

# All's Well That Ends Well

## 1.2

*A flourish of cornetts. Enter the King of France with letters, the two Lords Dumaine, [and divers attendants]*

**KING**

The Florentines and Sienese are by th'ears,  
Have fought with equal fortune, and continue  
A braving war.

**FIRST LORD DUMAINE**      So 'tis reported, sir.

**KING**

Nay, 'tis most credible: we here receive it  
A certainty vouched from our cousin Austria,      5  
With caution that the Florentine will move us  
For speedy aid±±wherein our dearest friend  
Prejudicates the business, and would seem  
To have us make denial.

**FIRST LORD DUMAINE**      His love and wisdom  
Approved so to your majesty may plead      10  
For amplest credence.

**KING**      He hath armed our answer,  
And Florence is denied before he comes.  
Yet for our gentlemen that mean to see  
The Tuscan service, freely have they leave  
To stand on either part.

**SECOND LORD DUMAINE**      It well may serve      15  
A nursery to our gentry, who are sick  
For breathing and exploit.

**KING**      What's he comes here?

*Enter Bertram, Lafeu, and Paroles*

**FIRST LORD DUMAINE**

It is the Count Roussillon, my good lord,  
Young Bertram.

**KING** *(to Bertram)*      Youth, thou bear'st thy father's face.  
Frank nature, rather curious than in haste,      20  
Hath well composed thee. Thy father's moral parts  
Mayst thou inherit, too. Welcome to Paris.

**BERTRAM**

My thanks and duty are your majesty's.

**KING**

I would I had that corporal soundness now  
As when thy father and myself in friendship 25  
First tried our soldiership. He did look far  
Into the service of the time, and was  
Disciplined of the bravest. He lasted long,  
But on us both did haggish age steal on,  
And wore us out of act. It much repairs me 30  
To talk of your good father. In his youth  
He had the wit which I can well observe  
Today in our young lords, but they may jest  
Till their own scorn return to them unnoted  
Ere they can hide their levity in honour. 35  
So like a courtier, contempt nor bitterness  
Were in his pride or sharpness; if they were  
His equal had awaked them, and his honour±±  
Clock to itself±±knew the true minute when  
Exception bid him speak, and at this time 40  
His tongue obeyed his hand. Who were below him  
He used as creatures of another place,  
And bowed his eminent top to their low ranks,  
Making them proud of his humility,  
In their poor praise he humbled. Such a man 45  
Might be a copy to these younger times,  
Which followed well would demonstrate them now  
But goers-backward.

**BERTRAM**

His good remembrance, sir,  
Lies richer in your thoughts than on his tomb.  
So in approof lives not his epitaph 50  
As in your royal speech.

**KING**

Would I were with him! He would always say±±  
Methinks I hear him now; his plausible words  
He scattered not in ears, but grafted them  
To grow there and to bear. `Let me not live'±± 55  
This his good melancholy oft began  
On the catastrophe and heel of pastime,  
When it was out±±`Let me not live', quoth he,  
`After my flame lacks oil, to be the snuff

Of younger spirits, whose apprehensive senses 60  
All but new things disdain, whose judgements are  
Mere fathers of their garments, whose constancies  
Expire before their fashions.' This he wished.

I after him do after him wish too,  
Since I nor wax nor honey can bring home, 65  
I quickly were dissolveÁd from my hive  
To give some labourers room.

**SECOND LORD DUMAINE** You're loveÁd, sir.  
They that least lend it you shall lack you first.

**KING**  
I fill a place, I know't.±±How long is't, Count,  
Since the physician at your father's died? 70  
He was much famed.

**BERTRAM** Some six months since, my lord.

**KING**  
If he were living I would try him yet.±±  
Lend me an arm.±±The rest have worn me out  
With several applications. Nature and sickness  
Debate it at their leisure. Welcome, Count. 75  
My son's no dearer.

**BERTRAM** Thank your majesty.  
*[Flourish.] Exeunt*