

Love's Labour's Lost

1 – Ferdinand, King of Navarre and the Princess of France

ACT II.i. 90-112

The King enters with his lords and tells the Princess and her ladies that he cannot allow them into the court because of the oath he swore that “no woman may approach his silent court”.

FERDINAND, KING OF NAVARRE: Fair Princess, welcome to the court of Navarre.

THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE: “Fair” I give you back again, and “welcome” I have not yet. The roof of this court is too high to be yours, and welcome to the wide fields too base to be mine.

FERDINAND, KING OF NAVARRE: You shall be welcome, madam, to my court.

THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE: I will be welcome then—conduct me thither.

FERDINAND, KING OF NAVARRE: Hear me, dear lady: I have sworn an oath.

THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE: Our Lady help my lord! He’ll be forsworn.

FERDINAND, KING OF NAVARRE: Not for the world, fair madam, by my will.

THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE: Why, will shall break it, will, and nothing else.

FERDINAND, KING OF NAVARRE: Your ladyship is ignorant what it is.

THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE: I hear your Grace hath sworn out house-keeping: ’Tis deadly sin to keep that oath, my lord, And sin to break it. But pardon me, I am too sudden bold; Vouchsafe to read the purpose of my coming, And suddenly resolve me in my suit.

FERDINAND, KING OF NAVARRE: Madam, I will, if suddenly I may.

THE PRINCESS OF FRANCE: You will the sooner, that I were away, For you’ll prove perjur’d if you make me stay.

2 – Holofernes and Nathaniel

ACT IV. ii. 13-76

Nathaniel, a minister, and Holofernes, a schoolteacher – windbags who are the epitome of men of learning who know nothing – just watched a deer hunt. Their companion Dull has just called the kind of deer the Princess killed a pricket, and Holofernes disagrees and begins to mock him.

HOLOFERNES: Most barbarous intimation! Yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, in via, in way, of explication; rather ostentare, to show, as it were, his inclination — after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or, rather, unlettered, or, ratherest, unconfirmed fashion — to insert again a pricket for my deer. O thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

NATHANIEL: Sir, he hath not fed of the dainties that are bred in a book.

He hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink. His intellect is not replenished; he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts.

And such barren plants are set before us that we thankful should be,

Which we of taste and feeling are, for the parts that do fructify in us more than he;

For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool:

So were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school.

HOLOFERNES: Sir Nathaniel, will you hear an extemporal epitaph on the death of the deer? And, to humor the ignorant, call I the deer the princess killed, a pricket.

NATHANIEL: Purge, good Master Holofernes, purge, so it shall please you.

HOLOFERNES: The preyful princess pierced and pricked a pretty pleasing pricket.

NATHANIEL: A rare talent!

HOLOFERNES: This is a gift that I have, simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions. But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it.

NATHANIEL: Sir, I praise the Lord for you.

Berowne ACT V.ii.395-416

Berowne swears off all poetical techniques for wooing and appeals to Rosaline.

Here stand I, lady, dart thy skill at me,
Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout,
Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance,
Cut me to pieces with thy keen conceit;
And I will wish thee never more to dance,
Nor never more in Russian habit wait.
O, never will I trust to speeches penn'd,
Nor to the motion of a schoolboy's tongue,
Nor never come in vizard to my friend,
Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song!
I do forswear them, and I here protest,
By this white glove (how white the hand, God knows!),
Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd
In russet yeas and honest kersey noes.
And to begin, wench, so God help me law!
My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.

Don Adriano de Armado ACT I.ii.155-171

Earlier in the scene Don Armado confesses to his page, Moth, that he has fallen in love with Jaquenetta. He asks Moth to comfort him by telling him of other great men that have been in love, and Moth mentions Hercules and Samson. Later Armado confesses his love to Jaquenetta, but she departs with Constable Dull. When alone, Armado laments his situation and calls upon the "God of rhyme" to aid him in writing Jaquenetta a love letter.

I do affect the very ground (which is base) where her shoe
(which is baser) guided by her foot (which is basest) doth tread.
I shall be forsworn (which is a great argument of falsehood) if I love.
And how can that be true love, which is falsely attempted?
Love is a familiar; Love is a devil; there is no evil angel but Love.
Yet was Sampson so tempted, and he had an excellent strength;
yet was Salomon so seduced, and he had a very good wit.
Cupid's butt-shaft is too hard for Hercules' club,
and therefore too much odds for a Spaniard's rapier.
Adieu, valor, rust, rapier, be still, drum,
for your manager is in love; yea, he loveth. Assist me, some extemporal god of rhyme,
for I am sure I shall turn sonnet. Devise, wit, write, pen,
for I am for whole volumes in folio.

Costard ACT III.i. 127-136

Costard displays a tendency to take language literally. When Armado gives him "payment", or "remuneration", for delivering a letter, Costard interprets the word "remuneration" as the actual name for the amount of money he is given.

Now will I look to his remuneration. Remuneration! O, that's the Latin word for three farthings: three farthings—remuneration. "What's the price of this inkle?"—"One penny."—"No, I'll give you a remuneration": why, it carries it. Remuneration: why, it is a fairer name than French crown! I will never buy and sell out of this word.

The Princess of France ACT V.ii.778-802

A messenger has just brought news to the Princess that her father is dead. The Princess is heartbroken and tells the King that they will leave that night, he entreats her to stay, but the Princess tells the King that he should become a hermit for twelve months and then seek her again.

A time methinks too short
To make a world-without-end bargain in.
No, no, my lord, your Grace is perjur'd much,
Full of dear guiltiness, and therefore this:
Your oath I will not trust, but go with speed
To some forlorn and naked hermitage,
Remote from all the pleasures of the world;
There stay until the twelve celestial signs
Have brought about the annual reckoning.
If this austere insociable life
Change not your offer made in heat of blood;
Then at the expiration of the year,
Come challenge me, challenge me by these deserts,
And by this virgin palm now kissing thine,
I will be thine; and till that instant shut
My woeful self up in a mourning house,
Raining the tears of lamentation
For the remembrance of my father's death.
If this thou do deny, let our hands part,
Neither intitled in the other's heart.