

Much Ado About Nothing

1.3

Enter Don John the bastard and Conrad, his companion

CONRAD What the goodyear, my lord, why are you thus out of measure sad?

DON JOHN There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it, therefore the sadness is without limit.

CONRAD You should hear reason. 5

DON JOHN And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

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

DON JOHN I wonder that thou±±being, as thou sayst thou 10
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; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend 15
on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and
claw no man in his humour.

CONRAD 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 20
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 25
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 30
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 mean
time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

CONRAD Can you make no use of your discontent? 35

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 40 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. 45

DON JOHN Who, the most exquisite Claudio?

BORACHIO Even he.

DON JOHN A proper squire. And who, and who? Which way looks he?

BORACHIO Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of 50 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 whipped 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. 55

DON JOHN Come, come, let us thither. This may prove 60 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?

CONRAD To the death, my lord. 65

DON JOHN Let us to the great supper. Their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were o' my mind. Shall we go prove what's to be done?

BORACHIO We'll wait upon your lordship.

Exeunt