

QUEEN MARGARET

Where is thy husband now? Where be thy brothers?
Where be thy two sons? Wherein dost thou joy?
Who sues to thee and cries 'God save the queen'?
Where be the bending peers that flattered thee?
Where be the thronging troops that followed thee?
Decline all this, and see what now thou art:
For happy wife, a most distressed widow;
For joyful mother, one that wails the name;
For queen, a very caitiff crowned with care;
For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;
For one that scorned at me, now scorned of me;
For she commanding all, obeyed of none.
Thus hath the course of justice whirled about,
And left thee but a very prey to time,
Having no more but thought of what thou wast
To torture thee the more, being what thou art.
If thou wouldst learn to curse,
Forbear to sleep the nights, and fast the days;
Compare dead happiness with living woe;
Think that thy babes were fairer than they were,
And he that slew them fouler than he is.
Bettering thy loss makes the bad causer worse;
Revolving this will teach thee how to curse.

BENEDICK

Is Claudio thine enemy?

BEATRICE

Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered,
scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! What,
bear her in hand until they come to take hands; and then, with
public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour, --O
God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.
Sweet Hero! She is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone. O
that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is
melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only
turned into tongue. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I
will die a woman with grieving.

HERO

Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
Our talk must only be of Benedick.
To praise him more than ever man did merit:
Of this matter is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

Approaching the bower where BEATRICE hides

No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful.
Benedick loves Beatrice entirely;
So says the prince and my new-trothed lord.
They did entreat me to acquaint her of it;
But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.
O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But Nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice;
Her wit values itself so highly that to her
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endear'd. But who dare tell her so?

BUCKINGHAM

See where he stands between two clergymen!
Two props of virtue for a Christian prince,
To stay him from the fall of vanity:
And see, a book of prayer in his hand,
True ornaments to know a holy man.
Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince,
Lend favourable ears to our request;
And pardon us the interruption
Of thy devotion and right Christian zeal.
Know, then, it is your fault that you resign
The supreme seat, the throne majestic,
The sceptered office of your ancestors,
To the corruption of a blemished stock.
You say Prince Edward is your brother's son:
So say we too, but not by Edward's wife;
For first he was contract to Lady Lucy –
Your mother lives a witness to that vow –
And afterward by substitute betrothed
To Bona, sister to the King of France.
These both put off, a poor petitioner,
A care-crazed mother of many children,
A beauty-waning and distressed widow,
Even in the afternoon of her best days,
Made prize and purchase of his lustful eye,
Seduced the pitch and height of his degree
To base declension and loathed bigamy.
By her, in his unlawful bed, he got
This Edward, whom our manners term the prince.
More bitterly could I expostulate,
Save that, for reverence to some alive,
I give a sparing limit to my tongue.
Yet whether you accept our suit or no,
Your brother's son shall never reign our king,
But we will plant some other in the throne,
To the disgrace and downfall of your house.

RICHMOND

More than I have said, loving countrymen,
The leisure and enforcement of the time
Forbids to dwell upon: yet remember this:
God and our good cause fight upon our side.
The prayers of holy saints and wrongèd souls,
Like high-reared bulwarks, stand before our faces.
Richard except, those whom we fight against
Had rather have us win than him they follow.
For what is he they follow? Truly, gentlemen,
A bloody tyrant and a homicide;
One raised in blood, and one in blood established;
A base, foul stone, made precious by the foil
Of England's chair, where he is falsely set;
One that hath ever been God's enemy.
Then if you fight against God's enemy,
God will in justice ward you as his soldiers.
Then, in the name of God and all these rights,
Advance your standards, draw your willing swords.
For me, the ransom of my bold attempt
Shall be this cold corpse on the earth's cold face;
But if I thrive, the gain of my attempt
The least of you shall share his part thereof.
Sound drums and trumpets boldly and cheerfully;
God and Saint George! Richmond and victory!

LEONATO

Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?
Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny
The story that is printed in her blood?
Do not live, Hero; do not open thine eyes:
For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
Why, she, O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again
And salt too little which may season give
To her foul-tainted flesh!

CONRADE

Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

DOGBERRY

Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my years?
O that he were here to write me down an ass! But, masters,
remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet
forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety,
as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow,
and, which is more, an officer, and, which is more, a householder,
and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina,
and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to;
and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns and
every thing handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had
been writ down an ass!

BENEDICK

This can be no trick: they seem to pity the lady: it seems her
affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited.
I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I
perceive the love come from her; they say too that she will rather
die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry: I
must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions
and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth,
I can bear them witness; and virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot reprove it;
and wise, but for loving me; by my troth, it is no addition to her
wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in
love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of
wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage:
but doth not the appetite alter? Shall these paper bullets of the
brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world
must be peopled. Here comes Beatrice.

CLAUDIO

O, my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars.