

BENEDICK Monologue

BENEDICK *(Coming forward)* This can be no trick; the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of it from Hero. Love me! Why it must be requited. 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 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? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.

Here comes Beatrice. By this day! She's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

BEATRICE Monologue

BEATRICE *(Coming forward)* What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true? Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much? Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adieu! No glory lives behind the back of such. And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee, taming my wild heart to thy loving hand: if thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee to bind our loves up in a holy band; for others say thou dost deserve, and I believe it better than reportingly. *(Exit)*

BEATRICE and BENEDICK 1

BEATRICE I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

BENEDICK What, my dear Lady Disdain! Are you yet living?

BEATRICE Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must turn to disdain if you come in her presence.

BENEDICK I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

BEATRICE A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

BENEDICK God keep your ladyship still in that mind! So some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestination scratched face.

BEATRICE Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

BENEDICK Keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.

BEATRICE You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

BEATRICE and BENEDICK 2

BENEDICK Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while?

BEATRICE Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

BENEDICK Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

BEATRICE Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her!

BENEDICK Is there any way to show such friendship?

BEATRICE A very even way, but no such friend.

BENEDICK May a man do it? I do love nothing in the world so well as you: is not that strange?

BEATRICE It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing.

BENEDICK Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

BEATRICE Kill Claudio.

BENEDICK Ha! Not for the wide world.

BEATRICE You kill me to deny it. Farewell!

BENEDICK Is Claudio thine enemy? Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

BEATRICE Yea, as sure as I have a thought or soul. Sweet Hero! She is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone!

BENEDICK Enough, I am engaged; I will challenge him. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account.

BEATRICE, HERO, and MARGARET

BEATRICE Good morrow, sweet Hero.

HERO Why how now do you speak in this sick tune?

BEATRICE I am out of all other tune, methinks. 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; tis time you were ready.

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 of cold. Get some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus, and lay it on your heart: it is the only thing for a qualm.

HERO There thou piercest 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. You may think perchance that I think you are in love; nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list, indeed I cannot think, if I would think my heart of thinking, that you are in love or that you will be in love or that you can't be in 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 do.

BEATRICE What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

DON JOHN, DON PEDRO, and CLAUDIO

DON JOHN My lord and brother, God save you. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

DON PEDRO In private?

DON JOHN If it please you; yet Count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of concerns him.

DON PEDRO What's the matter?

DON JOHN *(to CLAUDIO)* Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

DON PEDRO You know he does.

DON JOHN I know not that, when he knows what I know.

CLAUDIO If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

DON JOHN I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shortened, for she has been too long a talking of, the lady is disloyal.

CLAUDIO Who, Hero?

DON JOHN Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.

CLAUDIO Disloyal?

DON JOHN The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; Go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered, even the night before her wedding-day. If you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honor to change your mind.

CLAUDIO May this be so?

DON PEDRO I will not think it.

DON JOHN If you will follow me, I will show you enough.

CLAUDIO If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

DOGBERRY and BORACHIO

DOGBERRY (*Aside, to the audience*) Some treason afoot; stand close.

BORACHIO (*Speaking aloud to no one in particular*) I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

DOGBERRY Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

BORACHIO When rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

DOGBERRY I know that Deformed; a' has been a vile thief this seven year; a' goes up and down like a gentleman; I remember his name.

BORACHIO Didst thou not hear somebody? Know that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero; she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good-night -I tell this tale vilely- The prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

DOGBERRY Thought they Margaret was Hero?

BORACHIO The prince and Claudio, thought Margaret be Hero, but the devil my master knew she was Margaret. Away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw over night and send her home again without a husband.

DOGBERRY (*Confronts BORACHIO*) I charge you, in the prince's name, Stand! I have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

LEONATO and DOGBERRY

LEONATO What would you wish with me, honest neighbor?

DOGBERRY Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that
 decerns you nearly.

LEONATO Brief, I pray you; for you see it is a busy time with
me.

DOGBERRY Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your
 worship's presence, ha ta'an as arrant a once as any
 in Messina.

LEONATO I must leave you..

DOGBERRY Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended this
 auspicious person, and we would have them this morning
 examined before
 your worship.

LEONATO Take their examination yourself and bring it me: I am
 now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

DOGBERRY It shall be sufferance.

LEONATO Drink some wine ere you go: fare you well.

HERO and URSULA

- HERO Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come, our talk must only be of Benedick. When I do name him, let it be thy part to praise him more than ever man did merit: my talk to thee must be how Benedick is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter is little Cupid's crafty arrow made. (*Beatrice enters behind them*)
- URSULA Fear you not my part of the dialogue.
- HERO Then go we near her; that her ear lose nothing of the false sweet bait that we lay for it. (*Approaches Beatrice's hiding place*) No, truly Ursula, she is too disdainful.
- URSULA But are you sure that Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?
- HERO So says the prince and my new-trothed lord.
- URSULA And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?
- HERO 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.
- URSULA Why did you do so? Doth not the gentleman deserve as full as fortunate a bed as ever Beatrice shall couch upon?
- HERO 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. She cannot love, nor take no shape nor project of affection, she is so self-endear'd.
- URSULA Therefore certainly it ere not good she knew his love, lest she make sport of it.
- HERO I never yet saw man, but she would spell him backward: if fair-faced she would swear the gentleman should be her sister; if tall, a lance ill-headed; if low, an agate very vilely cut; so turns she every man the wrong side out.

URSULA Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

HERO But who dare tell her so? If I should speak, she would mock me into air; therefore let Benedick consume away in sighs, waste inwardly; it were a better death than to die with mocks.

URSULA Yet tell her of it; hear what she will say.

HERO No; rather I will go to Benedick and counsel him to fight
fight
 against his passion.

URSULA O, do not do your cousin such a wrong. She cannot be so much without true judgment - having so swift and excellenta wit - as to refuse so rare a gentleman as Benedick, who, for shape, for bearing, argument and valour goes foremostin report through Italy.

HERO Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

URSULA When are you married. Madam?

HERO To-morrow. Come, go in, I'll show thee some attires,
and
 have thy counsel which is the best to furnish me.

URSULA *(Loud whisper to Hero)* She's limed, I warrant you; we have caught her, madam.

HERO If it proves so, then loving goes by haps; some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and LEONATO

DON PEDRO Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of today, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

LEONATO No, nor I neither; but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviors seem ever to abhor.

BENEDICK *(To himself)* Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner?

LEONATO I cannot tell what to think of it but that she loves him with an enraged affection.

DON PEDRO Maybe she doth but counterfeit.

LEONATO There was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it.

CLAUDIO *(Loud whisper)* Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

DON PEDRO You amaze me; I would have I thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

LEONATO I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

BENEDICK I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it; knavery cannot, sure, hide himself in such reverence.

CLAUDIO He hath taken the infection; hold it up.

DON PEDRO Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

LEONATO No, and swears she never will; that's her torment.

CLAUDIO 'Tis true indeed; 'Shall I,' says she, 'that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?'

LEONATO She'll be up twenty times a night, and there she will sit till she have writ a sheet of paper. O, when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet.

CLAUDIO Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, prays, curses; 'O sweet Benedick! God give me patience.'

DON PEDRO It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have dared all other respects had made her half myself. I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what a' will say.

CLAUDIO Hero thinks surely she will die; for she says she will die, if he loves her not, and she will die, ere she make her love known.

DON PEDRO If she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it, for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit.

CLAUDIO Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out with good counsel.

LEONATO Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

DON PEDRO Well, let it cool the while; I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.
