

# Love's Labour's Lost

## 5.1

*Enter Holofernes the pedant, Nathaniel the curate,  
and Anthony Dull*

**HOLOFERNES** *Satis quid sufficit.*

**NATHANIEL** I praise God for you, sir. Your reasons at dinner have been sharp and sententious, pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy. I did converse this quondam day with a companion of the King's who is intituled, nominated, or called Don Adriano de Armado.

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**HOLOFERNES** *Novi hominum tanquam te.* His humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestic, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it.

**NATHANIEL** A most singular and choice epithet. *He draws out his table-book* 15

**HOLOFERNES** He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. I abhor such fanatical phantasims, such insociable and point-device companions, such rackers of orthography as to speak `dout', *sine* `b', when he should say `doubt'; `det' when he should pronounce `debt'±±`d, e, b, t', not `d, e, t'. He clepeth a calf `cauf', half `hauf', neighbour *vocatur* `nebour'±±`neigh' abbreviated `ne'. This is abominable±±which he would call `abominable'. It insinuateth me of *insanire*±±*ne intelligis, domine?*±±to make frantic, lunatic. 25

**NATHANIEL** *Laus deo, bone intelligo.*

**HOLOFERNES** *Bone? Bon, fort bon*±±Priscian a little scratched±±'twill serve.

*Enter Armado the braggart, Mote his boy, and  
Costard the clown*

**NATHANIEL** *Videsne quis venit?* 30

**HOLOFERNES** *Video, et gaudio.*

ARMADO (to Mote) Chirrah.

HOLOFERNES (to Nathaniel) Quare `chirrah', not `sirrah'?

ARMADO Men of peace, well encountered.

HOLOFERNES Most military sir, salutation! 35

MOTE (aside to Costard) They have been at a great feast of languages and stolen the scraps.

COSTARD (aside to Mote) O, they have lived long on the alms-basket of words. I marvel thy master hath not eaten thee for a word, for thou art not so long by 40 the head as *honorificabilitudinitatibus*. Thou art easier swallowed than a flapdragon.

MOTE (aside to Costard) Peace, the peal begins.

ARMADO (to Holofernes) Monsieur, are you not lettered?

MOTE Yes, yes, he teaches boys the horn-book. What is 45 `a, b' spelled backward, with the horn on his head?

HOLOFERNES Ba, *pueritia*, with a horn added.

MOTE Ba, most silly sheep, with a horn! You hear his learning.

HOLOFERNES *Quis, quis*, thou consonant? 50

MOTE The last of the five vowels if you repeat them, or the fifth if I.

HOLOFERNES I will repeat them: a, e, i±±

MOTE The sheep. The other two concludes it: o, u.

ARMADO Now by the salt wave of the *Mediterraneum* a 55 sweet touch, a quick venue of wit; snip, snap, quick, and home. It rejoiceth my intellect±±true wit.

MOTE Offered by a child to an old man, which is `wit-old'.

HOLOFERNES What is the figure? What is the figure? 60

MOTE Horns.

HOLOFERNES Thou disputes like an infant. Go whip thy gig.

MOTE Lend me your horn to make one, and I will whip about your infamy *circum circa*±±a gig of a cuckold's 65 horn.

COSTARD An I had but one penny in the world, thou shouldst have it to buy gingerbread. (*Giving money*) Hold, there is the very remuneration I had of thy master, thou halfpenny purse of wit, thou pigeon-egg of discretion. O, an the heavens were so pleased that

thou wert but my bastard, what a joyful father wouldst thou make me! Go to, thou hast it *ad dunghill*, at the fingers' ends, as they say.

**HOLOFERNES** O, I smell false Latin±±`dunghill' for *unguem*. 75

**ARMADO** Arts-man, *preambulate*. We will be singled from the barbarous. Do you not educate youth at the charge-house on the top of the mountain?

**HOLOFERNES** Or *mons*, the hill.

**ARMADO** At your sweet pleasure, for the mountain. 80

**HOLOFERNES** I do, sans question.

**ARMADO** Sir, it is the King's most sweet pleasure and affection to congratulate the Princess at her pavilion in the posteriors of this day, which the rude multitude call the afternoon. 85

**HOLOFERNES** The posterior of the day, most generous sir, is liable, congruent, and measurable for the afternoon. The word is well culled, choice, sweet, and apt, I do assure you, sir, I do assure.

**ARMADO** Sir, the King is a noble gentleman, and my 90 familiar, I do assure ye, very good friend. For what is inward between us, let it pass. I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy. I beseech thee, apparel thy head. And, among other important and most serious designs, and of great import indeed, too±±but let that 95 pass, for I must tell thee it will please his grace, by the world, sometime to lean upon my poor shoulder and with his royal finger thus dally with my excrement, with my mustachio. But, sweetheart, let that pass. By the world, I recount no fable. Some certain special 100 honours it pleaseth his greatness to impart to Armado, a soldier, a man of travel, that hath seen the world. But let that pass. The very all of all is±±but, sweetheart, I do implore secrecy±±that the King would have me present the Princess±±sweet chuck±±with some delight- 105 ful ostentation, or show, or pageant, or antic, or firework. Now, understanding that the curate and your sweet self are good at such eruptions and sudden breaking-out of mirth, as it were, I have acquainted you withal to the end to crave your assistance. 110

**HOLOFERNES** Sir, you shall present before her the Nine

Worthies. Sir Nathaniel, as concerning some entertainment of time, some show in the posterior of this day to be rendered by our assistance, the King's command, and this most gallant, illustre, and learned gentleman before the Princess, I say none so fit as to present the Nine Worthies. 115

**NATHANIEL** Where will you find men worthy enough to present them?

**HOLOFERNES** Joshua, yourself; myself, Judas Maccabeus; and this gallant gentleman, Hector. This swain, because of his great limb or joint, shall pass Pompey the Great; the page, Hercules. 120

**ARMADO** Pardon, sir, error! He is not quantity enough for that Worthy's thumb. He is not so big as the end of his club. 125

**HOLOFERNES** Shall I have audience? He shall present Hercules in minority. His enter and exit shall be strangling a snake, and I will have an apology for that purpose. 130

**MOTE** An excellent device! So, if any of the audience hiss, you may cry `Well done, Hercules, now thou crushest the snake!'+±that is the way to make an offence gracious, though few have the grace to do it.

**ARMADO** For the rest of the Worthies? 135

**HOLOFERNES** I will play three myself.

**MOTE** Thrice-worthy gentleman!

**ARMADO** Shall I tell you a thing?

**HOLOFERNES** We attend.

**ARMADO** We will have, if this fadge not, an antic. I beseech you, follow. 140

**HOLOFERNES** *Via*, Goodman Dull! Thou hast spoken no word all this while.

**DULL** Nor understood none neither, sir.

**HOLOFERNES** *Allons!* We will employ thee. 145

**DULL** I'll make one in a dance or so, or I will play on the tabor to the Worthies, and let them dance the hay.

**HOLOFERNES** Most dull, honest Dull! To our sport, away.

*Exeunt*