

# The Two Gentlemen of Verona

## 1.3

*Enter Antonio and Panthino*

**ANTONIO**

Tell me, Panthino, what sad talk was that  
Wherewith my brother held you in the cloister?

**PANTHINO**

'Twas of his nephew Proteus, your son.

**ANTONIO**

Why, what of him?

**PANTHINO**

He wondered that your lordship  
Would suffer him to spend his youth at home 5  
While other men, of slender reputation,  
Put forth their sons to seek preferment out±±  
Some to the wars, to try their fortune there,  
Some to discover islands far away,  
Some to the studious universities. 10  
For any or for all these exercises  
He said that Proteus your son was meet,  
And did request me to importune you  
To let him spend his time no more at home,  
Which would be great impeachment to his age 15  
In having known no travel in his youth.

**ANTONIO**

Nor need'st thou much importune me to that  
Whereon this month I have been hammering.  
I have considered well his loss of time,  
And how he cannot be a perfect man, 20  
Not being tried and tutored in the world.  
Experience is by industry achieved,  
And perfected by the swift course of time.  
Then tell me, whither were I best to send him?

**PANTHINO**

I think your lordship is not ignorant 25  
How his companion, youthful Valentine,  
Attends the Emperor in his royal court.

**ANTONIO**

I know it well.

**PANTHINO**

'Twere good, I think, your lordship sent him thither.

There shall he practise tilts and tournaments, 30  
Hear sweet discourse, converse with noblemen,  
And be in eye of every exercise  
Worthy his youth and nobleness of birth.

**ANTONIO**

I like thy counsel. Well hast thou advised,  
And that thou mayst perceive how well I like it, 35  
The execution of it shall make known.  
Even with the speediest expedition  
I will dispatch him to the Emperor's court.

**PANTHINO**

Tomorrow, may it please you, Don Alfonso,  
With other gentlemen of good esteem, 40  
Are journeying to salute the Emperor  
And to commend their service to his will.

**ANTONIO**

Good company. With them shall Proteus go.  
*Enter Proteus with a letter. He does not see Antonio  
and Panthino*

And in good time. Now will we break with him.

**PROTEUS** Sweet love, sweet lines, sweet life! 45

Here is her hand, the agent of her heart.  
Here is her oath for love, her honour's pawn.  
O that our fathers would applaud our loves  
To seal our happiness with their consents.  
O heavenly Julia! 50

**ANTONIO**

How now, what letter are you reading there?

**PROTEUS**

May't please your lordship, 'tis a word or two  
Of commendations sent from Valentine,  
Delivered by a friend that came from him.

**ANTONIO**

Lend me the letter. Let me see what news. 55

**PROTEUS**

There is no news, my lord, but that he writes  
How happily he lives, how well beloved  
And daily graceÁd by the Emperor,  
Wishing me with him, partner of his fortune.

**ANTONIO**

And how stand you affected to his wish? 60

**PROTEUS**

As one relying on your lordship's will,  
And not depending on his friendly wish.

**ANTONIO**

My will is something sorted with his wish.  
Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed,  
For what I will, I will, and there an end. 65  
I am resolved that thou shalt spend some time  
With Valentinus in the Emperor's court.  
What maintenance he from his friends receives,  
Like exhibition thou shalt have from me.  
Tomorrow be in readiness to go. 70  
Excuse it not, for I am peremptory.

**PROTEUS**

My lord, I cannot be so soon provided.  
Please you deliberate a day or two.

**ANTONIO**

Look what thou want'st shall be sent after thee.  
No more of stay. Tomorrow thou must go. 75  
Come on, Panthino. You shall be employed  
To hasten on his expedition.

*Exeunt Antonio and Panthino*

**PROTEUS**

Thus have I shunned the fire for fear of burning  
And drenched me in the sea where I am drowned.  
I feared to show my father Julia's letter 80  
Lest he should take exceptions to my love,  
And with the vantage of mine own excuse  
Hath he excepted most against my love.  
O, how this spring of love resembleth  
The uncertain glory of an April day, 85  
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,  
And by and by a cloud takes all away.

*Enter Panthino*

**PANTHINO**

Sir Proteus, your father calls for you.  
He is in haste, therefore I pray you go.

**PROTEUS**

Why, this it is. My heart accords thereto, 90  
And yet a thousand times it answers `No'.

*Exeunt*