

William Shakespeare

Love's Labour's Lost



+ Sidney Lee

**The Classic Biography:
The Life of William Shakespeare**

William Shakespeare and Sidney Lee

Love's Labour's Lost (The Unabridged Play) + The Classic Biography: The Life of William Shakespeare

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Dramatis Personae.

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SCENE: Navarre

ACT I.

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SCENE I. The King of Navarre's park

[Enter the King, BEROWNE, LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN.]

KING.

Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live regist'ed upon our brazen tombs,
And then grace us in the disgrace of death;
When, spite of cormorant devouring Time,
The endeavour of this present breath may buy
That honour which shall bate his scythe's keen edge,
And make us heirs of all eternity.
Therefore, brave conquerors—for so you are
That war against your own affections
And the huge army of the world's desires—
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force:
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world;
Our court shall be a little academe,
Still and contemplative in living art.
You three, Berowne, Dumain, and Longaville,
Have sworn for three years' term to live with me,
My fellow-scholars, and to keep those statutes
That are recorded in this schedule here:
Your oaths are pass'd; and now subscribe your names,
That his own hand may strike his honour down
That violates the smallest branch herein.
If you are arm'd to do as sworn to do,
Subscribe to your deep oaths, and keep it too.
LONGAVILLE.
I am resolv'd; 'tis but a three years' fast:

The mind shall banquet, though the body pine:
Fat paunches have lean pates; and dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but bankrupt quite the wits.
DUMAINE.

My loving lord, Dumain is mortified:
The grosser manner of these world's delights
He throws upon the gross world's baser slaves;
To love, to wealth, to pomp, I pine and die,
With all these living in philosophy.
BEROWNE.

I can but say their protestation over;
So much, dear liege, I have already sworn,
That is, to live and study here three years.
But there are other strict observances:
As, not to see a woman in that term,
Which I hope well is not enrolled there:
And one day in a week to touch no food,
And but one meal on every day beside;
The which I hope is not enrolled there:
And then to sleep but three hours in the night
And not be seen to wink of all the day,—
When I was wont to think no harm all night,
And make a dark night too of half the day,—
Which I hope well is not enrolled there.
O! these are barren tasks, too hard to keep,
Not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep.
KING.

Your oath is pass'd to pass away from these.
BEROWNE.

Let me say no, my liege, an if you please:
I only swore to study with your Grace,
And stay here in your court for three years' space.
LONGAVILLE.

You swore to that, Berowne, and to the rest.
BEROWNE.

By yea and nay, sir, then I swore in jest.

What is the end of study? let me know.

KING.

Why, that to know which else we should not know.

BEROWNE.

Things hid and barr'd, you mean, from common sense?

KING. Ay, that is study's godlike recompense.

BEROWNE.

Come on, then; I will swear to study so,

To know the thing I am forbid to know,

As thus: to study where I well may dine,

When I to feast expressly am forbid;

Or study where to meet some mistress fine,

When mistresses from common sense are hid;

Or, having sworn too hard-a-keeping oath,

Study to break it, and not break my troth.

If study's gain be thus, and this be so,

Study knows that which yet it doth not know.

Swear me to this, and I will ne'er say no.

KING.

These be the stops that hinder study quite,

And train our intellects to vain delight.

BEROWNE.

Why, all delights are vain; but that most vain

Which, with pain purchas'd, doth inherit pain:

As painfully to pore upon a book,

To seek the light of truth; while truth the while

Doth falsely blind the eyesight of his look.

Light, seeking light, doth light of light beguile;

So, ere you find where light in darkness lies,

Your light grows dark by losing of your eyes.

Study me how to please the eye indeed,

By fixing it upon a fairer eye;

Who dazzling so, that eye shall be his heed,

And give him light that it was blinded by.

Study is like the heaven's glorious sun,

That will not be deep-search'd with saucy looks;
Small have continual plodders ever won,
Save base authority from others' books.
These earthly godfathers of heaven's lights
That give a name to every fixed star
Have no more profit of their shining nights
Than those that walk and wot not what they are.
Too much to know is to know nought but fame;
And every godfather can give a name.

KING.

How well he's read, to reason against reading!

DUMAINE.

Proceeded well, to stop all good proceeding!

LONGAVILLE.

He weeds the corn, and still lets grow the weeding.

BEROWNE.

The spring is near, when green geese are a-breeding.

DUMAINE.

How follows that?

BEROWNE.

Fit in his place and time.

DUMAINE.

In reason nothing.

BEROWNE.

Something then in rime.

LONGAVILLE.

Berowne is like an envious sneaping frost

That bites the first-born infants of the spring.

BEROWNE.

Well, say I am: why should proud summer boast

Before the birds have any cause to sing?

Why should I joy in any abortive birth?

At Christmas I no more desire a rose

Than wish a snow in May's newfangled shows;

But like of each thing that in season grows;

So you, to study now it is too late,

Climb o'er the house to unlock the little gate.

KING.

Well, sit out; go home, Berowne; adieu.

BEROWNE.

No, my good lord; I have sworn to stay with you;

And though I have for barbarism spoke more

Than for that angel knowledge you can say,

Yet confident I'll keep what I have swore,

And bide the penance of each three years' day.

Give me the paper; let me read the same;

And to the strict'st decrees I'll write my name.

KING.

How well this yielding rescues thee from shame!

BEROWNE. 'Item. That no woman shall come within a
mile of my court.' Hath this been proclaimed?

LONGAVILLE.

Four days ago.

BEROWNE. Let's see the penalty. 'On pain of losing her
tongue.' Who devised this penalty?

LONGAVILLE.

Marry, that did I.

BEROWNE.

Sweet lord, and why?

LONGAVILLE.

To fright them hence with that dread penalty.

BEROWNE.

A dangerous law against gentility!

'Item. If any man be seen to talk with a woman within
the term of three years, he shall endure such public
shame as the

rest of the court can possibly devise.'

This article, my liege, yourself must break;

For well you know here comes in embassy

The French king's daughter, with yourself to speak—

A mild of grace and complete majesty—
About surrender up of Aquitaine
To her decrepit, sick, and bedrid father:
Therefore this article is made in vain,
Or vainly comes th' admired princess hither.

KING.

What say you, lords? why, this was quite forgot.

BEROWNE.

So study evermore is overshot:

While it doth study to have what it would,

It doth forget to do the thing it should;

And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,

'Tis won as towns with fire; so won, so lost.

KING.

We must of force dispense with this decree;

She must lie here on mere necessity.

BEROWNE.

Necessity will make us all forsworn

Three thousand times within this three years' space;

For every man with his affects is born,

Not by might master'd, but by special grace.

If I break faith, this word shall speak for me:

I am forsworn 'on mere necessity.'

So to the laws at large I write my name; [Subscribes]

And he that breaks them in the least degree

Stands in attainder of eternal shame.

Suggestions are to other as to me;

But I believe, although I seem so loath,

I am the last that will last keep his oath.

But is there no quick recreation granted?

KING.

Ay, that there is. Our court, you know, is haunted

With a refined traveller of Spain;

A man in all the world's new fashion planted,

That hath a mint of phrases in his brain;

One who the music of his own vain tongue

Doth ravish like enchanting harmony;
A man of complements, whom right and wrong
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny:
This child of fancy, that Armado hight,
For interim to our studies shall relate,
In high-born words, the worth of many a knight
From tawny Spain lost in the world's debate.
How you delight, my lords, I know not, I;
But, I protest, I love to hear him lie,
And I will use him for my minstrelsy.
BEROWNE.

Armado is a most illustrious wight,
A man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight.
LONGAVILLE.

Costard the swain and he shall be our sport;
And so to study three years is but short.
[Enter DULL, with a letter, and COSTARD.]

DULL.
Which is the duke's own person?
BEROWNE.

This, fellow. What wouldst?

DULL. I myself reprehend his own person, for I am his
Grace's tharborough: but I would see his own person in
flesh and blood.

BEROWNE.
This is he.

DULL. Signior Arm—Arm—commends you. There's villainy
abroad: this letter will tell you more.

COSTARD.
Sir, the contempts thereof are as touching me.
KING.

A letter from the magnificent Armado.
BEROWNE.

How long soever the matter, I hope in God for high words.

LONGAVILLE.

A high hope for a low heaven: God grant us patience!

BEROWNE.

To hear, or forbear laughing?

LONGAVILLE. To hear meekly, sir, and to laugh moderately; or, to forbear both.

BEROWNE. Well, sir, be it as the style shall give us cause to climb in the merriness.

COSTARD.

The matter is to me, sir, as concerning Jaquenetta.

The manner of it is, I was taken with the manner.

BEROWNE.

In what manner?

COSTARD. In manner and form following, sir; all those three: I was seen with her in the manor-house, sitting with her upon the form, and taken following her into the park; which, put together, is in manner and form following. Now, sir, for the manner,—it is the manner of a man to speak to a woman, for the form,—in some form.

BEROWNE.

For the following, sir?

COSTARD.

As it shall follow in my correction; and God defend the right!

KING.

Will you hear this letter with attention?

BEROWNE.

As we would hear an oracle.

COSTARD.

Such is the simplicity of man to hearken after the flesh.

KING.

'Great deputy, the welkin's vicegerent and sole dominator of Navarre, my soul's earth's god and body's fostering patron,'

COSTARD.

Not a word of Costard yet.

KING.

'So it is,'—

COSTARD. It may be so; but if he say it is so, he is, in telling true, but so.—

KING.

Peace!

COSTARD.

Be to me, and every man that dares not fight!

KING.

No words!

COSTARD.

Of other men's secrets, I beseech you.

KING. 'So it is, besieged with sable-coloured melancholy, I did commend the black-oppressing humour to the most wholesome physic of thy health-giving air; and, as I am a gentleman, betook myself to walk. The time when? About the sixth hour; when beasts most graze, birds best peck, and men sit down to that nourishment which is called supper: so much for the time when. Now for the ground which; which, I mean, I upon; it is ycleped thy park. Then for the place where; where, I mean, I did encounter that obscene and most preposterous event, that draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-coloured ink which here thou viewest, beholdest, surveyest, or seest. But to the place where, it standeth north-north-east and by east from the west corner of thy curious-knotted garden: there did I see that low-spirited swain, that base minnow of thy mirth,'— COSTARD.

Me.

KING. 'that unlettered small-knowing soul,'—

COSTARD.

Me.

KING. 'that shallow vassal,'—

COSTARD.

Still me.—

KING. 'which, as I remember, hight Costard,'—

COSTARD.

O me.

KING. 'sorted and consorted, contrary to thy established proclaimed edict and continent canon, with—with,—O! with but with this I passion to say wherewith,'—

COSTARD.

With a wench.

KING. 'with a child of our grandmother Eve, a female; or, for thy more sweet understanding, a woman. Him, I,—as my ever-esteemed duty pricks me on,—have sent to thee, to receive the meed of punishment, by thy sweet Grace's officer, Antony Dull, a man of good repute, carriage, bearing, and estimation.'

DULL.

Me, an't please you; I am Antony Dull.

KING. 'For Jaquenetta,—so is the weaker vessel called, which I apprehended with the aforesaid swain,—I keep her as a vessel of thy law's fury; and shall, at the least of thy sweet notice, bring her to trial. Thine, in all compliments of devoted and heartburning heat of duty,
DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO.'

BEROWNE. This is not so well as I looked for, but the best

that ever I heard.

KING.

Ay, the best for the worst. But, sirrah, what say you to this?

COSTARD.

Sir, I confess the wench.

KING.

Did you hear the proclamation?

COSTARD. I do confess much of the hearing it, but little of the marking of it.

KING. It was proclaimed a year's imprisonment to be taken with a wench.

COSTARD.

I was taken with none, sir: I was taken with a damosel.

KING.

Well, it was proclaimed 'damosel'.

COSTARD.

This was no damosel neither, sir; she was a 'virgin'.

KING.

It is so varied too; for it was proclaimed 'virgin'.

COSTARD.

If it were, I deny her virginity: I was taken with a maid.

KING.

This maid not serve your turn, sir.

COSTARD.

This maid will serve my turn, sir.

KING. Sir, I will pronounce your sentence: you shall fast a week with bran and water.

COSTARD.

I had rather pray a month with mutton and porridge.

KING.

And Don Armado shall be your keeper.

My Lord Berowne, see him delivered o'er:
And go we, lords, to put in practice that
Which each to other hath so strongly sworn.
[Exeunt KING, LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN.]

BEROWNE.

I'll lay my head to any good man's hat
These oaths and laws will prove an idle scorn.
Sirrah, come on.

COSTARD. I suffer for the truth, sir: for true it is I was
taken with Jaquenetta, and Jaquenetta is a true girl; and
therefore welcome the sour cup of prosperity! Affliction
may one day smile again; and till then, sit thee down,
sorrow!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. The park.

[Enter ARMADO and MOTH.]

ARMADO. Boy, what sign is it when a man of great spirit
grows melancholy?

MOTH.

A great sign, sir, that he will look sad.

ARMADO.

Why, sadness is one and the selfsame thing, dear imp.

MOTH.

No, no; O Lord, sir, no.

ARMADO. How canst thou part sadness and melancholy,
my tender juvenal?

MOTH.

By a familiar demonstration of the working, my tough

senior.

ARMADO.

Why tough senior? Why tough senior?

MOTH.

Why tender juvenal? Why tender juvenal?

ARMADO. I spoke it, tender juvenal, as a congruent epitheton appertaining to thy young days, which we may nominate tender.

MOTH. And I, tough senior, as an appertinent title to your old time, which we may name tough.

ARMADO.

Pretty and apt.

MOTH. How mean you, sir? I pretty, and my saying apt? or I apt, and my saying pretty?

ARMADO.

Thou pretty, because little.

MOTH.

Little pretty, because little. Wherefore apt?

ARMADO.

And therefore apt, because quick.

MOTH.

Speak you this in my praise, master?

ARMADO.

In thy condign praise.

MOTH.

I will praise an eel with the same praise.

ARMADO.

What! That an eel is ingenious?

MOTH.

That an eel is quick.

ARMADO.

I do say thou art quick in answers: thou heat'st my blood.

MOTH.

I am answered, sir.

ARMADO.

I love not to be crossed.

MOTH.

[Aside] He speaks the mere contrary: crosses love not him.

ARMADO.

I have promised to study three years with the duke.

MOTH.

You may do it in an hour, sir.

ARMADO.

Impossible.

MOTH. How many is one thrice told? @@@@

ARMADO.

I am ill at reck'ning; it fitteth the spirit of a tapster.

MOTH.

You are a gentleman and a gamester, sir.

ARMADO.

I confess both: they are both the varnish of a complete man.

MOTH. Then I am sure you know how much the gross sum of deuce-ace amounts to.

ARMADO.

It doth amount to one more than two.

MOTH.

Which the base vulgar do call three.

ARMADO.

True.

MOTH. Why, sir, is this such a piece of study? Now here's three studied ere ye'll thrice wink; and how easy it is to put 'years' to the word 'three,' and study three years in two words, the dancing horse will tell you.

ARMADO.

A most fine figure!

MOTH.

[Aside] To prove you a cipher.

ARMADO. I will hereupon confess I am in love; and as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love with a base wench. If drawing my sword against the humour of affection would deliver me from the reprobate thought of it, I would take Desire prisoner, and ransom him to any French courtier for a new-devised curtsy. I think scorn to sigh: methinks I should outswear Cupid. Comfort me, boy: what great men have been in love?

MOTH.

Hercules, master.

ARMADO. Most sweet Hercules! More authority, dear boy, name more; and, sweet my child, let them be men of good repute and carriage.

MOTH. Samson, master: he was a man of good carriage, great carriage, for he carried the town gates on his back like a porter; and he was in love.

ARMADO. O well-knit Samson! strong-jointed Samson! I do excel thee in my rapier as much as thou didst me in carrying gates. I am in love too. Who was Samson's love, my dear Moth?

MOTH.

A woman, master.

ARMADO.

Of what complexion?

MOTH. Of all the four, or the three, or the two, or one of the four.

ARMADO.

Tell me precisely of what complexion.

MOTH.

Of the sea-water green, sir.

ARMADO.

Is that one of the four complexions?

MOTH.

As I have read, sir; and the best of them too.

ARMADO. Green, indeed, is the colour of lovers; but to have a love of that colour, methinks Samson had small reason for it. He surely affected her for her wit.

MOTH.

It was so, sir, for she had a green wit.

ARMADO.

My love is most immaculate white and red.

MOTH. Most maculate thoughts, master, are masked under such colours.

ARMADO.

Define, define, well-educated infant.

MOTH.

My father's wit my mother's tongue assist me!

ARMADO.

Sweet invocation of a child; most pretty, and pathetic!

MOTH.

If she be made of white and red,

Her faults will ne'er be known;

For blushing cheeks by faults are bred,

And fears by pale white shown.

Then if she fear, or be to blame,

By this you shall not know,

For still her cheeks possess the same

Which native she doth owe.

A dangerous rhyme, master, against the reason of white and red.

ARMADO.

Is there not a ballad, boy, of the King and the Beggar?

MOTH. The world was very guilty of such a ballad some three ages since; but I think now 'tis not to be found; or if it were, it would neither serve for the writing nor the tune.

ARMADO. I will have that subject newly writ o'er, that I may example my digression by some mighty precedent. Boy, I do love that country girl that I took in the park with the rational hind Costard: she deserves well.

MOTH.

[Aside] To be whipped; and yet a better love than my master.

ARMADO.

Sing, boy: my spirit grows heavy in love.

MOTH.

And that's great marvel, loving a light wench.

ARMADO.

I say, sing.

MOTH.

Forbear till this company be past.

[Enter DULL, COSTARD, and JAQUENETTA.]

DULL. Sir, the Duke's pleasure is, that you keep Costard safe: and you must suffer him to take no delight nor no penance; but a' must fast three days a week. For this damsel, I must keep her at the park; she is allowed for the day-woman. Fare you well.

ARMADO.

I do betray myself with blushing. Maid!

JAQUENETTA.

Man?

ARMADO.

I will visit thee at the lodge.

JAQUENETTA.

That's hereby.

ARMADO.

I know where it is situate.

JAQUENETTA.

Lord, how wise you are!

ARMADO.

I will tell thee wonders.

JAQUENETTA.

With that face?

ARMADO.

I love thee.

JAQUENETTA.

So I heard you say.

ARMADO.

And so, farewell.

JAQUENETTA.

Fair weather after you!

DULL.

Come, Jaquenetta, away!

[Exit with JAQUENETTA.]

ARMADO. Villain, thou shalt fast for thy offences ere thou be pardoned.

COSTARD. Well, sir, I hope when I do it I shall do it on a full stomach.

ARMADO.

Thou shalt be heavily punished.

COSTARD. I am more bound to you than your fellows, for they are but lightly rewarded.

ARMADO.

Take away this villain: shut him up.

MOTH.

Come, you transgressing slave: away!

COSTARD.

Let me not be pent up, sir: I will fast, being loose.

MOTH.

No, sir; that were fast and loose: thou shalt to prison.

COSTARD. Well, if ever I do see the merry days of desolation that I have seen, some shall see—

MOTH.

What shall some see?

COSTARD. Nay, nothing, Master Moth, but what they look upon. It is not for prisoners to be too silent in their words, and therefore I will say nothing. I thank God I have as little patience as another man, and therefore I can be quiet.

[Exeunt MOTH and COSTARD.]

ARMADO. 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 Samson so tempted, and he had an excellent strength; yet was Solomon 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. The first and second cause will not serve my turn; the passado he respects not, the duello he regards not; his disgrace is to be called boy, but his glory is to subdue men. Adieu, valour! rust, rapier! be still, drum! for your manager is in love; yea, he loveth. Assist me, some extemporal god of rime, for I am sure I shall turn

sonneter. Devise, wit; write, pen; for I am for whole
volumes in folio.

[Exit.]

ACT II.

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SCENE I. The King of Navarre's park. A pavilion and tents at a distance.

[Enter the PRINCESS OF FRANCE, ROSALINE, MARIA, KATHARINE, BOYET, LORDS, and other Attendants.]

BOYET.

Now, madam, summon up your dearest spirits:
Consider who the king your father sends,
To whom he sends, and what's his embassy:
Yourself, held precious in the world's esteem,
To parley with the sole inheritor
Of all perfections that a man may owe,
Matchless Navarre; the plea of no less weight
Than Aquitaine, a dowry for a queen.
Be now as prodigal of all dear grace
As Nature was in making graces dear
When she did starve the general world beside,
And prodigally gave them all to you.

PRINCESS.

Good Lord Boyet, my beauty, though but mean,
Needs not the painted flourish of your praise:
Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye,
Not utt'ed by base sale of chapmen's tongues.
I am less proud to hear you tell my worth
Than you much willing to be counted wise
In spending your wit in the praise of mine.
But now to task the tasker: good Boyet,
You are not ignorant, all-telling fame
Doth noise abroad, Navarre hath made a vow,

Till painful study shall outwear three years,
No woman may approach his silent court:
Therefore to's seemeth it a needful course,
Before we enter his forbidden gates,
To know his pleasure; and in that behalf,
Bold of your worthiness, we single you
As our best-moving fair solicitor.
Tell him the daughter of the King of France,
On serious business, craving quick dispatch,
Importunes personal conference with his Grace.
Haste, signify so much; while we attend,
Like humble-visag'd suitors, his high will.
BOYET.
Proud of employment, willingly I go.
PRINCESS.
All pride is willing pride, and yours is so.

[Exit BOYET.]

Who are the votaries, my loving lords,
That are vow-fellows with this virtuous duke?
FIRST LORD.
Lord Longaville is one.
PRINCESS.
Know you the man?
MARIA.
I know him, madam: at a marriage feast,
Between Lord Perigort and the beauteous heir
Of Jaques Falconbridge, solemnized
In Normandy, saw I this Longaville.
A man of sovereign parts, he is esteem'd,
Well fitted in arts, glorious in arms:
Nothing becomes him ill that he would well.
The only soil of his fair virtue's gloss,—
If virtue's gloss will stain with any soil,—
Is a sharp wit match'd with too blunt a will;

Whose edge hath power to cut, whose will still wills
It should none spare that come within his power.

PRINCESS.

Some merry mocking lord, belike; is't so?

MARIA.

They say so most that most his humours know.

PRINCESS.

Such short-liv'd wits do wither as they grow.

Who are the rest?

KATHARINE.

The young Dumain, a well-accomplish'd youth,

Of all that virtue love for virtue lov'd;

Most power to do most harm, least knowing ill,

For he hath wit to make an ill shape good,

And shape to win grace though he had no wit.

I saw him at the Duke Alencon's once;

And much too little of that good I saw

Is my report to his great worthiness.

ROSALINE.

Another of these students at that time

Was there with him, if I have heard a truth:

Berowne they call him; but a merrier man,

Within the limit of becoming mirth,

I never spent an hour's talk withal.

His eye begets occasion for his wit,

For every object that the one doth catch

The other turns to a mirth-moving jest,

Which his fair tongue, conceit's expositor,

Delivers in such apt and gracious words

That aged ears play truant at his tales,

And younger hearings are quite ravished;

So sweet and voluble is his discourse.

PRINCESS.

God bless my ladies! Are they all in love,

That every one her own hath garnished

With such bedecking ornaments of praise?

FIRST LORD.
Here comes Boyet.

[Re-enter BOYET.]

PRINCESS.
Now, what admittance, lord?
BOYET.

Navarre had notice of your fair approach,
And he and his competitors in oath
Were all address'd to meet you, gentle lady,
Before I came. Marry, thus much I have learnt;
He rather means to lodge you in the field,
Like one that comes here to besiege his court,
Than seek a dispensation for his oath,
To let you enter his unpeeled house.
Here comes Navarre.

[The LADIES mask.]

[Enter KING, LONGAVILLE, DUMAINE, BEROWNE, and
ATTENDANTS.]

KING.
Fair Princess, welcome to the court of Navarre.
PRINCESS. '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.

KING.
You shall be welcome, madam, to my court.

PRINCESS.
I will be welcome then: conduct me thither.

KING.
Hear me, dear lady; I have sworn an oath.

PRINCESS.

Our Lady help my lord! he'll be forsworn.

KING.

Not for the world, fair madam, by my will.

PRINCESS.

Why, will shall break it; will, and nothing else.

KING.

Your ladyship is ignorant what it is.

PRINCESS.

Were my lord so, his ignorance were wise,

Where now his knowledge must prove ignorance.

I hear your Grace hath sworn out housekeeping:

'Tis deadly sin to keep that oath, my lord,

And sin to break it.

But pardon me, I am too sudden bold:

To teach a teacher ill beseemeth me.

Vouchsafe to read the purpose of my coming,

And suddenly resolve me in my suit.

[Gives a paper.]

KING.

Madam, I will, if suddenly I may.

PRINCESS.

You will the sooner that I were away,

For you'll prove perjurer'd if you make me stay.

BEROWNE.

Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?

ROSALINE.

Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?

BEROWNE.

I know you did.

ROSALINE.

How needless was it then

To ask the question!

BEROWNE.