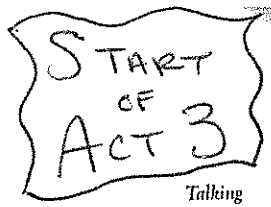


3.1

Enter HERO *and two gentlewomen,* MARGARET *and* URSULA

HERO 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 pleachèd[1] bower
Where honeysuckles, ripened by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter—like favourites
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it.[2] There will she hide her
To listen° our propose.° This is thy office.
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

Talking

hear / conversation

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.[3]

pace

Enter BEATRICE

Now begin,
For look where Beatrice like a lapwing[4] 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 couchèd° in the woodbine coverture.[5]
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

hidden

HERO Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false-sweet bait that we lay for it.—
[*They approach Beatrice's hiding-place*]
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful.
I know her spirits are as coy° and wild
As haggards° of the rock.

disdainful; shy
wild female hawks

URSULA But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

HERO So says the Prince and my new trothèd 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 loved Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

URSULA Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman

3.1 Location: Leonato's garden.
1. Screened by intertwining branches.
2. *that advance . . . it:* who presumptuously oppose the power that created it.
3. Wounds by rumor or gossip.
4. A peewit, a bird that scuttles along the ground.
5. In the honeysuckle arbor.

Deserve as full° as fortunate a bed
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

fully

HERO O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man.
But nature never framed 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,[6]
She is so self-endearèd.

Despising
other matters seem

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

HERO Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How° wise, how noble, young, how rarely° featured,
But she would spell him backward.[7] If fair-faced,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister.
If black,° why nature, drawing of an antic,°
Made a foul blot.° If tall, a lance ill headed;
If low, an agate[8] very vilely cut;
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block movèd with° none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out,
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness° and merit purchaseth.°

However / finely
dark / a buffoon
error
by
integrity / deserve

URSULA Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

HERO No, not to be so odd and from all fashions[9]
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[1] with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like covered fire,
Consume away in sighs,[2] 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.

harmless

URSULA O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgement,
Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is prized° to have, as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signor Benedick.

esteemed

6. *Nor take . . . affection:* Nor form the image or even the concept of love.
7. She would speak of his virtues as faults.
8. Tiny figures were carved in agates and used as seals or in rings.
9. *from all fashions:* contrary to normal behavior.
1. Crushing weights were loaded upon accused criminals who refused to enter a plea; Hero suggests that she will be silenced with mockery and then mocked for her silence.
2. Each sigh was said to draw a drop of blood from the

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. Signor Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument,[3] 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?
HERO Why, every day, tomorrow.[4] Come, go in.
I'll show thee some attires and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me tomorrow.
URSULA [*aside*] She's limed,[5] I warrant you. We have caught her, madam.
HERO [*aside*] If it prove so, then loving goes by haps.° *chance*
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.
Exeunt [HERO *and* URSULA]
BEATRICE [*coming forward*] What fire is in mine ears?[6] Can this be true?
Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell; and maiden pride, adieu.
No glory lives behind the back of such.[7]
And, Benedick, love on. I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand.[8]
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* *than as mere rumor*

3.2

Enter [DON PEDRO *the*] *Prince,* CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, *and* LEONATO

DON PEDRO I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Aragon.
CLAUDIO I'll bring° you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe° me. *accompany / allow*
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 bow-string, 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. *only ask* *rogue; executioner*
BENEDICK Gallants, I am not as I have been.
LEONATO So say I. Methinks you are sadder.° *more serious*
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. *lacks*

3. Intellect and rhetorical skill.
4. From tomorrow on, I shall be a married woman every day.
5. Snared with birdlime, a glue spread on branches to catch birds.
6. Proverbial: if [illegible] were talking about you elsewhere, your ears would burn.
7. No one praises such people behind their backs.
8. In falconry, the bird is tamed by the hand of the falconer.

3.2 Location: Leonato's house.

BENEDICK I have the toothache.[1]
DON PEDRO Draw° it. *Extract*
BENEDICK Hang it.
CLAUDIO You must hang it first and draw it afterwards.[2]
DON PEDRO What? Sigh for the toothache?
LEONATO Where is but a humour[3] or a worm.
BENEDICK Well, everyone 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 today, a Frenchman tomorrow, 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.[4] 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. *love* *baggy breeches*
CLAUDIO If he be not in love with some woman there is no believing old° signs. A° brushes his hat o' mornings, what should that bode? *time-honored / He*
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.[5]
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[6] by that? *perfume*
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[7] 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 now governed by stops.[8]
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. *qualities*
DON PEDRO She shall be buried with her face upwards.[9]
BENEDICK Yet is this no charm for the toothache. Old signor, walk aside with me. I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you which these hobby-horses° must not hear. *clowns*
[*Exeunt* BENEDICK *and* LEONATO]
DON PEDRO For° my life, to break° with him about Beatrice. *Upon / speak*

1. Toothaches supposedly plagued lovers.
2. *hang it:* a mild expletive (like "darn it"). Claudio plays on the notion of hanging criminals, who were then cut down and "drawn" (disemboweled).
3. Poisonous fluid in the body (which, along with worms, was thought to be the cause of toothache).
4. His doublet is covered with a Spanish cloak.
5. Benedick has shaved off his beard. Tennis balls were stuffed with hair.
6. Detect his secret (with play on literal "smell").
7. When was he accustomed to use cosmetics on (compare "paint" in following line).
8. Frets on a lute's fingerboard; restraints. (Lutes were associated with lovers' serenades.)
9. That is, in Benedick's arms, where she will die (Elizabethan slang for "orgasm") in the act of love; perhaps a joking reversal of the idea that as one responsible for her own fate, she should be buried, like a suicide, with her face downward.

CLAUDIO 'Tis even so. Hero and Margaret[1] have by this° played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet. *now*

Enter [DON] JOHN *the bastard*

DON JOHN My lord, and brother, God save you.

DON PEDRO Good-e'en,° brother. *Good evening*

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 tomorrow?

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. *reveal*

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 dearness° of heart hath holp° to effect your ensuing marriage—surely suit ill spent, and labour ill bestowed. *think better of* / *in high respect* / *affection* / *helped*

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[2]—the lady is disloyal.° *put simply* / *unfaithful*

CLAUDIO Who, Hero?

DON JOHN Even she. Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

CLAUDIO Disloyal?

DON JOHN The word is 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 tonight, you shall see her chamber window entered, even the night before her wedding day. If you love her then, tomorrow wed her. But it would better fit your honour to change your mind. *fully describe* / *evidence*

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.[3] 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 tonight why I should not marry her, tomorrow, 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. *calmly*

DON PEDRO O day untowardly turned!° *miserably changed*

CLAUDIO O mischief strangely thwarting!

1. Ursula and Hero played the trick on Beatrice with help from Margaret.
2. For we have already talked about her too much.
3. If you won't risk seeing for yourself, don't claim to know.

DON JOHN O plague right well prevented!—So will you say when you have seen the sequel. *Exeunt*

3.3

Enter DOGBERRY *and his compartner* [VERGES], *with the* WATCH[1]

DOGBERRY Are you good men and true?

VERGES Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation,[2] 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. *(for "disloyalty")*

VERGES Well, give them their charge,° neighbour Dogberry. *instructions*

DOGBERRY First, who think you the most desertless° man to be constable?[3] *(for "deserving")*

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

DOGBERRY Come hither, neighbour Seacoal, God hath blest you with a good name.[4] To be a well-favoured° man is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature. *good-looking*

FIRST WATCHMAN 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 lantern. This is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom[5] men. You are to bid any man stand,° in the Prince's name. *looks* / *(for "sensible")* / *stop*

FIRST WATCHMAN 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. *immediately*

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. *(for "intolerable")*

A WATCHMAN We will rather sleep than talk. We know what belongs° to a watch. *is appropriate*

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[6] be not stolen. Well, you are to call at all the alehouses and bid those that are drunk get them to bed. *experienced*

A WATCHMAN How if they will not?

DOGBERRY Why then, let them alone till they are sober. If they

3.3 Location: A street.
1. Watchmen who patrolled the streets, proclaiming the hour and performing police duties. "Verges" probably alludes to a "verge," or wand of office, carried by officials.
2. For "damnation." (Verges and Dogberry repeatedly say the opposite of what they mean.)
3. The leader of the Watch. (Dogberry himself is the parish constable.) Q's speech prefixes are confusing in this scene, making it difficult to identify the leader of the Watch; some of them have been rearranged.
4. Sea coal from Newcastle was known for its high quality (thus the "good name").
5. For "vagrant." *comprehend:* for "apprehend."

make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.

A WATCHMAN 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. *honest* *have to do / better it is*

A WATCHMAN 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.[7] 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. *(for "less")*

VERGES If you hear a child cry in the night you must call to the nurse and bid her still° it. *calm*

A WATCHMAN 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. *blockhead*

VERGES 'Tis very true.

DOGBERRY This is the end of the charge. You, constable, are to present° the Prince's own person.[8] If you meet the Prince in the night you may stay° him. *represent* *stop*

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. *unless*

VERGES By'r Lady, I think it be so.

DOGBERRY Ha ha 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. *that occurs*

FIRST WATCHMAN 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 Signor Leonato's door, for the wedding being there tomorrow, there is a great coil° tonight. Adieu. Be vigitant,° I beseech you. *to-do, bustle* *(for "vigilant")*

Exeunt [DOGBERRY *and* VERGES. *The* WATCH *sit*]

Enter BORACHIO *and* CONRAD

BORACHIO What, Conrad!

FIRST WATCHMAN [*aside*] Peace; stir not.

BORACHIO Conrad, I say.

CONRAD Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

BORACHIO Mass,° an my elbow itched,[9] I thought there would a scab[1] follow. *By the mass*

7. A proverbial saying, derived from the Apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus (13:1).
8. Dogberry presents a parodic version of the notion that the monarch's authority was in theory separable when he was physically absent).
9. Proverbially, itching elbows alerted you against shady company.
1. Contemptible person; punning on a literal "scab."

CONRAD 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[2] all to thee. *overhanging structure*

A WATCHMAN [*aside*] Some treason, masters. Yet stand close.° *keep hidden*

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

CONRAD Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?° *valuable*

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

CONRAD 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[3] a man. *inexperienced*

CONRAD Yes, it is apparel.

BORACHIO I mean the fashion.

CONRAD 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[4] this fashion is? *deforming*

A WATCHMAN [*aside*] I know that Deformed. A° has been a vile thief this seven year. A goes up and down° like a gentleman. I remember his name. *He* *struts here and there*

BORACHIO Didst thou not hear somebody?

CONRAD No, 'twas the vane on the house.

BORACHIO Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is, how giddily a turns about all the hot-bloods° between fourteen and five-and-thirty, sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy° painting,[5] sometime like god Bel's[6] priests in the old church window, sometime like the shaven Hercules[7] in the smirched, worm-eaten tapestry, where his codpiece[8] seems as massy as his club? *dandies* *grimy*

CONRAD All this I see, and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man.[9] But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion, too, that thou hast shifted[1] out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

BORACHIO Not so, neither. But know that I have tonight 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[2] by my master, Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable° encounter. *leans* *loving*

CONRAD 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,

2. The drunken Borachio, whose name means "drunkard," alludes to the Latin tag *in vino veritas*.
3. Tells us nothing about (but Conrad takes him to mean "means nothing to").
4. Used here to mean "rogue"—but also that keeping up with fashion robs men of their money.
5. Perhaps refers to a painting of the fleeing Israelites pursued by Pharaoh's army.
6. Bel (Baal) was a Babylonian god who had seventy sometimes depicted in stained-glass windows.
7. Probably referring to the story of Omphale (compare 2.1.220), or perhaps confusing Hercules with Samson.
8. Pouch, often stuffed and ornamented, worn over a man's breeches, covering the genitals.
9. *fashion . . . man:* fashions change before clothes wear out.
1. Punning on "changed clothes."
2. Informed; but, perhaps also, controlled (as by the

which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, 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'ernight, and send her home again without a husband. *church*

FIRST WATCHMAN [*coming forward*] We charge you in the Prince's name. Stand.

A WATCHMAN Call up the right[3] Master Constable. We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery[4] that ever was known in the commonwealth.

FIRST WATCHMAN And one Deformed is one of them. I know him—a wears a lock.[5]

CONRAD Masters, masters!

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

CONRAD Masters—

A WATCHMAN Never speak. We charge you. Let us obey° you to go with us. *(for "compel")*

BORACHIO [*to* CONRAD] We are like to prove a goodly° commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.[6] *fine (ironic)*

CONRAD A commodity in question,[7] I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. *Exeunt*

3.4

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*] *Very well*

MARGARET Troth, I think your other rebato° were better. *stiffly wired ruff*

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. *it's / am sure*

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. *headdress with wig*

HERO O, that exceeds,° they say. *surpasses all*

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 bluish tinsel.[1] But for a fine, quaint,° graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't. *dressing gown* *elegant*

3. Respectfully, as in "right worshipful."
4. For "treachery." *recovered:* for "discovered."
5. A "lovelock," or curl of hair, worn by courtiers.
6. *being . . . bills:* a multiple pun: after we have been hoisted on their halberds (weapons); been arrested on their warrants; been obtained on credit ("taken up") in exchange for their bonds ("bills").

3.4 Location: Leonato's house.
1. *cloth . . . tinsel:* made of silk or woolen cloth interwoven with gold thread, with ornamental slashes ("cuts") showing the fabric beneath, and decorated with silver embroidery or lace and with pearls; with fitted ("down") sleeves and another pair that hung open from the shoulder; trimmed at the hem or fully lined

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,[2] 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. *even i* *If / pervert* *licentiously*

Enter BEATRICE

HERO Good morrow, coz.

BEATRICE Good morrow, sweet Hero.

HERO 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.[3] Do you sing it, and I'll dance it. *Let us shift*

BEATRICE Ye light o' love with your heels.[4] Then if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.[5]

MARGARET O illegitimate construction![6] I scorn that with my heels.[7]

BEATRICE [*to* HERO] '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,[8] or a husband?

BEATRICE For the letter that begins them all—h.[9]

MARGARET Well, an you be not turned Turk,[1] there's no more sailing by the star.[2]

BEATRICE What means the fool, trow?° *I wonder*

MARGARET Nothing, I. But God send everyone their heart's desire.

HERO These gloves the Count sent me, they are an excellent perfume.[3]

BEATRICE I am stuffed,[4] 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?° *claimed to be witty*

MARGARET Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely?° *excellently*

BEATRICE It is not seen enough. You should wear it in your cap.[5] By my troth, I am sick.

MARGARET Get you some of this distilled *carduus benedictus,*[6] and lay it to your heart. It is the only thing for a qualm.° *sudden faintness*

HERO There thou prickest her with a thistle.

2. A polite expression of apology (as if "husband" were an offensive term).
3. Bass part (for a man's voice), with play on heavy "weight of a man." "Light o' Love" was a popular tune.
4. *Ye . . . heels:* Your dancing toys with love ("light-heeled" was slang for "promiscuous").
5. Punning on "bairns," children.
6. A multiple pun: forced interpretation; making of bastards; illegal building (of stables and barns).
7. I kick that away (reject it).
8. Responding to Beatrice's ostentatious sigh as a
9. Punningly: "ache" was pronounced in the same way.

1. If you have not reneged (on your vows against marriage). "To turn Turk" is, in the Christian proverb, to become a renegade (by going over to the enemy, the Muslim Turks).
2. No more navigating by the polestar. (No truths can be trusted from now on.)
3. Perfumed gloves were fashionable.
4. In the nose; Margaret follows with an obscene pun.
5. Like the coxcomb of a professional fool.
6. Holy thistle, or blessed thistle (a

BEATRICE Benedictus—why Benedictus? You have some moral[7] 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,[8] 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.[9] And how you may be converted I know not, but methinks you look with your eyes, as other women do.

perhaps

please

BEATRICE What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

MARGARET Not a false gallop.[1]

Enter URSULA

URSULA [*to* HERO] Madam, withdraw. The Prince, the Count, Signor 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

3.5

Enter LEONATO, *and* [DOGBERRY] *the constable, and* [VERGES] *the headborough*°

local constable

LEONATO What would you with me, honest neighbour?

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

(for "conference")
(for "concerns")

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

Be brief

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.

(commoner's title)
subject / (for "sharp")

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,[1] neighbour Verges.

(for "odious")

LEONATO Neighbours, you are tedious.[2]

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.

the Duke's poor

LEONATO All thy tediousness on me, ah?

DOGBERRY Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis, for I hear as good exclamation[3] 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.

7. Hidden meaning (with ensuing pun on "no moral" as "immoral").
8. Benedick was once an enemy of love.
9. Nonetheless, he has a perfectly good appetite.
1. Not a canter. (I am not speaking of a false pace.)
1. Be brief (from a Spanish expression, *pocas palabras*: "few words").
2. Dogberry takes it to mean "rich."
3. Properly, "accusation"; but Dogberry probably intends "[illegible]."

LEONATO I would fain° know what you have to say.

gladly

VERGES Marry, sir, our watch tonight, excepting your worship's presence,[4] 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.[5] God help us, it is a world to see.[6] 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.[7] But, God is to be worshipped, all men are not alike, alas, good neighbour.

If

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, have indeed comprehended two auspicious[8] 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 it may appear unto you.

DOGBERRY It shall be suffigance.°

(for "sufficient")

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.

wait

LEONATO I'll wait upon them, I am ready.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO *and* MESSENGER]

DOGBERRY Go, good partner, go get you to Francis Seacoal,[9] bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail. We are now to examination° these men.

(for "examine")

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-com.[1] Only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication,° and meet me at the jail.

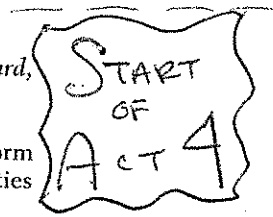
that which

(for "examination")

Exeunt

4.1

Enter [DON PEDRO *the*] *Prince,* [DON JOHN *the*] *bastard,* LEONATO, FRIAR [FRANCIS], CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, *and* BEATRICE



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

FRIAR [*to* CLAUDIO] You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

CLAUDIO No.

LEONATO To be married to her. Friar, you come to marry her.

FRIAR [*to* HERO] Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

4. For "respecting your worship's presence": an apology for speaking what might displease.
5. Dogberry's version of the proverb "When the wine is in, the wit is out."
6. Dogberry seems to mean "a strange world"; the [illegible]
7. [illegible] all of which are remembered correctly but irrelevantly.
8. For "suspicious." *comprehended:* for "apprehended."
9. Refers to the Sexton in 4.2, not the George Seacoal of the Watch in 3.3.
1. For "nonplus" (bewilderment) [illegible]