

All's Well That Ends Well

4.3

Enter the two Captains Dumaine and some two or three soldiers

FIRST LORD DUMAINE You have not given him his mother's letter?

SECOND LORD DUMAINE I have delivered it an hour since. There is something in't that stings his nature, for on the reading it he changed almost into another man. 5

FIRST LORD DUMAINE He has much worthy blame laid upon him for shaking off so good a wife and so sweet a lady.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE Especially he hath incurred the everlasting displeasure of the King, who had even tuned 10 his bounty to sing happiness to him. I will tell you a thing, but you shall let it dwell darkly with you.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE When you have spoken it 'tis dead, and I am the grave of it.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE He hath perverted a young gentle- 15 woman here in Florence of a most chaste renown, and this night he fleshes his will in the spoil of her honour. He hath given her his monumental ring, and thinks himself made in the unchaste composition.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE Now God delay our rebellion! As we 20 are ourselves, what things are we.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE Merely our own traitors. And as in the common course of all treasons we still see them reveal themselves till they attain to their abhorred ends, so he that in this action contrives against his own 25 nobility, in his proper stream o'erflows himself.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE Is it not meant damnable in us to be trumpeters of our unlawful intents? We shall not then have his company tonight?

SECOND LORD DUMAINE Not till after midnight, for he is 30 dieted to his hour.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE That approaches apace. I would gladly have him see his company anatomized, that he might take a measure of his own judgements, wherein

so curiously he had set this counterfeit. 35

SECOND LORD DUMAINE We will not meddle with him till
he come, for his presence must be the whip of the
other.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE In the mean time, what hear you of
these wars? 40

SECOND LORD DUMAINE I hear there is an overture of peace.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE Nay, I assure you, a peace concluded.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE What will Count Roussillon do
then? Will he travel higher, or return again into
France? 45

FIRST LORD DUMAINE I perceive by this demand you are
not altogether of his council.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE Let it be forbid, sir; so should I be
a great deal of his act.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE Sir, his wife some two months since 50
fled from his house. Her pretence is a pilgrimage to
Saint Jaques le Grand, which holy undertaking with
most austere sanctimony she accomplished, and there
residing, the tenderness of her nature became as a prey
to her grief: in fine, made a groan of her last breath, 55
and now she sings in heaven.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE How is this justified?

FIRST LORD DUMAINE The stronger part of it by her own
letters, which makes her story true even to the point
of her death. Her death itself, which could not be her 60
office to say is come, was faithfully confirmed by the
rector of the place.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE Hath the Count all this intelligence?

FIRST LORD DUMAINE Ay, and the particular confirmations,
point from point, to the full arming of the verity. 65

SECOND LORD DUMAINE I am heartily sorry that he'll be
glad of this.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE How mightily sometimes we make
us comforts of our losses.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE And how mightily some other times 70
we drown our gain in tears. The great dignity that his
valour hath here acquired for him shall at home be
encountered with a shame as ample.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE The web of our life is of a mingled

yarn, good and ill together. Our virtues would be proud 75
if our faults whipped them not, and our crimes would
despair if they were not cherished by our virtues.

Enter a Servant

How now? Where's your master?

SERVANT He met the Duke in the street, sir, of whom he
hath taken a solemn leave. His lordship will next 80
morning for France. The Duke hath offered him letters
of commendations to the King.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE They shall be no more than needful
there, if they were more than they can commend.

Enter Bertram

[FIRST LORD DUMAINE] They cannot be too sweet for the 85
King's tartness. Here's his lordship now. How now, my
lord, is't not after midnight?

BERTRAM I have tonight dispatched sixteen businesses, a
month's length apiece. By an abstract of success: I
have *congeÂd* with the Duke, done my adieu with his 90
nearest, buried a wife, mourned for her, writ to my
lady mother I am returning, entertained my convoy,
and between these main parcels of dispatch affected
many nicer needs. The last was the greatest, but that
I have not ended yet. 95

SECOND LORD DUMAINE If the business be of any difficulty,
and this morning your departure hence, it requires
haste of your lordship.

BERTRAM I mean the business is not ended, as fearing to
hear of it hereafter. But shall we have this dialogue 100
between the Fool and the Soldier? Come, bring forth
this counterfeit model, has deceived me like a double-
meaning prophet.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE Bring him forth.

Exit one or more

He's sat i'th' stocks all night, poor gallant knave. 105

BERTRAM No matter, his heels have deserved it in usurping
his spurs so long. How does he carry himself?

SECOND LORD DUMAINE I have told your lordship already,
the stocks carry him. But to answer you as you would
be understood, he weeps like a wench that had shed 110
her milk. He hath confessed himself to Morgan, whom

he supposes to be a friar, from the time of his remembrance to this very instant disaster of his setting i'th' stocks. And what think you he hath confessed?

BERTRAM Nothing of me, has a? 115

SECOND LORD DUMAINE His confession is taken, and it shall be read to his face. If your lordship be in't, as I believe you are, you must have the patience to hear it.

Enter Paroles [guarded and] blindfolded, with the Interpreter

BERTRAM A plague upon him! Muffled! He can say nothing of me. 120

[FIRST LORD DUMAINE] *(aside to Bertram)* Hush, hush.

[SECOND] LORD DUMAINE *(aside to Bertram)* Hoodman comes. *(Aloud)* Porto tartarossa.

INTERPRETER *(to Paroles)* He calls for the tortures. What will you say without 'em? 125

PAROLES I will confess what I know without constraint. If ye pinch me like a pasty I can say no more.

INTERPRETER *Bosko chimurcho.*

[SECOND] LORD DUMAINE *Boblibindo chicurmurco.*

INTERPRETER You are a merciful general.±±Our general 130 bids you answer to what I shall ask you out of a note.

PAROLES And truly, as I hope to live.

INTERPRETER *[reads]* `First demand of him how many horse the Duke is strong.'±±What say you to that?

PAROLES Five or six thousand, but very weak and 135 unserviceable. The troops are all scattered and the commanders very poor rogues, upon my reputation and credit, and as I hope to live.

INTERPRETER Shall I set down your answer so?

PAROLES Do. I'll take the sacrament on't, how and which 140 way you will.

[FIRST LORD DUMAINE] *(aside)* All's one to him.

BERTRAM *(aside)* What a past-saving slave is this!

FIRST LORD DUMAINE *(aside)* You're deceived, my lord. This is Monsieur Paroles, the `gallant militarist'±±that was 145 his own phrase±±that had the whole theoric of war in the knot of his scarf, and the practice in the chape of his dagger.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE *(aside)* I will never trust a man

again for keeping his sword clean, nor believe he can
have everything in him by wearing his apparel neatly. 150

INTERPRETER *(to Paroles)* Well, that's set down.

PAROLES 'Five or six thousand horse,' I said±±I will say
true±±'or thereabouts' set down, for I'll speak truth.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE *(aside)* He's very near the truth in 155
this.

BERTRAM *(aside)* But I con him no thanks for't in the
nature he delivers it.

PAROLES 'Poor rogues', I pray you say.

INTERPRETER Well, that's set down. 160

PAROLES I humbly thank you, sir. A truth's a truth. The
rogues are marvellous poor.

INTERPRETER *[reads]* 'Demand of him of what strength they
are a-foot.'±±What say you to that?

PAROLES By my troth, sir, if I were to die this present 165
hour, I will tell true. Let me see, Spurio a hundred and
fifty; Sebastian so many; Corambus so many; Jaques
so many; Guillaume, Cosmo, Lodowick, and Gratii, two
hundred fifty each; mine own company, Chitopher,
Vaumond, Bentii, two hundred fifty each. So that the 170
muster file, rotten and sound, upon my life amounts
not to fifteen thousand poll, half of the which dare not
shake the snow from off their cassocks lest they shake
themselves to pieces.

BERTRAM *(aside)* What shall be done to him? 175

FIRST LORD DUMAINE *(aside)* Nothing, but let him have
thanks. *(To Interpreter)* Demand of him my condition,
and what credit I have with the Duke.

INTERPRETER *(to Paroles)* Well, that's set down. *[Reads]*
'You shall demand of him, whether one Captain 180
Dumaine be i'th' camp, a Frenchman; what his
reputation is with the Duke; what his valour, honesty,
and expertness in wars; or whether he thinks it were
not possible with well-weighting sums of gold to corrupt
him to a revolt.'±±What say you to this? What do you 185
know of it?

PAROLES I beseech you let me answer to the particular of
the inter'gatories. Demand them singly.

INTERPRETER Do you know this Captain Dumaine?

PAROLES I know him. A was a botcher's prentice in Paris, 190
from whence he was whipped for getting the sheriff's
fool with child±±a dumb innocent that could not say
him nay.

BERTRAM (*aside to First Lord Dumaine*) Nay, by your leave,
hold your hands, though I know his brains are forfeit 195
to the next tile that falls.

INTERPRETER Well, is this captain in the Duke of Florence's
camp?

PAROLES Upon my knowledge he is, and lousy.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE (*aside*) Nay, look not so upon me: we 200
shall hear of your lordship anon.

INTERPRETER What is his reputation with the Duke?

PAROLES The Duke knows him for no other but a poor
officer of mine, and writ to me this other day to turn
him out o'th' band. I think I have his letter in my 205
pocket.

INTERPRETER Marry, we'll search.

PAROLES In good sadness, I do not know. Either it is there,
or it is upon a file with the Duke's other letters in my
tent. 210

INTERPRETER Here 'tis, here's a paper. Shall I read it to
you?

PAROLES I do not know if it be it or no.

BERTRAM (*aside*) Our interpreter does it well.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE (*aside*) Excellently. 215

INTERPRETER (*reads the letter*)

`Dian, the Count's a fool, and full of gold.'

PAROLES That is not the Duke's letter, sir. That is an
advertisement to a proper maid in Florence, one Diana,
to take heed of the allurement of one Count Roussillon, 220
a foolish idle boy, but for all that very ruttish. I pray
you, sir, put it up again.

INTERPRETER Nay, I'll read it first, by your favour.

PAROLES My meaning in't, I protest, was very honest in
the behalf of the maid, for I knew the young Count to 225
be a dangerous and lascivious boy, who is a whale to
virginity, and devours up all the fry it finds.

BERTRAM (*aside*) Damnable both-sides rogue.

INTERPRETER (*reads*)

`When he swears oaths, bid him drop gold, and take it.
After he scores he never pays the score. 230
Half-won is match well made; match, and well make it.
He ne'er pays after-debts, take it before.
And say a soldier, Dian, told thee this:
Men are to mell with, boys are not to kiss.
For count of this, the Count's a fool, I know it, 235
Who pays before, but not when he does owe it.
Thine, as he vowed to thee in thine ear,
Paroles.'

BERTRAM (*aside*) He shall be whipped through the army
with this rhyme in's forehead. 240

SECOND LORD DUMAINE (*aside*) This is your devoted friend,
sir, the manifold linguist and the armipotent soldier.

BERTRAM (*aside*) I could endure anything before but a cat,
and now he's a cat to me.

INTERPRETER I perceive, sir, by the general's looks, we 245
shall be fain to hang you.

PAROLES My life, sir, in any case! Not that I am afraid to
die, but that, my offences being many, I would repent
out the remainder of nature. Let me live, sir, in a
dungeon, i'th' stocks, or anywhere, so I may live. 250

INTERPRETER We'll see what may be done, so you confess
freely. Therefore once more to this Captain Dumaine.
You have answered to his reputation with the Duke,
and to his valour. What is his honesty?

PAROLES He will steal, sir, an egg out of a cloister. For 255
rapes and ravishments he parallels Nessus. He professes
not keeping of oaths; in breaking 'em he is stronger
than Hercules. He will lie, sir, with such volubility that
you would think truth were a fool. Drunkenness is his
best virtue, for he will be swine-drunk, and in his sleep 260
he does little harm, save to his bedclothes; but they
about him know his conditions, and lay him in straw.
I have but little more to say, sir, of his honesty. He has
everything that an honest man should not have; what
an honest man should have, he has nothing. 265

FIRST LORD DUMAINE (*aside*) I begin to love him for this.

BERTRAM (*aside*) For this description of thine honesty? A
pox upon him! For me, he's more and more a cat.

INTERPRETER What say you to his expertness in war?

PAROLES Faith, sir, he's led the drum before the English 270
tragedians. To belie him I will not, and more of his
soldiership I know not, except in that country he had
the honour to be the officer at a place there called Mile
End, to instruct for the doubling of files. I would do the
man what honour I can, but of this I am not certain. 275

FIRST LORD DUMAINE (*aside*) He hath out-villained villainy
so far that the rarity redeems him.

BERTRAM (*aside*) A pox on him! He's a cat still.

INTERPRETER His qualities being at this poor price, I need
not to ask you if gold will corrupt him to revolt. 280

PAROLES Sir, for a *quart d'eÂcu* he will sell the fee-simple of
his salvation, the inheritance of it, and cut th'entail
from all remainders, and a perpetual succession for it
perpetually.

INTERPRETER What's his brother, the other Captain 285
Dumaine?

SECOND LORD DUMAINE (*aside*) Why does he ask him of me?

INTERPRETER What's he?

PAROLES E'en a crow o'th' same nest. Not altogether so
great as the first in goodness, but greater a great deal 290
in evil. He excels his brother for a coward, yet his
brother is reputed one of the best that is. In a retreat
he outruns any lackey; marry, in coming on he has
the cramp.

INTERPRETER If your life be saved will you undertake to 295
betray the Florentine?

PAROLES Ay, and the captain of his horse, Count
Roussillon.

INTERPRETER I'll whisper with the general and know his
pleasure. 300

PAROLES I'll no more drumming. A plague of all drums!
Only to seem to deserve well, and to beguile the
supposition of that lascivious young boy, the Count,
have I run into this danger. Yet who would have
suspected an ambush where I was taken?

305

INTERPRETER There is no remedy, sir, but you must die.
The general says you that have so traitorously
discovered the secrets of your army, and made such

pestiferous reports of men very nobly held, can serve
the world for no honest use; therefore you must die.±± 310
Come, headsman, off with his head.

PAROLES O Lord, sir!±±Let me live, or let me see my death!

INTERPRETER That shall you, and take your leave of all
your friends.

He unmuffles Paroles

So, look about you. Know you any here? 315

BERTRAM Good morrow, noble captain.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE God bless you, Captain Paroles.

FIRST LORD DUMAINE God save you, noble captain.

SECOND LORD DUMAINE Captain, what greeting will you to
my Lord Lafeu? I am for France. 320

FIRST LORD DUMAINE Good captain, will you give me a
copy of the sonnet you writ to Diana in behalf of the
Count Roussillon? An I were not a very coward I'd
compel it of you. But fare you well.

Exeunt all but Paroles and Interpreter

INTERPRETER You are undone, captain±±all but your scarf; 325
that has a knot on't yet.

PAROLES Who cannot be crushed with a plot?

INTERPRETER If you could find out a country where but
women were that had received so much shame, you
might begin an impudent nation. Fare ye well, sir. I 330
am for France too. We shall speak of you there.

Exit

PAROLES

Yet am I thankful. If my heart were great
'Twould burst at this. Captain I'll be no more,
But I will eat and drink and sleep as soft
As captain shall. Simply the thing I am 335
Shall make me live. Who knows himself a braggart,
Let him fear this, for it will come to pass
That every braggart shall be found an ass.
Rust, sword; cool, blushes; and Paroles live
Safest in shame; being fooled, by fool'ry thrive. 340
There's place and means for every man alive.
I'll after them.

Exit