

Much Ado About Nothing

3.4

Enter Hero, Margaret, and Ursula

HERO Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

URSULA I will, lady.

HERO And bid her come hither.

URSULA Well.

5

Exit

MARGARET Troth, I think your other rebato were better.

HERO No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

MARGARET By my troth, 's not so good, and I warrant your cousin will say so.

HERO My cousin's a fool, and thou art another: I'll wear 10 none but this.

MARGARET I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner. And your gown's a most rare fashion, i'faith. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so.

15

HERO O, that exceeds, they say.

MARGARET By my troth, 's but a night-gown in respect of yours±±cloth o' gold, and cuts, and laced with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts round underborne with a bluish tinsel. But for a fine, 20 quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

HERO God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy.

MARGARET 'Twill be heavier soon by the weight of a man. 25

HERO Fie upon thee, art not ashamed?

MARGARET Of what, lady? Of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say `saving your reverence, a husband'. An bad 30 thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody. Is there any harm in `the heavier for a husband'? None, I think, an it be the right husband and the right wife±±otherwise 'tis light and not heavy. Ask my Lady

Beatrice else. Here she comes.

35

Enter Beatrice

HERO Good morrow, coz.

BEATRICE Good morrow, sweet Hero.

HERO Why, how now? Do you speak in the sick tune?

BEATRICE I am out of all other tune, methinks.

MARGARET Clap 's into 'Light o' love'. That goes without 40
a burden. Do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

BEATRICE Ye light o' love with your heels. Then if your
husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack
no barns.

MARGARET O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with 45
my heels.

BEATRICE *(to Hero)* 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin. 'Tis
time you were ready. By my troth, I am exceeding ill.
Heigh-ho!

MARGARET For a hawk, a horse, or a husband? 50

BEATRICE For the letter that begins them all±±h.

MARGARET Well, an you be not turned Turk, there's no
more sailing by the star.

BEATRICE What means the fool, trow?

MARGARET Nothing, I. But God send everyone their heart's 55
desire.

HERO These gloves the Count sent me, they are an
excellent perfume.

BEATRICE I am stuffed, cousin. I cannot smell.

MARGARET A maid, and stuffed! There's goodly catching 60
of cold.

BEATRICE O, God help me, God help me. How long have
you professed apprehension?

MARGARET Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become
me rarely? 65

BEATRICE It is not seen enough. You should wear it in
your cap. By my troth, I am sick.

MARGARET Get you some of this distilled *carduus benedictus*,
and lay it to your heart. It is the only thing for a
qualm. 70

HERO There thou prickest her with a thistle.

BEATRICE Benedictus±±why Benedictus? You have some
moral in this Benedictus.

MARGARET Moral? No, by my troth, I have no moral meaning. I meant plain holy-thistle. You may think 75
perchance that I think you are in love. Nay, by'r Lady,
I am not such a fool to think what I list, nor I list not
to think what I can, nor indeed I cannot think, if I
would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in
love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in 80
love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he
become a man. He swore he would never marry, and
yet now in despite of his heart he eats his meat without
grudging. And how you may be converted I know not,
but methinks you look with your eyes, as other women 85
do.

BEATRICE What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

MARGARET Not a false gallop.

Enter Ursula

URSULA (to Hero) Madam, withdraw. The Prince, the
Count, Signor Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants 90
of the town are come to fetch you to church.

HERO Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula.
Exeunt