

ACT V

SCENE I.—Before LEONATO'S House.

Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO.

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

Leon. 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 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,
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.

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing
differ.
Leon. I pray thee, peace! I will be flesh and
blood;

For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently, 36
However they have writ the style of gods
And made a push at chance and sufferance.

Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon your-
self;
Make those that do offend you suffer too. 40
Leon. 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. 44
Ant. Here come the prince and Claudio
hastily.

Enter DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO.

D. Pedro. Good den, good den.*Claud.* Good day to both of you.*Leon.* Hear you, my lords,—*D. Pedro.* We have some haste, Leonato.*Leon.* Some haste, my lord! well, fare you
well, my lord: 48

Are you so hasty now?—well, all is one.

D. Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good
old man.*Ant.* If he could right himself with quar-
relling,
Some of us would lie low.*Claud.* Who wrongs him? 52
Leon. Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou dis-
sembler, thou.*Nay,* never lay thy hand upon thy sword;
I fear thee not.*Claud.* Marry, beshrew my hand, 55
If it should give your age such cause of fear.
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.*Leon.* Tush, tush, man! never flier 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, 64
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, 68*And she lies* buried with her ancestors;
O! in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villany!*Claud.* My villany?*Leon.* Thine, Claudio; thine, I say. 72*D. Pedro.* You say not right, old man.*Leon.* 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 lusthood. 76*Claud.* Away! I will not have to do with you.*Leon.* Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast*kill'd my* child;*If thou kill'st* me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.*Ant.* He shall kill two of us, and men indeed:*But that's* no matter; let him kill one first: 81*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. 85*Leon.* Brother,—*Ant.* 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 89*As I dare* take a serpent by the tongue.*Boys,* apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!*Leon.* Brother Antony,—*Ant.* Hold you content. What, man! I know*them,* yea, 92*And what* they weigh, even to the utmost*scruple,**Scrambling,* out-facing, fashion-monging boys,*That lie* and cog and flout, deprave and slander,*Go antickly,* show outward hideousness, 96*And speak* off half a dozen dangerous words,

SCENE I]

How they might hurt their enemies, if they
durst;

And this is all!

Leon. But, brother Antony,—*Ant.* Come, 'tis no matter: 100

Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

D. 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 no-

thing 104

But what was true and very full of proof.*Leon.* My lord, my lord—*D. Pedro.* I will not hear you.*Leon.* No?*Come,* brother, away. I will be heard.— 107*Ant.* And shall, or some of us will smart for

it. [Exeunt LEONATO and ANTONIO.]

Enter BENEDICK.

D. Pedro. See, see; here comes the man we
went to seek.*Claud.* Now, signior, what news?*Bene.* Good day, my lord. 112*D. Pedro.* Welcome, signior: you are almost

come to part almost a fray.

Claud. We had like to have had our two

noses snapped off with two old men without

teeth. 117

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother. What

thinkest thou? Had we fought, I doubt we

should have been too young for them. 120

Bene. In a false quarrel there is no true

valour. I came to seek you both.

Claud. 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? 126

Bene. It is in my scabbard; shall I draw it?*D. Pedro.* Dost thou wear thy wit by thy

side?

Claud. 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. 132

D. Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks

pale. Art thou sick, or angry?

Claud. What, courage, man! What though

care killed a cat, thou hast mettle enough in

thee to kill care. 137

Bene. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career,

an you charge it against me. I pray you choose

another subject. 140

Claud. Nay then, give him another staff:

this last was broke cross.

D. Pedro. By this light, he changes more and

more: I think he be angry indeed. 144

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

girdle.

Bene. Shall I speak a word in your ear?*Claud.* God bless me from a challenge! 148*Bene.* [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.

Claud. Well I will meet you, so I may have
good cheer. 156*D. Pedro.* What, a feast, a feast?*Claud.* 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? 161

Bene. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes

easily.

D. Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised

thy wit the other day. I said, 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. 178

Claud. For the which she wept heartily and

said she cared not.

D. 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. 184

Claud. All, all; and moreover, God saw him

when he was hid in the garden.

D. Pedro. But when shall we set the sa-
vage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's

head? 189

Claud. Yea, and text underneath, 'Here
dwells Benedick the married man!'*Bene.* 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.]

D. Pedro. He is in earnest.*Claud.* In most profound earnest; and, I'll

warrant you, for the love of Beatrice. 204

D. Pedro. And hath challenged thee?*Claud.* Most sincerely.*D. Pedro.* What a pretty thing man is when

he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off

his wit! 209

Claud. He is then a giant to an ape; but then

is an ape a doctor to such a man.

D. Pedro. But, soft you; let me be: pluck

up, my heart, and be sad! Did he not say my

brother was fled? 214

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and the Watch, with

CONRADE and BORACHIO.

Dogb. 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.

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

Claud. Hearken after their offence, my lord.
D. Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

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

D. 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?

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

D. Pedro. Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood. What's your offence?

Bora. 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.

D. Pedro. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

D. Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

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

D. Pedro. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery:

And fled he is upon this villany.

Claud. Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear

In the rare semblance that I lov'd it first.

Dogb. 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.

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

Re-enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, and the Sexton.

Leon. 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?

Bora. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

Leon. Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd

Mine innocent child?

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. 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.

Claud. 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.

D. 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.

Leon. 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.

Claud. O noble sir,

Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!

I do embrace your offer; and dispose

For henceforth of poor Claudio.

Leon. 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.

Bora. 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.

Dogb. 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.

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

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

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Dogb. God save the foundation!

Leon. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner,

and I thank thee.

Dogb. 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.*]

Leon. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

Ant. Farewell, my lords: we look for you

to-morrow.

D. Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

[*Exeunt DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO.*]

Leon. [To the Watch.] Bring you these fellows

on. We'll talk with Margaret.

How her acquaintance grew with this lewd

fellow.

SCENE II.—LEONATO'S Garden.

Enter BENEDICK and MARGARET, meeting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bene. 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 pandars, 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 rime; for 'scorn,' 'horn,' a hard rime; for 'school,' 'fool,' a babbling rime; 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?

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

Bene. O, stay but till then!

Beat. '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.

Bene. Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

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

Bene. 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?

Beat. 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?

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

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

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

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

Bene. 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.

Beat. And how long is that think you?

Bene. Question: why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum: therefore it is 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?

Beat. Very ill.
Bene. And how do you?
Beat. Very ill too.
Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend. There will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter URSULA.

Urs. 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?

Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior?
Bene. 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.

SCENE III.—*The Inside of a Church.*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and Attendants, with music and tapers.

Claud. Is this the monument of Leonato?

A Lord. It is, my lord.

Claud. [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.

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.

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

D. Pedro. Good morrow, masters: put your torches out.
 The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,

Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
 Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.
 Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

Claud. Good morrow, masters: each his several way.

D. Pedro. Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds;

And then to Leonato's we will go.

Claud. And Hymen now with luckier issue speed's,

Than this for whom we render'd up this woe!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*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?

Leon. 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
 In the true course of all the question.

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

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

Leon. 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.

Ant. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

Bene. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

Friar. To do what, signior?

Bene. 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.
 Your niece that eye my daughter lent her: 'tis

most true.
Bene. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

Leon. The sight whereof I think, you had from me,

From Claudio, and the prince. But what's your will?

Bene. 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:

In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.
Leon. My heart is with your liking.

Friar. And my help.
 Here come the prince and Claudio.

Enter DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO, with Attendants.

D. Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.
Leon. Good morrow, prince; good morrow,

Claudio: We here attend you. Are you yet determin'd
 To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

Claud. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiop.
Leon. Call her forth, brother: here's the friar

ready.
[Exit ANTONIO.]
D. Pedro. Good morrow, Benedick. Why,

what's the matter,
 That you have such a February face,

So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness?
Claud. 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.

Bene. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low: 48
 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.
Claud. For this I owe you: here come other

reckonings.

Re-enter ANTONIO, with the ladies masked.
 Which is the lady I must seize upon?

Ant. This same is she, and I do give you her.
Claud. Why, then she's mine. Sweet, let me

see your face.
Leon. No, that you shall not, till you take her

hand
 Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

Claud. 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:
 And when you lov'd, you were my other hus-

band.
Claud. Another Hero!

Hero. Nothing certainer:
 One Hero died defil'd, but I do live,

And surely as I live, I am a maid.
D. Pedro. The former Hero! Hero that is

dead!
Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slan-

der 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.

Bene. Soft and fair, friar. Which is Beatrice?
Beat. [Unmasking.] I answer to that name.

What is your will?
Bene. Do not you love me?

Beat. Why, no; no more than reason.
Bene. Why, then, your uncle and the prince

and Claudio
 Have been deceived; for they swore you did.

Beat. Do not you love me?
Bene. Troth, no; no more than reason.

Beat. Why, then, my cousin, Margaret, and
 Ursula,

Are much deceiv'd; for they did swear you did.
Bene. They swore that you were almost sick

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

dead for me.
Bene. 'Tis no such matter. Then, you do not

love me?
Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

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

Claud. 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.
Bene. A miracle! here's our own hands against

our hearts. Come, I will have thee; but, by this
 light, I take thee for pity.

Beat. 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.

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

D. Pedro. How dost thou, Benedick, the mar-
 ried man?

Bene. 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 epi-
 gram? No; if a 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 un-

bruised, and love my cousin.

Claud. 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.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends. Let's have
 a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten

our own hearts and our wives' heels.
Leon. We'll have dancing afterward.

Bene. First, of my word; therefore play,
 music! Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife,

get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverend
 than one tipped with horn.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in
 flight,

And brought with armed men back to Messina.
Bene. Think not on him till to-morrow: I'll

devise thee three brave punishments for him. Strike
 up, pipers!

[*Dance. Exeunt.*]