your wife send you not a worse.

PETRUCHIO.

I hope, better.

HORTENSIO.

Sirrah Biondello, go and entreat my wife
To come to me forthwith.

[Exit BIONDELLO.]

PETRUCHIO.

O, ho! entreat her!
Nay, then she must needs come.

HORTENSIO.

I am afraid, sir,
Do what you can, yours will not be entreated.

[Re-enter BIONDELLO.]

Now, where's my wife?

BIONDELLO.

She says you have some goodly jest in hand:
She will not come; she bids you come to her.

PETRUCHIO.

Worse and worse; she will not come! O vile,
Intolerable, not to be endur'd!
Sirrah Grumio, go to your mistress; say,
I command her come to me.

[Exit GRUMIO.]

HORTENSIO.

I know her answer.

PETRUCHIO.

What?

HORTENSIO.

She will not.

PETRUCHIO.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

The fouler fortune mine, and there an end.

[Re-enter KATHERINA.]

BAPTISTA.

Now, by my holidame, here comes Katherina!

KATHERINA.

What is your sir, that you send for me?

PETRUCHIO.

Where is your sister, and Hortensio's wife?

KATHERINA.

They sit conferring by the parlour fire.

PETRUCHIO.

Go, fetch them hither; if they deny to come,
Swinge me them soundly forth unto their husbands.
Away, I say, and bring them hither straight.

[Exit KATHERINA.]

LUCENTIO.

Here is a wonder, if you talk of a wonder.

HORTENSIO.

And so it is. I wonder what it bodes.

PETRUCHIO.

Marry, peace it bodes, and love, and quiet life,
An awful rule, and right supremacy;
And, to be short, what not that's sweet and happy.

BAPTISTA.

Now fair befall thee, good Petruchio!
The wager thou hast won; and I will add
Unto their losses twenty thousand crowns;
Another dowry to another daughter,
For she is chang'd, as she had never been.

PETRUCHIO.

Nay, I will win my wager better yet,
And show more sign of her obedience,
Her new-built virtue and obedience.
See where she comes, and brings your froward wives
As prisoners to her womanly persuasion.

[Re-enter KATHERINA with BIANCA and WIDOW.]

Katherine, that cap of yours becomes you not:

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Off with that bauble, throw it underfoot.

[KATHERINA pulls off her cap and throws it down.]

WIDOW.

Lord, let me never have a cause to sigh
Till I be brought to such a silly pass!

BIANCA.

Fie! what a foolish duty call you this?

LUCENTIO.

I would your duty were as foolish too;
The wisdom of your duty, fair Bianca,
Hath cost me a hundred crowns since supper-time!

BIANCA.

The more fool you for laying on my duty.

PETRUCHIO.

Katherine, I charge thee, tell these headstrong women
What duty they do owe their lords and husbands.

WIDOW.

Come, come, you're mocking; we will have no telling.

PETRUCHIO.

Come on, I say; and first begin with her.

WIDOW.

She shall not.

PETRUCHIO.

I say she shall: and first begin with her.

KATHERINA.

Fie, fie! unknit that threatening unkind brow,
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor:
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,
And in no sense is meet or amiable.
A woman mov'd is like a fountain troubled,
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
And for thy maintenance commits his body
To painful labour both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;
And craves no other tribute at thy hands
But love, fair looks, and true obedience;
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?--
I am asham'd that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace,
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway,
When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,
Unapt to toll and trouble in the world,
But that our soft conditions and our hearts
Should well agree with our external parts?
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My heart as great, my reason haply more,
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;
But now I see our lances are but straws,
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot:
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready; may it do him ease.

PETRUCHIO.

Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate.

LUCENTIO.

Well, go thy ways, old lad, for thou shalt ha't.

VINCENTIO.

'Tis a good hearing when children are toward.

LUCENTIO.

But a harsh hearing when women are froward.

PETRUCHIO.

Come, Kate, we'll to bed.
We three are married, but you two are sped.
'Twas I won the wager,
[To LUCENTIO.] though you hit the white;
And being a winner, God give you good night!

[Exeunt PETRUCHIO and KATHERINA.]

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

HORTENSIO.

Now go thy ways; thou hast tam'd a curst shrew.

LUCENTIO.

'Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tam'd so.

[Exeunt.]

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

by William Shakespeare

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DUKE OF MILAN, father to Silvia
VALENTINE, one of the two gentlemen
PROTEUS, one of the two gentlemen
ANTONIO, father to Proteus
THURIO, a foolish rival to Valentine
EGLAMOUR, agent for Silvia in her escape
SPEED, a clownish servant to Valentine
LAUNCE, the like to Proteus
PANTHINO, servant to Antonio
HOST, where Julia lodges in Milan
OUTLAWS, with Valentine

JULIA, a lady of Verona, beloved of Proteus
SILVIA, beloved of Valentine
LUCETTA, waiting-woman to Julia

SERVANTS, MUSICIANS

SCENE: Verona; Milan; the frontiers of Mantua

ACT I.

SCENE I. Verona. An open place

[Enter VALENTINE and PROTEUS.]

VALENTINE.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Cease to persuade, my loving Proteus:
Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits.
Were't not affection chains thy tender days
To the sweet glances of thy honour'd love,
I rather would entreat thy company
To see the wonders of the world abroad,
Than, living dully sluggardiz'd at home,
Wear out thy youth with shapeless idleness.
But since thou lov'st, love still, and thrive therein,
Even as I would, when I to love begin.

PROTEUS.

Wilt thou be gone? Sweet Valentine, adieu!
Think on thy Proteus, when thou haply seest
Some rare noteworthy object in thy travel:
Wish me partaker in thy happiness
When thou dost meet good hap; and in thy danger,
If ever danger do environ thee,
Commend thy grievance to my holy prayers,
For I will be thy headsman, Valentine.

VALENTINE.

And on a love-book pray for my success?

PROTEUS.

Upon some book I love I'll pray for thee.

VALENTINE.

That's on some shallow story of deep love,
How young Leander cross'd the Hellespont.

PROTEUS.

That's a deep story of a deeper love;
For he was more than over shoes in love.

VALENTINE.

'Tis true; for you are over boots in love,
And yet you never swum the Hellespont.

PROTEUS.

Over the boots? Nay, give me not the boots.

VALENTINE.

No, I will not, for it boots thee not.

PROTEUS.

What?

VALENTINE.

To be in love, where scorn is bought with groans;
Coy looks with heart-sore sighs; one fading moment's mirth

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights:
If haply won, perhaps a hapless gain;
If lost, why then a grievous labour won:
However, but a folly bought with wit,
Or else a wit by folly vanquished.

PROTEUS.

So, by your circumstance, you call me fool.

VALENTINE.

So, by your circumstance, I fear you'll prove.

PROTEUS.

'Tis love you cavil at: I am not Love.

VALENTINE.

Love is your master, for he masters you;
And he that is so yoked by a fool,
Methinks, should not be chronicled for wise.

PROTEUS.

Yet writers say, as in the sweetest bud
The eating canker dwells, so eating love
Inhabits in the finest wits of all.

VALENTINE.

And writers say, as the most forward bud
Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,
Even so by love the young and tender wit
Is turned to folly; blasting in the bud,
Losing his verdure even in the prime,
And all the fair effects of future hopes.
But wherefore waste I time to counsel the
That art a votary to fond desire?
Once more adieu! my father at the road
Expects my coming, there to see me shipp'd.

PROTEUS.

And thither will I bring thee, Valentine.

VALENTINE.

Sweet Proteus, no; now let us take our leave.
To Milan let me hear from thee by letters
Of thy success in love, and what news else
Betideth here in absence of thy friend;
And I likewise will visit thee with mine.

PROTEUS.

All happiness bechance to thee in Milan!

VALENTINE.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

As much to you at home! and so farewell!

[Exit.]

PROTEUS.

He after honour hunts, I after love;
He leaves his friends to dignify them more:
I leave myself, my friends, and all for love.
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphos'd me;--
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,
War with good counsel, set the world at nought;
Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.

[Enter SPEED.]

SPEED.

Sir Proteus, save you! Saw you my master?

PROTEUS.

But now he parted hence to embark for Milan.

SPEED.

Twenty to one then he is shipp'd already,
And I have play'd the sheep in losing him.

PROTEUS.

Indeed a sheep doth very often stray,
An if the shepherd be a while away.

SPEED.

You conclude that my master is a shepherd then, and
I a sheep?

PROTEUS.

I do.

SPEED.

Why then, my horns are his horns, whether I wake or sleep.

PROTEUS.

A silly answer, and fitting well a sheep.

SPEED.

This proves me still a sheep.

PROTEUS.

True; and thy master a shepherd.

SPEED.

Nay, that I can deny by a circumstance.

ACT 4.

PROTEUS.

It shall go hard but I'll prove it by another.

SPEED.

The shepherd seeks the sheep, and not the sheep the shepherd; but I seek my master, and my master seeks not me; therefore, I am no sheep.

PROTEUS.

The sheep for fodder follow the shepherd; the shepherd for food follows not the sheep: thou for wages followest thy master; thy master for wages follows not thee. Therefore, thou art a sheep.

SPEED.

Such another proof will make me cry 'baa.'

PROTEUS.

But, dost thou hear? gavest thou my letter to Julia?

SPEED.

Ay, sir; I, a lost mutton, gave your letter to her, a laced mutton; and she, a laced mutton, gave me, a lost mutton, nothing for my labour.

PROTEUS.

Here's too small a pasture for such store of muttons.

SPEED.

If the ground be overcharged, you were best stick her.

PROTEUS.

Nay, in that you are astray: 'twere best pound you.

SPEED.

Nay, sir, less than a pound shall serve me for carrying your letter.

PROTEUS.

You mistake; I mean the pound,--a pifold.

SPEED.

From a pound to a pin? fold it over and over,
'Tis threefold too little for carrying a letter to your lover.

PROTEUS.

But what said she? [SPEED nods.] Did she nod?

SPEED.

Ay.

PROTEUS.

Nod, ay? Why, that's noddy.

SPEED.

You mistook, sir; I say she did nod; and you ask me if she did nod; and I say, Ay.

PROTEUS.

And that set together is--noddy.

SPEED.

Now you have taken the pains to set it together, take it for your pains.

PROTEUS.

No, no; you shall have it for bearing the letter.

SPEED.

Well, I perceive I must be fain to bear with you.

PROTEUS.

Why, sir, how do you bear with me?

SPEED.

Marry, sir, the letter, very orderly; having nothing but the word 'noddy' for my pains.

PROTEUS.

Beshrew me, but you have a quick wit.

SPEED.

And yet it cannot overtake your slow purse.

PROTEUS.

Come, come; open the matter; in brief: what said she?

SPEED.

Open your purse, that the money and the matter may be both at once delivered.

PROTEUS.

Well, sir, here is for your pains [giving him money]. What said she?

SPEED.

Truly, sir, I think you'll hardly win her.

PROTEUS.

Why, couldst thou perceive so much from her?

SPEED.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Sir, I could perceive nothing at all from her; no, not so much as a ducat for delivering your letter; and being so hard to me that brought your mind, I fear she'll prove as hard to you in telling your mind. Give her no token but stones, for she's as hard as steel.

PROTEUS.

What! said she nothing?

SPEED.

No, not so much as 'Take this for thy pains.' To testify your bounty, I thank you, you have testerned me; in requital whereof, henceforth carry your letters yourself; and so, sir, I'll commend you to my master.

PROTEUS.

Go, go, be gone, to save your ship from wrack;
Which cannot perish, having thee aboard,
Being destin'd to a drier death on shore.--

[Exit SPEED.]

I must go send some better messenger.
I fear my Julia would not deign my lines,
Receiving them from such a worthless post.

[Exit.]

SCENE 2. The same. The garden Of JULIA'S house.

[Enter JULIA and LUCETTA.]

JULIA.

But say, Lucetta, now we are alone,
Wouldst thou then counsel me to fall in love?

LUCETTA.

Ay, madam; so you stumble not unheedfully.

JULIA.

Of all the fair resort of gentlemen
That every day with parle encounter me,
In thy opinion which is worthiest love?

LUCETTA.

Please you, repeat their names; I'll show my mind
According to my shallow simple skill.

JULIA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

What think'st thou of the fair Sir Eglamour?

LUCETTA.

As of a knight well-spoken, neat, and fine;
But, were I you, he never should be mine.

JULIA.

What think'st thou of the rich Mercatio?

LUCETTA.

Well of his wealth; but of himself, so so.

JULIA.

What think'st thou of the gentle Proteus?

LUCETTA.

Lord, Lord! to see what folly reigns in us!

JULIA.

How now! what means this passion at his name?

LUCETTA.

Pardon, dear madam; 'tis a passing shame
That I, unworthy body as I am,
Should censure thus on lovely gentlemen.

JULIA.

Why not on Proteus, as of all the rest?

LUCETTA.

Then thus,—of many good I think him best.

JULIA.

Your reason?

LUCETTA.

I have no other but a woman's reason:
I think him so, because I think him so.

JULIA.

And wouldst thou have me cast my love on him?

LUCETTA.

Ay, if you thought your love not cast away.

JULIA.

Why, he, of all the rest, hath never moved me.

LUCETTA.

Yet he, of all the rest, I think, best loves ye.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

JULIA.

His little speaking shows his love but small.

LUCETTA.

Fire that's closest kept burns most of all.

JULIA.

They do not love that do not show their love.

LUCETTA.

O! they love least that let men know their love.

JULIA.

I would I knew his mind.

LUCETTA.

Peruse this paper, madam. [Gives a letter.]

JULIA.

'To Julia'--Say, from whom?

LUCETTA.

That the contents will show.

JULIA.

Say, say, who gave it thee?

LUCETTA.

Sir Valentine's page, and sent, I think, from Proteus.
He would have given it you; but I, being in the way,
Did in your name receive it; pardon the fault, I pray.

JULIA.

Now, by my modesty, a goodly broker!
Dare you presume to harbour wanton lines?
To whisper and conspire against my youth?
Now, trust me, 'tis an office of great worth,
And you an officer fit for the place.
There, take the paper; see it be return'd;
Or else return no more into my sight.

LUCETTA.

To plead for love deserves more fee than hate.

JULIA.

Will ye be gone?

LUCETTA.

That you may ruminat.

[Exit.]

ACT 4.

JULIA.

And yet, I would I had o'erlook'd the letter.
It were a shame to call her back again,
And pray her to a fault for which I chid her.
What fool is she, that knows I am a maid
And would not force the letter to my view!
Since maids, in modesty, say 'No' to that
Which they would have the profferer construe 'Ay.'
Fie, fie, how wayward is this foolish love,
That like a testy babe will scratch the nurse,
And presently, all humbled, kiss the rod!
How churlishly I chid Lucetta hence,
When willingly I would have had her here:
How angerly I taught my brow to frown,
When inward joy enforc'd my heart to smile.
My penance is, to call Lucetta back
And ask remission for my folly past.
What ho! Lucetta!

[Re--enter LUCETTA.]

LUCETTA.

What would your ladyship?

JULIA.

Is it near dinner time?

LUCETTA.

I would it were;
That you might kill your stomach on your meat
And not upon your maid.

JULIA.

What is't that you took up so gingerly?

LUCETTA.

Nothing.

JULIA.

Why didst thou stoop, then?

LUCETTA.

To take a paper up
That I let fall.

JULIA.

And is that paper nothing?

LUCETTA.

Nothing concerning me.

ACT 4.

JULIA.

Then let it lie for those that it concerns.

LUCETTA.

Madam, it will not lie where it concerns,
Unless it have a false interpreter.

JULIA.

Some love of yours hath writ to you in rime.

LUCETTA.

That I might sing it, madam, to a tune:
Give me a note: your ladyship can set.

JULIA.

As little by such toys as may be possible;
Best sing it to the tune of 'Light o' Love.'

LUCETTA.

It is too heavy for so light a tune.

JULIA.

Heavy! belike it hath some burden then?

LUCETTA.

Ay; and melodious were it, would you sing it.

JULIA.

And why not you?

LUCETTA.

I cannot reach so high.

JULIA.

Let's see your song. [Taking the letter.]
How now, minion!

LUCETTA.

Keep tune there still, so you will sing it out:
And yet methinks, I do not like this tune.

JULIA.

You do not?

LUCETTA.

No, madam; it is too sharp.

JULIA.

You, minion, are too saucy.

LUCETTA.

Nay, now you are too flat
And mar the concord with too harsh a descant;
There wanteth but a mean to fill your song.

JULIA.

The mean is drown'd with your unruly bass.

LUCETTA.

Indeed, I bid the base for Proteus.

JULIA.

This babble shall not henceforth trouble me.
Here is a coil with protestation!—[Tears the letter.]
Go, get you gone; and let the papers lie:
You would be fingering them, to anger me.

LUCETTA.

She makes it strange; but she would be best pleas'd
To be so anger'd with another letter.

[Exit.]

JULIA.

Nay, would I were so anger'd with the same!
O hateful hands, to tear such loving words!
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey
And kill the bees that yield it with your stings!
I'll kiss each several paper for amends.
Look, here is writ 'kind Julia.' Unkind Julia!
As in revenge of thy ingratitude,
I throw thy name against the bruising stones,
Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.
And here is writ 'love-wounded Proteus':
Poor wounded name! my bosom, as a bed,
Shall lodge thee till thy wound be thoroughly heal'd;
And thus I search it with a sovereign kiss.
But twice or thrice was 'Proteus' written down:
Be calm, good wind, blow not a word away
Till I have found each letter in the letter
Except mine own name; that some whirlwind bear
Unto a ragged, fearful-hanging rock,
And throw it thence into the raging sea!
Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ:
'Poor forlorn Proteus, passionate Proteus,
To the sweet Julia':—that I'll tear away;
And yet I will not, sith so prettily
He couples it to his complaining names:
Thus will I fold them one upon another:
Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

[Re--enter LUCETTA.]

LUCETTA.

Madam,
Dinner is ready, and your father stays.

JULIA.

Well, let us go.

LUCETTA.

What! shall these papers lie like tell--tales here?

JULIA.

If you respect them, best to take them up.

LUCETTA.

Nay, I was taken up for laying them down;
Yet here they shall not lie, for catching cold.

JULIA.

I see you have a month's mind to them.

LUCETTA.

Ay, madam, you may say what sights you see;
I see things too, although you judge I wink.

JULIA.

Come, come; will't please you go?

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 3. The same. A room in ANTONIO'S house.

[Enter ANTONIO and PANTHINO.]

ANTONIO.

Tell me, Panthino, what sad talk was that
Wherewith my brother held you in the cloister?

PANTHINO.

'Twas of his nephew Proteus, your son.

ANTONIO.

Why, what of him?

PANTHINO.

He wonder'd that your lordship
Would suffer him to spend his youth at home,
While other men, of slender reputation,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Put forth their sons to seek preferment out:
Some to the wars, to try their fortune there;
Some to discover islands far away;
Some to the studious universities.
For any, or for all these exercises,
He said that Proteus, your son, was meet;
And did request me to importune you
To let him spend his time no more at home,
Which would be great impeachment to his age,
In having known no travel in his youth.

ANTONIO.

Nor need'st thou much importune me to that
Whereon this month I have been hammering.
I have consider'd well his loss of time,
And how he cannot be a perfect man,
Not being tried and tutor'd in the world:
Experience is by industry achiev'd,
And perfected by the swift course of time.
Then tell me whither were I best to send him?

PANTHINO.

I think your lordship is not ignorant
How his companion, youthful Valentine,
Attends the emperor in his royal court.

ANTONIO.

I know it well.

PANTHINO.

'Twere good, I think, your lordship sent him thither:
There shall he practise tilts and tournaments,
Hear sweet discourse, converse with noblemen,
And be in eye of every exercise
Worthy his youth and nobleness of birth.

ANTONIO.

I like thy counsel; well hast thou advis'd;
And that thou mayst perceive how well I like it,
The execution of it shall make known:
Even with the speediest expedition
I will dispatch him to the emperor's court.

PANTHINO.

To-morrow, may it please you, Don Alphonso
With other gentlemen of good esteem
Are journeying to salute the emperor
And to commend their service to his will.

ANTONIO.

Good company; with them shall Proteus go.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And in good time:--now will we break with him.

[Enter PROTEUS.]

PROTEUS.

Sweet love! sweet lines! sweet life!
Here is her hand, the agent of her heart;
Here is her oath for love, her honour's pawn.
O! that our fathers would applaud our loves,
To seal our happiness with their consents!
O heavenly Julia!

ANTONIO.

How now! What letter are you reading there?

PROTEUS.

May't please your lordship, 'tis a word or two
Of commendations sent from Valentine,
Deliver'd by a friend that came from him.

ANTONIO.

Lend me the letter; let me see what news.

PROTEUS.

There is no news, my lord; but that he writes
How happily he lives, how well belov'd
And daily graced by the emperor;
Wishing me with him, partner of his fortune.

ANTONIO.

And how stand you affected to his wish?

PROTEUS.

As one relying on your lordship's will,
And not depending on his friendly wish.

ANTONIO.

My will is something sorted with his wish.
Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed;
For what I will, I will, and there an end.
I am resolv'd that thou shalt spend some time
With Valentinus in the Emperor's court:
What maintenance he from his friends receives,
Like exhibition thou shalt have from me.
To-morrow be in readiness to go:
Excuse it not, for I am peremptory.

PROTEUS.

My lord, I cannot be so soon provided;
Please you, deliberate a day or two.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

ANTONIO.

Look, what thou want'st shall be sent after thee:
No more of stay; to-morrow thou must go.
Come on, Panthino: you shall be employ'd
To hasten on his expedition.

[Exeunt ANTONIO and PANTHINO.]

PROTEUS.

Thus have I shunn'd the fire for fear of burning,
And drench'd me in the sea, where I am drown'd.
I fear'd to show my father Julia's letter,
Lest he should take exceptions to my love;
And with the vantage of mine own excuse
Hath he excepted most against my love.
O! how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by an by a cloud takes all away!

[Re-enter PANTHINO.]

PANTHINO.

Sir Proteus, your father calls for you;
He is in haste; therefore, I pray you, go.

PROTEUS.

Why, this it is: my heart accords thereto,
And yet a thousand times it answers 'no.'

[Exeunt.]

ACT 2.

SCENE I. Milan. A room in the DUKE'S palace.

[Enter VALENTINE and SPEED.]

SPEED.

Sir, your glove. [Offering a glove.]

VALENTINE.

Not mine; my gloves are on.

SPEED.

Why, then, this may be yours; for this is but one.

ACT 4.

VALENTINE.

Ha! let me see; ay, give it me, it's mine;
Sweet ornament that decks a thing divine!
Ah, Silvia! Silvia!

SPEED.

[Calling.] Madam Silvia! Madam Silvia!

VALENTINE.

How now, sirrah?

SPEED.

She is not within hearing, sir.

VALENTINE.

Why, sir, who bade you call her?

SPEED.

Your worship, sir; or else I mistook.

VALENTINE.

Well, you'll still be too forward.

SPEED.

And yet I was last chidden for being too slow.

VALENTINE.

Go to, sir. tell me, do you know Madam Silvia?

SPEED.

She that your worship loves?

VALENTINE.

Why, how know you that I am in love?

SPEED.

Marry, by these special marks: first, you have learned, like
Sir Proteus, to wreath your arms like a malcontent; to relish a
love-song, like a robin redbreast; to walk alone, like one that
had the pestilence; to sigh, like a school-boy that had lost his
A B C; to weep, like a young wench that had buried her grandam;
to fast, like one that takes diet; to watch, like one that fears
robbing; to speak puling, like a beggar at Hallowmas. You were
wont, when you laughed, to crow like a cock; when you walked, to
walk like one of the lions; when you fasted, it was presently
after dinner; when you looked sadly, it was for want of money.
And now you are metamorphosed with a mistress, that, when I look
on you, I can hardly think you my master.

VALENTINE.

Are all these things perceived in me?

ACT 4.

SPEED.

They are all perceived without ye.

VALENTINE.

Without me? They cannot.

SPEED.

Without you? Nay, that's certain; for, without you were so simple, none else would; but you are so without these follies that these follies are within you, and shine through you like the water in an urinal, that not an eye that sees you but is a physician to comment on your malady.

VALENTINE.

But tell me, dost thou know my lady Silvia?

SPEED.

She that you gaze on so as she sits at supper?

VALENTINE.

Hast thou observed that? Even she, I mean.

SPEED.

Why, sir, I know her not.

VALENTINE.

Dost thou know her by my gazing on her, and yet know'st her not?

SPEED.

Is she not hard-favoured, sir?

VALENTINE.

Not so fair, boy, as well-favoured.

SPEED.

Sir, I know that well enough.

VALENTINE.

What dost thou know?

SPEED.

That she is not so fair as, of you, well-favoured.

VALENTINE.

I mean that her beauty is exquisite, but her favour infinite.

SPEED.

That's because the one is painted, and the other out of all

ACT 4.

count.

VALENTINE.

How painted? and how out of count?

SPEED.

Marry, sir, so painted to make her fair, that no man counts
of her beauty.

VALENTINE.

How esteem'st thou me? I account of her beauty.

SPEED.

You never saw her since she was deformed.

VALENTINE.

How long hath she been deformed?

SPEED.

Ever since you loved her.

VALENTINE.

I have loved her ever since I saw her, and still
I see her beautiful.

SPEED.

If you love her, you cannot see her.

VALENTINE.

Why?

SPEED.

Because Love is blind. O! that you had mine eyes; or your own
eyes had the lights they were wont to have when you chid at Sir
Proteus for going ungartered!

VALENTINE.

What should I see then?

SPEED.

Your own present folly and her passing deformity; for he,
being in love, could not see to garter his hose; and you, being
in love, cannot see to put on your hose.

VALENTINE.

Belike, boy, then you are in love; for last morning you
could not see to wipe my shoes.

SPEED.

True, sir; I was in love with my bed. I thank you, you
swinged me for my love, which makes me the bolder to chide you

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

for yours.

VALENTINE.

In conclusion, I stand affected to her.

SPEED.

I would you were set, so your affection would cease.

VALENTINE.

Last night she enjoined me to write some lines to one she loves.

SPEED.

And have you?

VALENTINE.

I have.

SPEED.

Are they not lamely writ?

VALENTINE.

No, boy, but as well as I can do them.

Peace! here she comes.

[Enter Silvia]

SPEED.

[Aside] O excellent motion! O exceeding puppet!
Now will he interpret to her.

VALENTINE.

Madam and mistress, a thousand good morrows.

SPEED.

[Aside] O, give ye good even: here's a million of manners.

SILVIA.

Sir Valentine and servant, to you two thousand.

SPEED. [Aside] He should give her interest, and she gives it him.

VALENTINE.

As you enjoin'd me, I have writ your letter
Unto the secret nameless friend of yours;
Which I was much unwilling to proceed in,
But for my duty to your ladyship.

[Gives a letter.]

SILVIA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

I thank you, gentle servant. 'Tis very clerkly done.

VALENTINE.

Now trust me, madam, it came hardly off;
For, being ignorant to whom it goes,
I writ at random, very doubtfully.

SILVIA.

Perchance you think too much of so much pains?

VALENTINE.

No, madam; so it stead you, I will write,
Please you command, a thousand times as much;
And yet—

SILVIA.

A pretty period! Well, I guess the sequel;
And yet I will not name it; and yet I care not.
And yet take this again; and yet I thank you,
Meaning henceforth to trouble you no more.

SPEED.

[Aside] And yet you will; and yet another yet.

VALENTINE.

What means your ladyship? Do you not like it?

SILVIA.

Yes, yes; the lines are very quaintly writ;
But, since unwillingly, take them again:
Nay, take them.

[Gives hack the letter.]

VALENTINE.

Madam, they are for you.

SILVIA.

Ay, ay, you writ them, sir, at my request;
But I will none of them; they are for you.
I would have had them writ more movingly.

VALENTINE.

Please you, I'll write your ladyship another.

SILVIA.

And when it's writ, for my sake read it over;
And if it please you, so; if not, why, so.

VALENTINE.

If it please me, madam, what then?

ACT 4.

SILVIA.

Why, if it please you, take it for your labour.
And so good morrow, servant.

[Exit.]

SPEED.

O jest unseen, inscrutable, invisible,
As a nose on a man's face, or a weathercock on a steeple!
My master sues to her; and she hath taught her suitor,
He being her pupil, to become her tutor.
O excellent device! Was there ever heard a better,
That my master, being scribe, to himself should write the letter?

VALENTINE.

How now, sir! What are you reasoning with yourself?

SPEED.

Nay, I was rhyming: 'tis you that have the reason.

VALENTINE.

To do what?

SPEED.

To be a spokesman from Madam Silvia.

VALENTINE.

To whom?

SPEED.

To yourself; why, she woos you by a figure.

VALENTINE.

What figure?

SPEED.

By a letter, I should say.

VALENTINE.

Why, she hath not writ to me?

SPEED.

What need she, when she hath made you write to yourself?
Why, do you not perceive the jest?

VALENTINE.

No, believe me.

SPEED.

No believing you indeed, sir. But did you perceive her

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

earnest?

VALENTINE.

She gave me none except an angry word.

SPEED.

Why, she hath given you a letter.

VALENTINE.

That's the letter I writ to her friend.

SPEED.

And that letter hath she delivered, and there an end.

VALENTINE.

I would it were no worse.

SPEED.

I'll warrant you 'tis as well.

'For often have you writ to her; and she, in modesty,
Or else for want of idle time, could not again reply;
Or fearing else some messenger that might her mind discover,
Herself hath taught her love himself to write unto her lover.'

All this I speak in print, for in print I found it.

Why muse you, sir? 'Tis dinner time.

VALENTINE.

I have dined.

SPEED.

Ay, but hearken, sir; though the chameleon Love can feed on
the air, I am one that am nourished by my victuals, and would
fain have meat. O! be not like your mistress! Be moved, be moved.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 2. Verona. A room in JULIA'S house.

[Enter PROTEUS and JULIA.]

PROTEUS.

Have patience, gentle Julia.

JULIA.

I must, where is no remedy.

PROTEUS.

When possibly I can, I will return.

ACT 4.

JULIA.

If you turn not, you will return the sooner.
Keep this remembrance for thy Julia's sake.

[Gives him a ring.]

PROTEUS.

Why, then, we'll make exchange. Here, take you this.

[Gives her another.]

JULIA.

And seal the bargain with a holy kiss.

PROTEUS.

Here is my hand for my true constancy;
And when that hour o'erslips me in the day
Wherein I sigh not, Julia, for thy sake,
The next ensuing hour some foul mischance
Torment me for my love's forgetfulness!
My father stays my coming; answer not;
The tide is now: nay, not thy tide of tears:
That tide will stay me longer than I should.
Julia, farewell!

[Exit JULIA.]

What, gone without a word?
Ay, so true love should do: it cannot speak;
For truth hath better deeds than words to grace it.

[Enter PANTHINO.]

PANTHINO.

Sir Proteus, you are stay'd for.

PROTEUS.

Go; I come, I come.
Alas! this parting strikes poor lovers dumb.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 3. The same. A street

[Enter LAUNCE, leading a dog.]

LAUNCE.

Nay, 'twill be this hour ere I have done weeping; all the
kind of the Launces have this very fault. I have received my

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

proportion, like the prodigious son, and am going with Sir Proteus to the imperial's court. I think Crab my dog be the sourest-natured dog that lives: my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity; yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear. He is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog; a Jew would have wept to have seen our parting; why, my grandam having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting. Nay, I'll show you the manner of it. This shoe is my father; no, this left shoe is my father; no, no, left shoe is my mother; nay, that cannot be so neither; yes, it is so, it is so, it hath the worser sole. This shoe with the hole in it is my mother, and this my father. A vengeance on 't! There 'tis: now, sir, this staff is my sister, for, look you, she is as white as a lily and as small as a wand; this hat is Nan our maid; I am the dog; no, the dog is himself, and I am the dog--O! the dog is me, and I am myself; ay, so, so. Now come I to my father: 'Father, your blessing.' Now should not the shoe speak a word for weeping; now should I kiss my father; well, he weeps on. Now come I to my mother;--O, that she could speak now like a wood woman! Well, I kiss her; why there 'tis; here's my mother's breath up and down. Now come I to my sister; mark the moan she makes. Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear, nor speaks a word; but see how I lay the dust with my tears.

[Enter PANTHINO.]

PANTHINO.

Launce, away, away, aboard! Thy master is shipped, and thou art to post after with oars. What's the matter? Why weep'st thou, man? Away, ass! You'll lose the tide if you tarry any longer.

LAUNCE.

It is no matter if the tied were lost; for it is the unkindest tied that ever any man tied.

PANTHINO.

What's the unkindest tide?

LAUNCE.

Why, he that's tied here, Crab, my dog.

PANTHINO.

Tut, man, I mean thou'lt lose the flood, and, in losing the flood, lose thy voyage, and, in losing thy voyage, lose thy master, and, in losing thy master, lose thy service, and, in losing thy service,--Why dost thou stop my mouth?

LAUNCE.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

For fear thou shouldst lose thy tongue.

PANTHINO.

Where should I lose my tongue?

LAUNCE.

In thy tale.

PANTHINO.

In thy tail!

LAUNCE.

Lose the tide, and the voyage, and the master, and the service, and the tied! Why, man, if the river were dry, I am able to fill it with my tears; if the wind were down, I could drive the boat with my sighs.

PANTHINO.

Come, come away, man; I was sent to call thee.

LAUNCE.

Sir, call me what thou darest.

PANTHINO.

Will thou go?

LAUNCE.

Well, I will go.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 4. Milan. A room in the DUKE'S palace.

[Enter SILVIA, VALENTINE, THURIO, and SPEED.]

SILVIA.

Servant!

VALENTINE.

Mistress?

SPEED.

Master, Sir Thurio frowns on you.

VALENTINE.

Ay, boy, it's for love.

SPEED.

Not of you.

ACT 4.

VALENTINE.
Of my mistress, then.

SPEED.
'Twere good you knock'd him.

SILVIA.
Servant, you are sad.

VALENTINE.
Indeed, madam, I seem so.

THURIO.
Seem you that you are not?

VALENTINE.
Haply I do.

THURIO.
So do counterfeits.

VALENTINE.
So do you.

THURIO.
What seem I that I am not?

VALENTINE.
Wise.

THURIO.
What instance of the contrary?

VALENTINE.
Your folly.

THURIO.
And how quote you my folly?

VALENTINE.
I quote it in your jerkin.

THURIO.
My jerkin is a doublet.

VALENTINE.
Well, then, I'll double your folly.

THURIO.
How?

ACT 4.

SILVIA.

What, angry, Sir Thurio! Do you change colour?

VALENTINE.

Give him leave, madam; he is a kind of chameleon.

THURIO.

That hath more mind to feed on your blood than live in your air.

VALENTINE.

You have said, sir.

THURIO.

Ay, sir, and done too, for this time.

VALENTINE.

I know it well, sir; you always end ere you begin.

SILVIA.

A fine volley of words, gentlemen, and quickly shot off.

VALENTINE.

'Tis indeed, madam; we thank the giver.

SILVIA.

Who is that, servant?

VALENTINE.

Yourself, sweet lady; for you gave the fire. Sir Thurio borrows his wit from your ladyship's looks, and spends what he borrows kindly in your company.

THURIO.

Sir, if you spend word for word with me, I shall make your wit bankrupt.

VALENTINE.

I know it well, sir; you have an exchequer of words, and, I think, no other treasure to give your followers; for it appears by their bare liveries that they live by your bare words.

[Enter DUKE]

SILVIA.

No more, gentlemen, no more. Here comes my father.

[Enter DUKE.]

DUKE.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Now, daughter Silvia, you are hard beset.
Sir Valentine, your father is in good health.
What say you to a letter from your friends
Of much good news?

VALENTINE.

My lord, I will be thankful
To any happy messenger from thence.

DUKE.

Know ye Don Antonio, your countryman?

VALENTINE.

Ay, my good lord, I know the gentleman
To be of worth and worthy estimation,
And not without desert so well reputed.

DUKE.

Hath he not a son?

VALENTINE.

Ay, my good lord; a son that well deserves
The honour and regard of such a father.

DUKE.

You know him well?

VALENTINE.

I knew him as myself; for from our infancy
We have convers'd and spent our hours together;
And though myself have been an idle truant,
Omitting the sweet benefit of time
To clothe mine age with angel-like perfection,
Yet hath Sir Proteus,--for that's his name,--
Made use and fair advantage of his days:
His years but young, but his experience old;
His head unmellowed, but his judgment ripe;
And, in a word,--for far behind his worth
Comes all the praises that I now bestow,--
He is complete in feature and in mind,
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

DUKE.

Beshrew me, sir, but if he make this good,
He is as worthy for an empress' love
As meet to be an emperor's counsellor.
Well, sir, this gentleman is come to me
With commendation from great potentates,
And here he means to spend his time awhile.
I think 'tis no unwelcome news to you.

ACT 4.

VALENTINE.

Should I have wish'd a thing, it had been he.

DUKE.

Welcome him, then, according to his worth.
Silvia, I speak to you, and you, Sir Thurio:—
For Valentine, I need not cite him to it.
I will send him hither to you presently.

[Exit.]

VALENTINE.

This is the gentleman I told your ladyship
Had come along with me but that his mistress
Did hold his eyes lock'd in her crystal looks.

SILVIA.

Belike that now she hath enfranchis'd them
Upon some other pawn for fealty.

VALENTINE.

Nay, sure, I think she holds them prisoners still.

SILVIA.

Nay, then, he should be blind; and, being blind,
How could he see his way to seek out you?

VALENTINE.

Why, lady, Love hath twenty pair of eyes.

THURIO.

They say that Love hath not an eye at all.

VALENTINE.

To see such lovers, Thurio, as yourself:
Upon a homely object Love can wink.

SILVIA.

Have done, have done; here comes the gentleman.

[Enter PROTEUS]

VALENTINE.

Welcome, dear Proteus! Mistress, I beseech you
Confirm his welcome with some special favour.

SILVIA.

His worth is warrant for his welcome hither,
If this be he you oft have wish'd to hear from.

VALENTINE.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Mistress, it is; sweet lady, entertain him
To be my fellow--servant to your ladyship.

SILVIA.

Too low a mistress for so high a servant.

PROTEUS.

Not so, sweet lady; but too mean a servant
To have a look of such a worthy mistress.

VALENTINE.

Leave off discourse of disability;
Sweet lady, entertain him for your servant.

PROTEUS.

My duty will I boast of, nothing else.

SILVIA.

And duty never yet did want his meed.
Servant, you are welcome to a worthless mistress.

PROTEUS.

I'll die on him that says so but yourself.

SILVIA.

That you are welcome?

PROTEUS.

That you are worthless.

[Enter a servant.]

SERVANT.

Madam, my lord your father would speak with you.

SILVIA.

I wait upon his pleasure. [Exit Servant.] Come, Sir Thurio,
Go with me. Once more, new servant, welcome.
I'll leave you to confer of home affairs;
When you have done we look to hear from you.

PROTEUS.

We'll both attend upon your ladyship.

[Exeunt SILVIA, THURIO, and SPEED.]

VALENTINE.

Now, tell me, how do all from whence you came?

PROTEUS.

Your friends are well, and have them much commended.

ACT 4.

VALENTINE.

And how do yours?

PROTEUS.

I left them all in health.

VALENTINE.

How does your lady, and how thrives your love?

PROTEUS.

My tales of love were wont to weary you;
I know you joy not in a love-discourse.

VALENTINE.

Ay, Proteus, but that life is alter'd now;
I have done penance for contemning Love;
Whose high imperious thoughts have punish'd me
With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,
With nightly tears, and daily heart-sore sighs;
For, in revenge of my contempt of love,
Love hath chas'd sleep from my enthralled eyes
And made them watchers of mine own heart's sorrow.
O, gentle Proteus! Love's a mighty lord,
And hath so humbled me as I confess,
There is no woe to his correction,
Nor to his service no such joy on earth.
Now no discourse, except it be of love;
Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep,
Upon the very naked name of love.

PROTEUS.

Enough; I read your fortune in your eye.
Was this the idol that you worship so?

VALENTINE.

Even she; and is she not a heavenly saint?

PROTEUS.

No; but she is an earthly paragon.

VALENTINE.

Call her divine.

PROTEUS.

I will not flatter her.

VALENTINE.

O! flatter me; for love delights in praises.

PROTEUS.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

When I was sick you gave me bitter pills,
And I must minister the like to you.

VALENTINE.

Then speak the truth by her; if not divine,
Yet let her be a principality,
Sovereign to all the creatures on the earth.

PROTEUS.

Except my mistress.

VALENTINE.

Sweet, except not any,
Except thou wilt except against my love.

PROTEUS.

Have I not reason to prefer mine own?

VALENTINE.

And I will help thee to prefer her too:
She shall be dignified with this high honour,--
To bear my lady's train, lest the base earth
Should from her vesture chance to steal a kiss,
And, of so great a favour growing proud,
Disdain to root the summer-swellings flower
And make rough winter everlastingly.

PROTEUS.

Why, Valentine, what braggardism is this?

VALENTINE.

Pardon me, Proteus; all I can is nothing
To her, whose worth makes other worthies nothing;
She is alone.

PROTEUS.

Then, let her alone.

VALENTINE.

Not for the world: why, man, she is mine own;
And I as rich in having such a jewel
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.
Forgive me that I do not dream on thee,
Because thou see'st me dote upon my love.
My foolish rival, that her father likes
Only for his possessions are so huge,
Is gone with her along; and I must after,
For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy.

PROTEUS.

ACT 4.

But she loves you?

VALENTINE.

Ay, and we are betroth'd; nay more, our marriage-hour,
With all the cunning manner of our flight,
Determin'd of: how I must climb her window,
The ladder made of cords, and all the means
Plotted and 'greed on for my happiness.
Good Proteus, go with me to my chamber,
In these affairs to aid me with thy counsel.

PROTEUS.

Go on before; I shall enquire you forth:
I must unto the road to disembark
Some necessaries that I needs must use;
And then I'll presently attend you.

VALENTINE.

Will you make haste?

PROTEUS.

I will.

[Exit VALENTINE.]

Even as one heat another heat expels
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
So the remembrance of my former love
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.
Is it my mind, or Valentinus' praise,
Her true perfection, or my false transgression,
That makes me reasonless to reason thus?
She is fair; and so is Julia that I love,—
That I did love, for now my love is thaw'd;
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire
Bears no impression of the thing it was.
Methinks my zeal to Valentine is cold,
And that I love him not as I was wont.
O! but I love his lady too—too much,
And that's the reason I love him so little.
How shall I dote on her with more advice
That thus without advice begin to love her?
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,
And that hath dazzled my reason's light;
But when I look on her perfections,
There is no reason but I shall be blind.
If I can check my erring love, I will;
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill.

[Exit.]

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

SCENE 5. The same. A street

[Enter SPEED and LAUNCE.]

SPEED.

Launce! by mine honesty, welcome to Milan!

LAUNCE.

Forswear not thyself, sweet youth, for I am not welcome. I reckon this always, that a man is never undone till he be hanged, nor never welcome to a place till some certain shot be paid, and the hostess say 'Welcome!'

SPEED.

Come on, you madcap; I'll to the alehouse with you presently; where, for one shot of five pence, thou shalt have five thousand welcomes. But, sirrah, how did thy master part with Madam Julia?

LAUNCE.

Marry, after they clos'd in earnest, they parted very fairly in jest.

SPEED.

But shall she marry him?

LAUNCE.

No.

SPEED.

How then? Shall he marry her?

LAUNCE.

No, neither.

SPEED.

What, are they broken?

LAUNCE.

No, they are both as whole as a fish.

SPEED.

Why then, how stands the matter with them?

LAUNCE.

Marry, thus: when it stands well with him, it stands well with her.

SPEED.

ACT 4.

What an ass art thou! I understand thee not.

LAUNCE.

What a block art thou that thou canst not! My staff understands me.

SPEED.

What thou sayest?

LAUNCE.

Ay, and what I do too; look thee, I'll but lean, and my staff understands me.

SPEED.

It stands under thee, indeed.

LAUNCE.

Why, stand-under and under-stand is all one.

SPEED.

But tell me true, will't be a match?

LAUNCE.

Ask my dog. If he say ay, it will; if he say no, it will; if he shake his tail and say nothing, it will.

SPEED.

The conclusion is, then, that it will.

LAUNCE.

Thou shalt never get such a secret from me but by a parable.

SPEED.

'Tis well that I get it so. But, Launce, how sayest thou that my master is become a notable lover?

LAUNCE.

I never knew him otherwise.

SPEED.

Than how?

LAUNCE.

A notable lubber, as thou reportest him to be.

SPEED.

Why, thou whoreson ass, thou mistak'st me.

LAUNCE.

Why, fool, I meant not thee, I meant thy master.

ACT 4.

SPEED.

I tell thee my master is become a hot lover.

LAUNCE.

Why, I tell thee I care not though he burn himself in love.
If thou wilt, go with me to the alehouse; if not, thou art an
Hebrew, a Jew, and not worth the name of a Christian.

SPEED.

Why?

LAUNCE.

Because thou hast not so much charity in thee as to go to
the ale with a Christian. Wilt thou go?

SPEED.

At thy service.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 6. The same. The DUKE's palace.

[Enter PROTEUS.]

PROTEUS.

To leave my Julia, shall I be forsworn;
To love fair Silvia, shall I be forsworn;
To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn;
And even that power which gave me first my oath
Provokes me to this threefold perjury:
Love bade me swear, and Love bids me forswear.
O sweet--suggesting Love! if thou hast sinn'd,
Teach me, thy tempted subject, to excuse it.
At first I did adore a twinkling star,
But now I worship a celestial sun.
Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken;
And he wants wit that wants resolved will
To learn his wit t' exchange the bad for better.
Fie, fie, unreverend tongue, to call her bad,
Whose sovereignty so oft thou hast preferr'd
With twenty thousand soul-confirming oaths.
I cannot leave to love, and yet I do;
But there I leave to love where I should love.
Julia I lose, and Valentine I lose;
If I keep them, I needs must lose myself;
If I lose them, thus find I by their loss,
For Valentine, myself; for Julia, Silvia.
I to myself am dearer than a friend,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

For love is still most precious in itself;
And Silvia--witness heaven, that made her fair!--
Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiopie.
I will forget that Julia is alive,
Remembering that my love to her is dead;
And Valentine I'll hold an enemy,
Aiming at Silvia as a sweeter friend.
I cannot now prove constant to myself
Without some treachery us'd to Valentine.
This night he meaneth with a corded ladder
To climb celestial Silvia's chamber window,
Myself in counsel, his competitor.
Now presently I'll give her father notice
Of their disguising and pretended flight;
Who, all enrag'd, will banish Valentine;
For Thurio, he intends, shall wed his daughter;
But, Valentine being gone, I'll quickly cross,
By some sly trick blunt Thurio's dull proceeding.
Love, lend me wings to make my purpose swift,
As thou hast lent me wit to plot this drift!

[Exit.]

SCENE 7. Verona. A room in JULIA'S house.

[Enter JULIA and LUCETTA.]

JULIA.

Counsel, Lucetta; gentle girl, assist me:
And, ev'n in kind love, I do conjure thee,
Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
Are visibly character'd and engrav'd,
To lesson me and tell me some good mean
How, with my honour, I may undertake
A journey to my loving Proteus.

LUCETTA.

Alas, the way is wearisome and long.

JULIA.

A true-devoted pilgrim is not weary
To measure kingdoms with his feeble steps;
Much less shall she that hath Love's wings to fly,
And when the flight is made to one so dear,
Of such divine perfection, as Sir Proteus.

LUCETTA.

Better forbear till Proteus make return.

ACT 4.

JULIA.

O! know'st thou not his looks are my soul's food?
Pity the dearth that I have pined in
By longing for that food so long a time.
Didst thou but know the inly touch of love.
Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow
As seek to quench the fire of love with words.

LUCETTA.

I do not seek to quench your love's hot fire,
But qualify the fire's extreme rage,
Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.

JULIA.

The more thou damm'st it up, the more it burns.
The current that with gentle murmur glides,
Thou know'st, being stopp'd, impatiently doth rage;
But when his fair course is not hindered,
He makes sweet music with th' enamell'd stones,
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage;
And so by many winding nooks he strays,
With willing sport, to the wild ocean.
Then let me go, and hinder not my course.
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
And make a pastime of each weary step,
Till the last step have brought me to my love;
And there I'll rest as, after much turmoil,
A blessed soul doth in Elysium.

LUCETTA.

But in what habit will you go along?

JULIA.

Not like a woman, for I would prevent
The loose encounters of lascivious men.
Gentle Lucetta, fit me with such weeds
As may beseem some well-reputed page.

LUCETTA.

Why then, your ladyship must cut your hair.

JULIA.

No, girl; I'll knit it up in silken strings
With twenty odd-conceited true-love knots:
To be fantastic may become a youth
Of greater time than I shall show to be.

LUCETTA.

What fashion, madam, shall I make your breeches?

JULIA.

That fits as well as 'Tell me, good my lord,
What compass will you wear your farthingale?'
Why even what fashion thou best likes, Lucetta.

LUCETTA.

You must needs have them with a codpiece, madam.

JULIA.

Out, out, Lucetta, that will be ill-favour'd.

LUCETTA.

A round hose, madam, now's not worth a pin,
Unless you have a codpiece to stick pins on.

JULIA.

Lucetta, as thou lov'st me, let me have
What thou think'st meet, and is most mannerly.
But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me
For undertaking so unstaïd a journey?
I fear me it will make me scandaliz'd.

LUCETTA.

If you think so, then stay at home and go not.

JULIA.

Nay, that I will not.

LUCETTA.

Then never dream on infamy, but go.
If Proteus like your journey when you come,
No matter who's displeas'd when you are gone.
I fear me he will scarce be pleas'd withal.

JULIA.

That is the least, Lucetta, of my fear:
A thousand oaths, an ocean of his tears,
And instances of infinite of love,
Warrant me welcome to my Proteus.

LUCETTA.

All these are servants to deceitful men.

JULIA.

Base men that use them to so base effect!
But truer stars did govern Proteus' birth;
His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles,
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,
His tears pure messengers sent from his heart,
His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

LUCETTA.

Pray heav'n he prove so when you come to him.

JULIA.

Now, as thou lov'st me, do him not that wrong
To bear a hard opinion of his truth;
Only deserve my love by loving him.
And presently go with me to my chamber,
To take a note of what I stand in need of
To furnish me upon my longing journey.
All that is mine I leave at thy dispose,
My goods, my lands, my reputation;
Only, in lieu thereof, dispatch me hence.
Come, answer not, but to it presently!
I am impatient of my tarrance.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 3.

SCENE I. Milan. An anteroom in the DUKE'S palace.

[Enter DUKE, THURIO, and PROTEUS.]

DUKE.

Sir Thurio, give us leave, I pray, awhile;
We have some secrets to confer about.

[Exit THURIO.]

Now tell me, Proteus, what's your will with me?

PROTEUS.

My gracious lord, that which I would discover
The law of friendship bids me to conceal;
But, when I call to mind your gracious favours
Done to me, undeserving as I am,
My duty pricks me on to utter that
Which else no worldly good should draw from me.
Know, worthy prince, Sir Valentine, my friend,
This night intends to steal away your daughter;
Myself am one made privy to the plot.
I know you have determin'd to bestow her
On Thurio, whom your gentle daughter hates;
And should she thus be stol'n away from you,
It would be much vexation to your age.
Thus, for my duty's sake, I rather chose

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

To cross my friend in his intended drift
Than, by concealing it, heap on your head
A pack of sorrows which would press you down,
Being unprevented, to your timeless grave.

DUKE.

Proteus, I thank thee for thine honest care,
Which to requite, command me while I live.
This love of theirs myself have often seen,
Haply when they have judg'd me fast asleep,
And oftentimes have purpos'd to forbid
Sir Valentine her company and my court;
But, fearing lest my jealous aim might err
And so, unworthily, disgrace the man,—
A rashness that I ever yet have shunn'd,—
I gave him gentle looks, thereby to find
That which thyself hast now disclos'd to me.
And, that thou mayst perceive my fear of this,
Knowing that tender youth is soon suggested,
I nightly lodge her in an upper tower,
The key whereof myself have ever kept;
And thence she cannot be convey'd away.

PROTEUS.

Know, noble lord, they have devis'd a mean
How he her chamber window will ascend
And with a corded ladder fetch her down;
For which the youthful lover now is gone,
And this way comes he with it presently;
Where, if it please you, you may intercept him.
But, good my lord, do it so cunningly
That my discovery be not aimed at;
For love of you, not hate unto my friend,
Hath made me publisher of this pretence.

DUKE.

Upon mine honour, he shall never know
That I had any light from thee of this.

PROTEUS.

Adieu, my lord; Sir Valentine is coming.

[Exit.]

[Enter VALENTINE]

DUKE.

Sir Valentine, whither away so fast?

VALENTINE.

Please it your Grace, there is a messenger

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

That stays to bear my letters to my friends,
And I am going to deliver them.

DUKE.

Be they of much import?

VALENTINE.

The tenour of them doth but signify
My health and happy being at your court.

DUKE.

Nay then, no matter; stay with me awhile;
I am to break with thee of some affairs
That touch me near, wherein thou must be secret.
'Tis not unknown to thee that I have sought
To match my friend Sir Thurio to my daughter.

VALENTINE.

I know it well, my lord; and, sure, the match
Were rich and honourable; besides, the gentleman
Is full of virtue, bounty, worth, and qualities
Beseeming such a wife as your fair daughter.
Cannot your grace win her to fancy him?

DUKE.

No, trust me; she is peevish, sullen, froward,
Proud, disobedient, stubborn, lacking duty;
Neither regarding that she is my child
Nor fearing me as if I were her father;
And, may I say to thee, this pride of hers,
Upon advice, hath drawn my love from her;
And, where I thought the remnant of mine age
Should have been cherish'd by her childlike duty,
I now am full resolv'd to take a wife
And turn her out to who will take her in.
Then let her beauty be her wedding-dower;
For me and my possessions she esteems not.

VALENTINE.

What would your Grace have me to do in this?

DUKE.

There is a lady of Verona here,
Whom I affect; but she is nice, and coy,
And nought esteems my aged eloquence.
Now, therefore, would I have thee to my tutor,
For long ago I have forgot to court;
Besides, the fashion of the time is chang'd,
How and which way I may bestow myself
To be regarded in her sun-bright eye.

VALENTINE.

Win her with gifts, if she respect not words:
Dumb jewels often in their silent kind
More than quick words do move a woman's mind.

DUKE.

But she did scorn a present that I sent her.

VALENTINE.

A woman sometime scorns what best contents her.
Send her another; never give her o'er,
For scorn at first makes after-love the more.
If she do frown, 'tis not in hate of you,
But rather to beget more love in you;
If she do chide, 'tis not to have you gone;
For why, the fools are mad if left alone.
Take no repulse, whatever she doth say;
For 'Get you gone' she doth not mean 'Away!'
Flatter and praise, commend, extol their graces;
Though ne'er so black, say they have angels' faces.
That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man,
If with his tongue he cannot win a woman.

DUKE.

But she I mean is promis'd by her friends
Unto a youthful gentleman of worth;
And kept severely from resort of men,
That no man hath access by day to her.

VALENTINE.

Why then I would resort to her by night.

DUKE.

Ay, but the doors be lock'd and keys kept safe,
That no man hath recourse to her by night.

VALENTINE.

What lets but one may enter at her window?

DUKE.

Her chamber is aloft, far from the ground,
And built so shelving that one cannot climb it
Without apparent hazard of his life.

VALENTINE.

Why then a ladder, quaintly made of cords,
To cast up with a pair of anchoring hooks,
Would serve to scale another Hero's tow'r,
So bold Leander would adventure it.

DUKE.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Now, as thou art a gentleman of blood,
Advise me where I may have such a ladder.

VALENTINE.

When would you use it? Pray, sir, tell me that.

DUKE.

This very night; for Love is like a child,
That longs for everything that he can come by.

VALENTINE.

By seven o'clock I'll get you such a ladder.

DUKE.

But, hark thee; I will go to her alone;
How shall I best convey the ladder thither?

VALENTINE.

It will be light, my lord, that you may bear it
Under a cloak that is of any length.

DUKE.

A cloak as long as thine will serve the turn?

VALENTINE.

Ay, my good lord.

DUKE.

Then let me see thy cloak.
I'll get me one of such another length.

VALENTINE.

Why, any cloak will serve the turn, my lord.

DUKE.

How shall I fashion me to wear a cloak?
I pray thee, let me feel thy cloak upon me.

[Pulls open VALENTINE'S cloak.]

What letter is this same? What's here?—'To Silvia!
And here an engine fit for my proceeding!
I'll be so bold to break the seal for once.

'My thoughts do harbour with my Silvia nightly,
And slaves they are to me, that send them flying.
O! could their master come and go as lightly,
Himself would lodge where, senseless, they are lying!
My herald thoughts in thy pure bosom rest them,
While I, their king, that thither them importune,
Do curse the grace that with such grace hath blest them,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Because myself do want my servants' fortune.
I curse myself, for they are sent by me,
That they should harbour where their lord should be.'

What's here?
'Silvia, this night I will enfranchise thee.'

'Tis so; and here's the ladder for the purpose.
Why, Phaethon--for thou art Merops' son--
Wilt thou aspire to guide the heavenly car,
And with thy daring folly burn the world?
Wilt thou reach stars because they shine on thee?
Go, base intruder! over-weening slave!
Bestow thy fawning smiles on equal mates,
And think my patience, more than thy desert,
Is privilege for thy departure hence.
Thank me for this more than for all the favours
Which, all too much, I have bestow'd on thee.
But if thou linger in my territories
Longer than swiftest expedition
Will give thee time to leave our royal court,
By heaven! my wrath shall far exceed the love
I ever bore my daughter or thyself.
Be gone! I will not hear thy vain excuse;
But, as thou lov'st thy life, make speed from hence.

[Exit.]

VALENTINE.

And why not death rather than living torment?
To die is to be banish'd from myself,
And Silvia is myself; banish'd from her
Is self from self,--a deadly banishment!
What light is light, if Silvia be not seen?
What joy is joy, if Silvia be not by?
Unless it be to think that she is by,
And feed upon the shadow of perfection.
Except I be by Silvia in the night,
There is no music in the nightingale;
Unless I look on Silvia in the day,
There is no day for me to look upon.
She is my essence, and I leave to be
If I be not by her fair influence
Foster'd, illumin'd, cherish'd, kept alive.
I fly not death, to fly his deadly doom:
Tarry I here, I but attend on death;
But fly I hence, I fly away from life.

[Enter PROTEUS and LAUNCE.]

PROTEUS.

ACT 4.

Run, boy; run, run, seek him out.

LAUNCE.

Soho! soho!

PROTEUS.

What seest thou?

LAUNCE.

Him we go to find: there's not a hair on 's head but 'tis a Valentine.

PROTEUS.

Valentine?

VALENTINE.

No.

PROTEUS.

Who then? his spirit?

VALENTINE.

Neither.

PROTEUS.

What then?

VALENTINE.

Nothing.

LAUNCE.

Can nothing speak? Master, shall I strike?

PROTEUS.

Who wouldst thou strike?

LAUNCE.

Nothing.

PROTEUS.

Villain, forbear.

LAUNCE.

Why, sir, I'll strike nothing. I pray you,--

PROTEUS.

Sirrah, I say, forbear.--Friend Valentine, a word.

VALENTINE.

My ears are stopp'd and cannot hear good news,
So much of bad already hath possess'd them.

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PROTEUS.

Then in dumb silence will I bury mine,
For they are harsh, untuneable, and bad.

VALENTINE.

Is Silvia dead?

PROTEUS.

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE.

No Valentine, indeed, for sacred Silvia.
Hath she forsworn me?

PROTEUS.

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE.

No Valentine, if Silvia have forsworn me.
What is your news?

LAUNCE.

Sir, there is a proclamation that you are vanished.

PROTEUS.

That thou art banished, O, that's the news,
From hence, from Silvia, and from me thy friend.

VALENTINE.

O, I have fed upon this woe already,
And now excess of it will make me surfeit.
Doth Silvia know that I am banished?

PROTEUS.

Ay, ay; and she hath offer'd to the doom—
Which, unrevers'd, stands in effectual force—
A sea of melting pearl, which some call tears;
Those at her father's churlish feet she tender'd;
With them, upon her knees, her humble self,
Wringing her hands, whose whiteness so became them
As if but now they waxed pale for woe:
But neither bended knees, pure hands held up,
Sad sighs, deep groans, nor silver-shedding tears,
Could penetrate her uncompassionate sire;
But Valentine, if he be ta'en, must die.
Besides, her intercession chaf'd him so,
When she for thy repeal was suppliant,
That to close prison he commanded her,
With many bitter threats of biding there.

VALENTINE.

No more; unless the next word that thou speak'st
Have some malignant power upon my life:
If so, I pray thee breathe it in mine ear,
As ending anthem of my endless dolour.

PROTEUS.

Cease to lament for that thou canst not help,
And study help for that which thou lament'st.
Time is the nurse and breeder of all good.
Here if thou stay thou canst not see thy love;
Besides, thy staying will abridge thy life.
Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that
And manage it against despairing thoughts.
Thy letters may be here, though thou art hence,
Which, being writ to me, shall be deliver'd
Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love.
The time now serves not to expostulate:
Come, I'll convey thee through the city-gate;
And, ere I part with thee, confer at large
Of all that may concern thy love-affairs.
As thou lov'st Silvia, though not for thyself,
Regard thy danger, and along with me!

VALENTINE.

I pray thee, Launce, an if thou seest my boy,
Bid him make haste and meet me at the North-gate.

PROTEUS.

Go, sirrah, find him out. Come, Valentine.

VALENTINE.

O my dear Silvia! Hapless Valentine!

[Exeunt VALENTINE and PROTEUS.]

LAUNCE.

I am but a fool, look you, and yet I have the wit to think
my master is a kind of a knave; but that's all one if he be but
one knave. He lives not now that knows me to be in love; yet I am
in love; but a team of horse shall not pluck that from me; nor
who 'tis I love; and yet 'tis a woman; but what woman I will not
tell myself; and yet 'tis a milkmaid; yet 'tis not a maid, for
she hath had gossips; yet 'tis a maid, for she is her master's
maid and serves for wages. She hath more qualities than a
water-spaniel--which is much in a bare Christian. [Pulling out a
paper.]

Here is the catalog of her condition. 'Inprimis: She
can fetch and carry.' Why, a horse can do no more: nay, a horse
cannot fetch, but only carry; therefore is she better than a
jade. 'Item: She can milk.' Look you, a sweet virtue in a maid

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

with clean hands.

[Enter SPEED.]

SPEED.

How now, Signior Launce! What news with your mastership?

LAUNCE.

With my master's ship? Why, it is at sea.

SPEED.

Well, your old vice still: mistake the word. What news, then, in your paper?

LAUNCE.

The blackest news that ever thou heardest.

SPEED.

Why, man? how black?

LAUNCE.

Why, as black as ink.

SPEED.

Let me read them.

LAUNCE.

Fie on thee, jolthead! thou canst not read.

SPEED.

Thou liest; I can.

LAUNCE.

I will try thee. Tell me this: who begot thee?

SPEED.

Marry, the son of my grandfather.

LAUNCE.

O, illiterate loiterer! It was the son of thy grandmother. This proves that thou canst not read.

SPEED.

Come, fool, come; try me in thy paper.

LAUNCE.

There; and Saint Nicholas be thy speed!

SPEED.

'Inprimis, She can milk.'

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LAUNCE.

Ay, that she can.

SPEED.

'Item, She brews good ale.'

LAUNCE.

And thereof comes the proverb, 'Blessing of your heart, you brew good ale.'

SPEED.

'Item, She can sew.'

LAUNCE.

That's as much as to say 'Can she so?'

SPEED.

'Item, She can knit.'

LAUNCE.

What need a man care for a stock with a wench, when she can knit him a stock?

SPEED.

'Item, She can wash and scour.'

LAUNCE.

A special virtue; for then she need not be washed and scoured.

SPEED.

'Item, She can spin.'

LAUNCE.

Then may I set the world on wheels, when she can spin for her living.

SPEED.

'Item, She hath many nameless virtues.'

LAUNCE.

That's as much as to say, bastard virtues; that indeed know not their fathers, and therefore have no names.

SPEED.

'Here follow her vices.'

LAUNCE.

Close at the heels of her virtues.

SPEED.

'Item, She is not to be kissed fasting, in respect of her

ACT 4.

breath.'

LAUNCE.

Well, that fault may be mended with a breakfast.
Read on.

SPEED.

'Item, She hath a sweet mouth.'

LAUNCE.

That makes amends for her sour breath.

SPEED.

'Item, She doth talk in her sleep.'

LAUNCE.

It's no matter for that, so she sleep not in her talk.

SPEED.

'Item, She is slow in words.'

LAUNCE.

O villain, that set this down among her vices! To be slow
in words is a woman's only virtue. I pray thee, out with't; and
place it for her chief virtue.

SPEED.

'Item, She is proud.'

LAUNCE.

Out with that too: it was Eve's legacy, and cannot be ta'en
from her.

SPEED.

'Item, She hath no teeth.'

LAUNCE.

I care not for that neither, because I love crusts.

SPEED.

'Item, She is curst.'

LAUNCE.

Well; the best is, she hath no teeth to bite.

SPEED.

'Item, She will often praise her liquor.'

LAUNCE.

If her liquor be good, she shall: if she will not, I will;
for good things should be praised.

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SPEED.

'Item, She is too liberal.'

LAUNCE.

Of her tongue she cannot, for that's writ down she is slow
of; of her purse she shall not, for that I'll keep shut. Now of
another thing she may, and that cannot I help. Well, proceed.

SPEED.

'Item, She hath more hair than wit, and more faults
than hairs, and more wealth than faults.'

LAUNCE.

Stop there; I'll have her; she was mine, and not mine,
twice or thrice in that last article. Rehearse that once more.

SPEED.

'Item, She hath more hair than wit'--

LAUNCE.

More hair than wit it may be; I'll prove it: the cover of
the salt hides the salt, and therefore it is more than the salt;
the hair that covers the wit is more than the wit, for the
greater hides the less. What's next?

SPEED.

'And more faults than hairs.'--

LAUNCE.

That's monstrous! O, that that were out!

SPEED.

'And more wealth than faults.'

LAUNCE.

Why, that word makes the faults gracious. Well, I'll have
her; an if it be a match, as nothing is impossible,--

SPEED.

What then?

LAUNCE.

Why, then will I tell thee,--that thy master stays for thee
at the North-gate.

SPEED.

For me?

LAUNCE.

For thee! ay, who art thou? He hath stay'd for a better man

ACT 4.

than thee.

SPEED.

And must I go to him?

LAUNCE.

Thou must run to him, for thou hast stayed so long that going will scarce serve the turn.

SPEED.

Why didst not tell me sooner? Pox of your love letters!

[Exit.]

LAUNCE.

Now will he be swing'd for reading my letter. An unmannerly slave that will thrust himself into secrets! I'll after, to rejoice in the boy's correction.

[Exit.]

SCENE 2. The same. A room in the DUKE'S palace.

[Enter DUKE and THURIO.]

DUKE.

Sir Thurio, fear not but that she will love you
Now Valentine is banish'd from her sight.

THURIO.

Since his exile she hath despis'd me most,
Forsworn my company and rail'd at me,
That I am desperate of obtaining her.

DUKE.

This weak impress of love is as a figure
Trenched in ice, which with an hour's heat
Dissolves to water and doth lose his form.
A little time will melt her frozen thoughts,
And worthless Valentine shall be forgot.

[Enter PROTEUS.]

How now, Sir Proteus! Is your countryman,
According to our proclamation, gone?

PROTEUS.

Gone, my good lord.

DUKE.

My daughter takes his going grievously.

PROTEUS.

A little time, my lord, will kill that grief.

DUKE.

So I believe; but Thurio thinks not so.
Proteus, the good conceit I hold of thee,--
For thou hast shown some sign of good desert,--
Makes me the better to confer with thee.

PROTEUS.

Longer than I prove loyal to your Grace
Let me not live to look upon your Grace.

DUKE.

Thou know'st how willingly I would effect
The match between Sir Thurio and my daughter.

PROTEUS.

I do, my lord.

DUKE.

And also, I think, thou art not ignorant
How she opposes her against my will.

PROTEUS.

She did, my lord, when Valentine was here.

DUKE.

Ay, and perversely she perseveres so.
What might we do to make the girl forget
The love of Valentine, and love Sir Thurio?

PROTEUS.

The best way is to slander Valentine
With falsehood, cowardice, and poor descent,
Three things that women highly hold in hate.

DUKE.

Ay, but she'll think that it is spoke in hate.

PROTEUS.

Ay, if his enemy deliver it;
Therefore it must with circumstance be spoken
By one whom she esteemeth as his friend.

DUKE.

Then you must undertake to slander him.

PROTEUS.

And that, my lord, I shall be loath to do:
'Tis an ill office for a gentleman,
Especially against his very friend.

DUKE.

Where your good word cannot advantage him,
Your slander never can endamage him;
Therefore the office is indifferent,
Being entreated to it by your friend.

PROTEUS.

You have prevail'd, my lord; if I can do it
By aught that I can speak in his dispraise,
She shall not long continue love to him.
But say this weed her love from Valentine,
It follows not that she will love Sir Thurio.

THURIO.

Therefore, as you unwind her love from him,
Lest it should ravel and be good to none,
You must provide to bottom it on me;
Which must be done by praising me as much
As you in worth dispraise Sir Valentine.

DUKE.

And, Proteus, we dare trust you in this kind,
Because we know, on Valentine's report,
You are already Love's firm votary
And cannot soon revolt and change your mind.
Upon this warrant shall you have access
Where you with Silvia may confer at large;
For she is lumpish, heavy, melancholy,
And, for your friend's sake, will be glad of you;
Where you may temper her by your persuasion
To hate young Valentine and love my friend.

PROTEUS.

As much as I can do I will effect.
But you, Sir Thurio, are not sharp enough;
You must lay lime to tangle her desires
By wailful sonnets, whose composed rhymes
Should be full-fraught with serviceable vows.

DUKE.

Ay,
Much is the force of heaven-bred poesy.

PROTEUS.

Say that upon the altar of her beauty
You sacrifice your tears, your sighs, your heart.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Write till your ink be dry, and with your tears
Moist it again, and frame some feeling line
That may discover such integrity:
For Orpheus' lute was strung with poets' sinews,
Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones,
Make tigers tame, and huge leviathans
Forsake unsounded deeps to dance on sands.
After your dire-lamenting elegies,
Visit by night your lady's chamber-window
With some sweet consort: to their instruments
Tune a deploring dump; the night's dead silence
Will well become such sweet-complaining grievance.
This, or else nothing, will inherit her.

DUKE.

This discipline shows thou hast been in love.

THURIO.

And thy advice this night I'll put in practice.
Therefore, sweet Proteus, my direction-giver,
Let us into the city presently
To sort some gentlemen well skill'd in music.
I have a sonnet that will serve the turn
To give the onset to thy good advice.

DUKE.

About it, gentlemen!

PROTEUS.

We'll wait upon your Grace till after-supper,
And afterward determine our proceedings.

DUKE.

Even now about it! I will pardon you.

[Exeunt.]

ACT 4.

SCENE 1. A forest between Milan and Verona.

[Enter certain OUTLAWS.]

FIRST OUTLAW.

Fellows, stand fast; I see a passenger.

SECOND OUTLAW.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

If there be ten, shrink not, but down with 'em.

[Enter VALENTINE and SPEED.]

THIRD OUTLAW.

Stand, sir, and throw us that you have about ye;
If not, we'll make you sit, and rifle you.

SPEED.

Sir, we are undone: these are the villains
That all the travellers do fear so much.

VALENTINE.

My friends,--

FIRST OUTLAW.

That's not so, sir; we are your enemies.

SECOND OUTLAW.

Peace! we'll hear him.

THIRD OUTLAW.

Ay, by my beard, will we, for he is a proper man.

VALENTINE.

Then know that I have little wealth to lose;
A man I am cross'd with adversity;
My riches are these poor habiliments,
Of which if you should here disfurnish me,
You take the sum and substance that I have.

SECOND OUTLAW.

Whither travel you?

VALENTINE.

To Verona.

FIRST OUTLAW.

Whence came you?

VALENTINE.

From Milan.

THIRD OUTLAW.

Have you long sojourn'd there?

VALENTINE.

Some sixteen months, and longer might have stay'd,
If crooked fortune had not thwarted me.

FIRST OUTLAW.

ACT 4.

What! were you banish'd thence?

VALENTINE.

I was.

SECOND OUTLAW.

For what offence?

VALENTINE.

For that which now torments me to rehearse:
I kill'd a man, whose death I much repent;
But yet I slew him manfully in fight,
Without false vantage or base treachery.

FIRST OUTLAW.

Why, ne'er repent it, if it were done so.
But were you banish'd for so small a fault?

VALENTINE.

I was, and held me glad of such a doom.

SECOND OUTLAW.

Have you the tongues?

VALENTINE.

My youthful travel therein made me happy,
Or else I often had been miserable.

THIRD OUTLAW.

By the bare scalp of Robin Hood's fat friar,
This fellow were a king for our wild faction!

FIRST OUTLAW.

We'll have him: Sirs, a word.

SPEED.

Master, be one of them; it's an honourable kind of thievery.

VALENTINE.

Peace, villain!

SECOND OUTLAW.

Tell us this: have you anything to take to?

VALENTINE.

Nothing but my fortune.

THIRD OUTLAW.

Know, then, that some of us are gentlemen,
Such as the fury of ungovern'd youth
Thrust from the company of awful men:

ACT 4.

Myself was from Verona banished
For practising to steal away a lady,
An heir, and near allied unto the duke.

SECOND OUTLAW.

And I from Mantua, for a gentleman
Who, in my mood, I stabb'd unto the heart.

FIRST OUTLAW.

And I for such-like petty crimes as these.
But to the purpose; for we cite our faults,
That they may hold excus'd our lawless lives;
And, partly, seeing you are beautified
With goodly shape, and by your own report
A linguist, and a man of such perfection
As we do in our quality much want—

SECOND OUTLAW.

Indeed, because you are a banish'd man,
Therefore, above the rest, we parley to you.
Are you content to be our general?
To make a virtue of necessity
And live as we do in this wilderness?

THIRD OUTLAW.

What say'st thou? Wilt thou be of our consort?
Say 'ay' and be the captain of us all:
We'll do thee homage, and be rul'd by thee,
Love thee as our commander and our king.

FIRST OUTLAW.

But if thou scorn our courtesy thou diest.

SECOND OUTLAW.

Thou shalt not live to brag what we have offer'd.

VALENTINE.

I take your offer, and will live with you,
Provided that you do no outrages
On silly women or poor passengers.

THIRD OUTLAW.

No, we detest such vile base practices.
Come, go with us; we'll bring thee to our crews,
And show thee all the treasure we have got;
Which, with ourselves, all rest at thy dispose.

[Exeunt.]

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

SCENE 2. Milan. The court of the DUKE'S palace.

[Enter PROTEUS.]

PROTEUS.

Already have I been false to Valentine,
And now I must be as unjust to Thurio.
Under the colour of commending him,
I have access my own love to prefer:
But Silvia is too fair, too true, too holy,
To be corrupted with my worthless gifts.
When I protest true loyalty to her,
She twits me with my falsehood to my friend;
When to her beauty I commend my vows,
She bids me think how I have been forsworn
In breaking faith with Julia whom I lov'd;
And notwithstanding all her sudden quips,
The least whereof would quell a lover's hope,
Yet, spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love
The more it grows and fawneth on her still.
But here comes Thurio. Now must we to her window,
And give some evening music to her ear.

[Enter THURIO and Musicians.]

THURIO.

How now, Sir Proteus! are you crept before us?

PROTEUS.

Ay, gentle Thurio; for you know that love
Will creep in service where it cannot go.

THURIO.

Ay, but I hope, sir, that you love not here.

PROTEUS.

Sir, but I do; or else I would be hence.

THURIO.

Who? Silvia?

PROTEUS.

Ay, Silvia, for your sake.

THURIO.

I thank you for your own. Now, gentlemen,
Let's tune, and to it lustily awhile.

[Enter Host, and JULIA in boy's clothes.]

HOST.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Now, my young guest, methinks you're allycholly; I pray you,
why is it?

JULIA.

Marry, mine host, because I cannot be merry.

HOST.

Come, we'll have you merry; I'll bring you where you shall
hear music, and see the gentleman that you asked for.

JULIA.

But shall I hear him speak?

HOST.

Ay, that you shall.

JULIA.

That will be music. [Music plays.]

HOST.

Hark! hark!

JULIA.

Is he among these?

HOST.

Ay; but peace! let's hear 'em.

[SONG]

Who is Silvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness.
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being help'd, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling.
' To her let us garlands bring.

HOST.

How now, are you sadder than you were before?
How do you, man? The music likes you not.

ACT 4.

JULIA.

You mistake; the musician likes me not.

HOST.

Why, my pretty youth?

JULIA.

He plays false, father.

HOST.

How? out of tune on the strings?

JULIA.

Not so; but yet so false that he grieves my very
heart--strings.

HOST.

You have a quick ear.

JULIA.

Ay, I would I were deaf; it makes me have a slow heart.

HOST.

I perceive you delight not in music.

JULIA.

Not a whit,--when it jars so.

HOST.

Hark! what fine change is in the music!

JULIA.

Ay, that change is the spite.

HOST.

You would have them always play but one thing?

JULIA.

I would always have one play but one thing.
But, Host, doth this Sir Proteus, that we talk on,
Often resort unto this gentlewoman?

HOST.

I tell you what Launce, his man, told me: he lov'd her out of
all nick.

JULIA.

Where is Launce?

HOST.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Gone to seek his dog, which to-morrow, by his master's command, he must carry for a present to his lady.

JULIA.

Peace! stand aside: the company parts.

PROTEUS.

Sir Thurio, fear not you; I will so plead
That you shall say my cunning drift excels.

THURIO.

Where meet we?

PROTEUS.

At Saint Gregory's well.

THURIO.

Farewell.

[Exeunt THURIO and Musicians.]

[Enter SILVIA above, at her window.]

PROTEUS.

Madam, good even to your ladyship.

SILVIA.

I thank you for your music, gentlemen.
Who is that that spake?

PROTEUS.

One, lady, if you knew his pure heart's truth,
You would quickly learn to know him by his voice.

SILVIA.

Sir Proteus, as I take it.

PROTEUS.

Sir Proteus, gentle lady, and your servant.

SILVIA.

What's your will?

PROTEUS.

That I may compass yours.

SILVIA.

You have your wish; my will is even this,
That presently you hie you home to bed.
Thou subtle, perjur'd, false, disloyal man!
Think'st thou I am so shallow, so conceitless,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

To be seduced by thy flattery,
That hast deceiv'd so many with thy vows?
Return, return, and make thy love amends.
For me, by this pale queen of night I swear,
I am so far from granting thy request
That I despise thee for thy wrongful suit,
And by and by intend to chide myself
Even for this time I spend in talking to thee.

PROTEUS.

I grant, sweet love, that I did love a lady;
But she is dead.

JULIA.

[Aside] 'Twere false, if I should speak it;
For I am sure she is not buried.

SILVIA.

Say that she be; yet Valentine, thy friend,
Survives, to whom, thyself art witness,
I am betroth'd; and art thou not asham'd
To wrong him with thy importunacy?

PROTEUS.

I likewise hear that Valentine is dead.

SILVIA.

And so suppose am I; for in his grave,
Assure thyself my love is buried.

PROTEUS.

Sweet lady, let me rake it from the earth.

SILVIA.

Go to thy lady's grave, and call hers thence;
Or, at the least, in hers sepulchre thine.

JULIA.

[Aside] He heard not that.

PROTEUS.

Madam, if your heart be so obdurate,
Vouchsafe me yet your picture for my love,
The picture that is hanging in your chamber;
To that I'll speak, to that I'll sigh and weep;
For, since the substance of your perfect self
Is else devoted, I am but a shadow;
And to your shadow will I make true love.

JULIA.

[Aside] If 'twere a substance, you would, sure, deceive it

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

And make it but a shadow, as I am.

SILVIA.

I am very loath to be your idol, sir;
But since your falsehood shall become you well
To worship shadows and adore false shapes,
Send to me in the morning, and I'll send it;
And so, good rest.

PROTEUS.

As wretches have o'ernight
That wait for execution in the morn.

[Exeunt PROTEUS and SILVIA, above.]

JULIA.

Host, will you go?

HOST.

By my halidom, I was fast asleep.

JULIA.

Pray you, where lies Sir Proteus?

HOST.

Marry, at my house. Trust me, I think 'tis almost day.

JULIA.

Not so; but it hath been the longest night
That e'er I watch'd, and the most heaviest.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 3. The same.

[Enter EGLAMOUR.]

EGLAMOUR.

This is the hour that Madam Silvia
Entreated me to call and know her mind:
There's some great matter she'd employ me in.
Madam, madam!

[Enter SILVIA above, at her window.]

SILVIA.

Who calls?

EGLAMOUR.

ACT 4.

Your servant and your friend;
One that attends your ladyship's command.

SILVIA.

Sir Eglamour, a thousand times good morrow.

EGLAMOUR.

As many, worthy lady, to yourself.
According to your ladyship's impose,
I am thus early come to know what service
It is your pleasure to command me in.

SILVIA.

O Eglamour, thou art a gentleman--
Think not I flatter, for I swear I do not--
Valiant, wise, remorseful, well accomplish'd.
Thou art not ignorant what dear good will
I bear unto the banish'd Valentine;
Nor how my father would enforce me marry
Vain Thurio, whom my very soul abhors.
Thyself hast lov'd; and I have heard thee say
No grief did ever come so near thy heart
As when thy lady and thy true love died,
Upon whose grave thou vow'dst pure chastity.
Sir Eglamour, I would to Valentine,
To Mantua, where I hear he makes abode;
And, for the ways are dangerous to pass,
I do desire thy worthy company,
Upon whose faith and honour I repose.
Urge not my father's anger, Eglamour,
But think upon my grief, a lady's grief,
And on the justice of my flying hence,
To keep me from a most unholy match,
Which heaven and fortune still rewards with plagues.
I do desire thee, even from a heart
As full of sorrows as the sea of sands,
To bear me company and go with me;
If not, to hide what I have said to thee,
That I may venture to depart alone.

EGLAMOUR.

Madam, I pity much your grievances;
Which since I know they virtuously are plac'd,
I give consent to go along with you,
Recking as little what betideth me
As much I wish all good befortune you.
When will you go?

SILVIA.

This evening coming.

EGLAMOUR.

Where shall I meet you?

SILVIA.

At Friar Patrick's cell,
Where I intend holy confession.

EGLAMOUR.

I will not fail your ladyship. Good morrow, gentle lady.

SILVIA.

Good morrow, kind Sir Eglamour.

[Exeunt severally.]

SCENE 4. The same.

[Enter LAUNCE with his dog.]

LAUNCE.

When a man's servant shall play the cur with him, look you, it goes hard; one that I brought up of a puppy; one that I saved from drowning, when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it. I have taught him, even as one would say precisely 'Thus I would teach a dog.' I was sent to deliver him as a present to Mistress Silvia from my master; and I came no sooner into the dining-chamber, but he steps me to her trencher and steals her capon's leg. O! 'tis a foul thing when a cur cannot keep himself in all companies! I would have, as one should say, one that takes upon him to be a dog indeed, to be, as it were, a dog at all things. If I had not had more wit than he, to take a fault upon me that he did, I think verily he had been hang'd for't; sure as I live, he had suffer'd for't; you shall judge. He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentleman-like dogs under the duke's table; he had not been there—bless the mark, a pissing-while, but all the chamber smelt him. 'Out with the dog!' says one; 'What cur is that?' says another; 'Whip him out' says the third; 'Hang him up' says the duke. I, having been acquainted with the smell before, knew it was Crab, and goes me to the fellow that whips the dogs: 'Friend,' quoth I 'you mean to whip the dog?' 'Ay, marry do I,' quoth he. 'You do him the more wrong,' quoth I; 'twas I did the thing you wot of.' He makes me no more ado, but whips me out of the chamber. How many masters would do this for his servant? Nay, I'll be sworn, I have sat in the stock for puddings he hath stolen, otherwise he had been executed; I have stood on the pillory for geese he hath killed, otherwise he had suffered for't. Thou think'st not of this now. Nay, I remember the trick you serv'd me when I took my leave of Madam Silvia: did not I bid

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

thee still mark me and do as I do? When didst thou see me heave
up my leg and make water against a gentlewoman's farthingale?
Didst thou ever see me do such a trick?

[Enter PROTEUS, and JULIA in boy's clothes.]

PROTEUS.

Sebastian is thy name? I like thee well,
And will employ thee in some service presently.

JULIA.

In what you please; I'll do what I can.

PROTEUS.

I hope thou wilt.

[To LAUNCE] How now, you whoreson peasant!
Where have you been these two days loitering?

LAUNCE.

Marry, sir, I carried Mistress Silvia the dog you bade me.

PROTEUS.

And what says she to my little jewel?

LAUNCE.

Marry, she says your dog was a cur, and tells you currish
thanks is good enough for such a present.

PROTEUS.

But she received my dog?

LAUNCE.

No, indeed, did she not: here have I brought him back
again.

PROTEUS.

What! didst thou offer her this from me?

LAUNCE.

Ay, sir; the other squirrel was stolen from me by the
hangman boys in the market-place; and then I offered her mine
own, who is a dog as big as ten of yours, and therefore the gift
the greater.

PROTEUS.

Go, get thee hence and find my dog again,
Or ne'er return again into my sight.
Away, I say. Stayest thou to vex me here?
A slave that still an end turns me to shame!

[Exit LAUNCE.]

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Sebastian, I have entertained thee
Partly that I have need of such a youth
That can with some discretion do my business,
For 'tis no trusting to yond foolish lout;
But chiefly for thy face and thy behaviour,
Which, if my augury deceive me not,
Witness good bringing up, fortune, and truth:
Therefore, know thou, for this I entertain thee.
Go presently, and take this ring with thee,
Deliver it to Madam Silvia:
She lov'd me well deliver'd it to me.

JULIA.

It seems you lov'd not her, to leave her token.
She's dead, belike?

PROTEUS.

Not so: I think she lives.

JULIA.

Alas!

PROTEUS.

Why dost thou cry 'Alas'?

JULIA.

I cannot choose
But pity her.

PROTEUS.

Wherefore shouldst thou pity her?

JULIA.

Because methinks that she lov'd you as well
As you do love your lady Silvia.
She dreams on him that has forgot her love:
You dote on her that cares not for your love.
'Tis pity love should be so contrary;
And thinking on it makes me cry 'alas!'

PROTEUS.

Well, give her that ring, and therewithal
This letter: that's her chamber. Tell my lady
I claim the promise for her heavenly picture.
Your message done, hie home unto my chamber,
Where thou shalt find me sad and solitary.

[Exit.]

JULIA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

How many women would do such a message?
Alas, poor Proteus! thou hast entertain'd
A fox to be the shepherd of thy lambs.
Alas, poor fool! why do I pity him
That with his very heart despiseth me?
Because he loves her, he despiseth me;
Because I love him, I must pity him.
This ring I gave him, when he parted from me,
To bind him to remember my good will;
And now am I--unhappy messenger--
To plead for that which I would not obtain,
To carry that which I would have refus'd,
To praise his faith, which I would have disprais'd.
I am my master's true--confirmed love,
But cannot be true servant to my master
Unless I prove false traitor to myself.
Yet will I woo for him, but yet so coldly
As, heaven it knows, I would not have him speed.

[Enter SILVIA, attended.]

Gentlewoman, good day! I pray you be my mean
To bring me where to speak with Madam Silvia.

SILVIA.

What would you with her, if that I be she?

JULIA.

If you be she, I do entreat your patience
To hear me speak the message I am sent on.

SILVIA.

From whom?

JULIA.

From my master, Sir Proteus, madam.

SILVIA.

O! he sends you for a picture?

JULIA.

Ay, madam.

SILVIA.

Ursula, bring my picture there.

[A picture brought.]

Go, give your master this. Tell him from me,
One Julia, that his changing thoughts forget,
Would better fit his chamber than this shadow.

ACT 4.

JULIA.

Madam, please you peruse this letter.--
Pardon me, madam; I have unadvis'd
Deliver'd you a paper that I should not:
This is the letter to your ladyship.

SILVIA.

I pray thee, let me look on that again.

JULIA.

It may not be: good madam, pardon me.

SILVIA.

There, hold.
I will not look upon your master's lines:
I know they are stuff'd with protestations
And full of new-found oaths, which he will break
As easily as I do tear his paper.

JULIA.

Madam, he sends your ladyship this ring.

SILVIA.

The more shame for him that he sends it me;
For I have heard him say a thousand times
His Julia gave it him at his departure.
Though his false finger have profan'd the ring,
Mine shall not do his Julia so much wrong.

JULIA.

She thanks you.

SILVIA.

What say'st thou?

JULIA.

I thank you, madam, that you tender her.
Poor gentlewoman, my master wrongs her much.

SILVIA.

Dost thou know her?

JULIA.

Almost as well as I do know myself:
To think upon her woes, I do protest
That I have wept a hundred several times.

SILVIA.

Belike she thinks, that Proteus hath forsook her.

JULIA.

I think she doth, and that's her cause of sorrow.

SILVIA.

Is she not passing fair?

JULIA.

She hath been fairer, madam, than she is.
When she did think my master lov'd her well,
She, in my judgment, was as fair as you;
But since she did neglect her looking-glass
And threw her sun-expelling mask away,
The air hath starv'd the roses in her cheeks
And pinch'd the lily-tincture of her face,
That now she is become as black as I.

SILVIA.

How tall was she?

JULIA.

About my stature; for at Pentecost,
When all our pageants of delight were play'd,
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
And I was trimm'd in Madam Julia's gown,
Which served me as fit, by all men's judgments,
As if the garment had been made for me:
Therefore I know she is about my height.
And at that time I made her weep agoon;
For I did play a lamentable part.
Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning
For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight;
Which I so lively acted with my tears
That my poor mistress, mov'd therewithal,
Wept bitterly; and would I might be dead
If I in thought felt not her very sorrow!

SILVIA.

She is beholding to thee, gentle youth.--
Alas, poor lady, desolate and left!
I weep myself, to think upon thy words.
Here, youth, there is my purse; I give thee this
For thy sweet mistress' sake, because thou lov'st her.
Farewell.

JULIA.

And she shall thank you for't, if e'er you know her.--

[Exit SILVIA with ATTENDANTS]

A virtuous gentlewoman, mild and beautiful!
I hope my master's suit will be but cold,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Since she respects my mistress' love so much.
Alas, how love can trifle with itself!
Here is her picture; let me see. I think,
If I had such a tire, this face of mine
Were full as lovely as is this of hers;
And yet the painter flatter'd her a little,
Unless I flatter with myself too much.
Her hair is auburn, mine is perfect yellow:
If that be all the difference in his love,
I'll get me such a colour'd periwig.
Her eyes are grey as glass, and so are mine;
Ay, but her forehead's low, and mine's as high.
What should it be that he respects in her
But I can make respective in myself,
If this fond Love were not a blinded god?
Come, shadow, come, and take this shadow up,
For 'tis thy rival. O thou senseless form!
Thou shalt be worshipp'd, kiss'd, lov'd, and ador'd,
And, were there sense in his idolatry,
My substance should be statue in thy stead.
I'll use thee kindly for thy mistress' sake,
That us'd me so; or else, by Jove I vow,
I should have scratch'd out your unseeing eyes,
To make my master out of love with thee.

[Exit.]

ACT 5.

SCENE I. Milan. An abbey

[Enter EGLAMOUR.]

EGLAMOUR.

The sun begins to gild the western sky,
And now it is about the very hour
That Silvia at Friar Patrick's cell should meet me.
She will not fail; for lovers break not hours
Unless it be to come before their time,
So much they spur their expedition.
See, where she comes.

[Enter SILVIA.]

Lady, a happy evening!

SILVIA.

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Amen, amen! Go on, good Eglamour,
Out at the postern by the abbey wall.
I fear I am attended by some spies.

EGLAMOUR.

Fear not: the forest is not three leagues off;
If we recover that, we are sure enough.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 2. The same. A room in the DUKE'S palace.

[Enter THURIO, PROTEUS, and JULIA.]

THURIO.

Sir Proteus, what says Silvia to my suit?

PROTEUS.

O, sir, I find her milder than she was;
And yet she takes exceptions at your person.

THURIO.

What! that my leg is too long?

PROTEUS.

No; that it is too little.

THURIO.

I'll wear a boot to make it somewhat rounder.

JULIA.

[Aside] But love will not be spurr'd to what it loathes.

THURIO.

What says she to my face?

PROTEUS.

She says it is a fair one.

THURIO.

Nay, then, the wanton lies; my face is black.

PROTEUS.

But pearls are fair; and the old saying is:
'Black men are pearls in beauteous ladies' eyes.'

JULIA.

[Aside] 'Tis true, such pearls as put out ladies' eyes;
For I had rather wink than look on them.

ACT 4.

THURIO.

How likes she my discourse?

PROTEUS.

Ill, when you talk of war.

THURIO.

But well when I discourse of love and peace?

JULIA.

[Aside] But better, indeed, when you hold your peace.

THURIO.

What says she to my valour?

PROTEUS.

O, sir, she makes no doubt of that.

JULIA.

[Aside] She needs not, when she knows it cowardice.

THURIO.

What says she to my birth?

PROTEUS.

That you are well deriv'd.

JULIA.

[Aside] True; from a gentleman to a fool.

THURIO.

Considers she my possessions?

PROTEUS.

O, ay; and pities them.

THURIO.

Wherefore?

JULIA.

[Aside] That such an ass should owe them.

PROTEUS.

That they are out by lease.

JULIA.

Here comes the duke.

[Enter DUKE.]

DUKE.

How now, Sir Proteus! how now, Thurio!
Which of you saw Sir Eglamour of late?

THURIO.

Not I.

PROTEUS.

Nor I.

DUKE.

Saw you my daughter?

PROTEUS.

Neither.

DUKE.

Why then,
She's fled unto that peasant Valentine;
And Eglamour is in her company.
'Tis true; for Friar Lawrence met them both
As he in penance wander'd through the forest;
Him he knew well, and guess'd that it was she,
But, being mask'd, he was not sure of it;
Besides, she did intend confession
At Patrick's cell this even; and there she was not.
These likelihoods confirm her flight from hence.
Therefore, I pray you, stand not to discourse,
But mount you presently, and meet with me
Upon the rising of the mountain-foot
That leads toward Mantua, whither they are fled.
Dispatch, sweet gentlemen, and follow me.

[Exit.]

THURIO.

Why, this it is to be a peevish girl
That flies her fortune when it follows her.
I'll after, more to be reveng'd on Eglamour
Than for the love of reckless Silvia.

[Exit.]

PROTEUS.

And I will follow, more for Silvia's love
Than hate of Eglamour, that goes with her.

[Exit.]

JULIA.

And I will follow, more to cross that love

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Than hate for Silvia, that is gone for love.

[Exit.]

SCENE 3. Frontiers of Mantua. The forest.

[Enter OUTLAWS with SILVA.]

FIRST OUTLAW.

Come, come.

Be patient; we must bring you to our captain.

SILVIA.

A thousand more mischances than this one
Have learn'd me how to brook this patiently.

SECOND OUTLAW.

Come, bring her away.

FIRST OUTLAW.

Where is the gentleman that was with her?

SECOND OUTLAW.

Being nimble-footed, he hath outrun us;
But Moyses and Valerius follow him.
Go thou with her to the west end of the wood;
There is our captain; we'll follow him that's fled.
The thicket is beset; he cannot 'scape.

[Exeunt all except the First Outlaw and SYLVIA.]

FIRST OUTLAW.

Come, I must bring you to our captain's cave.

Fear not; he bears an honourable mind,

And will not use a woman lawlessly.

SILVIA.

O Valentine, this I endure for thee!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 4. Another part of the forest.

[Enter VALENTINE.]

VALENTINE.

How use doth breed a habit in a man!

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
And to the nightingale's complaining notes
Tune my distresses and record my woes.
O thou that dost inhabit in my breast,
Leave not the mansion so long tenantless,
Lest, growing ruinous, the building fall
And leave no memory of what it was!
Repair me with thy presence, Silvia!
Thou gentle nymph, cherish thy forlorn swain. [Noise within.]
What halloing and what stir is this to-day?
These are my mates, that make their wills their law,
Have some unhappy passenger in chase.
They love me well; yet I have much to do
To keep them from uncivil outrages.
Withdraw thee, Valentine: who's this comes here?

[Steps aside.]

[Enter PROTEUS, SILVIA, and JULIA.]

PROTEUS.

Madam, this service I have done for you--
Though you respect not aught your servant doth--
To hazard life, and rescue you from him
That would have forc'd your honour and your love.
Vouchsafe me, for my meed, but one fair look;
A smaller boon than this I cannot beg,
And less than this, I am sure, you cannot give.

VALENTINE. [Aside] How like a dream is this I see and hear!
Love, lend me patience to forbear awhile.

SILVIA.

O miserable, unhappy that I am!

PROTEUS.

Unhappy were you, madam, ere I came;
But by my coming I have made you happy.

SILVIA.

By thy approach thou mak'st me most unhappy.

JULIA. [Aside] And me, when he approacheth to your presence.

SILVIA.

Had I been seized by a hungry lion,
I would have been a breakfast to the beast,
Rather than have false Proteus rescue me.
O! heaven be judge how I love Valentine,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Whose life's as tender to me as my soul,
And full as much--for more there cannot be--
I do detest false, perjur'd Proteus.
Therefore be gone; solicit me no more.

PROTEUS.

What dangerous action, stood it next to death,
Would I not undergo for one calm look!
O, 'tis the curse in love, and still approv'd,
When women cannot love where they're belov'd!

SILVIA.

When Proteus cannot love where he's belov'd!
Read over Julia's heart, thy first best love,
For whose dear sake thou didst then rend thy faith
Into a thousand oaths; and all those oaths
Descended into perjury, to love me.
Thou hast no faith left now, unless thou'dst two,
And that's far worse than none: better have none
Than plural faith, which is too much by one.
Thou counterfeit to thy true friend!

PROTEUS.

In love,
Who respects friend?

SILVIA.

All men but Proteus.

PROTEUS.

Nay, if the gentle spirit of moving words
Can no way change you to a milder form,
I'll woo you like a soldier, at arms' end,
And love you 'gainst the nature of love,--force ye.

SILVIA.

O heaven!

PROTEUS.

I'll force thee yield to my desire.

VALENTINE. [Coming forward.]

Ruffian! let go that rude uncivil touch;
Thou friend of an ill fashion!

PROTEUS.

Valentine!

VALENTINE.

Thou common friend, that's without faith or love--
For such is a friend now--treacherous man,

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

Thou hast beguil'd my hopes; nought but mine eye
Could have persuaded me. Now I dare not say
I have one friend alive: thou wouldst disprove me.
Who should be trusted, when one's own right hand
Is perjur'd to the bosom? Proteus,
I am sorry I must never trust thee more,
But count the world a stranger for thy sake.
The private wound is deep'st. O time most curst!
'Mongst all foes that a friend should be the worst!

PROTEUS.

My shame and guilt confounds me.
Forgive me, Valentine; if hearty sorrow
Be a sufficient ransom for offence,
I tender 't here; I do as truly suffer
As e'er I did commit.

VALENTINE.

Then I am paid;
And once again I do receive thee honest.
Who by repentance is not satisfied
Is nor of heaven nor earth, for these are pleas'd.
By penitence the Eternal's wrath's appeas'd:
And, that my love may appear plain and free,
All that was mine in Silvia I give thee.

JULIA.

O me unhappy! [Swoons]

PROTEUS.

Look to the boy.

VALENTINE.

Why, boy! why, wag! how now!
What's the matter? Look up; speak.

JULIA.

O good sir, my master charg'd me to deliver a ring to Madam
Silvia, which, out of my neglect, was never done.

PROTEUS.

Where is that ring, boy?

JULIA.

Here 'tis; this is it. [Gives a ring.]

PROTEUS.

How! let me see. Why, this is the ring I gave to Julia.

JULIA.

O, cry you mercy, sir, I have mistook;

ACT 4.

Four Comedies -- William Shakespeare

This is the ring you sent to Silvia. [Shows another ring.]

PROTEUS.

But how cam'st thou by this ring?
At my depart I gave this unto Julia.

JULIA.

And Julia herself did give it me;
And Julia herself have brought it hither.

PROTEUS.

How! Julia!

JULIA.

Behold her that gave aim to all thy oaths,
And entertain'd them deeply in her heart:
How oft hast thou with perjury cleft the root!
O Proteus! let this habit make thee blush.
Be thou asham'd that I have took upon me
Such an immodest raiment; if shame live
In a disguise of love.
It is the lesser blot, modesty finds,
Women to change their shapes than men their minds.

PROTEUS.

Than men their minds! 'tis true. O heaven! were man
But constant, he were perfect: that one error
Fills him with faults; makes him run through all the sins:
Inconstancy falls off ere it begins.
What is in Silvia's face, but I may spy
More fresh in Julia's with a constant eye?

VALENTINE.

Come, come, a hand from either.
Let me be blest to make this happy close;
'Twere pity two such friends should be long foes.

PROTEUS.

Bear witness, heaven, I have my wish for ever.

JULIA.

And I mine.

[Enter OUTLAWS, with DUKE and THURIO.]

OUTLAW.

A prize, a prize, a prize!

VALENTINE.

Forbear, forbear, I say; it is my lord the duke.
Your Grace is welcome to a man disgrac'd,

ACT 4.

Banished Valentine.

DUKE.

Sir Valentine!

THURIO.

Yonder is Silvia; and Silvia's mine.

VALENTINE.

Thurio, give back, or else embrace thy death;
Come not within the measure of my wrath;
Do not name Silvia thine; if once again,
Verona shall not hold thee. Here she stands
Take but possession of her with a touch;
I dare thee but to breathe upon my love.

THURIO.

Sir Valentine, I care not for her, I;
I hold him but a fool that will endanger
His body for a girl that loves him not:
I claim her not, and therefore she is thine.

DUKE.

The more degenerate and base art thou
To make such means for her as thou hast done,
And leave her on such slight conditions.
Now, by the honour of my ancestry,
I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,
And think thee worthy of an empress' love.
Know then, I here forget all former griefs,
Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again,
Plead a new state in thy unrivall'd merit,
To which I thus subscribe: Sir Valentine,
Thou art a gentleman, and well deriv'd;
Take thou thy Silvia, for thou hast deserv'd her.

VALENTINE.

I thank your Grace; the gift hath made me happy.
I now beseech you, for your daughter's sake,
To grant one boon that I shall ask of you.

DUKE.

I grant it for thine own, whate'er it be.

VALENTINE.

These banish'd men, that I have kept withal,
Are men endu'd with worthy qualities:
Forgive them what they have committed here,
And let them be recall'd from their exile:
They are reformed, civil, full of good,
And fit for great employment, worthy lord.

ACT 4.

DUKE.

Thou hast prevail'd; I pardon them, and thee;
Dispose of them as thou know'st their deserts.
Come, let us go; we will include all jars
With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity.

VALENTINE.

And, as we walk along, I dare be bold
With our discourse to make your Grace to smile.
What think you of this page, my lord?

DUKE.

I think the boy hath grace in him; he blushes.

VALENTINE.

I warrant you, my lord, more grace than boy.

DUKE.

What mean you by that saying?

VALENTINE.

Please you, I'll tell you as we pass along,
That you will wonder what hath fortun'd.
Come, Proteus; 'tis your penance but to hear
The story of your loves discovered:
That done, our day of marriage shall be yours;
One feast, one house, one mutual happiness.

[Exeunt.]