

# The Two Gentlemen of Verona

## 2.1

*Enter Valentine and Speed*

**SPEED** *(offering Valentine a glove)*

Sir, your glove.

**VALENTINE** Not mine. My gloves are on.

**SPEED**

Why then, this may be yours, for this is but one.

**VALENTINE**

Ha, let me see. Ay, give it me, it's mine±±

Sweet ornament, that decks a thing divine.

Ah, Silvia, Silvia!

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**SPEED** 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. 10

**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? 15

**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, 20 like a schoolboy that had lost his ABC; 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. 30

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**VALENTINE** Are all these things perceived in me?

**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 35  
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? 40

**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? 45

**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. 50

**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 count.

**VALENTINE** How painted? And how out of count? 55

**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. 60

**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. 65

**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? 70

**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. 75

**SPEED** True, sir. I was in love with my bed. I thank you,  
you swunged me for my love, which makes me the  
bolder to chide you for yours.

**VALENTINE** In conclusion, I stand affected to her.

**SPEED** I would you were set. So your affection would 80  
cease.

**VALENTINE** Last night she enjoined me to write some lines  
to one she loves.

**SPEED** And have you?

**VALENTINE** I have. 85

**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. 90

**VALENTINE**  
Madam and mistress, a thousand good-morrows.

**SPEED** (*aside*) O, give ye good e'en! 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 95  
him.

**VALENTINE**  
As you enjoined 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. 100

*He gives her a letter*

**SILVIA**  
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?

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**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.

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And yet, take this again.

*She offers him the letter*

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,

115

But since unwillingly, take them again.

*She presses the letter upon him*

Nay, take them.

**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.

120

**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?

**SILVIA**

Why, if it please you, take it for your labour.

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And so good morrow, servant.

*Exit*

**SPEED** (*aside*)

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. 130

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. 135

**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? 140

**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. 145

**SPEED** No believing you indeed, sir. But did you perceive  
her 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. 150

**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 155  
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. 160

**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*

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