

# The Two Gentlemen of Verona

## 2.4

*Enter Valentine, Silvia, Thurio, and Speed*

SILVIA     Servant!

VALENTINE     Mistress?

SPEED *(to Valentine)*     Master, Sir Thurio frowns on you.

VALENTINE     Ay, boy, it's for love.

SPEED     Not of you. 5

VALENTINE     Of my mistress, then.

SPEED     'Twere good you knocked him.

SILVIA *(to Valentine)*     Servant, you are sad.

VALENTINE     Indeed, madam, I seem so.

THURIO     Seem you that you are not? 10

VALENTINE     Haply I do.

THURIO     So do counterfeits.

VALENTINE     So do you.

THURIO     What seem I that I am not?

VALENTINE     Wise. 15

THURIO     What instance of the contrary?

VALENTINE     Your folly.

THURIO     And how quote you my folly?

VALENTINE     I quote it in your jerkin.

THURIO     My `jerkin' is a doublet. 20

VALENTINE     Well then, I'll double your folly.

THURIO     How!

SILVIA     What, angry, Sir Thurio? Do you change colour?

VALENTINE     Give him leave, madam, he is a kind of chameleon. 25

THURIO     That hath more mind to feed on your blood than live in your air.

VALENTINE     You have said, sir.

THURIO     Ay, sir, and done too, for this time.

VALENTINE     I know it well, sir, you always end ere you 30 begin.

SILVIA     A fine volley of words, gentlemen, and quickly shot off.

VALENTINE     'Tis indeed, madam, we thank the giver.

SILVIA     Who is that, servant? 35

**VALENTINE** Yourself, sweet lady, for you gave the fire. Sir  
Thurio borrows his wit from your ladyship's looks, and  
spends what he borrows kindly in your company.

**THURIO** Sir, if you spend word for word with me, I shall  
make your wit bankrupt. 40

**VALENTINE** I know it well, sir. You have an exchequer of  
words, and, I think, no other treasure to give your  
followers. For it appears by their bare liveries that they  
live by your bare words.

**SILVIA** No more, gentlemen, no more. Here comes my 45  
father.

*Enter the Duke*

**DUKE**  
Now, daughter Silvia, you are hard beset.  
Sir Valentine, your father is in good health,  
What say you to a letter from your friends  
Of much good news?

**VALENTINE** My lord, I will be thankful 50  
To any happy messenger from thence.

**DUKE**  
Know ye Don Antonio, your countryman?

**VALENTINE**  
Ay, my good lord, I know the gentleman  
To be of worth, and worthy estimation,  
And not without desert so well reputed. 55

**DUKE** Hath he not a son?

**VALENTINE**  
Ay, my good lord, a son that well deserves  
The honour and regard of such a father.

**DUKE** You know him well?

**VALENTINE**  
I knew him as myself, for from our infancy 60  
We have conversed, and spent our hours together.  
And though myself have been an idle truant,  
Omitting the sweet benefit of time  
To clothe mine age with angel-like perfection,  
Yet hath Sir Proteus±±for that's his name±± 65  
Made use and fair advantage of his days:  
His years but young, but his experience old;  
His head unmingled, but his judgement ripe.

And in a word±±for far behind his worth  
Comes all the praises that I now bestow±± 70  
He is complete, in feature and in mind,  
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

**DUKE**

Beshrew me, sir, but if he make this good  
He is as worthy for an empress' love  
As meet to be an emperor's counsellor. 75  
Well, sir, this gentleman is come to me  
With commendation from great potentates,  
And here he means to spend his time awhile.  
I think 'tis no unwelcome news to you.

**VALENTINE**

Should I have wished a thing it had been he. 80

**DUKE**

Welcome him then according to his worth.  
Silvia, I speak to you, and you, Sir Thurio;  
For Valentine, I need not cite him to it.  
I will send him hither to you presently.

*Exit*

**VALENTINE**

This is the gentleman I told your ladyship 85  
Had come along with me, but that his mistress  
Did hold his eyes locked in her crystal looks.

**SILVIA**

Belike that now she hath enfranchised them  
Upon some other pawn for fealty.

**VALENTINE**

Nay, sure, I think she holds them prisoners still. 90

**SILVIA**

Nay, then he should be blind, and being blind  
How could he see his way to seek out you?

**VALENTINE**

Why, lady, love hath twenty pair of eyes.

**THURIO**

They say that love hath not an eye at all.

**VALENTINE**

To see such lovers, Thurio, as yourself. 95  
Upon a homely object love can wink.

**SILVIA**

Have done, have done. Here comes the gentleman.

*Enter Proteus*

**VALENTINE**

Welcome, dear Proteus. Mistress, I beseech you  
Confirm his welcome with some special favour.

**SILVIA**

His worth is warrant for his welcome hither, 100  
If this be he you oft have wished to hear from.

**VALENTINE**

Mistress, it is. Sweet lady, entertain him  
To be my fellow-servant to your ladyship.

**SILVIA**

Too low a mistress for so high a servant.

**PROTEUS**

Not so, sweet lady, but too mean a servant 105  
To have a look of such a worthy mistress.

**VALENTINE**

Leave off discourse of disability.  
Sweet lady, entertain him for your servant.

**PROTEUS**

My duty will I boast of, nothing else.

**SILVIA**

And duty never yet did want his meed. 110  
Servant, you are welcome to a worthless mistress.

**PROTEUS**

I'll die on him that says so but yourself.

**SILVIA**

That you are welcome?

**PROTEUS**

That you are worthless.

*[Enter a Servant]*

**[SERVANT]**

Madam, my lord your father would speak with you.

**SILVIA**

I wait upon his pleasure.

*[Exit the Servant]*

Come, Sir Thurio,

115

Go with me. Once more, new servant, welcome.  
I'll leave you to confer of home affairs.  
When you have done, we look to hear from you.

**PROTEUS**

We'll both attend upon your ladyship.

*Exeunt Silvia and Thurio*

**VALENTINE**

Now tell me, how do all from whence you came?

120

**PROTEUS**

Your friends are well, and have them much  
commended.

**VALENTINE**

And how do yours?

**PROTEUS**

I left them all in health.

**VALENTINE**

How does your lady, and how thrives your love?

**PROTEUS**

My tales of love were wont to weary you.

I know you joy not in a love-discourse.

125

**VALENTINE**

Ay, Proteus, but that life is altered now.

I have done penance for contemning love,

Whose high imperious thoughts have punished me

With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,

With nightly tears and daily heart-sore sighs.

130

For in revenge of my contempt of love

Love hath chased sleep from my enthralleÁd eyes,

And made them watchers of mine own heart's sorrow.

O gentle Proteus, love's a mighty lord,

And hath so humbled me as I confess

135

There is no woe to his correction,

Nor to his service no such joy on earth.

Now, no discourse except it be of love.

Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep

Upon the very naked name of love.

140

**PROTEUS**

Enough. I read your fortune in your eye.

Was this the idol that you worship so?

**VALENTINE**

Even she; and is she not a heavenly saint?

**PROTEUS**

No, but she is an earthly paragon.

**VALENTINE**

Call her divine.

**PROTEUS**

I will not flatter her.

145

**VALENTINE**

O flatter me; for love delights in praises.

**PROTEUS**

When I was sick you gave me bitter pills,  
And I must minister the like to you.

**VALENTINE**

Then speak the truth by her; if not divine,  
Yet let her be a principality, 150  
Sovereign to all the creatures on the earth.

**PROTEUS**

Except my mistress.

**VALENTINE**

Sweet, except not any,  
Except thou wilt except against my love.

**PROTEUS**

Have I not reason to prefer mine own?

**VALENTINE**

And I will help thee to prefer her, too. 155  
She shall be dignified with this high honour,  
To bear my lady's train, lest the base earth  
Should from her vesture chance to steal a kiss  
And, of so great a favour growing proud,  
Disdain to root the summer-swelling flower, 160  
And make rough winter everlastingly.

**PROTEUS**

Why, Valentine, what braggartism is this?

**VALENTINE**

Pardon me, Proteus, all I can is nothing  
To her whose worth makes other worthies nothing.  
She is alone.

**PROTEUS**

Then let her alone. 165

**VALENTINE**

Not for the world. Why man, she is mine own,  
And I as rich in having such a jewel  
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,  
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.  
Forgive me that I do not dream on thee 170  
Because thou seest me dote upon my love.  
My foolish rival, that her father likes  
Only for his possessions are so huge,  
Is gone with her along, and I must after;  
For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy. 175

**PROTEUS**

But she loves you?

**VALENTINE**

Ay, and we are betrothed. Nay more, our marriage  
hour,  
With all the cunning manner of our flight,  
Determined of: how I must climb her window,  
The ladder made of cords, and all the means 180  
Plotted and 'greed on for my happiness.  
Good Proteus, go with me to my chamber  
In these affairs to aid me with thy counsel.

**PROTEUS**

Go on before. I shall enquire you forth.  
I must unto the road, to disembark 185  
Some necessaries that I needs must use,  
And then I'll presently attend you.

**VALENTINE** Will you make haste?

**PROTEUS** I will.

*Exit Valentine*

Even as one heat another heat expels, 190  
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,  
So the remembrance of my former love  
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.  
Is it mine eye, or Valentine's praise,  
Her true perfection, or my false transgression 195  
That makes me, reasonless, to reason thus?  
She is fair, and so is Julia that I love±±  
That I did love, for now my love is thawed,  
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire  
Bears no impression of the thing it was. 200  
Methinks my zeal to Valentine is cold,  
And that I love him not as I was wont.  
O, but I love his lady too-too much,  
And that's the reason I love him so little.  
How shall I dote on her with more advice, 205  
That thus without advice begin to love her?  
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,  
And that hath dazzled my reason's light.  
But when I look on her perfections  
There is no reason but I shall be blind. 210  
If I can check my erring love I will,  
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill.

*Exit*