

***BEN
JONSON***

***THE CASE
IS ALTERED***

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Ben Jonson

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A COMEDY.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

COUNT FERNEZE.
LORD PAULO FERNEZE.
CAMILLO FERNEZE.
MAXIMILIAN,
CHAMONT.
SIGNIOR ANGELO.
FRANCISCO COLONNIA.
JAQUES DE PRIE.
CHRISTOPHERO, the Steward.
JUNIPER, a Cobler..
ANTONIO BALLADINO,
SEBASTIAN,
MARTINO,
VINCENTIO,
VALENTINE,
BALTHASAR,
ONION,
MONS. PACUE.
FINIO, a Page.
BOY.

WOMEN.

AURELIA.
PHŒNIXELLA.
RACHEL DE PRIE.

SCENE. Milan.

Act I Scene I

Act I Scene II

Act I Scene III

Act I Scene IV

Act I Scene V

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Act II Scene II

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Act II Scene VI

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Act V Scene I

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Act I Scene I

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ACT I.

SCENE I.

Sound, after a flourish: Juniper a cobbler is discovered, sitting at work in his shop, and singing.

Juniper, Onion, Antony Balladino.

Junip. YOU woful wights, give ear a while,
And mark the tenor of my stile,

Enter Onion in haste.

Which shall such trembling hearts unfold,
As seldom hath to fore been told,
Such chances are, and doleful news—

Oni. Fellow Juniper! peace a god's name.

Junip. As may attempt your wits to muse.

Oni. Godso, hear, man! a pox a god on you.

Junip. And cause such trickling tears to pass,
Except your hearts be flint or brass:—

Oni. Juniper! Juniper!

Junip. To hear the news which I shall tell,
That in Custella once befel.

'Sblood, where didst thou learn to corrupt
a man in the midst of a verse, ha?

Oni. Godslid, man, service is ready to
go up, man: you must slip on your coat,
and come in; we lack waiters pitifully.

Junip. A pitiful hearing; for now must I
of a merry cobbler become mourning crea-
ture.

Oni. Well, you'll come. [*Exit Onion.*]

Junip. Presto. Go to, a word to the wise,
away, fly, vanish:

Lie there the weeds that I disdain to wear.

Ant. God save you, master Juniper.

Junip. What signior Antonio Balladino!
welcome sweet Ingle.

Ant. And how do you, sir?

Junip. Faith you see, put to my shifts
here, as poor retainers be oft-times. Sirrah,
Antony, there's one of my fellows mightily
enamoured of thee; and I faith, you slave,
now you're come, I'll bring you together:
it's Peter Onion, the groom of the hall; do
you know him?

Ant. No, not yet, I assure you.

Junip. O he is one as right of thy humour
as may be, a plain simple rascal, a true
dunce; marry he hath been a notable
villain in his time: he is in love, sirrah, with
a wench, and I have preferred thee to him;
thou shalt make him some pretty paradox,
or some allegory. How does my coat sit?
well?

Ant. I, very well.

Enter Onion.

Oni. Nay, godso, fellow Juniper, come away.

Junip. Art thou there, mad slave? I
come with a powder. Sirrah, fellow Onion,
I must have you peruse this gentleman well,

and do him good offices of respect and kindnesses, as instances shall be given.

Ant. Nay, good master Onion, what do you mean, I pray you, sir? you are too respective, in good faith.

Oni. I would not you should think so, sir; for though I have no learning, yet I honour a scholar in any ground of the earth, sir. Shall I request your name, sir?

Ant. My name is Antonio Balladino.

Oni. Balladino! you are not pageant poet to the city of Milan, sir, are you?

Ant. I supply the place, sir, when a worse cannot be had, sir.

Oni. I cry you mercy, sir; I love you the better for that, sir; by Jesu, you must pardon me, I knew you not; but I'll pray to be better acquainted with you, sir, I have seen of your works.

Ant. I am at your service, good master Onion; but concerning this maiden that you love, sir, what is she?

Oni. O did my fellow Juniper tell you? marry, sir, she is, as one may say, but a poor man's child indeed, and for mine own part, I am no gentleman born, I must confess; but my mind to me a kingdom is truly.

Ant. Truly a very good saying.

Oni. 'Tis somewhat stale; but that's no matter.

Ant. O 'tis the better; such things ever

are like bread, which the staler it is, the more wholesome.

Oni. 'Tis but a hungry comparison, in my judgment.

Ant. Why I'll tell you, master Onion, I do use as much stale stuff, though I say it myself, as any man does in that kind, I am sure. Did you see the last pageant I set forth?

Oni. No faith, sir; but there goes a huge report on't.

Ant. Why you shall be one of my Mæcenasses; I'll give you one of the books; O you'll like it admirably.

Oni. Nay that's certain, I'll get my fellow Juniper to read it.

Ant. Read it, sir! I'll read it to you.

Oni. Tut, then I shall not chuse but like it.

Ant. Why look you, sir, I write so plain, and keep that old decorum, that you must of necessity like it: marry, you shall have some now (as for example, in plays) that will have every day new tricks, and write you nothing but humours; indeed this pleases the gentlemen, but the common sort they care not for't; they know not what to make on't; they look for good matter they, and are not edified with such toys.

Oni. You are in the right, I'll not give a halfpenny to see a thousand on 'em. I was

at one the last term; but and ever I see a more roguish thing, I am a piece of cheese, and no Onion: nothing but kings and princes in it, the fool came not out a jot.

Ant. True, sir, they would have me make such plays; but as I tell 'em, and they'll give me twenty pounds a play, I'll not raise my vein.

Oni. No, it were a vain thing and you should, sir.

Ant. Tut, give me the penny, I care not for the gentlemen I; let me have a good ground, no matter for the pen, the plot shall carry it.

Oni. Indeed that's right, you are in print already for the best plotter.

Ant. I, I might as well have been put in for a dumb shew too.

Oni. I, marry, sir, I marle you were not. Stand aside, sir, a while.

Enter an armed sewer, some half dozen in mourning coats following, and pass by with service.

Enter Valentine.

Oni. How now, friend, what are you there? be uncovered. Would you speak with any man here?

Val. I, or else I must have returned you no answer.

Oni. Friend, you are somewhat too peremptory, let's crave your absence; nay,

never scorn it, I am a little your better in this place.

Val. I do acknowledge it.

Oni. Do you acknowledge it? nay, then you shall go forth; I'll teach you how you shall acknowledge it another time; go, void, I must have the hall purged; no setting up of a rest here, pack, begone.

Val. I pray you, sir, is not your name Onion?

Oni. Your friend as you may use him, and master Onion; say on.

Val. Master Onion with a murrain; come, come, put off this lion's hide, your ears have discovered you. Why Peter! do not I know you, Peter?

Oni. Godso, Valentine?

Val. O can you take knowledge of me now, sir?

Oni. Good lord, sirrah, how thou art altered with thy travel!

Val. Nothing so much as thou art with thine office: but sirrah, Onion, is the count Ferneze at home?

[Exit Antony.]

Oni. I, bully, he is above, and the lord Paulo Ferneze his son, and madam Aurelia and madam Phoenixella his daughters; but O Valentine!

Val. How now, man! how dost thou?