

# All's Well That Ends Well

## 4.5

*Enter Lavatch, the old Countess, and Lafeu*

**LAFEU** No, no, no, your son was misled with a snipped-taffeta fellow there, whose villainous saffron would have made all the unbaked and doughy youth of a nation in his colour. Else, your daughter-in-law had been alive at this hour, and your son here at home, 5 more advanced by the King than by that red-tailed humble-bee I speak of.

**COUNTESS** I would a had not known him. It was the death of the most virtuous gentlewoman that ever nature had praise for creating. If she had partaken of my flesh 10 and cost me the dearest groans of a mother I could not have owed her a more rooted love.

**LAFEU** 'Twas a good lady, 'twas a good lady. We may pick a thousand salads ere we light on such another herb. 15

**LAVATCH** Indeed, sir, she was the sweet marjoram of the salad, or rather the herb of grace.

**LAFEU** They are not grass, you knave, they are nose-herbs.

**LAVATCH** I am no great Nebuchadnezzar, sir, I have not 20 much skill in grace.

**LAFEU** Whether dost thou profess thyself, a knave or a fool?

**LAVATCH** A fool, sir, at a woman's service, and a knave at a man's. 25

**LAFEU** Your distinction?

**LAVATCH** I would cozen the man of his wife and do his service.

**LAFEU** So you were a knave at his service indeed.

**LAVATCH** And I would give his wife my bauble, sir, to do 30 her service.

**LAFEU** I will subscribe for thee, thou art both knave and fool.

**LAVATCH** At your service.

**LAFEU** No, no, no. 35

**LAVATCH** Why, sir, if I cannot serve you I can serve as great a prince as you are.

**LAFEU** Who's that? A Frenchman?

**LAVATCH** Faith, sir, a has an English name, but his phys'namy is more hotter in France than there.

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**LAFEU** What prince is that?

**LAVATCH** The Black Prince, sir, alias the prince of darkness, alias the devil.

**LAFEU** Hold thee, there's my purse. I give thee not this to suggest thee from thy master thou talk'st of; serve him still.

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**LAVATCH** I am a woodland fellow, sir, that always loved a great fire, and the master I speak of ever keeps a good fire. But since he is the prince of the world, let the nobility remain in's court; I am for the house with the narrow gate, which I take to be too little for pomp to enter. Some that humble themselves may, but the many will be too chill and tender, and they'll be for the flow'ry way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire.

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**LAFEU** Go thy ways. I begin to be aweary of thee, and I tell thee so before, because I would not fall out with thee. Go thy ways. Let my horses be well looked to, without any tricks.

**LAVATCH** If I put any tricks upon 'em, sir, they shall be jades' tricks, which are their own right by the law of nature.

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*Exit*

**LAFEU** A shrewd knave and an unhappy.

**COUNTESS** So a is. My lord that's gone made himself much sport out of him; by his authority he remains here, which he thinks is a patent for his sauciness, and indeed he has no pace, but runs where he will.

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**LAFEU** I like him well, 'tis not amiss. And I was about to tell you, since I heard of the good lady's death and that my lord your son was upon his return home, I moved the King my master to speak in the behalf of my daughter; which, in the minority of them both, his majesty out of a self-gracious remembrance did first propose. His highness hath promised me to do it; and

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to stop up the displeasure he hath conceived against  
your son, there is no fitter matter. How does your  
ladyship like it? 75

**COUNTESS** With very much content, my lord, and I wish  
it happily effected.

**LAFEU** His highness comes post from Marseilles, of as able 80  
body as when he numbered thirty. A will be here  
tomorrow, or I am deceived by him that in such  
intelligence hath seldom failed.

**COUNTESS** It rejoices me that I hope I shall see him ere I  
die. I have letters that my son will be here tonight. I 85  
shall beseech your lordship to remain with me till they  
meet together.

**LAFEU** Madam, I was thinking with what manners I might  
safely be admitted.

**COUNTESS** You need but plead your honourable privilege. 90

**LAFEU** Lady, of that I have made a bold charter, but, I  
thank my God, it holds yet.

*Enter Lavatch*

**LAVATCH** O madam, yonder's my lord your son with a  
patch of velvet on's face. Whether there be a scar  
under't or no, the velvet knows; but 'tis a goodly patch 95  
of velvet. His left cheek is a cheek of two pile and a  
half, but his right cheek is worn bare.

**LAFEU** A scar nobly got, or a noble scar, is a good liv'ry  
of honour. So belike is that.

**LAVATCH** But it is your carbonadoed face. 100

**LAFEU** *(to the Countess)* Let us go see your son, I pray you.  
I long to talk with the young noble soldier.

**LAVATCH** Faith, there's a dozen of 'em, with delicate fine  
hats, and most courteous feathers, which bow the head  
and nod at every man. 105

*Exeunt*