

# All's Well That Ends Well

## 3.5

*A tucket afar off. Enter an old Widow, her daughter Diana, and Mariana, with other Florentine citizens*

**WIDOW** Nay, come, for if they do approach the city we shall lose all the sight.

**DIANA** They say the French Count has done most honourable service.

**WIDOW** It is reported that he has taken their greatest 5 commander, and that with his own hand he slew the Duke's brother. *(Tucket)* We have lost our labour; they are gone a contrary way. Hark. You may know by their trumpets.

**MARIANA** Come, let's return again, and suffice ourselves 10 with the report of it.±±Well, Diana, take heed of this French earl. The honour of a maid is her name, and no legacy is so rich as honesty.

**WIDOW** *(to Diana)* I have told my neighbour how you have been solicited by a gentleman, his companion. 15

**MARIANA** I know that knave, hang him! One Paroles. A filthy officer he is in those suggestions for the young earl. Beware of them, Diana; their promises, enticements, oaths, tokens, and all their engines of lust, are not the things they go under. Many a maid hath 20 been seduced by them; and the misery is, example, that so terrible shows in the wreck of maidenhood, cannot for all that dissuade succession, but that they are limed with the twigs that threatens them. I hope I need not to advise you further, but I hope your own 25 grace will keep you where you are, though there were no further danger known but the modesty which is so lost.

**DIANA** You shall not need to fear me.

*Enter Helen dressed as a pilgrim*

**WIDOW** I hope so. Look, here comes a pilgrim. I know she 30 will lie at my house; thither they send one another. I'll question her.

God save you, pilgrim. Whither are you bound?

**HELEN** To Saint Jaques le Grand.  
 Where do the palmers lodge, I do beseech you? 35  
**WIDOW**  
 At the `Saint Francis' here beside the port.  
**HELEN**  
 Is this the way?  
**WIDOW** Ay, marry, is't.  
*Sound of a march, far off*  
 Hark you, they come this way. If you will tarry,  
 Holy pilgrim, but till the troops come by,  
 I will conduct you where you shall be lodged, 40  
 The rather for I think I know your hostess  
 As ample as myself.  
**HELEN** Is it yourself?  
**WIDOW** If you shall please so, pilgrim.  
**HELEN**  
 I thank you, and will stay upon your leisure. 45  
**WIDOW**  
 You came, I think, from France?  
**HELEN** I did so.  
**WIDOW**  
 Here you shall see a countryman of yours  
 That has done worthy service.  
**HELEN** His name, I pray you?  
**DIANA**  
 The Count Roussillon. Know you such a one?  
**HELEN**  
 But by the ear, that hears most nobly of him; 50  
 His face I know not.  
**DIANA** Whatsome'er he is,  
 He's bravely taken here. He stole from France,  
 As 'tis reported; for the King had married him  
 Against his liking. Think you it is so?  
**HELEN**  
 Ay, surely, mere the truth. I know his lady. 55  
**DIANA**  
 There is a gentleman that serves the Count  
 Reports but coarsely of her.  
**HELEN** What's his name?  
**DIANA**  
 Monsieur Paroles.

**HELEN** O, I believe with him:  
In argument of praise, or to the worth  
Of the great Count himself, she is too mean 60  
To have her name repeated. All her deserving  
Is a reserve—honesty, and that  
I have not heard examined.

**DIANA** Alas, poor lady.  
'Tis a hard bondage to become the wife  
Of a detesting lord. 65

**WIDOW**  
I warr'nt, good creature, wheresoe'er she is  
Her heart weighs sadly. This young maid might do her  
A shrewd turn if she pleased.

**HELEN** How do you mean?  
Maybe the amorous Count solicits her  
In the unlawful purpose.

**WIDOW** He does indeed, 70  
And brokes with all that can in such a suit  
Corrupt the tender honour of a maid.  
But she is armed for him, and keeps her guard  
In honestest defence.

**MARIANA** The gods forbid else. 75  
*[Enter, with drummer and colours, Bertram,  
Paroles, and the whole army]*

**WIDOW** So, now they come.  
That is Antonio, the Duke's eldest son;  
That, Escalus.

**HELEN** Which is the Frenchman?

**DIANA** He±±±  
That with the plume. 'Tis a most gallant fellow.  
I would he loved his wife. If he were honest 80  
He were much goodlier. Is't not  
A handsome gentleman?

**HELEN** I like him well.

**DIANA** 'Tis pity he is not honest.  
Yond's that same knave that leads him to those  
places. 85  
Were I his lady, I would poison  
That vile rascal.

**HELEN** Which is he?

**DIANA** That jackanapes

With scarves. Why is he melancholy?

**HELEN** Perchance he's hurt i'th' battle.

**PAROLES** (*aside*) Lose our drum? Well. 90

**MARIANA** He's shrewdly vexed at something.

Look, he has spied us.

**WIDOW** (*to Paroles*) Marry, hang you!

**MARIANA** (*to Paroles*)

And your courtesy, for a ring-carrier.

*Exeunt Bertram, Paroles, and the army*

**WIDOW**

The troop is past. Come, pilgrim, I will bring you

Where you shall host. Of enjoined penitents 95

There's four or five to great Saint Jaques bound

Already at my house.

**HELEN** I humbly thank you.

Please it this matron and this gentle maid

To eat with us tonight, the charge and thanking

Shall be for me. And to requite you further, 100

I will bestow some precepts of this virgin

Worthy the note.

**WIDOW AND MARIANA** We'll take your offer kindly.

*Exeunt*