

Much Ado About Nothing

3.5

Enter Leonato, and Dogberry the constable, and Verges the headborough

LEONATO What would you with me, honest neighbour?

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

LEONATO Brief I pray you, for you see it is a busy time with me. 5

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 10
as, God help, I would desire they were. But in faith,
honest as the skin between his brows.

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, neighbour 15
Verges.

LEONATO Neighbours, you are tedious.

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 20
to bestow it all of your worship.

LEONATO All thy tediousness on me, ah?

DOGBERRY Yea, an 'twere a thousand pound more than 'tis, for I hear as good exclamation on your worship as of any man in the city, and though I be but a poor 25
man, I am glad to hear it.

VERGES And so am I.

LEONATO I would fain know what you have to say.

VERGES Marry, sir, our watch tonight, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant 30
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. God help us, it is a world to see. Well said, i'faith, neighbour

Verges. Well, God's a good man. An two men ride of 35
a horse, one must ride behind. An honest soul, i'faith,
sir, by my troth he is, as ever broke bread. But, God is
to be worshipped, all men are not alike, alas, good
neighbour.

LEONATO Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you. 40

DOGBERRY Gifts that God gives!

LEONATO I must leave you.

DOGBERRY One word, sir. Our watch, sir, have indeed
comprehended two auspicious persons, and we would
have them this morning examined before your worship. 45

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.

LEONATO Drink some wine ere you go. Fare you well. 50

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER My lord, they stay for you to give your
daughter to her husband.

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

Exeunt Leonato and Messenger

DOGBERRY Go, good partner, go get you to Francis Seacoal,
bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail. We are 55
now to examination these men.

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. Only get
the learned writer to set down our excommunication, 60
and meet me at the jail.

Exeunt