

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

A line-by-line translation

Act 1, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter VALENTINE and PROTEUS

VALENTINE

Cease to persuade, my loving Proteus:
Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits.
Were't not affection chains thy tender days
To the sweet glances of thy honour'd love,
5 I rather would entreat thy company
To see the wonders of the world abroad,
Than, living dully sluggardized at home,
Wear out thy youth with shapeless idleness.
But since thou lovest, love still and thrive therein,
10 Even as I would when I to love begin.

PROTEUS

Wilt thou be gone? Sweet Valentine, adieu!
Think on thy Proteus, when thou haply seest
Some rare note-worthy object in thy travel:
Wish me partaker in thy happiness
15 When thou dost meet good hap; and in thy danger,
If ever danger do environ thee,
Commend thy grievance to my holy prayers,
For I will be thy beadsman, Valentine.

VALENTINE

And on a love-book pray for my success?

PROTEUS

20 Upon some book I love I'll pray for thee.

VALENTINE

That's on some shallow story of deep love:
How young Leander cross'd the Hellespont.

PROTEUS

That's a deep story of a deeper love:
For he was more than over shoes in love.

VALENTINE

25 'Tis true; for you are over boots in love,
And yet you never swum the Hellespont.

PROTEUS

Over the boots? Nay, give me not the boots.

VALENTINE

No, I will not, for it boots thee not.

PROTEUS

What?

VALENTINE

30 To be in love, where scorn is bought with groans;
Coy looks with heart-sore sighs; one fading moment's

Shakesclore Translation

VALENTINE and PROTEUS enter.

VALENTINE

Stop trying to convince me, enamored Proteus! Young people who always stay at home are very dull. If love didn't keep you here--chaining you to your beloved's sweet looks--I would ask you to join me, so you can see the wonders of the world abroad. That's better than to live in a dull way, being lazy at home and wasting your youth by doing nothing. But since you're in love, continue to love and let your love grow. I'll do the same when I fall in love.

PROTEUS

Are you going, then? Sweet Valentine, goodbye! Don't forget your Proteus, when you happen upon some special, remarkable object on your travels. Let me be a part of your happiness, when you stumble upon good luck. And when you are in danger--if you ever are surrounded by trouble--direct your unhappiness to me, and I will pray for you, Valentine.

VALENTINE

And will you swear on the [Book of Love](#) that you'll pray for my success?

¹ Shakespeare's phrase "love-book" refers to a type of instruction manual for courtship, common in his day.

PROTEUS

I swear I'll pray for you, on some book I love.

VALENTINE

That book would contain a silly story of deep love; about young [Leander](#) swimming across the Hellespont.

² In Greek myth, Leander swam nightly across the Hellespont to see his lover Hero, but tragically died on one fateful journey.

PROTEUS

That's a deep story of even a deeper love, since he was head over heels in love.

VALENTINE

That's true. You, though, are head over [boots](#) in love, and yet you have never swum to Hellespont.

³ Shakespeare makes a joke of boots being bigger than shoes, to exaggerate the extent of Proteus' love.

PROTEUS

I am head over boots in love? No, don't make fun of me.

VALENTINE

No, I won't, because it doesn't help me in any way.

PROTEUS

What do you mean?

VALENTINE

To be in love means to court rejection with moans; provoke disdainful looks with sorrowful sighs; and exchange one

mirth

35 With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights:
If haply won, perhaps a hapless gain;
If lost, why then a grievous labour won;
However, but a folly bought with wit,
Or else a wit by folly vanquished.

PROTEUS

So, by your circumstance, you call me fool.

VALENTINE

So, by your circumstance, I fear you'll prove.

PROTEUS

40 'Tis love you cavil at: I am not Love.

VALENTINE

Love is your master, for he masters you:
And he that is so yoked by a fool,
Methinks, should not be chronicled for wise.

PROTEUS

45 Yet writers say, as in the sweetest bud
The eating canker dwells, so eating love
Inhabits in the finest wits of all.

VALENTINE

50 And writers say, as the most forward bud
Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,
Even so by love the young and tender wit
Is turn'd to folly, blasting in the bud,
Losing his verdure even in the prime
And all the fair effects of future hopes.
But wherefore waste I time to counsel thee,
That art a votary to fond desire?
55 Once more adieu! My father at the road
Expects my coming, there to see me shipp'd.

PROTEUS

And thither will I bring thee, Valentine.

VALENTINE

60 Sweet Proteus, no; now let us take our leave.
To Milan let me hear from thee by letters
Of thy success in love, and what news else
Betideth here in absence of thy friend;
And likewise will visit thee with mine.

PROTEUS

All happiness bechance to thee in Milan!

VALENTINE

As much to you at home! And so, farewell.

Exit

PROTEUS

65 He after honour hunts, I after love:
He leaves his friends to dignify them more,
I leave myself, my friends and all, for love.
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me,
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,
70 War with good counsel, set the world at nought;
Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.

Enter SPEED

disappearing moment of happiness for twenty wakeful, tired, and exhausted nights. If love is won by luck, perhaps it's an unlucky gain. If love is lost, then it was good for nothing except sadness and toil. No matter the situation, love is merely foolishness bought with wisdom--or otherwise wisdom crushed by foolishness.

PROTEUS


So, judging from this elaborate speech, you're calling me a fool.

VALENTINE

So, judging from your situation, I'm afraid you are a fool.

PROTEUS

You're complain about love. But I am not Love himself.

 The capitalized "Love" in the original text suggests that Proteus refers to Cupid himself, the Roman god of love.

VALENTINE

Love is your master and he has power over you. And I think we should not consider anyone wise who is totally controlled by a fool.

PROTEUS

Yet writers say that the worm survives by feeding off the sweetest bud, destroying the whole plant. So consuming love makes one live in the best sense of them all.

VALENTINE

And writers also say that--as the worm eats the most tender bud before it blooms--so too does love turn young and vulnerable wit into foolishness. With love wearing down the bud, wit loses its green freshness, even in its prime--and along with it all the promise of future hopes. But why am I wasting my time here, advising you--a devoted worshiper to foolish desire? Once more, goodbye! My father expects my arrival at the harbor, where I will board a ship.

PROTEUS

I'll take you there, Valentine.

VALENTINE

No, kind Proteus. Let's say goodbye now. Write me letters when I'm in Milan. Write to me about your success in love, and other news while your friend is gone. And my letters will be similarly full of news.

PROTEUS

I hope only that you'll find only happiness in Milan!

VALENTINE

And I hope you will only have happiness here at home! And so, goodbye.

VALENTINE exits.

PROTEUS

He pursues honor, and I pursue love. He leaves his friends to honor them more. And I abandon myself, my friends, and everything--all for the sake of love. Julia, you have changed me completely. You've made me neglect my studies; waste my time; combat good advice; think nothing of the world; exhaust my wits with wondering; and sicken my heart with thinking!

SPEED enters.

SPEED

Sir Proteus, save you! Saw you my master?

PROTEUS

But now he parted hence, to embark for Milan.

SPEED

75 Twenty to one then he is shipp'd already,
And I have play'd the sheep in losing him.

PROTEUS

Indeed, a sheep doth very often stray,
An if the shepherd be a while away.

SPEED

You conclude that my master is a shepherd, then,
and I a sheep?

PROTEUS

80 I do.

SPEED

Why then, my horns are his horns, whether I wake or
sleep.

PROTEUS

A silly answer and fitting well a sheep.

SPEED

This proves me still a sheep.

PROTEUS

85 True; and thy master a shepherd.

SPEED

Nay, that I can deny by a circumstance.

PROTEUS

It shall go hard but I'll prove it by another.

SPEED

90 The shepherd seeks the sheep, and not the sheep the
shepherd; but I seek my master, and my master seeks
not me: therefore I am no sheep.

PROTEUS

The sheep for fodder follow the shepherd; the
shepherd for food follows not the sheep: thou for
wages followest thy master; thy master for wages
follows not thee: therefore thou art a sheep.

SPEED

95 Such another proof will make me cry 'baa.'

PROTEUS

But, dost thou hear? Gavest thou my letter to Julia?

SPEED

Ay sir: I, a lost mutton, gave your letter to her,
a laced mutton, and she, a laced mutton, gave me, a
lost mutton, nothing for my labour.

PROTEUS

100 Here's too small a pasture for such store of muttons.

SPEED

God save you, Sir Proteus! Have you seen my master
Valentine?

PROTEUS

He just left here, to set off for Milan.

SPEED

I bet twenty to one that he is on board the ship already, and
I have played the sheep ⁵ by losing him.

PROTEUS

Indeed, a sheep wanders very often, if the shepherd is away
for a while.

SPEED

You agree that my master is a shepherd, then? And I am a
sheep?

PROTEUS

I do.

SPEED

Well then, since he owns me, my horns belong to him--
whether I am awake or asleep.

PROTEUS

That's a silly answer, suitable for a sheep.

SPEED

This proves that I am *still* a sheep.

PROTEUS

True, and your master is a shepherd.

SPEED

No, I can deny that with a logical argument.

PROTEUS

Well, it may be a challenge, but I can prove it by another
argument.

SPEED

The shepherd looks for the sheep; the sheep doesn't look
for its shepherd. But I look for my master, and my master
does not look for me. That's why I'm *not* a sheep.

PROTEUS

The sheep will follow the shepherd because the shepherd is
the one who feeds the sheep. The shepherd doesn't follow
the sheep to be fed. You follow your master because he
pays you. Your master does not follow you, because you
don't pay him. That's why you *are* a sheep.

SPEED

Such an explanation makes me want to say "baa."

PROTEUS

But tell me: did you give my letter to Julia?

SPEED

Yes sir. I, a lost sheep, gave your letter to her, a prostitute ⁶
wearing a tightly laced bodice. And she, this prostitute,
gave me, a lost sheep, nothing for my work.

PROTEUS

This field is not big enough for such a great quantity of
sheep.

⁵ Shakespeare puns on the similar sounds of "ship" and "sheep."

⁶ In the original text, Speed uses the word "mutton" to refer to sheep, but also uses it for its slang use, as a term for "prostitute."

SPEED

If the ground be overcharged, you were best stick her.

PROTEUS

Nay: in that you are astray, 'twere best pound you.

SPEED

Nay, sir, less than a pound shall serve me for carrying your letter.

PROTEUS

105 You mistake; I mean the pound,--a pinfold.

SPEED

From a pound to a pin? Fold it over and over, 'Tis threefold too little for carrying a letter to your lover.

PROTEUS

But what said she?

SPEED

110 [First nodding] Ay.

PROTEUS

Nod--Ay--why, that's noddy.

SPEED

You mistook, sir; I say, she did nod: and you ask me if she did nod; and I say, 'Ay.'

PROTEUS

And that set together is noddy.

SPEED

115 Now you have taken the pains to set it together, take it for your pains.

PROTEUS

No, no; you shall have it for bearing the letter.

SPEED

Well, I perceive I must be fain to bear with you.

PROTEUS

Why sir, how do you bear with me?

SPEED

120 Marry, sir, the letter, very orderly; having nothing but the word 'noddy' for my pains.

PROTEUS

Beshrew me, but you have a quick wit.

SPEED

And yet it cannot overtake your slow purse.


PROTEUS


Come come, open the matter in brief: what said she?

SPEED


125 Open your purse, that the money and the matter may be both at once delivered.


SPEED

If the ground is overcrowded, you'd better slaughter  her.


 Speed uses the phrase "stick her" to connote having sex with Julia.


PROTEUS

No, you are wandering  into error there. It would be best if we confined you in a dog pound.

 Proteus uses the word "astray" to point out Speed's overstepping the bounds of decency, and pun on stray (lost) sheep.

SPEED


No, sir. I shall get less than a pound  for delivering your letter.


 Speed's "pound" here references money, though he puns on the meaning of a "pounding" (beating).

PROTEUS

You are mistaken. I mean the pound--an animal pen.

SPEED

From a pound to a pin ? Multiply and fold it over and over, and it's three times too little for carrying a letter to your lover.

 Here, "pin" means an insignificant amount.

PROTEUS


But what did she say?

SPEED

[Nodding] Yes.

PROTEUS

Nodding--yes--well, he's a fool .

 Proteus calls Speed a "noddy" (fool) to pun on his foolish response to an open-ended question by nodding his head.

SPEED

You misunderstood me, sir. I am saying that *she* nodded. And you asked me if she nodded, and I said: "Yes."

PROTEUS

Everything you just said makes you an ever bigger fool.

SPEED

Now that you have taken trouble to put it together, have it as a reward for the trouble you have taken.

PROTEUS

No, no. You will take it for bringing the letter to her.


SPEED


Well, it looks like I must be obliged to put up with you.

PROTEUS

How do you put up with me, sir?

SPEED

Indeed , sir, I'll take the letter very dutifully, since I've gotten nothing in exchange for my efforts besides being called a "fool."

 In the original text, Speed uses the light oath "marry"--derived from the Virgin Mary's name.

PROTEUS

The devil take me, you are quick-witted!

SPEED

And yet my wit cannot be quicker than your hesitation to pay me.

PROTEUS

Come, come: reveal the information. What did she say?

SPEED

Open your purse, so that the money and the information can be delivered both at once.

PROTEUS

Well, sir, here is for your pains. What said she?

SPEED

Truly, sir, I think you'll hardly win her.

PROTEUS

Why, couldst thou perceive so much from her?

SPEED

130 Sir, I could perceive nothing at all from her; no,
not so much as a ducat for delivering your letter:
and being so hard to me that brought your mind, I
fear she'll prove as hard to you in telling your
mind. Give her no token but stones; for she's as
135 hard as steel.

PROTEUS

What said she? Nothing?

SPEED

No, not so much as 'Take this for thy pains.' To
testify your bounty, I thank you, you have testerned
me ; in requital whereof, henceforth carry your
140 letters yourself : and so, sir, I'll commend you to my
master.

PROTEUS

Go, go, be gone, to save your ship from wreck,
Which cannot perish having thee aboard,
Being destined to a drier death on shore.

Exit SPEED

PROTEUS

145 I must go send some better messenger:
I fear my Julia would not deign my lines,
Receiving them from such a worthless post.

Exit

PROTEUS

Well, sir, here is for your trouble. [*He hands over money to SPEED*] What did she say?

SPEED

Really, sir, I think you won't be able to win her that easily.

PROTEUS

How could you understand so much from her?

SPEED

Sir, I received nothing from her at all. No, I did not even get
a gold coin from her for delivering your letter. And since she
was so hard on me--the person who only conveyed your
feelings to her--I am afraid she will be as hard on you when
you tell her about your feelings yourself. Don't give her any
gifts but [jewels](#) ¹³, since she is as hard as steel.

¹³ In the original text, Speed uses the word "stones" as in jewels, and also as a reference to Julia being hard as rock. (The term "stones" is also often used as a slang term for testicles.)

PROTEUS

What did she say? Nothing?

SPEED

No, not as much as "Take this for your troubles." I tip ¹⁴ my
hat to you for your generosity, since you've given me a tip.
And in return for my good word, you should carry your
letters yourself. And so sir, I'll speak well of you to my
master.

¹⁴ In the original text, Speed puns that he'll testify to Proteus' goodness since he "testerned" him--or, gave him a tip of sixpence.

PROTEUS

Go, go! Go away to save your ship from a shipwreck--it can't
sink as long as you're on board, because you're destined to
hang. You'll have a drier death on shore.

SPEED exits.

PROTEUS

I must go and send a better messenger. I am afraid my Julia
won't accept my letter if she receives it from such a
worthless idiot.

PROTEUS exits.

Act 1, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter JULIA and LUCETTA

JULIA

But say, Lucetta, now we are alone,
Wouldst thou then counsel me to fall in love?

LUCETTA

Ay, madam, so you stumble not unheedfully.

JULIA

Of all the fair resort of gentlemen
5 That every day with parle encounter me,
In thy opinion which is worthiest love?

LUCETTA

Please you repeat their names, I'll show my mind
According to my shallow simple skill.

Shakescleare Translation

JULIA and LUCETTA enter.

JULIA

Now that we're alone, tell me, Lucetta: would you advise
me to fall in love?

LUCETTA

Yes, madam. Provided that you won't have sex carelessly.

JULIA

Out of the group of beautiful gentlemen that talk to me
every day, which man do you think deserves my love the
most?

LUCETTA

Could you please repeat their names? I'll reveal what I think
as my shallow, simple skill allows.

JULIA

What think'st thou of the fair Sir Eglamour?

LUCETTA

10 As of a knight well-spoken, neat and fine;
But, were I you, he never should be mine.

JULIA

What think'st thou of the rich Mercatio?

LUCETTA

Well of his wealth; but of himself, so so.

JULIA

What think'st thou of the gentle Proteus?

LUCETTA

15 Lord, Lord! To see what folly reigns in us!

JULIA

How now! What means this passion at his name?

LUCETTA

Pardon, dear madam: 'tis a passing shame
That I, unworthy body as I am,
Should censure thus on lovely gentlemen.

JULIA

20 Why not on Proteus, as of all the rest?

LUCETTA

Then thus: of many good I think him best.

JULIA

Your reason?

LUCETTA

I have no other, but a woman's reason;
I think him so because I think him so.

JULIA

25 And wouldst thou have me cast my love on him?

LUCETTA

Ay, if you thought your love not cast away.

JULIA

Why he, of all the rest, hath never moved me.

LUCETTA

Yet he, of all the rest, I think, best loves ye.

JULIA

His little speaking shows his love but small.

LUCETTA

30 Fire that's closest kept burns most of all.

JULIA

They do not love that do not show their love.

LUCETTA

O, they love least that let men know their love.

JULIA

I would I knew his mind.

JULIA

What do you think of the handsome Sir Eglamour?

LUCETTA

For a knight, he's well-spoken, elegant, and refined. But if I were you, I'd never have him.

JULIA

What do you think of the rich Mercatio?

LUCETTA

I think well of his money. But him? I think he's just so-so.

JULIA

What do you think of the noble Proteus?

LUCETTA

Oh God, oh God! We are ruled by such foolishness.

JULIA

What? Why such an outburst of passion at the sound of his name?

LUCETTA

Excuse me, dear madam. It's very shameful for an unworthy person like myself to pass judgment in this way on lovely gentlemen like him.

JULIA

Why not judge Proteus like we have judged all the others?

LUCETTA

Well, it's like this: I think he is the best one of them all.

JULIA

Why do you think that?

LUCETTA

My reasoning is simply a woman's reasoning. I think he is the best simply because I think he is.

JULIA

And would you have me give my love to him?

LUCETTA

Yes, if you thought your love wouldn't be wasted on him.

JULIA

It's interesting that, out of all of them, he has never wooed me.

LUCETTA

Yet I think that, out of all of them, he loves you the most.

JULIA

He gives very few words on the subject; this shows his love is small.

LUCETTA

Fire that's the closest to us burns the hottest.

JULIA

You can't love if you don't show your love.

LUCETTA

Oh, those who let men know about their love are the ones who love the least.

JULIA

If only I knew what he's thinking.

LUCETTA

Peruse this paper, madam.

JULIA

35 'To Julia.' Say, from whom?

LUCETTA

That the contents will show.

JULIA

Say, say, who gave it thee?

LUCETTA

Valentine's page; and sent, I think, from Proteus.
He would have given it you; but I, being in the way,
40 Did in your name receive it: pardon the
fault I pray.

JULIA

Now, by my modesty, a goodly broker!
Dare you presume to harbour wanton lines?
To whisper and conspire against my youth?
45 Now, trust me, 'tis an office of great worth
And you an officer fit for the place.
Or else return no more into my sight.

LUCETTA

To plead for love deserves more fee than hate.

JULIA

Will ye be gone?

LUCETTA

50 That you may ruminate.

Exit

JULIA

And yet I would I had o'erlooked the letter:
It were a shame to call her back again
And pray her to a fault for which I chid her.
55 What a fool is she, that knows I am a maid,
And would not force the letter to my view!
Since maids, in modesty, say 'no' to that
Which they would have the profferer construe 'ay.'
Fie, fie, how wayward is this foolish love
60 That, like a testy babe, will scratch the nurse
And presently all humbled kiss the rod!
How churlishly I chid Lucetta hence,
When willingly I would have had her here!
How angerly I taught my brow to frown,
65 When inward joy enforced my heart to smile!
My penance is to call Lucetta back
And ask remission for my folly past.
What ho! Lucetta!

Re-enter LUCETTA

LUCETTA

What would your ladyship?

JULIA

70 Is't near dinner-time?

LUCETTA

I would it were,
That you might kill your stomach on your meat
And not upon your maid.

JULIA

What is't that you took up so gingerly?

LUCETTA

Read this paper here, madam.

JULIA

It says "To Julia." Tell me, who is this from?

LUCETTA

The contents of the letter will reveal that.

JULIA

Tell me, tell me, who gave it to you?

LUCETTA

Valentine's servant. And I think it was sent from Proteus. He would have given it to you himself. But since I happened to meet him, I took the letter on your behalf. I am sorry if I did the wrong thing.

JULIA

I swear by my modesty that you're a good intermediary! Do you dare to presume to hang onto this passionate letter? To whisper and conspire against my young age? Now, trust me, it's a powerful position, and you should be up for the challenge. If not, then don't come to me again.

LUCETTA

To ask for love deserves a greater reward than to ask for hate.

JULIA

Will you leave?

LUCETTA

Yes, to give you some time to think about it.

LUCETTA exits.

JULIA

And yet, I wish I had read that letter! It would be a shame to call her back again, and beg her to carry out the mistake that I just scolded her for doing. She is such a fool! She knows that I am a young girl, and still she would not force me to read the letter! Young modest women say "no" when they want the hearer to understand they mean "yes." Ugh! This foolish love is so unreasonable that--like an irritable child--it will scratch its nurse and then immediately be obedient! How roughly have I treated Lucetta there, when I would have wanted to have her here! How angrily I made myself frown, when an inside joy has made my heart smile! I can only call Lucetta back to make up for it and to ask for her forgiveness for my recent foolishness.

[To LUCETTA] Hello, Lucetta!

LUCETTA re-enters.

LUCETTA


What would you like, your Ladyship?

JULIA

Is it almost time for dinner?

LUCETTA

I wish it would be! That way, you could satisfy your appetite tearing into your meat, instead of tearing into your servant.

 In the original text, Lucetta puns on the double-meaning of "stomach" as both "hunger" and "temper," "anger."

JULIA

What did you just pick up so carefully?

LUCETTA
75 Nothing.

JULIA
Why didst thou stoop, then?

LUCETTA
To take a paper up that I let fall.

JULIA
And is that paper nothing?

LUCETTA
Nothing concerning me.

JULIA
80 Then let it lie for those that it concerns.

LUCETTA
Madam, it will not lie where it concerns
Unless it have a false interpreter.

JULIA
Some love of yours hath writ to you in rhyme.

LUCETTA
That I might sing it, madam, to a tune.
85 Give me a note: your ladyship can set.

JULIA
As little by such toys as may be possible.
Best sing it to the tune of 'Light o' love.'

LUCETTA
It is too heavy for so light a tune.

JULIA
Heavy! Belike it hath some burden then?

LUCETTA
90 Ay, and melodious were it, would you sing it.

JULIA
And why not you?

LUCETTA
I cannot reach so high.

JULIA
Let's see your song. How now, minion!

LUCETTA
Keep tune there still, so you will sing it out:
95 And yet methinks I do not like this tune.

JULIA
You do not?

LUCETTA
No, madam; it is too sharp.

JULIA
You, minion, are too saucy.

LUCETTA
Nay, now you are too flat
100 And mar the concord with too harsh a descant:
There wanteth but a mean to fill your song.

LUCETTA
Nothing.

JULIA
Why did you stoop down, then?

LUCETTA
To pick up a paper that I dropped.

JULIA
And that paper is nothing?


LUCETTA
Nothing that concerns me.

JULIA
Let it lie there for the people it's meant for.

LUCETTA
Madam, I won't let it lie here, in case someone who it's not
meant for intercepts the letter.

JULIA
Some lover of yours has written you a love poem.

LUCETTA
So I may sing it to a melody, madam. Give me a starting
note, your Ladyship, so this letter can be set to music.


JULIA
I will indulge you in your joking as little as possible. You'd
better sing it to the melody of "[Light o' love](#) .

LUCETTA
Its content is too serious for such a light melody.

JULIA
Serious! Maybe it carries a heavy burden, then?

LUCETTA
Yes. And if it were melodious, you'd sing it.

JULIA
And why wouldn't you?

LUCETTA
I cannot sing at such a [high pitch](#) .



JULIA
Let me see your song! Come on, you minx!


LUCETTA
Keep the melody going so you can finish the song. Although
I don't like this melody.


JULIA
You don't?


LUCETTA
No, madam. It's too sharp.

JULIA
You are too bold, minx.

LUCETTA
No, you are too blunt  and spoil the harmony with a
variation that's too harsh. Your song should be filled with a
sweet-sounding [tenor](#) .

 "[Light o' love](#)" was a popular tune in Shakespeare's time.

 Shakespeare puns on the word "high" to also refer to someone of Proteus' elevated social status.

 Shakespeare uses two meanings of "flat": a poor singing voice, and blunt in speech.

⁵ Shakespeare's use of "a mean" stands for "middle point" or "tenor"--a musical range for a male voice, such as Proteus'.

⁶ "Unruly bass" is a pun on "base" ("unworthy" or "low," possibly a comment on Lucetta's low social rank), which also refers to Lucetta's untrained impression of a low-range male singer.

⁷ In the original text, Julia suggests that she should be the only one who deserves to touch Proteus' letter.

⁸ The word "wasps" here is a metaphor that refers to Julia's fingers.

⁹ Julia folds the paper here so that her name is lies on top of Proteus' name.

JULIA

The mean is drown'd with your unruly bass.

LUCETTA

Indeed, I bid the base for Proteus.

JULIA

105 This babble shall not henceforth trouble me.
Here is a coil with protestation!

Tears the letter

JULIA

Go get you gone, and let the papers lie:
You would be fingering them, to anger me.

LUCETTA

She makes it strange; but she would be best pleased
To be so anger'd with another letter.

Exit

JULIA

110 Nay, would I were so anger'd with the same!
O hateful hands, to tear such loving words!
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey
And kill the bees that yield it with your stings!
I'll kiss each several paper for amends.
115 Look, here is writ 'kind Julia.' Unkind Julia!
As in revenge of thy ingratitude,
I throw thy name against the bruising stones,
Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.
And here is writ 'love-wounded Proteus.'
120 Poor wounded name! My bosom as a bed
Shall lodge thee till thy wound be thoroughly heal'd;
And thus I search it with a sovereign kiss.
But twice or thrice was 'Proteus' written down.
Be calm, good wind, blow not a word away
125 Till I have found each letter in the letter,
Except mine own name: that some whirlwind bear
Unto a ragged fearful-hanging rock
And throw it thence into the raging sea!
Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ,
130 'Poor forlorn Proteus, passionate Proteus,
To the sweet Julia:' that I'll tear away.
And yet I will not, sith so prettily
He couples it to his complaining names.
Thus will I fold them one on another:
135 Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

Re-enter LUCETTA

LUCETTA

Madam,
Dinner is ready, and your father stays.

JULIA

Well, let us go.

LUCETTA

What, shall these papers lie like tell-tales here?

JULIA

The middle point is drowned out by your uncontrolled bass voice ⁶.

LUCETTA

Yes, I am pretending to sing the male part as Proteus would.

JULIA

I won't let this nonsense trouble me anymore. I'll make a fuss with this declaration of love!

JULIA tears the letter into pieces.

JULIA

Leave me, and let the papers lie there. You would fiddle ⁷ with picking up all the pieces, just to make me angry.

LUCETTA

She pretends she doesn't care. But she would feel so happy to get angry over another letter.

LUCETTA exits.

JULIA

Ah, I wish I actually felt angry about the letter! Oh, hateful hands, you tore up such loving words! Harmful wasps ⁸, to feed on such sweet honey and use your sting to kill the bees that give it up! I'll kiss each scrap of the torn-up paper to make up for it. Look, here "kind Julia" is written. Cruel Julia! As if in revenge for your ungratefulness, I throw your name down on these harmful stones. And I trample scornfully all over your disdain. And here "love-wounded Proteus" is written. Poor, wounded name! I shall keep the scrap of paper with your name on it near my heart, and so place a healing kiss on it. Two or three times "Proteus" is written down. Be calm, good wind, don't blow away a word of this, until I have found each letter in this letter. Except for my own name: you can carry that off in a whirlwind to a rugged scary cliff, and throw it from there into the raging sea! Look, here in one line his name is written twice. "Poor, helpless Proteus, passionate Proteus, to the sweet Julia." I will tear that away. No wait, I won't, since he links my name so nicely to his lamenting name. So, I will fold them ⁹ on one another. Now kiss, embrace, grapple, and do what you want.

LUCETTA re-enters.

LUCETTA

Madam: dinner is ready and your father is waiting.

JULIA

Well, let's go.

LUCETTA

What? Will these papers just lie here then? Like sources of gossip?

JULIA

140 If you respect them, best to take them up.

LUCETTANay, I was taken up for laying them down:
Yet here they shall not lie, for catching cold.**JULIA**

I see you have a month's mind to them.

LUCETTA145 Ay, madam, you may say what sights you see;
I see things too, although you judge I wink.**JULIA**

Come, come; will't please you go?

*Exeunt***JULIA**

If you value them, you should pick them up.

LUCETTANo, I was told off for dropping them. Yet they shouldn't lie
here, or they'll catch a cold.**JULIA**

I see you like them.

LUCETTAYes, madam, you can call it like you see it. I also see things,
although I pretend that my eyes are closed.**JULIA**

Come, come. Will you please go?

LUCETTA and JULIA exit.

Act 1, Scene 3

Shakespeare

*Enter ANTONIO and PANTHINO***ANTONIO**Tell me, Panthino, what sad talk was that
Wherewith my brother held you in the cloister?**PANTHINO**

'Twas of his nephew Proteus, your son.

ANTONIO

Why, what of him?

PANTHINO

5 He wonder'd that your lordship
Would suffer him to spend his youth at home,
While other men, of slender reputation,
Put forth their sons to seek preferment out:
Some to the wars, to try their fortune there;
10 Some to discover islands far away;
Some to the studious universities.
For any or for all these exercises,
He said that Proteus your son was meet,
And did request me to importune you
15 To let him spend his time no more at home,
Which would be great impeachment to his age,
In having known no travel in his youth.

ANTONIO

Nor need'st thou much importune me to that
Whereon this month I have been hammering.
20 I have consider'd well his loss of time
And how he cannot be a perfect man,
Not being tried and tutor'd in the world:
Experience is by industry achieved
And perfected by the swift course of time.
25 Then tell me, whither were I best to send him?

PANTHINOI think your lordship is not ignorant
How his companion, youthful Valentine,
Attends the emperor in his royal court.**ANTONIO**

I know it well.

Shakescleare Translation

*ANTONIO and PANTHINO enter.***ANTONIO**Tell me, Panthino: what were you talking about so seriously
with my brother in the cloister?**PANTHINO**

It was about his nephew Proteus--your son.

ANTONIO

What about him?

PANTHINO

He was wondering why you had him spend his young days
at home while other men--of less significant status--send
their sons into the world. Some go to the wars, to try their
luck there; some go to discover islands far away; some go to
study at universities. He said that Proteus is fit for any and
all of these tasks, and he asked me to urge you to not have
him spend any more time at home. That would be a great
discredit to him when he's older, since he wouldn't have
traveled in his younger days.

ANTONIO

And you don't need to urge me to do what I've already been
thinking about doing all month. I have considered how he's
losing time, and how he can't be a fully-experienced man if
he isn't tested and tutored abroad. Experience is achieved
by activity, and perfected by the quick passing of time. So,
where do you think I should send him?

PANTHINOI think your Lordship is aware that Proteus' friend--the
young Valentine--is waiting on the Duke of Milan in his royal
court.**ANTONIO**

I know about that.

PANTHINO

30 'Twere good, I think, your lordship sent him thither:
There shall he practise tilts and tournaments,
Hear sweet discourse, converse with noblemen,
And be in eye of every exercise
Worthy his youth and nobleness of birth.

ANTONIO

35 I like thy counsel; well hast thou advised:
And that thou mayst perceive how well I like it,
The execution of it shall make known.
Even with the speediest expedition
I will dispatch him to the emperor's court.

PANTHINO

40 To-morrow, may it please you, Don Alphonso,
With other gentlemen of good esteem,
Are journeying to salute the emperor
And to commend their service to his will.

ANTONIO

45 Good company; with them shall Proteus go:
And, in good time! Now will we break with him.

Enter PROTEUS

PROTEUS

Sweet love! Sweet lines! Sweet life!
Here is her hand, the agent of her heart;
Here is her oath for love, her honour's pawn.
O, that our fathers would applaud our loves,
50 To seal our happiness with their consents!
O heavenly Julia!

ANTONIO

How now! What letter are you reading there?

PROTEUS

55 May't please your lordship, 'tis a word or two
Of commendations sent from Valentine,
Deliver'd by a friend that came from him.

ANTONIO

Lend me the letter; let me see what news.

PROTEUS

60 There is no news, my lord, but that he writes
How happily he lives, how well beloved
And daily graced by the emperor;
Wishing me with him, partner of his fortune.

ANTONIO

And how stand you affected to his wish?

PROTEUS

As one relying on your lordship's will
And not depending on his friendly wish.

ANTONIO

65 My will is something sorted with his wish.
Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed;
For what I will, I will, and there an end.
I am resolved that thou shalt spend some time
With Valentinus in the emperor's court:
What maintenance he from his friends receives,
70 Like exhibition thou shalt have from me.
To-morrow be in readiness to go:
Excuse it not, for I am peremptory.

PROTEUS

My lord, I cannot be so soon provided:
Please you, deliberate a day or two.

PANTHINO

I think it would be good to send him there, your Lordship.
There, he can take part in jousts and tournaments; hear
elegant conversation; and speak with noblemen. And he
can see for himself every task worthy of his youth and noble
social status.

ANTONIO

I like your advice; you have given a good recommendation.
And you can see just how much I liked your counsel; I will
make it happen. I will send him to the emperor's court with
the fastest haste.

PANTHINO

Don Alphonso, let him go tomorrow, if you like. He can go
with other respected gentlemen who are already planning
to travel there in order to pay their respects to the emperor,
and to commit their services to him.

ANTONIO

Good company! Proteus will go with them. And just at the
right moment! I will tell him now.

PROTEUS enters.

PROTEUS

Sweet love! Sweet lines! Sweet life! Here is her handwriting--
her heart's representative. Here is her promise of love--her
honor's pledge. Oh, I hope that our fathers will be happy
with our love, and accept our happiness by approving our
relationship. Oh, heavenly Julia!

ANTONIO

What's all this? What letter are you reading?

PROTEUS

If it's all right with your Lordship, it's a word or two of
greeting sent from Valentine, delivered by one of his friends
who came from him.

ANTONIO

Give me the letter. Let me see what news it brings.

PROTEUS

There is no news, my lord! He only writes how happily he
lives in Milan; how he is well-loved; and how the emperor
shows Valentine his favor every day. He wishes I were there
with him, to share in his good fortune.

ANTONIO

And what do you think of his wish?

PROTEUS

I rely on what you tell me to do, your Lordship. I don't
depend upon his friendly wish.

ANTONIO

My wish is somewhat in agreement with his wish. Don't
wonder why I decided so suddenly. Because I will have
what I want--and that's that. I have decided that you will
spend some time with Valentine in the emperor's court. I'll
give you the same amount of money that he gets
for allowance from his relatives. Be ready to go tomorrow.
Make no excuses, because it's already decided.

PROTEUS

My lord, I can't be ready that soon. Please, let me have a
day or two more.

ANTONIO

75 Look, what thou want'st shall be sent after thee:
No more of stay! To-morrow thou must go.
Come on, Panthino: you shall be employ'd
To hasten on his expedition.

Exeunt ANTONIO and PANTHINO

PROTEUS

80 Thus have I shunn'd the fire for fear of burning,
And drench'd me in the sea, where I am drown'd.
I fear'd to show my father Julia's letter,
Lest he should take exceptions to my love;
And with the vantage of mine own excuse
Hath he excepted most against my love.
85 O, how this spring of love resembleth
The uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away!

Re-enter PANTHINO

PANTHINO

90 Sir Proteus, your father calls for you:
He is in haste; therefore, I pray you to go.

PROTEUS

Why, this it is: my heart accords thereto,
And yet a thousand times it answers 'no.'

Exeunt

ANTONIO

Look, anything you're missing will be sent to you after you go. No further talk of lingering around here! You must go tomorrow.

[To PANTHINO] Come on, Panthino. You will make sure that this expedition is hastened.

ANTONIO and PANTHINO exit.

PROTEUS

And so I have avoided the fire, because I was afraid I'd burn. And I avoided being drenched in the sea, where I would drown. I was scared to show Julia's letter to my father because he would have made objections to my love. And with the benefit of my own excuse about Valentine sending me this letter, my father has caused the greatest obstacle to my love. Oh, how similar is this spring of love to the uncertain weather of a beautiful April day! Days in April can be gloriously sunny--until a cloud comes along to take all of that beauty away.

PANTHINO re-enters.

PANTHINO

Sir Proteus, your father is calling for you. He is in a hurry, so please go now.

PROTEUS

This is it! My heart agrees to the journey, and yet it answers "no" a thousand times over.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter VALENTINE and SPEED

SPEED

Sir, your glove.

VALENTINE

Not mine; my gloves are on.

SPEED

Why, then, this may be yours, for this is but one.

VALENTINE

5 Ha! Let me see: ay, give it me, it's mine:
Sweet ornament that decks a thing divine!
Ah, Silvia, Silvia!

SPEED

Madam Silvia! Madam Silvia!

VALENTINE

How now, sirrah?

SPEED

She is not within hearing, sir.

Shakesclore Translation


VALENTINE and SPEED enter.

SPEED

Sir, your glove.

VALENTINE

That's not mine. My gloves are on .

 Shakespeare puns on the way "on" and "one" were pronounced similarly in his day.

SPEED

Well, then, this one may be yours--because this is only one.


VALENTINE


Ha! Let me see! Yes, give it to me. It's mine. Sweet item of clothing that adorns a heavenly thing! Ah, Silvia, Silvia!

SPEED

Madam Silvia! Madam Silvia!

VALENTINE

What's that, sir .

 In the original text, Valentine uses the word "sirrah"--a familiar derivation of "sir" often used to address men of lower social rank.

SPEED

She's not within earshot, sir.

VALENTINE

10 Why, sir, who bade you call her?

SPEED

Your worship, sir; or else I mistook.

VALENTINE

Well, you'll still be too forward.

SPEED

And yet I was last chidden for being too slow.

VALENTINE

Go to, sir: tell me, do you know Madam Silvia?

SPEED

15 She that your worship loves?

VALENTINE

Why, how know you that I am in love?

SPEED

Marry, by these special marks: first, you have learned, like Sir Proteus, to wreath your arms, like a malecontent; to relish a love-song, like a robin-redbreast; to walk alone, like one that had the pestilence; to sigh, like a school-boy that had lost his A B C; to weep, like a young wench that had buried her grandam; to fast, like one that takes diet; to watch like one that fears robbing; to speak puling, like a beggar at Hallowmas. You were wont, when you laughed, to crow like a cock; when you walked, to walk like one of the lions; when you fasted, it was presently after dinner; when you looked sadly, it was for want of money: and now you are metamorphosed with a mistress, that, when I look on you, I can hardly think you my master .

20

25

30

VALENTINE

Are all these things perceived in me?

SPEED

They are all perceived without ye.

VALENTINE

Without me? They cannot.

SPEED

35 Without you? Nay, that's certain, for, without you were so simple, none else would: but you are so without these follies, that these follies are within you and shine through you like the water in an urinal, that not an eye that sees you but is a physician to comment on your malady.

40

VALENTINE

But tell me, dost thou know my lady Silvia?

SPEED

She that you gaze on so as she sits at supper?

VALENTINE

Hast thou observed that? Even she, I mean.

SPEED

Why, sir, I know her not.

VALENTINE

45 Dost thou know her by my gazing on her, and yet knowest her not?

VALENTINE

Who asked you to call her, sir?

SPEED

Your Worship, sir. Or else I misunderstood you.

VALENTINE

Well, you'll always be too hasty.

SPEED

And yet, last time I was told off for being too slow.

VALENTINE

Oh, that's enough, sir! Tell me, do you know Madam Silvia?

SPEED

Is that the lady whom your Worship loves?

VALENTINE

Oh, but how do you know that I'm in love?

SPEED

By these particular signs: first, you have learned--like Sir Proteus--to fold your arms like a discontented person; to enjoy a love song, like a robin; to walk alone, like someone that has the plague; to sigh, like a school boy that has forgotten the alphabet; to cry, like a young girl that buried her grandmother; to fast, like someone on a diet; to remain awake, as if worried about being robbed; to whine like a beggar on All Saints' Day. Before you fell in love, when you laughed, you crowed like a rooster; when you walked, you walked like a lion; and when you didn't eat, it was because you'd just finished your dinner; when you looked sad, it was because you didn't have money. And now you've changed so much because of your mistress, that, when I look at you, I can hardly think that you are my master.

VALENTINE

Can you spot all these changes in me?

SPEED

They are easy to see all around you.

VALENTINE

They're visible all around me? They can't be.

SPEED

All around you? Yes, for sure, because if you could simply hide the signs of love, nobody would perceive them. But you are so madly in love, inside and out, that all of the symptoms of love shine through you like urine in a doctor's test cup, and anyone who just looks at you can diagnose your illness as if they were a physician.

VALENTINE

Tell me, though: do you know my lady Silvia?

SPEED

Is she the one that you stare at when she is having dinner?

VALENTINE

Have you noticed that? I mean, yes, that's her.

SPEED

Well, sir, I don't know her.

VALENTINE

So, you know her by my staring at her--and yet you don't know her?

SPEED

Is she not hard-favoured, sir?

VALENTINE

Not so fair, boy, as well-favoured.

SPEED

Sir, I know that well enough.

VALENTINE

50 What dost thou know?

SPEED

That she is not so fair as, of you, well-favoured.

VALENTINE

I mean that her beauty is exquisite, but her favour infinite.

SPEED

55 That's because the one is painted and the other out of all count.

VALENTINE

How painted? And how out of count?

SPEED

Marry, sir, so painted, to make her fair, that no man counts of her beauty.

VALENTINE

How esteemest thou me? I account of her beauty.

SPEED

60 You never saw her since she was deformed.

VALENTINE

How long hath she been deformed?

SPEED

Ever since you loved her.

VALENTINE

I have loved her ever since I saw her; and still I see her beautiful.

SPEED

65 If you love her, you cannot see her.

VALENTINE

Why?

SPEED

70 Because Love is blind. O, that you had mine eyes; or your own eyes had the lights they were wont to have when you chid at Sir Proteus for going ungartered!

VALENTINE

What should I see then?

SPEED

Isn't she ugly, sir?

VALENTINE

Not so beautiful, boy, as she is attractive.

SPEED

Sir, I know that.

VALENTINE

What do you know?

SPEED

That she isn't so much beautiful as preferred by you.

S Speed puns on Valentine's prior use of the term "well-favored" (as in, attractive). He means that she's not so much "well-favored" (attractive) as she is "favored well" (preferred) by Valentine.

VALENTINE

I mean that her beauty is rare, but her charm is never-ending.

SPEED

That's because the one is artificial, and the other is beyond calculation.

A In the original text, Speed refers to Silvia's beauty as "painted"—claiming she uses makeup to enhance her looks.

VALENTINE

What do you mean, "artificial?" And how is it "beyond calculation?"

SPEED

Well, sir, she's so artificial, to make herself beautiful, that no man values her beauty.

VALENTINE

Do you think nothing of my judgment, then? I value her beauty.

SPEED

You haven't seen her since she was disfigured.

VALENTINE

How long has she been disfigured?

SPEED

Ever since you fell in love with her.

VALENTINE

I have loved her ever since I saw her. And she is still beautiful in my eyes.

SPEED

You can't see her if you love her.

VALENTINE

Why?

SPEED

Because Love is blind. Oh, if only you had my eyes! Or if your own eyes had the clear-sighted ability they used to have when you told Sir Proteus off for being disheveled!

S Since Cupid is often portrayed as blind, Shakespeare refers to Cupid ("Love" with a capital "L") literally here—and to the idea that people in love are blinded by emotion.

VALENTINE

What would I see then?

SPEED

75 Your own present folly and her passing deformity:
for he, being in love, could not see to garter his
hose, and you, being in love, cannot see to put on your
hose.

VALENTINE

Belike, boy, then, you are in love; for last
morning you could not see to wipe my shoes.

SPEED

80 T rue, sir; I was in love with my bed: I thank you,
you swung me for my love, which makes me the
bolder to chide you for yours.

VALENTINE

In conclusion, I stand affected to her.

SPEED

I would you were set, so your affection would cease.

VALENTINE

Last night she enjoined me to write some lines to
one she loves.

SPEED

85 And have you?

VALENTINE

I have.

SPEED

Are they not lamely writ?

VALENTINE

No, boy, but as well as I can do them. Peace!
Here she comes.

SPEED

90 *[Aside]* O excellent motion! O exceeding puppet!
Now will he interpret to her.

Enter SILVIA

VALENTINE

Madam and mistress, a thousand good-morrrows.

SPEED

95 *[Aside]* O, give ye good even! Here's a million of
manners.

SILVIA

Sir Valentine and servant, to you two thousand.

SPEED

[Aside] He should give her interest and she gives it
him.

VALENTINE

100 As you enjoin'd me, I have writ your letter
Unto the secret nameless friend of yours;
Which I was much unwilling to proceed in
But for my duty to your ladyship.

SILVIA

I thank you gentle servant: 'tis very clerkly done.

SPEED

Your own foolishness and her extreme deformity. Because
Proteus--who is in love--at least made himself presentable
by putting on his pants properly. And you--also blindly in
love--can't even do that.

VALENTINE

In that case, boy, you are in love. Because yesterday
morning, you couldn't see well enough to clean my shoes.

SPEED

That's true, sir. I was in love with my bed. Thank you for
beating me for my love. It makes me braver to tell you off
for yours.

VALENTINE

To sum it up, I am in love with her.

SPEED

I wish you were calm, so that your affection would stop.

VALENTINE

Last night she told me to write some lines to someone she
loves.

SPEED

And have you?

VALENTINE

I have.

SPEED

Are they not written badly?

VALENTINE

No, boy, I wrote them as well as I could. Be quiet! Here she
is.

SPEED

[To himself] Oh, that's a great puppet-show! Oh, that's a
great puppet! Now he will provide the words for the
puppet.

SILVIA enters.

VALENTINE

Madam, beloved, I wish you a thousand good mornings.


SPEED

[To himself] Oh, good grief! This is a very excessive display
of manners.

SILVIA

Sir Valentine, lover, I wish you two thousand.

SPEED

[To himself] He should show his interest in her, but she pays
him interest  instead by offering him twice as many good
mornings.

 Speed puns on Silvia's romantic
interest, as well as the monetary
meaning of "interest," since she's
increased the number of "good
mornings."

VALENTINE

As you have instructed, I have written your letter to your
secret, unnamed lover. I didn't want to do it, but I did it
because of my duty to you.

SILVIA

Thank you, kind servant. You've done it very scholarly.

VALENTINE

105 Now trust me, madam, it came hardly off;
For being ignorant to whom it goes
I writ at random, very doubtfully.

SILVIA

Perchance you think too much of so much pains?

VALENTINE

No, madam; so it stead you, I will write
Please you command, a thousand times as much; And yet--

SILVIA

110 A pretty period! Well, I guess the sequel;
And yet I will not name it; and yet I care not;
And yet take this again; and yet I thank you,
Meaning henceforth to trouble you no more.

SPEED

[Aside] And yet you will; and yet another 'yet.'

VALENTINE

115 What means your ladyship? Do you not like it?

SILVIA

Yes, yes; the lines are very quaintly writ;
But since unwillingly, take them again.
Nay, take them.

VALENTINE

Madam, they are for you.

SILVIA

120 Ay, ay: you writ them, sir, at my request;
But I will none of them; they are for you;
I would have had them writ more movingly.

VALENTINE

Please you, I'll write your ladyship another.

SILVIA

125 And when it's writ, for my sake read it over,
And if it please you, so; if not, why, so.

VALENTINE

If it please me, madam, what then?

SILVIA

Why, if it please you, take it for your labour:
And so, good morrow, servant.

Exit

SPEED

130 O jest unseen, inscrutable, invisible,
As a nose on a man's face, or a weathercock on a
steep! My master sues to her, and she hath
taught her suitor,
135 He being her pupil, to become her tutor.
O excellent device! Was there ever heard a better,
That my master, being scribe, to himself should write
the letter?

VALENTINE

How now, sir? What are you reasoning with yourself?

SPEED

140 Nay, I was rhyming: 'tis you that have the reason.

VALENTINE

To do what?

VALENTINE

Trust me, madam, it was difficult to do. Since I didn't know
who it was meant for, I wrote randomly and with much
hesitation.

SILVIA

Perhaps you think it's not worth making so much effort?

VALENTINE

No, madam. As long as it is helpful to you, I will write. Order
me to write a thousand times as much. And yet--

SILVIA

A clever pause! Well, I guess what follows. And yet I won't
say it. And yet I don't care. And yet take this again. And yet I
thank you. I don't mean to trouble you any longer.

SPEED

[To himself] And yet you will. And yet another "yet."

VALENTINE

What do you mean, your Ladyship? Don't you like the letter?

SILVIA

Yes, yes, the lines are written very skillfully. But since they
are written unwillingly, take them back. No, take them.

VALENTINE

They are for you, madam.

SILVIA

Yes, yes, you wrote them, sir, because I asked you to. But I
don't want them. They are for you. I would have had them
written with more emotion.

VALENTINE

If you'd like, I can write your Ladyship another one.

SILVIA

And when it's written, read it over for my sake. And if you're
happy with it, so be it; if not, well, so be it.

VALENTINE

Madam, if I'm happy with it, then what?

SILVIA

Well, if you're happy with it, take it as a payment for your
efforts. And so, good day, servant.

SILVIA exits.

SPEED

Oh, an unseen, mysterious, invisible joke! It's like the nose
on your face; or a weathervane on top of a spire! My master
courts her, and she taught her suitor. He is her student in
order to become her teacher. Oh, that's a genius scheme!
Has anyone heard of a better one, than that my master--
who is the writer-- should write the letter to himself?

VALENTINE

What's that, sir? What is it you're talking to yourself about?

SPEED

No, I was rhyming. You are the one who has a reason.

VALENTINE

To do what?

SPEED

To be a spokesman for Madam Silvia.

VALENTINE

To whom?

SPEED

To yourself: why, she woos you by a figure.

VALENTINE

145 What figure?

SPEED

By a letter, I should say.

VALENTINE

Why, she hath not writ to me?

SPEED

What need she, when she hath made you write to yourself? Why, do you not perceive the jest?

VALENTINE

150 No, believe me.

SPEED

No believing you, indeed, sir. But did you perceive her earnest?

VALENTINE

She gave me none, except an angry word.

SPEED

Why, she hath given you a letter.

VALENTINE

155 That's the letter I writ to her friend.

SPEED

And that letter hath she delivered, and there an end.

VALENTINE

I would it were no worse.

SPEED

I'll warrant you, 'tis as well:

160 For often have you writ to her, and she, in modesty,
Or else for want of idle time, could not again reply;
Or fearing else some messenger that might her mind
discover,
Herself hath taught her love himself to write unto her
lover.

165 All this I speak in print, for in print I found it.
Why muse you, sir? 'Tis dinner-time.

VALENTINE

I have dined.

SPEED

170 Ay, but hearken, sir; though the chameleon Love can
feed on the air, I am one that am nourished by my
victuals, and would fain have meat. O, be not like
your mistress; be moved, be moved.

Exeunt

SPEED

To speak for Madam Silvia.

VALENTINE

To whom?

SPEED

To yourself! She courts you by an ingenious device.

VALENTINE

What device?

SPEED

The letter!

VALENTINE

But she didn't write it to me.

SPEED

Why would she need to, when she has already made you write it to yourself? Don't you get the joke?

VALENTINE

No, believe me.

SPEED

I don't believe it, that's for sure, sir. But did you really think she was serious?

VALENTINE

She gave me nothing except for an angry word.

SPEED

She gave you a letter.

VALENTINE

That's the letter I wrote for her lover.

SPEED

And she has delivered the letter. And there's the end to the matter.

VALENTINE

I wish it weren't so bad.

SPEED

I assure you, it's all good. You have written to her a lot, and she couldn't reply because of her modesty, or because she doesn't have enough down-time. Or she was afraid that some messenger might find out what she thinks. So she has taught her love to write a letter to her lover. I am speaking very precisely about all of this--exactly as I see it. Why are you lost in thought, sir? It's time for dinner.

VALENTINE

I've already dined on beauty.

SPEED

Yes, but listen, sir. Although Love is changeable like the chameleon, and can feed on air, I can only feed on food and would like to have meat. Oh, don't be like your mistress. Be persuaded, be persuaded.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter PROTEUS and JULIA

PROTEUS

Have patience, gentle Julia.

JULIA

I must, where is no remedy.

PROTEUS

When possibly I can, I will return.

JULIA

If you turn not, you will return the sooner.
5 Keep this remembrance for thy Julia's sake.

Giving a ring

PROTEUS

Why then, we'll make exchange; here, take you this.

JULIA

And seal the bargain with a holy kiss.

PROTEUS

Here is my hand for my true constancy;
10 And when that hour o'erslips me in the day
Wherein I sigh not, Julia, for thy sake,
The next ensuing hour some foul mischance
Torment me for my love's forgetfulness!
My father stays my coming; answer not;
15 The tide is now: nay, not thy tide of tears;
That tide will stay me longer than I should.
Julia, farewell!

Exit JULIA

PROTEUS

What, gone without a word?
Ay, so true love should do: it cannot speak;
20 For truth hath better deeds than words to grace it.

Enter PANTHINO

PANTHINO

Sir Proteus, you are stay'd for.

PROTEUS

Go; I come, I come.
Alas! This parting strikes poor lovers dumb.

Exeunt

Shakescleare Translation

PROTEUS and JULIA enter.

PROTEUS

Be patient, dear Julia.

JULIA

I have to be patient. There's no way to fix this.

PROTEUS

I will return as soon as I can.

JULIA

If you stay faithful, you will return sooner. Keep this love
token, for the sake of your Julia.

JULIA gives PROTEUS a ring.

PROTEUS

Well then, we'll make an exchange. Here, you take this. [*He
gives her a ring*]

JULIA

And seal the contract with a holy kiss. [*They kiss*]

PROTEUS

Here is my hand swearing true fidelity. And if it should ever
happen that I won't swoon with love for you, Julia, then the
next hour some horrible misfortune will torture me--
because I have forgotten my love! My father is waiting for
me to go. Don't say anything. The best tide for sailing is
ready now; no, not your tide of tears. That tide will make
me stay longer than I should. Julia, goodbye!

JULIA exits.

PROTEUS

Is she gone without saying anything? Yes, true love should
do just that. True love can't speak; besides, actions speak
the truth louder than words.

PANTHINO enters.

PANTHINO

Sir Proteus, they are waiting for you.

PROTEUS

Go. I'm coming, I'm coming. Ah! Goodbyes like this can
make poor lovers speechless.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 3

Shakespeare

Enter LANCE, leading a dog

Shakescleare Translation

LANCE enters, leading a dog.

LANCE

Nay, 'twill be this hour ere I have done weeping;
 all the kind of the Lances have this very fault. I
 have received my proportion, like the prodigious
 son, and am going with Sir Proteus to the Imperial's
 5 court. I think Crab, my dog, be the sourest-natured
 dog that lives: my mother weeping, my father
 wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat
 wringing her hands, and all our house in a great
 perplexity, yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed
 10 one tear: he is a stone, a very pebble stone, and
 has no more pity in him than a dog: a Jew would have
 wept to have seen our parting; why, my grandam,
 having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my
 parting. Nay, I'll show you the manner of it. This
 15 shoe is my father: no, this left shoe is my father:
 no, no, this left shoe is my mother: nay, that
 cannot be so neither: yes, it is so, it is so, it
 hath the worse sole. This shoe, with the hole in
 it, is my mother, and this my father; a vengeance
 20 on't! There 'tis: now, sit, this staff is my
 sister, for, look you, she is as white as a lily and
 as small as a wand: this hat is Nan, our maid: I
 am the dog: no, the dog is himself, and I am the
 dog--Oh! The dog is me, and I am myself; ay, so,
 25 so. Now come I to my father; Father, your blessing:
 now should not the shoe speak a word for weeping:
 now should I kiss my father; well, he weeps on. Now
 come I to my mother: O, that she could speak now
 like a wood woman! Well, I kiss her; why, there
 30 'tis; here's my mother's breath up and down. Now
 come I to my sister; mark the moan she makes. Now
 the dog all this while sheds not a tear nor speaks a
 word; but see how I lay the dust with my tears.

Enter PANTHINO

PANTHINO

Launce, away, away, aboard! Thy master is shipped
 35 and thou art to post after with oars. What's the
 matter? Why weepest thou, man? Away, ass! You'll
 lose the tide, if you tarry any longer.

LANCE

It is no matter if the tied were lost; for it is the
 unkindest tied that ever any man tied.

PANTHINO

40 What's the unkindest tide?

LANCE

Why, he that's tied here, Crab, my dog.

PANTHINO

Tut, man, I mean thou'lt lose the flood, and, in
 losing the flood, lose thy voyage, and, in losing
 thy voyage, lose thy master, and, in losing thy
 45 master, lose thy service, and, in losing thy
 service,--Why dost thou stop my mouth?

LANCE

For fear thou shouldst lose thy tongue.

PANTHINO

Where should I lose my tongue?

LANCE

In thy tale.

PANTHINO

50 In thy tail!

LANCE

A lot of time will pass before I stop crying. Everyone from
 my family--the Lances--suffers from this. I have received my
 inheritance, like the prodigious son, and am now going
 to the emperor's court with Sir Proteus. I think that my dog
 Crab has the sourest nature of all dogs. My mother is
 sobbing, my father is lamenting, my sister is crying, our
 servant is crying loudly, our cat wringing her hands to get
 the water out from all the crying, and all our house is in
 such a state--yet this cruel-hearted dog didn't cry one tear!
 He is made of stone, a very rough stone, and has no more
 pity than a dog. A Jew would have cried to have seen my
 family say goodbye. Look, even my grandam, who has no
 eyes, cried herself blind when I was leaving. I'll show you
 how it happened. This shoe is my father. No, this left shoe is
 my father. No, no. This left shoe is my mother. No, that can't
 be correct either. Yet that's how it is, yes. It has a worse sole
 3 . This shoe, with the hole in it, is my mother, and this
 is my father. Damn it! There it is. Now, stay there. This
 walking stick is my sister because, as you can see, she is as
 white as a lily and as slim as a stick. This hat is Nan, our
 servant. I am the dog. No, the dog is himself, and I am the
 dog...Oh! The dog is me and I am myself. Yes, that's it. Now I
 come to my father. Father, give me your blessing. Now the
 shoe couldn't speak a word because it was crying. Now I
 kiss my father and well, he continues to cry. Now I come to
 my mother. Oh, if only she could speak now like a mad
 woman! Well, I kiss her, there it is. This smells like my
 mother's breath exactly. Now I come to my sister. Note the
 moan that she makes. Now, the dog doesn't cry a single
 tear all this time, nor does he speak a word! But look how I
 make the dust on the ground wet with my own tears.

PANTHINO enters.

PANTHINO

Lance, go, go! Get on board! Your master is already on the
 ship, and you are supposed to hurry along and bring some
 oars. What's the matter? Why are you crying, man? Get out
 of here, you jackass! You'll lose the tide if you stay here any
 longer.

LANCE

It doesn't matter if the tied was lost because it is the
 unkindest tied that any man ever had.

PANTHINO

What's the unkindest tide?

LANCE

Well, he that's tied here. My dog Crab.

PANTHINO

Oh please, man: I meant that you'll lose the sea's tide. And
 in losing the tide, you'll miss your voyage. And in missing
 your voyage, you'll lose your master. And in losing your
 master you'll lose your employment. And in losing your
 employment--why are you shutting me up?

LANCE

Because I'm afraid that you'll lose your tongue.

PANTHINO

Where should I lose my tongue?

LANCE

In your story.

PANTHINO

In your tail!

Lance likely means *Prodigal Son* here--a character in the parable of the same name, who receives his inheritance and spends it all.

Lance uses a common anti-Semitic view from his time that Jews were pitiless, like his dog.

Lance puns on the word "soul" when he says "sole"--a reference to the belief in Shakespeare's day that men's souls were superior to women's.

Shakespeare's use of "hole" is a crude reference to the vagina.

Lance uses "the tied" as a stand-in for the creature who is "tied" up--his dog Crab.

Panthino makes a bawdy pun on "tale" and "tail" (bottom).

LANCE

Lose the tide, and the voyage, and the master, and the service, and the tied! Why, man, if the river were dry, I am able to fill it with my tears; if the wind were down, I could drive the boat with my sighs.

PANTHINO

55 Come, come away, man; I was sent to call thee.

LANCE

Sir, call me what thou darest.

PANTHINO

Wilt thou go?

LANCE

Well, I will go.

Exeunt

LANCE

Lose the tide, and the voyage, and the master, and the employment, and the dog! Indeed, man, if the river were dry, I'd be able to fill it with my tears. If the wind wasn't blowing, I could push the boat with my sighs.

PANTHINO

Come, come away, man. I was sent to call you away.

LANCE

Sir, call me what you like.

PANTHINO

Will you go?

LANCE

Well, I will go.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter SILVIA, VALENTINE, TURIO, and SPEED

SILVIA

Servant!

VALENTINE

Mistress?

SPEED

Master, Sir Turio frowns on you.

VALENTINE

Ay, boy, it's for love.

SPEED

5 Not of you.

VALENTINE

Of my mistress, then.

SPEED

'Twere good you knocked him.

Exit

SILVIA

Servant, you are sad.

VALENTINE

10 Indeed, madam, I seem so.

TURIO

Seem you that you are not?

VALENTINE

Haply I do.

TURIO

So do counterfeits.

VALENTINE

So do you.

Shakescleare Translation

SILVIA, VALENTINE, TURIO, and SPEED enter.

SILVIA

Servant!

VALENTINE

Mistress?

SPEED

Master, Sir Turio is frowning at you.

VALENTINE

Ah, yes, boy. He's frowning because of his love.

SPEED

Not his love for you.

VALENTINE

Love for my mistress, then.

SPEED

It would be a good idea for you to hit him.

SPEED exits.

SILVIA

You are sad, servant.

VALENTINE

Indeed, madam, I seem sad.

TURIO

Do you seem what you are not?

VALENTINE

Maybe I do.

TURIO

So do impostors.

VALENTINE

So do you.

TURIO
15 What seem I that I am not?

VALENTINE
Wise.

TURIO
What instance of the contrary?

VALENTINE
Your folly.

TURIO
And how quote you my folly?

VALENTINE
20 I quote it in your jerkin.

TURIO
My jerkin is a doublet.

VALENTINE
Well, then, I'll double your folly.

TURIO
How?

SILVIA
What, angry, Sir Turio! Do you change colour?

VALENTINE
25 Give him leave, madam; he is a kind of chameleon.

TURIO
That hath more mind to feed on your blood than live in your air.

VALENTINE
You have said, sir.

TURIO
Ay, sir, and done too, for this time.

VALENTINE
30 I know it well, sir; you always end ere you begin.

SILVIA
A fine volley of words, gentlemen, and quickly shot off.

VALENTINE
'Tis indeed, madam; we thank the giver.

SILVIA
Who is that, servant?

VALENTINE
35 Yourself, sweet lady; for you gave the fire. Sir Turio borrows his wit from your ladyship's looks, and spends what he borrows kindly in your company.

TURIO
Sir, if you spend word for word with me, I shall make your wit bankrupt.

TURIO
What do I seem that I'm not?


VALENTINE
Wise.


TURIO
What's the evidence that I'm not wise?

VALENTINE
Your foolishness.

TURIO
And how can you tell that I'm foolish?

VALENTINE
I can tell by your sleeveless jacket.

TURIO
My sleeveless jacket is a doublet .

VALENTINE
Well, then, I'll double  your foolishness.

TURIO
How?

SILVIA
Oh, are you angry, Sir Turio? Is your face changing color?

VALENTINE
Let him be, madam. He is like a chameleon.

TURIO
A chameleon that would rather feed on your blood than live off of the same air you breathe.

VALENTINE
Well, you have said it, sir.

TURIO
Yes, sir, and I am finished too. For now.

VALENTINE
I know that well enough, sir. You always stop before you've started.


SILVIA
That's a fine exchange of words, gentlemen. And quickly fired.


VALENTINE
It is indeed, madam. We thank the one who gave it to us.

SILVIA
Who is that, servant?

VALENTINE
You, sweet lady. Because you gave us the spark to set it off. Sir Turio borrows his wit from your Ladyship's appearance, and spends what he borrows in your company.

TURIO
Sir, if you waste a word with me, I shall bankrupt your wit.

 A "doublet" is a close-fitting jacket.

 Valentine puns on Turio's "doublet," the jacket referred to in the previous line.

VALENTINE

40 I know it well, sir; you have an exchequer of words,
and, I think, no other treasure to give your
followers, for it appears by their bare liveries,
that they live by your bare words.

SILVIA

45 No more, gentlemen, no more!--here comes my father.

Enter DUKE

DUKE

Now, daughter Silvia, you are hard beset.
Sir Valentine, your father's in good health:
What say you to a letter from your friends
Of much good news?

VALENTINE

50 My lord, I will be thankful.
To any happy messenger from thence.

DUKE

Know ye Don Antonio, your countryman?

VALENTINE

55 Ay, my good lord, I know the gentleman
To be of worth and worthy estimation
And not without desert so well reputed.

DUKE

Hath he not a son?

VALENTINE

Ay, my good lord; a son that well deserves
The honour and regard of such a father.

DUKE

You know him well?

VALENTINE

60 I know him as myself; for from our infancy
We have conversed and spent our hours together:
And though myself have been an idle truant,
Omitting the sweet benefit of time
To clothe mine age with angel-like perfection,
65 Yet hath Sir Proteus, for that's his name,
Made use and fair advantage of his days;
His years but young, but his experience old;
His head unmellow'd, but his judgment ripe;
And, in a word, for far behind his worth
70 Comes all the praises that I now bestow,
He is complete in feature and in mind
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

DUKE

Beshrew me, sir, but if he make this good,
He is as worthy for an empress' love
75 As meet to be an emperor's counsellor.
Well, sir, this gentleman is come to me,
With commendation from great potentates;
And here he means to spend his time awhile:
I think 'tis no unwelcome news to you.

VALENTINE

80 Should I have wish'd a thing, it had been he.

DUKE

Welcome him then according to his worth.
Silvia, I speak to you, and you, Sir Turio;
For Valentine, I need not cite him to it:
I will send him hither to you presently.

VALENTINE

I know that well enough, sir. You have a treasury of words.
And I think that no other treasure helps you get servants. It
seems that they live on your words alone, based on their
shabby uniforms.

SILVIA

No more, gentlemen. No more. My father is coming.

The DUKE enters.

DUKE

Now you are besieged by suitors, my daughter Silvia.

[To VALENTINE] Sir Valentine, your father is well. What
would you say to a letter from your friends, passing on a lot
of good news?

VALENTINE

My lord, I would be thankful for any happy message from
home.

DUKE

Do you know Don Antonio? He is from your country.

VALENTINE

Yes, my good lord. I know that he is a gentleman of high
rank; one who deserves respect and esteem.

DUKE

Doesn't he have a son?

VALENTINE

Yes, my good lord. He has a son that deserves the honor
and regard of such a great father.

DUKE

Do you know him well?

VALENTINE

I know him like I know myself. Ever since we were children,
we have talked and spent all our time together. And
although I have been a lazy delinquent--disregarding the
benefit of time to perfect myself in my old age--Sir Proteus
(that's the son's name) used his time well. He is young, but
he is old if we consider his experience. There are no grey
hairs on his head, and yet his judgement is mature. And, to
sum it up (because my praises are not enough to praise his
worth), he is perfect in his appearance and in his mind. And
he has all the good grace that a gentleman has.

DUKE

Curse me, sir, if he is as good as you say he is. He deserves
an empress' love as well as a position to advise an emperor.
Well, sir, this gentleman is coming to me, with
recommendation from powerful rulers. And he is thinking
of spending some time here. I think you like this news too.

VALENTINE

If I could have wished for something, it would have been for
him to come here!

DUKE

Welcome him, then, according to his worth. Silvia and Sir
Turio, I speak to you, because I don't need to urge
Valentine. I will send Proteus here to you immediately.

*Exit***VALENTINE**

85 This is the gentleman I told your ladyship
Had come along with me, but that his mistress
Did hold his eyes lock'd in her crystal looks.

SILVIA

Belike that now she hath enfranchised them
Upon some other pawn for fealty.

VALENTINE

90 Nay, sure, I think she holds them prisoners still.

SILVIA

Nay, then he should be blind; and, being blind
How could he see his way to seek out you?

VALENTINE

Why, lady, Love hath twenty pair of eyes.

TURIO

They say that Love hath not an eye at all.

VALENTINE

95 To see such lovers, Turio, as yourself:
Upon a homely object Love can wink.

SILVIA

Have done, have done; here comes the gentleman.

*Exit TURIO**Enter PROTEUS***VALENTINE**

100 Welcome, dear Proteus! Mistress, I beseech you,
Confirm his welcome with some special favour.

SILVIA

His worth is warrant for his welcome hither,
If this be he you oft have wish'd to hear from.

VALENTINE

Mistress, it is: sweet lady, entertain him
To be my fellow-servant to your ladyship.

SILVIA

105 Too low a mistress for so high a servant.

PROTEUS

Not so, sweet lady: but too mean a servant
To have a look of such a worthy mistress.

VALENTINE

Leave off discourse of disability:
Sweet lady, entertain him for your servant.

PROTEUS

110 My duty will I boast of; nothing else.

SILVIA

And duty never yet did want his meed:
Servant, you are welcome to a worthless mistress.

PROTEUS

I'll die on him that says so but yourself.

*The DUKE exits.***VALENTINE**

This is the gentleman I told your Ladyship about. He would
have come along with me, but his mistress kept his eyes
locked on her.

SILVIA

Perhaps she has now freed his eyes, and instead chosen
another man's vow of loyalty.

VALENTINE

No, I think she still holds his eyes as prisoners.

SILVIA

No, then he should be blind. And if he's blind, how could he
see his way to find you?

VALENTINE

Indeed, Lady: Love has twenty pair of eyes.

TURIO

They say that Love is blind.

VALENTINE

Love is blind to such lovers as yourself, Turio. Love can shut
its eyes when it meets an unattractive object.

SILVIA

Enough, enough! Here he comes.

*TURIO exits.**PROTEUS enters.***VALENTINE**

Welcome, dear Proteus!

[To SILVIA] Mistress, I beg you to welcome him with a
special favor.

SILVIA

His worth is a guarantee for his welcome here, if this is the
same man that you have often wanted to hear from.

VALENTINE

Mistress, it is him. Sweet lady, receive him as my fellow
servant to your Ladyship.

SILVIA

I am a mistress too humble to have such a superior servant.

PROTEUS

Not at all, sweet lady. I am an unworthy servant to have
ever seen such a worthy mistress.

VALENTINE

Stop this talk of inadequacy.

[To SILVIA] Sweet lady, receive him as your servant.

PROTEUS

I will only boast of my sense of duty, nothing else.

SILVIA

And duty never lacked its reward. You are welcome,
servant, to a worthless mistress.

PROTEUS

I'll die fighting with anyone who says that--except for you,
of course.

SILVIA

That you are welcome?

PROTEUS

115 That you are worthless.

Re-enter TURIO

TURIO

Madam, my lord your father would speak with you.

SILVIA

I wait upon his pleasure. Come, Sir Turio,
Go with me. Once more, new servant, welcome:
120 I'll leave you to confer of home affairs;
When you have done, we look to hear from you.

PROTEUS

We'll both attend upon your ladyship.

Exeunt SILVIA and TURIO

VALENTINE

Now, tell me, how do all from whence you came?

PROTEUS

125 Your friends are well and have them much commended.

VALENTINE

And how do yours?

PROTEUS

I left them all in health.

VALENTINE

How does your lady? And how thrives your love?

PROTEUS

My tales of love were wont to weary you;
130 I know you joy not in a love discourse.

VALENTINE

Ay, Proteus, but that life is alter'd now:
I have done penance for condemning Love,
Whose high imperious thoughts have punish'd me
With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,
135 With nightly tears and daily heart-sore sighs;
For in revenge of my contempt of love,
Love hath chased sleep from my enthralled eyes
And made them watchers of mine own heart's sorrow.
O gentle Proteus, Love's a mighty lord,
140 And hath so humbled me, as, I confess,
There is no woe to his correction,
Nor to his service no such joy on earth.
Now no discourse, except it be of love;
Now can I break my fast, dine, sup and sleep,
145 Upon the very naked name of love.

PROTEUS

Enough; I read your fortune in your eye.
Was this the idol that you worship so?

VALENTINE

Even she; and is she not a heavenly saint?

PROTEUS

No; but she is an earthly paragon.

VALENTINE

150 Call her divine.

SILVIA

Anyone who says that you are welcome?

PROTEUS

Anyone who says that you are worthless.

TURIO re-enters.

TURIO

Madam, my lord--your father--would like to speak to you.

SILVIA

I will come to please him. Come, Sir Turio, go with me.

[To PROTEUS] Once more, welcome, new servant. I'll leave you to catch up about what's happening at home. When you're done, we look forward to hearing from you.

PROTEUS

We both serve your Ladyship.

SILVIA and TURIO exit.

VALENTINE

Now, tell me: how are things from where you've come?

PROTEUS

Your friends are well, and they send their hearty greetings.

VALENTINE

And how are your friends?

PROTEUS

They were all well when I left them.

VALENTINE

How is your lady doing? And how is your love?

PROTEUS

My tales of love used to make you tired. I know that you don't enjoy talking about love.

VALENTINE

Yes, Proteus, but that's all changed now. I am repenting for condemning love. Love's high, domineering thoughts have punished me with bitter fasting; with groans of penance; with nightly tears and daily sighs from heartache. In revenge for my sneering at love, love has taken sleep from my enslaved eyes, and keep them open, as watchers of my heart's sorrow. Oh, dear Proteus, Love is a powerful lord, and has made me so humble. And, I confess, no misery is as bad as that which results from love's punishment. And yet, there is no joy on earth that can compare with serving love. Now there is no discussion, except about love. Now I can have breakfast, lunch, dinner and sleep--only feeding on the mere name of love.

PROTEUS

That's enough. I can read it all from your eyes. Was Silvia the idol that you worship?

VALENTINE

That's her. And isn't she like a saint from heaven?

PROTEUS

No. But she is person from earth who's beyond compare.

VALENTINE

Call her divine.

PROTEUS

I will not flatter her.

VALENTINE

O, flatter me; for love delights in praises.

PROTEUS

When I was sick, you gave me bitter pills,
And I must minister the like to you.

VALENTINE

155 Then speak the truth by her; if not divine,
Yet let her be a principality,
Sovereign to all the creatures on the earth.

PROTEUS

Except my mistress.

VALENTINE

160 Sweet, except not any;
Except thou wilt except against my love.

PROTEUS

Have I not reason to prefer mine own?

VALENTINE

And I will help thee to prefer her too:
She shall be dignified with this high honour--
To bear my lady's train, lest the base earth
165 Should from her vesture chance to steal a kiss
And, of so great a favour growing proud,
Disdain to root the summer-swelling flower
And make rough winter everlastingly.

PROTEUS

Why, Valentine, what braggardism is this?

VALENTINE

170 Pardon me, Proteus: all I can is nothing
To her whose worth makes other worthies nothing;
She is alone.

PROTEUS

Then let her alone.

VALENTINE

175 Not for the world: why, man, she is mine own,
And I as rich in having such a jewel
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,
The water nectar and the rocks pure gold.
Forgive me that I do not dream on thee,
Because thou see'st me dote upon my love.
180 My foolish rival, that her father likes
Only for his possessions are so huge,
Is gone with her along, and I must after,
For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy.

PROTEUS

But she loves you?

VALENTINE

185 Ay, and we are betroth'd: nay, more, our
marriage-hour,
With all the cunning manner of our flight,
Determined of; how I must climb her window,
The ladder made of cords, and all the means
190 Plotted and 'greed on for my happiness.
Good Proteus, go with me to my chamber,
In these affairs to aid me with thy counsel.

PROTEUS

I won't flatter her.

VALENTINE

Oh, then flatter me. Because love enjoys praises.

PROTEUS

When I was in love, you didn't mince words. So I must give
you the same treatment.

VALENTINE

Then speak the truth about her. If she is not divine, let her
be one of the nine orders of angels, ruling all the creatures
of the earth.

PROTEUS

Except for my mistress.

VALENTINE


Ah, no! Except for no one. Unless you will object to my love.

PROTEUS

Do I not have a reason to promote my own?

VALENTINE

And I will help you to promote her too. She will be dignified
with this high honor: to carry my lady's train. Then, the
lowly earth won't brush against her dress. And if she did let
the earth touch it, the earth might glow so much with pride
that it could refuse to allow summer flowers to take root. It
would make the harsh winter last forever.

 A "train" in this context refers to the flowing piece of fabric that trails behind a very long dress.

PROTEUS

Valentine, what's with your bragging?

VALENTINE

I'm sorry, Proteus. All that I can say is nothing compared to
her. Her worth makes other valuable nothing. She is unique.

PROTEUS

Then let her be alone and remain unique.

VALENTINE

Not for the whole world! Indeed, man: she is my own. And,
having a jewel like her, I am as twenty seas--if all their sand
were pearls; their water, nectar; and their rocks, pure gold.
Forgive me that I'm not paying much attention to you,
because you see me only focusing lovingly on my love. My
foolish rival in love--the one that her father likes only
because he is rich--has gone with her. And so I must follow
them. Because love, as you know, is full of jealousy.

PROTEUS

But she loves you, doesn't she?

VALENTINE

Yes, and we are engaged. No, more than that. We have
decided on the time of our marriage, as well as an
ingenious escape plan. I must climb up to her window on a
rope ladder, and we have planned and agreed on all the
other details for my happiness. Good Proteus, go with me to
my room, and you can help me with your advice on these
matters.

PROTEUS

Go on before; I shall inquire you forth:
I must unto the road, to disembark
195 Some necessaries that I needs must use,
And then I'll presently attend you.

VALENTINE

Will you make haste?

PROTEUS

I will.

Exit VALENTINE

PROTEUS

200 Even as one heat another heat expels,
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
So the remembrance of my former love
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.
Is it mine, or Valentine's praise,
205 Her true perfection, or my false transgression,
That makes me reasonless to reason thus?
She is fair; and so is Julia that I love--
That I did love, for now my love is thaw'd;
Which, like a waxen image, 'gainst a fire,
210 Bears no impression of the thing it was.
Methinks my zeal to Valentine is cold,
And that I love him not as I was wont.
O, but I love his lady too too much,
And that's the reason I love him so little.
215 How shall I dote on her with more advice,
That thus without advice begin to love her!
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,
And that hath dazzled my reason's light;
But when I look on her perfections,
220 There is no reason but I shall be blind.
If I can cheque my erring love, I will;
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill.

Exit

PROTEUS

Go before me. I will seek you out. I have to go back to the
road to unpack some things from my luggage that I need to
use. And then I'll help you afterwards.

VALENTINE

Will you hurry?

PROTEUS

I will.

VALENTINE exits.

PROTEUS

It's like one source of heat replaces another one; or as if one
nail drives out another by being stronger. So my memory of
my past love is quite forgotten because of this newer sight.
Is it my or Valentine's praise of her true perfection? Or is it
my faithless sin that makes me justify myself without
cause? She is beautiful and so is Julia whom I love--whom I
loved. My love for Julia has now melted, like an image out
of wax put next to a fire, which no longer looks like the
thing it was. I think that my devotion to Valentine has gone
cold, and that I don't love him like I used to. Oh, but I love
this lady Silvia far too much, and that's why I love him less.
How shall I adore her upon more reflection, since I started
to fall in love with her without giving it a thought at all? It's
only her appearance that I've seen so far, and that has
dazzled me more than the light of my reason. But when I
come to look at her exquisite inner qualities, no doubt I will
be completely blinded by love. If I can restrain my
wandering love, I will. If not, I will use my skill to win her.

PROTEUS exits.

Act 2, Scene 5

Shakespeare

Enter SPEED and LANCE severally

SPEED

Lance! By mine honesty, welcome to Milan!

LANCE

Forswear not thyself, sweet youth, for I am not
welcome. I reckon this always, that a man is never
undone till he be hanged, nor never welcome to a
5 place till some certain shot be paid and the hostess
say 'Welcome!'

SPEED

Come on, you madcap, I'll to the alehouse with you
presently; where, for one shot of five pence, thou
shalt have five thousand welcomes. But, sirrah, how
10 did thy master part with Madam Julia?

LANCE

Marry, after they closed in earnest, they parted very
fairly in jest.

SPEED

But shall she marry him?

Shakescleare Translation

SPEED and LANCE enter from different directions.

SPEED

Lance! I swear by my honesty: welcome to Milan!

LANCE

Don't swear falsely by that, sweet boy, because I am not
welcome. I think it's always the case that a man is never
ruined until he is hanged. In the same way, a man is never
welcomed in a place until some bill is paid and the landlady
of an inn says: "Welcome!"

SPEED

Come on, you madman. I'll go to the bar with you
immediately. You shall have five thousand welcomes for
one payment of five pence. But, sir, how did your master
say goodbye to Lady Julia?

LANCE

Indeed, after they genuinely hugged each other, they said
goodbye cordially, as a bit of a joke.

SPEED

But will she marry him?

LANCE

No.

SPEED

15 How then? Shall he marry her?

LANCE

No, neither.

SPEED

What, are they broken?

LANCE

No, they are both as whole as a fish.

SPEED

Why, then, how stands the matter with them?

LANCE

20 Marry, thus: when it stands well with him, it stands well with her.

SPEED

What an ass art thou! I understand thee not.

LANCE

What a block art thou, that thou canst not! My staff understands me.

SPEED

25 What thou sayest?

LANCE

Ay, and what I do too: look thee, I'll but lean, and my staff understands me.

SPEED

It stands under thee, indeed.

LANCE

Why, stand-under and under-stand is all one.

SPEED

30 But tell me true, will't be a match?

LANCE

Ask my dog: if he say ay, it will! If he say no, it will; if he shake his tail and say nothing, it will.

SPEED

The conclusion is then that it will.

LANCE

35 Thou shalt never get such a secret from me but by a parable.

SPEED

'Tis well that I get it so. But, Lance, how sayest thou, that my master is become a notable lover?

Lance

I never knew him otherwise.

SPEED

Than how?

LANCE

40 A notable lubber, as thou reportest him to be.

LANCE


No.


SPEEDThen what? Will *he* marry her?**LANCE**

No, not that either.

SPEED

What, have they broken up?

LANCENo, they are together; as whole as a fish .

 Lance puns on the slang use of "hole" (homonym of "whole") and "fish" for "vagina."

SPEED

Well then, what's the problem that caused their falling out?

LANCE

Indeed, this is the problem: when things are going well for him, then she is well.

SPEED

You are such an idiot! I don't understand you.

LANCE

You are such a blockhead that you can't understand me! My staff understands me.

SPEED

What do you say?

LANCE

Yes, and I do too. Look! I'll lean and my staff understands me.

SPEED

It stands under you, yes.

LANCE

Well, stand-under and under-stand is the same thing.

SPEED

But tell me truth: will there be a wedding?

LANCE

Ask my dog; if he says yes, it will. If he says no, it will. If he shakes his tail and says nothing, it will.

SPEED

So then it will!

Lance

You will never get such a secret from me apart from using cryptic and confusing speech.

SPEED

It's good that I get it now. Lance, what do you say to this? My master has become a notorious lover!

LANCE

I never knew him as anything else.

SPEED

Anything else than what?

LANCE

A notorious lubber--a clumsy fool, as you have just said he is.

SPEED

Why, thou whoreson ass, thou mistakest me.

LANCE

Why, fool, I meant not thee; I meant thy master.

SPEED

I tell thee, my master is become a hot lover.

LANCE

45 Why, I tell thee, I care not though he burn himself
in love. If thou wilt, go with me to the alehouse;
if not, thou art an Hebrew, a Jew, and not worth the
name of a Christian.

SPEED

Why?

LANCE

50 Because thou hast not so much charity in thee as to
go to the ale with a Christian. Wilt thou go?

SPEED

At thy service.

Exeunt

SPEED

Ah, you bastard ass, you aren't understanding me!

LANCE

You fool, I didn't mean *you*. I meant your master!

SPEED

I am telling you that my master has become a passionate
lover.

LANCE

I am telling you that I don't care if he burns himself in love.
If you want to, come with me to the pub. If not, you are a
Hebrew, a Jew, and not worth the name of a Christian.

SPEED

Why?

LANCE

Because you don't have enough [charity](#) in you to go to
the pub with a Christian. Will you go?

SPEED

I'm at your service.

SPEED and LANCE exit.

[Lance](#) uses the anti-Semitic trope that Jews aren't charitable; a prejudicial view commonly held in Shakespeare's England.

Act 2, Scene 6

Shakespeare

Enter PROTEUS

PROTEUS

To leave my Julia, shall I be forsworn;
To love fair Silvia, shall I be forsworn;
To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn;
And even that power which gave me first my oath
5 Provokes me to this threefold perjury;
Love bade me swear and Love bids me forswear.
O sweet-suggesting Love, if thou hast sinned,
Teach me, thy tempted subject, to excuse it!
At first I did adore a twinkling star,
10 But now I worship a celestial sun.
Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken,
And he wants wit that wants resolved will
To learn his wit to exchange the bad for better.
Fie, fie, unreverend tongue! To call her bad,
15 Whose sovereignty so oft thou hast preferr'd
With twenty thousand soul-confirming oaths.
I cannot leave to love, and yet I do;
But there I leave to love where I should love.
Julia I lose and Valentine I lose:
20 If I keep them, I needs must lose myself;
If I lose them, thus find I by their loss
For Valentine myself, for Julia Silvia.
I to myself am dearer than a friend,
For love is still most precious to itself;
25 And Silvia--witness Heaven, that made her fair!--
Shows Julia but a swarthy Ethiop.
I will forget that Julia is alive,
Remembering that my love to her is dead;
And Valentine I'll hold an enemy,
30 Aiming at Silvia as a sweeter friend.
I cannot now prove constant to myself,
Without some treachery used to Valentine.
This night he meaneth with a corded ladder

Shakescleare Translation

PROTEUS enters.

PROTEUS

If I were to leave Julia, I would break my promise. If I love
the beautiful Silvia, I would break my promise. And I will
break an even bigger promise if I hurt my friend
Valentine. And yet even love--which made me swear to be
faithful to Julia--provokes me to break my promise three
times over. Love made me swear, but love wants me to
break that promise. Oh, sweetly tempting Love: if you have
ever sinned, teach me--your tempted subject--how to justify
it! At first, I adored a star, who shone for just a moment. But
now I worship the heavenly sun. Thoughtless promises can
be carefully broken. And a man lacks intelligence if he can't
take resolute action, teaching his wit to exchange a bad
thing for a better thing. Ah, ah, impudent tongue! How
could you call Julia bad, when you felt her power over you,
and urged it on with twenty thousand soul-strengthening
oaths? I cannot stop loving, and yet I do stop loving. But I
stop loving the woman I should love, Julia. If I lose Julia,
then I also lose Valentine. If I keep them, I must lose myself.
Yet if I lose them, then I'll change places with Valentine, and
Silvia will change places with Julia. I mean more to myself
than a friend means to me, since love is still most precious
in and of itself. And Silvia--Heaven look, you made her so
beautiful!--shows Julia to be only a [dark-complexioned
Ethiopian](#). I will forget that Julia is alive, and remember
that my love for her is therefore dead. I'll consider Valentine
my enemy, and direct myself to Silvia as my sweeter friend.
I cannot be faithful to myself now, without committing
some act of treason on Valentine. Tonight, he is planning on
climbing a rope ladder to the window of heavenly Silvia's
room. He told me this in confidence, and trusts me--but I
am also his rival. Now I will immediately let her father know
of their deceptive plan to escape. He will be angry, and will
cast Valentine out, since he wants Turio to marry his

[Proteus](#) alludes here to Julia's darker complexion, not her ethnicity--though his statement certainly has racist overtones by today's standards. The standards of beauty in Shakespeare's day emphasized a fair appearance.

To climb celestial Silvia's chamber-window,
 35 Myself in counsel, his competitor.
 Now presently I'll give her father notice
 Of their disguising and pretended flight;
 Who, all enraged, will banish Valentine;
 For Turio, he intends, shall wed his daughter;
 40 But, Valentine being gone, I'll quickly cross
 By some sly trick blunt Turio's dull proceeding.
 Love, lend me wings to make my purpose swift,
 As thou hast lent me wit to plot this drift!

Exit

daughter. But as soon as Valentine is gone, I'll quickly use
 some clever trick to prevent the stupid Turio's progress.
 Love, give me wings so my purpose can be quick, just like
 you have lent me wit to plan this scheme!

PROTEUS exits.

Act 2, Scene 7

Shakespeare

Enter JULIA and LUCETTA

JULIA

Counsel, Lucetta; gentle girl, assist me;
 And even in kind love I do conjure thee,
 Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
 Are visibly character'd and engraved,
 5 To lesson me and tell me some good mean
 How, with my honour, I may undertake
 A journey to my loving Proteus.

LUCETTA

Alas, the way is wearisome and long!

JULIA

A true-devoted pilgrim is not weary
 10 To measure kingdoms with his feeble steps;
 Much less shall she that hath Love's wings to fly,
 And when the flight is made to one so dear,
 Of such divine perfection, as Sir Proteus.

LUCETTA

Better forbear till Proteus make return.

JULIA

O, know'st thou not his looks are my soul's food?
 Pity the dearth that I have pined in,
 By longing for that food so long a time.
 Didst thou but know the inly touch of love,
 Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow
 20 As seek to quench the fire of love with words.

LUCETTA

I do not seek to quench your love's hot fire,
 But qualify the fire's extreme rage,
 Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.

JULIA

The more thou damm'st it up, the more it burns.
 25 The current that with gentle murmur glides,
 Thou know'st, being stopp'd, impatiently doth rage;
 But when his fair course is not hindered,
 He makes sweet music with the enamell'd stones,
 Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
 30 He overtaketh in his pilgrimage,
 And so by many winding nooks he strays
 With willing sport to the wild ocean.
 Then let me go and hinder not my course
 I'll be as patient as a gentle stream
 35 And make a pastime of each weary step,
 Till the last step have brought me to my love;
 And there I'll rest, as after much turmoil
 A blessed soul doth in Elysium.

Shakescleare Translation

JULIA and LUCETTA enter.

JULIA

Give me advice, Lucetta. Dear girl, help me. I beg you with
 kind love. You are like the notebook where all my thoughts
 are clearly written and engraved. So teach me, and tell me
 about some good method by which I could travel to my
 loving Proteus, and still maintain my honor.

LUCETTA

Ah, the journey is tiring and long!

JULIA

A truly devoted traveler doesn't get tired from traveling
 across kingdoms with his weak steps. And she who flies on
 Love's wings will be even less tired. Especially when she
 flies to someone so dear--someone of such heavenly
 perfection--as Sir Proteus.

LUCETTA

You'd better have patience until Proteus returns.

JULIA

Oh, don't you know that his looks are the food that my soul
 feeds on? It's a pity that I have to waste away in a famine,
 because I have been longing for that food for so long. If you
 only knew the inward touch of love, you would as soon light
 a fire with snow as try to extinguish the fire of love with
 words.

LUCETTA

I don't want to suffocate your love's hot fire, but instead
 moderate the fire's extreme power--so it doesn't burn
 beyond what's reasonable.

JULIA

The more you try to moderate it, the more it burns. The
 current that flows gently and slowly impatiently rages when
 it's stopped. But when its flowing isn't prevented, it creates
 a pleasing sound as it babbles over the smooth stones,
 giving a gentle kiss to every plant it passes by on its
 journey. And so it stops at many twisting corners; it goes off
 with entertaining activity toward the wild ocean. Then let
 me go, and don't prevent my going. I'll be as patient as the
 gentle stream, and make an entertainment out of every
 tiring step, until the last step brings me to my love. And
 there I will remain, as a blessed soul would in heaven, after
 going to a lot of trouble.

LUCETTA

But in what habit will you go along?

JULIA

40 Not like a woman; for I would prevent
The loose encounters of lascivious men:
Gentle Lucetta, fit me with such weeds
As may beseeem some well-reputed page.

LUCETTA

Why, then, your ladyship must cut your hair.

JULIA

45 No, girl, I'll knit it up in silken strings
With twenty odd-conceited true-love knots.
To be fantastic may become a youth
Of greater time than I shall show to be.

LUCETTA

What fashion, madam shall I make your breeches?

JULIA

50 That fits as well as 'Tell me, good my lord,
What compass will you wear your farthingale?'
Why even what fashion thou best likest, Lucetta.

LUCETTA

You must needs have them with a codpiece, madam.

JULIA

Out, out, Lucetta! That would be ill-favour'd.

LUCETTA

55 A round hose, madam, now's not worth a pin,
Unless you have a codpiece to stick pins on.

JULIA

Lucetta, as thou lovest me, let me have
What thou thinkest meet and is most mannerly.
But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me
60 For undertaking so unstaidd a journey?
I fear me, it will make me scandalized.

LUCETTA

If you think so, then stay at home and go not.

JULIA

Nay, that I will not.

LUCETTA

Then never dream on infamy, but go.
65 If Proteus like your journey when you come,
No matter who's displeased when you are gone:
I fear me, he will scarce be pleased withal.

JULIA

That is the least, Lucetta, of my fear:
A thousand oaths, an ocean of his tears
70 And instances of infinite of love
Warrant me welcome to my Proteus.

LUCETTA

All these are servants to deceitful men.

JULIA

Base men, that use them to so base effect!
But truer stars did govern Proteus' birth
75 His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles,

LUCETTA

But what clothes will you wear?

JULIA

Not a woman's clothes, since I hope to avoid greedy men's
improper advances. Dear Lucetta, give me clothes that are
appropriate for some well-regarded servant.

LUCETTA

Well, then your Ladyship must cut your hair.

JULIA

No, girl. I'll tie it up with silken strings in twenty elaborately
devised knots. Being imaginative is quite appropriate for a
boy who's older than I will appear.


LUCETTA


In what style shall I make your pants?

JULIA

That's as if you were asking: "Tell me, my good lord, in what
perimeter will you wear your petticoat?" In any style that
you like, Lucetta.

LUCETTA

You should have the pants with a [codpiece](#) , madam.

 A *codpiece* was a decorative pouch attached to the front of men's breeches, covering their genitalia. Lucetta teases Julia by mentioning this suggestive article of clothing.

JULIA

Get out, Lucetta! That's unheard of!

LUCETTA

Pants aren't worth anything unless you have a codpiece to
pin on them.

JULIA

Lucetta, since you love me, let me have anything that you
think is appropriate. But tell me, girl, what will the world
think of me for going on such an immodest journey? I am
afraid that it will be a scandal.

LUCETTA

If you think so, then stay at home and don't go.

JULIA

No, I won't do that.

LUCETTA

Then don't worry about getting a bad reputation and just
go. If Proteus is happy that you came when you arrive, it
doesn't matter who is unhappy when you are gone. I am
afraid that he won't be that happy about it.

JULIA

That is the least of my worries, Lucetta. A thousand
promises, an ocean of his tears, and evidence of his never-
ending love guarantee that Proteus will welcome my arrival.

LUCETTA

All these things simply help deceitful men in their
treachery.

JULIA

They are lowly men that use them to such a lowly effect!
But truer stars shone when Proteus was born. His words are
binding promises; his love is sincere; his thoughts are pure;

His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,
His tears pure messengers sent from his heart,
His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.

LUCETTA

Pray heaven he prove so, when you come to him!

JULIA

80 Now, as thou lovest me, do him not that wrong
To bear a hard opinion of his truth:
Only deserve my love by loving him;
And presently go with me to my chamber,
To take a note of what I stand in need of,
85 To furnish me upon my longing journey.
All that is mine I leave at thy dispose,
My goods, my lands, my reputation;
Only, in lieu thereof, dispatch me hence.
Come, answer not, but to it presently!
90 I am impatient of my tarriance.

Exeunt

his tears are poor messengers sent from his heart; his heart
is as far from lies as heaven is from earth.

LUCETTA

I hope to God that he'll prove to be true when you go to
him!

JULIA

Now since you love me, don't speak like that about him.
Don't have such a tough opinion of his sincerity. Earn my
love by loving him. And go to my room immediately, to find
out what I need to take with me on my journey, which will
be full of yearning. I leave everything I have under your
control: my things, my lands, my reputation. All I ask for in
exchange is that you send me on my way. Come, don't
answer, just do it now! I am impatient from your delay.

JULIA and LUCETTA exit.

Act 3, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter DUKE, TURIO, and PROTEUS

DUKE

Sir Turio, give us leave, I pray, awhile;
We have some secrets to confer about.

Exit TURIO

DUKE

Now, tell me, Proteus, what's your will with me?

PROTEUS

5 My gracious lord, that which I would discover
The law of friendship bids me to conceal;
But when I call to mind your gracious favours
Done to me, undeserving as I am,
My duty pricks me on to utter that
10 Which else no worldly good should draw from me.
Know, worthy prince, Sir Valentine, my friend,
This night intends to steal away your daughter:
Myself am one made privy to the plot.
I know you have determined to bestow her
15 On Turio, whom your gentle daughter hates;
And should she thus be stol'n away from you,
It would be much vexation to your age.
Thus, for my duty's sake, I rather chose
To cross my friend in his intended drift
20 Than, by concealing it, heap on your head
A pack of sorrows which would press you down,
Being unprevented, to your timeless grave.

DUKE

Proteus, I thank thee for thine honest care;
Which to requite, command me while I live.
25 This love of theirs myself have often seen,
Haply when they have judged me fast asleep,
And oftentimes have purposed to forbid
Sir Valentine her company and my court:
But fearing lest my jealous aim might err
30 And so unworthily disgrace the man,
A rashness that I ever yet have shunn'd,
I gave him gentle looks, thereby to find
That which thyself hast now disclosed to me.

Shakescleare Translation

The DUKE, TURIO, and PROTEUS enter.

DUKE

Sir Turio, leave us alone for a while, please. We have to
discuss some secrets.

TURIO exits.

DUKE

Now, what did you want to tell me, Proteus?

PROTEUS

My gracious lord, the rules of friendship tell me to keep
certain things a secret. But when I remind myself of your
kindness to me, my duty forces me to tell you a secret that
nobody else could ever get out of me. My friend Sir
Valentine is planning on stealing away with your daughter
tonight. I have been entrusted with this secret information.
I know you are determined to give her in marriage to Turio,
whom your dear daughter hates. And if she were taken
away from you like this, it would distress you--especially at
your age. So, for the sake of my duty, I would rather choose
to go against my friend's intended plan than hide it. That
way, you won't be weighed down with sorrow, which could
easily kill you.

DUKE

Proteus, I thank you for your honesty and care. To repay
you, ask any favor of me while I'm still alive. I have often
seen signs that Valentine and Silvia are in love, usually
while they think I'm sleeping. And I have often thought of
forbidding Sir Valentine to see her, and of banishing him
from my court. But I was worried that my suspicions may be
wrong, which would unfairly shame him. I put that rash
decision out of my mind, and I looked upon him kindly in
order to try and discover the information which you have
just told me. You can guess that this causes me to worry
about her. And knowing how young people are easily

And, that thou mayst perceive my fear of this,
 35 Knowing that tender youth is soon suggested,
 I nightly lodge her in an upper tower,
 The key whereof myself have ever kept;
 And thence she cannot be convey'd away.

PROTEUS

Know, noble lord, they have devised a mean
 40 How he her chamber-window will ascend
 And with a corded ladder fetch her down;
 For which the youthful lover now is gone
 And this way comes he with it presently;
 Where, if it please you, you may intercept him.
 45 But, good my Lord, do it so cunningly
 That my discovery be not aimed at;
 For love of you, not hate unto my friend,
 Hath made me publisher of this pretence.

DUKE

Upon mine honour, he shall never know
 50 That I had any light from thee of this.

PROTEUS

Adieu, my Lord; Sir Valentine is coming.

Exit

Enter VALENTINE

DUKE

Sir Valentine, whither away so fast?

VALENTINE

Please it your grace, there is a messenger
 55 That stays to bear my letters to my friends,
 And I am going to deliver them.

DUKE

Be they of much import?

VALENTINE

The tenor of them doth but signify
 My health and happy being at your court.

DUKE

60 Nay then, no matter; stay with me awhile;
 I am to break with thee of some affairs
 That touch me near, wherein thou must be secret.
 'Tis not unknown to thee that I have sought
 To match my friend Sir Turio to my daughter.

VALENTINE

65 I know it well, my Lord; and, sure, the match
 Were rich and honourable; besides, the gentleman
 Is full of virtue, bounty, worth and qualities
 Beseeming such a wife as your fair daughter:
 Cannot your Grace win her to fancy him?

DUKE

70 No, trust me; she is peevish, sullen, froward,
 Proud, disobedient, stubborn, lacking duty,
 Neither regarding that she is my child
 Nor fearing me as if I were her father;
 And, may I say to thee, this pride of hers,
 75 Upon advice, hath drawn my love from her;
 And, where I thought the remnant of mine age
 Should have been cherish'd by her child-like duty,
 I now am full resolved to take a wife
 And turn her out to who will take her in:
 80 Then let her beauty be her wedding-dower;
 For me and my possessions she esteems not.

tempted, I keep her in a high tower every night, and I hold
 onto the key so she can't be taken away.

PROTEUS

But, noble lord, they have come up with a plan to use a
 rope ladder--he'll climb up it to get to the window of her
 room, and will bring her down. The young man has just left
 to get that ladder, and he will soon come this way with it. If
 you wish, you may catch him bringing it here. But, my good
 lord, do it cleverly, so that I am not suspected of disclosing
 his secret plan. My love for you--not hatred of my friend--
 made me reveal his intention.

DUKE

I swear on my honor that he will never know that I heard
 any of this from you.

PROTEUS

Goodbye, my Lord. Sir Valentine is coming!


PROTEUS exits.

VALENTINE enters.

DUKE

Sir Valentine, where are you going so fast?

VALENTINE

I am sorry, your Grace . There is a messenger that is
 waiting to take my letters to my friends, and I'm going to
 give them to him.

DUKE

Are these letters important?

VALENTINE

They just talk of my health, and how happy I am at your
 court.


DUKE


Then they are not so important. Stay with me for a while. I
 want to tell you about some things that are close to my
 heart, and you must keep them secret. You know yourself
 that I have been trying to make a match between my friend
 Sir Turio and my daughter.


VALENTINE

I know that well, my Lord. And that match is rich and
 honorable, of course. Also, the gentleman is virtuous,
 generous, and worthy. And he has all the right qualities
 that are suitable for such a wife as your beautiful daughter
 will be. Can't you win her over so she likes him, your Grace?

DUKE

No, trust me. She is headstrong, sour, obstinate, proud,
 disobedient, and stubborn. She doesn't respect the duty
 that she owes me as my child, and doesn't fear my parental
 authority. And, I can tell you this, after thinking it over, this
 pride of hers has turned my love away from her. I thought
 that, in my old age, she might cherish me and be dutiful to
 me. But now I have decided to get a wife, and shun my
 daughter, so anyone can take her in. Then, let her beauty be
 her dowry . She is not worth me and my possessions.

 "Your Grace" is an honorific title
 to convey respect, similar to "your
 Highness."

 In Shakespeare's time, a dowry
 consisted of goods, property, or
 money brought by a bride to her
 husband upon their marriage. A
 sizable dowry would incentivize
 marriage.

VALENTINE

What would your Grace have me to do in this?

DUKE

There is a lady in Verona here
Whom I affect; but she is nice and coy
85 And nought esteems my aged eloquence:
Now therefore would I have thee to my tutor--
For long ago I have forgot to court;
Besides, the fashion of the time is changed--
How and which way I may bestow myself
90 To be regarded in her sun-bright eye.

VALENTINE

Win her with gifts, if she respect not words:
Dumb jewels often in their silent kind
More than quick words do move a woman's mind.

DUKE

But she did scorn a present that I sent her.

VALENTINE

95 A woman sometimes scorns what best contents her.
Send her another; never give her o'er;
For scorn at first makes after-love the more.
If she do frown, 'tis not in hate of you,
But rather to beget more love in you:
100 If she do chide, 'tis not to have you gone;
For why, the fools are mad, if left alone.
Take no repulse, whatever she doth say;
For 'get you gone,' she doth not mean 'away!'
Flatter and praise, commend, extol their graces;
105 Though ne'er so black, say they have angels' faces.
That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man,
If with his tongue he cannot win a woman .

DUKE

But she I mean is promised by her friends
Unto a youthful gentleman of worth,
110 And kept severely from resort of men,
That no man hath access by day to her.

VALENTINE

Why, then, I would resort to her by night.

DUKE

Ay, but the doors be lock'd and keys kept safe,
That no man hath recourse to her by night.

VALENTINE

115 What lets but one may enter at her window?

DUKE

Her chamber is aloft, far from the ground,
And built so shelving that one cannot climb it
Without apparent hazard of his life.

VALENTINE

Why then, a ladder quaintly made of cords,
120 To cast up, with a pair of anchoring hooks,
Would serve to scale another Hero's tower,
So bold Leander would adventure it.

DUKE

Now, as thou art a gentleman of blood,
Advise me where I may have such a ladder.

VALENTINE

125 When would you use it? Pray, sir, tell me that.

VALENTINE

Your Grace, what do you want me to do about this?

DUKE

There is a lady here in Verona whom I love. But she is
reluctant and shy, and does not care to speak of love with
me, an old man. I'd like you to be my tutor, since it's been a
while and I have forgotten how to woo. And the fashion of
the time has changed too. Tell me how and in what way I
should behave to be well-regarded in her eyes.

VALENTINE

Win her with gifts, if she doesn't care for words. Jewels
often influence a woman's mind; they're silent, but jewels
move a woman quicker than words ever could.

DUKE

But she refused a gift that I sent her.

VALENTINE

A woman sometimes refuses what she likes the best. Send
her another gift; don't give up on her. Refusal at first makes
later love greater. If she frowns, it's not because she hates
you. Instead, she wants to get more love out of you. If she
tells you off, it's not because she wants you to stop or go
away. These foolish women go crazy when they are left
alone. Don't take her refusals seriously, no matter what she
says. When she says "leave," she doesn't necessarily mean
"go away." Flatter her, praise her, elaborate on all her
virtues. However dark-complexioned women may be, say
that they have angels' faces. I think that a man that has a
tongue is no man at all if he can't use his tongue to win a
woman.

DUKE

But her family has promised to marry her to some young,
worthy gentleman. She is kept away from any other men, so
that no man has access to her during the day.

VALENTINE

Well then, I would go to her at night.

DUKE

Yes, but her door is locked. And the keys are kept safely
tucked away, so that no man can get to her at night.


VALENTINE

What prevents you from entering her room through her
window?

DUKE

Her room is up high, quite far from the ground. And it's built
in a way that you can't climb up without endangering your
life.

VALENTINE


Well, then a ladder made out of ropes could be thrown up
to her, and set with a pair of heavy hooks. These would
work to get to another Hero's tower , so bold Leander
would try to reach her.

DUKE

Now, since you are a gentleman from a good family, tell me
where I may find such a ladder.

VALENTINE

When would you need it? Please tell me when, sir.

 Valentine refers to the mythical
Hero, who showed her lover Leander
the way to her room by hanging a light
in her tower.

DUKE

This very night; for Love is like a child,
That longs for every thing that he can come by.

VALENTINE

By seven o'clock I'll get you such a ladder.

DUKE

130 But, hark thee; I will go to her alone:
How shall I best convey the ladder thither?

VALENTINE

It will be light, my lord, that you may bear it
Under a cloak that is of any length.

DUKE

A cloak as long as thine will serve the turn?

VALENTINE

Ay, my good lord.

DUKE

135 Then let me see thy cloak:
I'll get me one of such another length.

VALENTINE

Why, any cloak will serve the turn, my lord.

DUKE

140 How shall I fashion me to wear a cloak?
I pray thee, let me feel thy cloak upon me.
What letter is this same? What's here? 'To Silvia'
And here an engine fit for my proceeding.
I'll be so bold to break the seal for once.

Reads

DUKE

145 'My thoughts do harbour with my Silvia nightly,
And slaves they are to me that send them flying:
O, could their master come and go as lightly,
Himself would lodge where senseless they are lying!
My herald thoughts in thy pure bosom rest them:
While I, their king, that hither them importune,
Do curse the grace that with such grace hath bless'd
150 them,
Because myself do want my servants' fortune:
I curse myself, for they are sent by me,
That they should harbour where their lord would be!
What's here?
155 'Silvia, this night I will enfranchise thee.'
'Tis so; and here's the ladder for the purpose.
Why, Phaeton,--for thou art Merops' son,--
Wilt thou aspire to guide the heavenly car
And with thy daring folly burn the world?
160 Wilt thou reach stars, because they shine on thee?
Go, base intruder! Overweening slave!
Bestow thy fawning smiles on equal mates,
And think my patience, more than thy desert,
Is privilege for thy departure hence:
165 Thank me for this more than for all the favours
Which all too much I have bestow'd on thee.
But if thou linger in my territories
Longer than swiftest expedition
Will give thee time to leave our royal court,
170 By heaven! My wrath shall far exceed the love
I ever bore my daughter or myself.
Be gone! I will not hear thy vain excuse;
But, as thou lovest thy life, make speed from hence.

Exit

DUKE

Tonight! Because Love is like a child. It wants everything
that it can get.

VALENTINE

I'll get you this ladder by seven o'clock.

DUKE

But, wait. I will be going to her alone, so how can I carry the
ladder there?

VALENTINE

It's not heavy, my lord. And you can hide it under any coat,
long or short.

DUKE

Would a coat as long as yours work?

VALENTINE

Yes, my good lord.

DUKE

Then let me see your coat. I'll get one of this length for
myself.

VALENTINE

Any coat will be work, my lord.

DUKE

How can I get used to wearing a coat? Please, let me try
yours. [*He tries on the coat and finds a letter*] What's this
letter? What does it say? [*Reading*] "To Silvia!" This is a
device suitable for the very scheme I have been planning.
I'll be so bold as to break the seal for once.

DUKE reads.

DUKE

[*Reading*] "My thoughts take refuge with my Silvia every
night, and whoever sends those thoughts flying are like
scoundrels to me. Oh, if only I could come and go as easily
my thoughts. Then I would choose to stay where all my
thoughts of Silvia reside imperceptibly within my mind. My
thoughts are like messages delivered to your pure heart
4. I--their sender--urge them to go there. But I also curse the
good fortune that my thoughts have been blessed with,
because I long to be as lucky as they are. I curse myself
because even though I'm the one who sent them, I can't be
where they get to be--with you." What's this here?
[*Reading*] "Silvia, I will free you tonight." Is that so? And here
is the ladder for that purpose. Are you like Phaeton 5,
Merops' son, and will you hope to drive the heavenly
chariot and burn the world with your daring foolishness?
Will you reach the stars because they shine on you? Go, you
lowly invader! You arrogant scoundrel! Give your smiles to
women of your own worth. I hope you know that it is
because of my patience--and not because you deserve it in
any way--that I'm allowing you to leave. Thank me for this
more than for all the kind things I've done for you--of which
there have been far too many. But, if you stay behind in my
lands longer than the short time that I'll give you to leave
my royal court, I swear to God that my anger will be
stronger than the love I've ever had for my daughter or for
you. Get out of here! I don't want to hear any of your
excuses. If you love your life, you'd better get out of here as
fast as possible.

The DUKE exits.

⁴ Shakespeare uses the more general term "bosom" to represent where Valentine imagines his thoughts residing within Silvia.

⁵ Phaeton was the son of the Greek sun god, Helios. Once he was allowed to drive his father's chariot, he crashed it, scalding the earth with the falling sun's rays.

VALENTINE

And why not death rather than living torment?

- 175 To die is to be banish'd from myself;
And Silvia is myself: banish'd from her
Is self from self: a deadly banishment!
What light is light, if Silvia be not seen?
What joy is joy, if Silvia be not by?
- 180 Unless it be to think that she is by
And feed upon the shadow of perfection
Except I be by Silvia in the night,
There is no music in the nightingale;
Unless I look on Silvia in the day,
- 185 There is no day for me to look upon;
She is my essence, and I leave to be,
If I be not by her fair influence
Foster'd, illumined, cherish'd, kept alive.
I fly not death, to fly his deadly doom:
- 190 Tarry I here, I but attend on death:
But, fly I hence, I fly away from life.

Enter PROTEUS and LANCE

PROTEUS

Run, boy, run, run, and seek him out.

LANCE

Soho, soho!

PROTEUS

What seest thou?

LANCE

- 195 Him we go to find: there's not a hair on's head
but 'tis a Valentine.

PROTEUS

Valentine?

VALENTINE

No.

PROTEUS

Who then? His spirit?

VALENTINE

- 200 Neither.

PROTEUS

What then?

VALENTINE

Nothing.

LANCE

Can nothing speak? Master, shall I strike?

PROTEUS

Who wouldst thou strike?

LANCE

- 205 Nothing.

PROTEUS

Villain, forbear.

LANCE

Why, sir, I'll strike nothing: I pray you,--

PROTEUS

Sirrah, I say, forbear. Friend Valentine, a word.

VALENTINE

And why don't I die rather than live in torment? To die is to be banished from myself, and Silvia *is* myself. Being banished from her is like being banished from myself. That's a deadly banishment! What light is light, if Silvia can't be seen? What joy is joy, if Silvia isn't nearby? Unless joy is to simply think that she is nearby and feed on that image of perfection. If I'm not by Silvia during the night, then the nightingale doesn't sing. Unless I look at Silvia during the day, there is no day for me to see. She is my everything, and I will cease to exist if I am not nurtured, illuminated, comforted, and kept alive by her power. It'll be as bad as dying under his death sentence if I run away. But, I will flee--even though I'll be fleeing from life itself.

PROTEUS and LANCE enter.

PROTEUS

Run, boy, run, run; and look for him.

LANCE

Oh, oh!

PROTEUS

What do you see?

LANCE

I found the man we wanted to find. Look, I swear that every hair on that man's head belongs to Valentine.

PROTEUS

Valentine?

VALENTINE

No.

PROTEUS

Who then? His ghost?

VALENTINE

Not his ghost neither.

PROTEUS

What then?

VALENTINE

Nothing.

LANCE

Can nothing speak? Master, shall I hit it?

PROTEUS

Who would you hit?

LANCE

Nothing.

PROTEUS

Rogue, stand by.

LANCE

But sir, I won't hit anything, I swear--

PROTEUS

I said, stand by, sir.

[To VALENTINE] Valentine, my friend, speak to me.

VALENTINE

210 My ears are stopt and cannot hear good news,
So much of bad already hath possess'd them.

PROTEUS

Then in dumb silence will I bury mine,
For they are harsh, untuneable and bad.

VALENTINE

Is Silvia dead?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

215 No Valentine, indeed, for sacred Silvia.
Hath she forsworn me?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

No Valentine, if Silvia have forsworn me.
What is your news?

LANCE

220 Sir, there is a proclamation that you are vanished.

PROTEUS

That thou art banished--O, that's the news!--
From hence, from Silvia and from me thy friend.

VALENTINE

O, I have fed upon this woe already,
And now excess of it will make me surfeit.
225 Doth Silvia know that I am banished?

PROTEUS

Ay, ay; and she hath offer'd to the doom--
Which, unreversed, stands in effectual force--
A sea of melting pearl, which some call tears:
Those at her father's churlish feet she tender'd;
230 With them, upon her knees, her humble self;
Wringing her hands, whose whiteness so became them
As if but now they waxed pale for woe:
But neither bended knees, pure hands held up,
Sad sighs, deep groans, nor silver-shedding tears,
235 Could penetrate her uncompassionate sire;
But Valentine, if he be ta'en, must die.
Besides, her intercession chafed him so,
When she for thy repeal was suppliant,
That to close prison he commanded her,
240 With many bitter threats of bidding there.

VALENTINE

No more; unless the next word that thou speak'st
Have some malignant power upon my life:
If so, I pray thee, breathe it in mine ear,
As ending anthem of my endless dolour.

PROTEUS

245 Cease to lament for that thou canst not help,
And study help for that which thou lament'st.
Time is the nurse and breeder of all good.
Here if thou stay, thou canst not see thy love;
Besides, thy staying will abridge thy life.
250 Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that
And manage it against despairing thoughts.
Thy letters may be here, though thou art hence;
Which, being writ to me, shall be deliver'd
Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love.
255 The time now serves not to expostulate:
Come, I'll convey thee through the city-gate;

VALENTINE

My ears are blocked up and can't hear good news, since
they have been packed with so much bad news already.

PROTEUS

Then I will bury my news in silence, because my news is
harsh and bad.

VALENTINE

Is Silvia dead?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

Then, indeed, there will be no Valentine for sacred Silvia.
Has she rejected me?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

There will be no Valentine, if Silvia has rejected me. What is
your news?

LANCE

Sir, it has been announced that you are vanished.

PROTEUS

That you are banished! Oh, that's the news! Banished from
here, from Silvia and from me, your friend.

VALENTINE

Oh, I have already heard this bad news--and now more of it
will make me ill. Does Silvia know that I am banished?

PROTEUS

Yes, yes, and her reaction to the sentence--which, as long as
it's not reversed, will be as powerful as ever--was a sea of
tears. She offered them and her whole self at her father's
feet, begging on her knees. She was wringing her hands,
which were so white it was like they had just gone pale with
sadness. But neither her knees, nor her hands held up. Her
sad sighs, deep groans, and tears couldn't reach out to her
unfeeling father. But, if you are taken, you will die. Also, her
prayer--in which she asked for the reversal of your
sentence--made her father so angry that he locked her up in
a secluded prison. He made many awful threats if she didn't
stay there.

VALENTINE

Say no more, unless your next word has some evil power
over my life. If so, then I ask you, whisper it in my ear, like a
tune playing at my funeral, to remember my endless
suffering.

PROTEUS

Stop moaning; that won't help you. Instead, let's figure out
how to help the situation you are moaning about. Time
heals all wounds, and makes everything good. If you stay
here, you won't be able to see your love. Besides, your
staying here will shorten your life. Hope is like a lover's staff,
and therefore you can walk with that and handle it against
your despairing thoughts. Your letters can be here, even if
you are away. Address them to me, and they'll be delivered
your love's milk-white bosom. We have no time to discuss it
further. Come, I'll walk you out through the city gate. And,
before I say goodbye, we'll discuss anything that may
concern your love affair in detail. For your love of Silvia--

And, ere I part with thee, confer at large
Of all that may concern thy love-affairs.
As thou lovest Silvia, though not for thyself,
260 Regard thy danger, and along with me!

VALENTINE

I pray thee, Lance, an if thou seest my boy,
Bid him make haste and meet me at the North-gate.

PROTEUS

Go, sirrah, find him out. Come, Valentine.

VALENTINE

O my dear Silvia! Hapless Valentine!

265

Exeunt VALENTINE and PROTEUS

LANCE

I am but a fool, look you; and yet I have the wit to
think my master is a kind of a knave: but that's
all one, if he be but one knave. He lives not now
that knows me to be in love; yet I am in love; but a
270 team of horse shall not pluck that from me; nor who
'tis I love; and yet 'tis a woman; but what woman, I
will not tell myself; and yet 'tis a milkmaid; yet
'tis not a maid, for she hath had gossips; yet 'tis
a maid, for she is her master's maid, and serves for
275 wages. She hath more qualities than a water-spaniel;
which is much in a bare Christian.

Pulling out a paper

LANCE

Here is the cate-log of her condition.
'Imprimis: She can fetch and carry.' Why, a horse
can do no more: nay, a horse cannot fetch, but only
280 carry; therefore is she better than a jade. 'Item:
She can milk;' look you, a sweet virtue in a maid
with clean hands.

Enter SPEED

SPEED

How now, Signior Lance! What news with your
mastership?

LANCE

285 With my master's ship? Why, it is at sea.

SPEED

Well, your old vice still; mistake the word. What
news, then, in your paper?

LANCE

The blackest news that ever thou heardest.

SPEED

Why, man, how black?

LANCE

290 Why, as black as ink.

SPEED

Let me read them.

LANCE

Fie on thee, jolt-head! Thou canst not read.

even if not for your own sake--do what you can to avoid
danger, and come along with me!

VALENTINE

Lance, if you see my boy, tell him to hurry up and meet me
at the North Gate, please.

PROTEUS

[To LANCE] Go find him, sir.

[To VALENTINE] Come, Valentine.

VALENTINE

Oh, my dear Silvia! Unfortunate Valentine!

VALENTINE and PROTEUS exit.

LANCE

I am only a fool, you know. And yet I am clever enough to
think that my master is some kind of villain. But that's all
right if he's one specific kind of a villain. Not a man alive
knows that I am in love. Yet I am in love. But a group of
horses can't get that secret out of me, nor whom I love. And
yet, it's a woman, but I won't say what woman. And yet, it's
a milkmaid. Yet, it's not a servant, because she knows the
gossip and provides domestic services for money. She has
more accomplishments than a submissive dog, which is
saying a lot for a mere Christian.


LANCE pulls out a piece of paper.

LANCE


Here is the list of her attributes. *[Reading]* "In the first place:
She can bring and carry things." A horse can do that. No, a
horse can't *bring* things, but only *carry* them. Therefore,
she is better than a worthless old horse. *[Reading]* "Next:
She can milk a cow." Yes, that is a sweet virtue in a maid
with clean hands.

SPEED enters.

SPEED

How are you, Mr.  Lance? What is the news with your
Mastership?

LANCE

With my master's ship ? It's at sea.

SPEED

Ah, your old bad habit! You didn't understand the word.
What news is in your paper, then?

LANCE

The blackest news that you've ever heard.

SPEED

How black, man?

LANCE


As black as ink.


SPEED

Let me read the news.

LANCE

Damn you, idiot! You can't read.

 In the original text, Speed uses an Italianate form of address for a man ("signior"), appropriate for the scene's setting in Milan.

 Lance mishears Speed's honorific term of address "your Mastership."

SPEED

Thou liest; I can.

LANCE

I will try thee. Tell me this: who begot thee?

SPEED

295 Marry, the son of my grandfather.

LANCE

O illiterate loiterer! It was the son of thy grandmother: this proves that thou canst not read.

SPEED

Come, fool, come; try me in thy paper.

LANCE

There; and St. Nicholas be thy speed!

SPEED

300 *[Reads]* 'Imprimis: She can milk.'

LANCE

Ay, that she can.

SPEED

'Item: She brews good ale.'

LANCE

And thereof comes the proverb: 'Blessing of your heart, you brew good ale.'

SPEED

305 'Item: She can sew.'

LANCE

That's as much as to say, 'Can she so?'

SPEED

'Item: She can knit.'

LANCE

What need a man care for a stock with a wench, when she can knit him a stocking?

SPEED

310 'Item: She can wash and scour.'

LANCE

A special virtue: for then she need not be washed and scoured.

SPEED

'Item: She can spin.'

LANCE

315 Then may I set the world on wheels, when she can spin for her living.

SPEED

'Item: She hath many nameless virtues.'

LANCE

That's as much as to say, bastard virtues; that, indeed, know not their fathers and therefore have no names.

SPEED

You lie. I can.

LANCE

I will test you. Tell me, who conceived you?

SPEED

Indeed, my grandfather's son.

LANCE

Oh, you illiterate slowpoke! It was your *grandmother's* son. This proves that you can't read.

SPEED

Come on, you fool, come on! Test me with your paper.

LANCE

Start reading here, and may [St. Nicholas](#) help you!

SPEED

[Reading] "In the first place: She can milk."

LANCE

Yes, that she can do.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She makes good beer."

LANCE

And that's where the proverb comes from: "Bless your heart, you make a good beer."

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She can stitch."

LANCE

That's as if we were to say: "Can she really?"

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She can knit."

LANCE

Why does a man need a dowry from a woman when she can knit him a stocking?

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She can wash and scrub."

LANCE

That's a special virtue, because then she doesn't need to be cleaned and rubbed clean.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She can spin thread."

LANCE


Then I may have an easy life, when she can spin for a living.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She has many inexpressible qualities."

LANCE

That's as if we were to say that she has illegitimate children that don't know their fathers, and, therefore, have no names.

 Lance suggests that Speed will need the help of St. Nicholas--the patron saint of scholars--to read the paper. He feels Speed can't read without divine intervention.

SPEED

320 'Here follow her vices.'

LANCE

Close at the heels of her virtues.

SPEED

'Item: She is not to be kissed fasting in respect of her breath.'

LANCE

325 Well, that fault may be mended with a breakfast. Read on.

SPEED

'Item: She hath a sweet mouth.'

LANCE

That makes amends for her sour breath.

SPEED

'Item: She doth talk in her sleep.'

LANCE

It's no matter for that, so she sleep not in her talk.

SPEED

330 'Item: She is slow in words.'

LANCE

O villain, that set this down among her vices! To be slow in words is a woman's only virtue: I pray thee, out with't, and place it for her chief virtue.

SPEED

'Item: She is proud.'

LANCE

335 Out with that too; it was Eve's legacy, and cannot be ta'en from her.

SPEED

'Item: She hath no teeth.'

LANCE

I care not for that neither, because I love crusts.

SPEED

'Item: She is curst.'

LANCE

340 Well, the best is, she hath no teeth to bite.

SPEED

'Item: She will often praise her liquor.'

LANCE

If her liquor be good, she shall: if she will not, I will; for good things should be praised.

SPEED

'Item: She is too liberal.'

LANCE

345 Of her tongue she cannot, for that's writ down she is slow of; of her purse she shall not, for that I'll keep shut: now, of another thing she may, and that cannot I help. Well, proceed.

SPEED

[Reading] "Here are her bad qualities."

LANCE

Right after the list of her virtues.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She shouldn't be kissed before she has eaten, because of her breath."

LANCE

Well, that fault can be fixed by breakfast. Carry on reading.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She has a sweet tooth."

LANCE

That makes up for her sour breath.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She talks in her sleep."

LANCE

That doesn't matter, as long as she doesn't sleep when she talks.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She is slow with words."

LANCE

Oh, you rogue! You put that as one of her *bad* qualities! To be slow with words is a woman's only virtue. Take it out of there, I beg you, and put it as her main virtue.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She is greedy."

LANCE

Take that one out too. Women got that quality from Eve in the Garden of Eden, and greed can't be taken from her.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She doesn't have any teeth."

LANCE

I don't care about that one either, because I love to eat crusts.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She is bad-tempered."

LANCE

Well, at least she has no teeth to bite me with.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She drinks liquor often."

LANCE


If her liquor is good, she will drink it. If she won't drink it, I will--because good things should be drunk.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She is too unrestrained."

LANCE

She can't be unrestrained in speaking, because the list says she is slow in that. She can't unrestrained with her money, because I will be in charge of the money. Now, she may be unrestrained in another [thing](#), and I can't help that. Well, carry on.

 Lance may be alluding to the woman's lack of sexual restraint, as

"thing" has sexual overtones--often used in Elizabethan slang as "penis."

SPEED

350 'Item: She hath more hair than wit, and more faults than hairs, and more wealth than faults.'

LANCE

Stop there; I'll have her: she was mine, and not mine, twice or thrice in that last article. Rehearse that once more.

SPEED

'Item: She hath more hair than wit,'--

LANCE

355 More hair than wit? It may be; I'll prove it. The cover of the salt hides the salt, and therefore it is more than the salt; the hair that covers the wit is more than the wit, for the greater hides the less. What's next?

SPEED

360 'And more faults than hairs,'--

LANCE

That's monstrous: O, that that were out!

SPEED

'And more wealth than faults.'

LANCE

365 Why, that word makes the faults gracious. Well, I'll have her; and if it be a match, as nothing is impossible,'--

SPEED

What then?

LANCE

Why, then will I tell thee--that thy master stays for thee at the North-gate.

SPEED

For me?

LANCE

370 For thee! Ay, who art thou? He hath stayed for a better man than thee.

SPEED

And must I go to him?

LANCE

Thou must run to him, for thou hast stayed so long that going will scarce serve the turn.

SPEED

375 Why didst not tell me sooner? Pox of your love letters!

Exit

LANCE

Now will he be swinged for reading my letter; an unmannerly slave, that will thrust himself into secrets! I'll after, to rejoice in the boy's correction.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She has more hair than wisdom; and more faults than hair; and more money than faults."

LANCE

Stop there. I will have her. She was mine, and then not mine--two or three times in that last item you read. Say that one again.

SPEED

[Reading] "Next: She has more hair than wisdom,--"

LANCE

More hair than wisdom? It very well may be; let me prove it logically. The lid of a large salt container hides the salt, and therefore it is more than the salt. The hair that covers the wisdom is more than the wisdom, because the greater hides the smaller. What's next?

SPEED

[Reading] "And more faults than hair,--"

LANCE

That's outrageous! Oh, that should not be on the list.

SPEED

[Reading] "And more money than faults."

LANCE

That fact makes the faults acceptable. Well, I'll have her; and if it's a match, since nothing is impossible--

SPEED

Then what?

LANCE

Then I'll tell you that my master is waiting for you at the North Gate.

SPEED

For me?

LANCE

For you! Yes, who are you? He has waited for a better man than you.

SPEED

And should I go to him?

LANCE

You must *run* to him, because you've stayed here for so long that just *going* won't be enough.

SPEED

Why didn't you tell me earlier? Curse your love letters!

SPEED exits.

LANCE

Now he will be beaten for reading my letter. He is an ill-mannered rascal who will reveal all secrets! I'll follow him so that I can enjoy watching his punishment.

*Exit**LANCE exits.*

Act 3, Scene 2

Shakespeare

*Enter DUKE and TURIO***DUKE**

Sir Turio, fear not but that she will love you,
Now Valentine is banish'd from her sight.

Turio

Since his exile she hath despised me most,
Forsworn my company and rail'd at me,
5 That I am desperate of obtaining her.

DUKE

This weak impress of love is as a figure
Trenched in ice, which with an hour's heat
Dissolves to water and doth lose his form.
A little time will melt her frozen thoughts
10 And worthless Valentine shall be forgot.

*Enter PROTEUS***DUKE**

How now, Sir Proteus! Is your countryman
According to our proclamation gone?

PROTEUS

Gone, my good lord.

DUKE

15 My daughter takes his going grievously.

PROTEUS

A little time, my lord, will kill that grief.

DUKE

So I believe; but Turio thinks not so.
Proteus, the good conceit I hold of thee--
For thou hast shown some sign of good desert--
20 Makes me the better to confer with thee.

PROTEUS

Longer than I prove loyal to your grace
Let me not live to look upon your grace.

DUKE

Thou know'st how willingly I would effect
The match between Sir Turio and my daughter.

PROTEUS

25 I do, my lord.

DUKE

And also, I think, thou art not ignorant
How she opposes her against my will.

PROTEUS

She did, my lord, when Valentine was here.

DUKE

Ay, and perversely she perseveres so.
30 What might we do to make the girl forget
The love of Valentine and love Sir Turio?

Shakescleare Translation

*The DUKE and TURIO enter.***DUKE**

Sir Turio, don't be worried! She will love you now that
Valentine is banished and out of her sight.

TURIO

Since his departure, she has hated me the most. She's
rejected my company, and ranted so abusively at me that I
have no chance in gaining her favor.

DUKE

This weak impression of love is a shape cut out ice, which
will dissolve into water and lose its form if you heat it for an
hour. A little time will melt her frozen thoughts, and she'll
forget all about worthless Valentine.

*PROTEUS enters.***DUKE**

How are you, Sir Proteus? Is your friend gone, just like our
announcement says?

PROTEUS

He's gone, my good lord.

DUKE

My daughter grieves over his departure.

PROTEUS

It will take just a little time for her grief to be over, my lord.

DUKE

I believe so too, but Turio doesn't think so. Since you've
shown some signs that you deserve the good opinion I have
of you, I feel more inclined to talk to you.

PROTEUS

I will prove my loyalty to your Grace. If not, don't let me live
any longer to look upon your face.

DUKE

You know how willingly I would bring about the marriage
between Sir Turio and my daughter.

PROTEUS

I do, my lord.

DUKE

And I also think that you are quite aware of how
vehemently she disagrees with my plan for her future.

PROTEUS

She did disagree when Valentine was here, my lord.

DUKE

Yes, and she continues to do so. What could we do to make
her forget her love for Valentine, and to love Sir Turio
instead?

PROTEUS

The best way is to slander Valentine
With falsehood, cowardice and poor descent,
Three things that women highly hold in hate.

DUKE

35 Ay, but she'll think that it is spoke in hate.

PROTEUS

Ay, if his enemy deliver it:
Therefore it must with circumstance be spoken
By one whom she esteemeth as his friend.

DUKE

Then you must undertake to slander him.

PROTEUS

40 And that, my lord, I shall be loath to do:
'Tis an ill office for a gentleman,
Especially against his very friend.

DUKE

Where your good word cannot advantage him,
Your slander never can endamage him;
45 Therefore the office is indifferent,
Being entreated to it by your friend.

PROTEUS

You have prevail'd, my lord; if I can do it
By ought that I can speak in his dispraise,
She shall not long continue love to him.
50 But say this weed her love from Valentine,
It follows not that she will love Sir Turio.

TURIO

Therefore, as you unwind her love from him,
Lest it should ravel and be good to none,
You must provide to bottom it on me;
55 Which must be done by praising me as much
As you in worth dispraise Sir Valentine.

DUKE

And, Proteus, we dare trust you in this kind,
Because we know, on Valentine's report,
You are already Love's firm votary
60 And cannot soon revolt and change your mind.
Upon this warrant shall you have access
Where you with Silvia may confer at large;
For she is lumpish, heavy, melancholy,
And, for your friend's sake, will be glad of you;
65 Where you may temper her by your persuasion
To hate young Valentine and love my friend.

PROTEUS

As much as I can do, I will effect:
But you, Sir Turio, are not sharp enough;
You must lay lime to tangle her desires
70 By wailful sonnets, whose composed rhymes
Should be full-fraught with serviceable vows.

DUKE

Ay,
Much is the force of heaven-bred poesy.

PROTEUS

Say that upon the altar of her beauty
75 You sacrifice your tears, your sighs, your heart:
Write till your ink be dry, and with your tears
Moist it again, and frame some feeling line
That may discover such integrity:
For Orpheus' lute was strung with poets' sinews,
80

PROTEUS

The best way is to speak badly of Valentine--speak of his
falsehood, cowardice, and low social status. Women hate
these three things very much.

DUKE

Yes, but she'll think that this criticism is motivated by
hatred.

PROTEUS

Yes, but only if Valentine's enemy says these things to her.
That's why someone she considers as his friend should
speak about this with detailed evidence.

DUKE

Then *you* have to speak badly of him.

PROTEUS

I am very reluctant to do that, my lord. It doesn't suit a
gentleman, especially if he does it against his best friend.

DUKE

Since your good words can't help him, your bad words can't
hurt him. Therefore, your position is indifferent, since I am
asking you to do it as a friend.

PROTEUS

You have won me over, my lord. If I can do it by saying
things in order to damage his reputation, she won't
continue to love him. But, even if we root out her love for
Valentine, it doesn't necessarily mean that she will then
love Sir Turio.

TURIO

Therefore, as you untangle her from her love for Valentine--
unless it should get tangled up and be of no use to any of
us--you must prepare to wind her around me. This must be
done by praising me just as much as you speak badly of Sir
Valentine.

DUKE

And Proteus, we trust you with all of this because we know--
from Valentine--that you are already a great preacher of
love, and wouldn't go against it and change your mind all of
a sudden. I authorize you to have access to Silvia; you may
speak together as much as you want, since she is dull,
gloomy, and melancholy. She'll be happy to see you, her
friend. There you may mold her by your persuasion to hate
young Valentine, and to love my friend Turio.

PROTEUS

I will do as much as I can.


[To *TURIO*] But you, Sir Turio, are not eager enough. You
must lay a trap to catch her desires with longing love
poems, whose carefully-constructed rhymes should be
entirely filled with vows of service.

DUKE

Yes, that's the poetry inspired by heaven.

PROTEUS

Say to her that you sacrifice your tears, your sighs, and your
heart on the altar of her beauty. Write until your pen is dry,
and make it wet again with your tears. Compose some
emotional poetry that may reveal your absolute devotion.
Indeed, Orpheus' lute was strung with poets'
tendons. When he played, his golden touch could melt steel

 According to Greek legend, Proteus was a skillful musician whose music could charm even animals, rocks, and trees.

Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones,
 Make tigers tame and huge leviathans
 Forsake unsounded deeps to dance on sands.
 After your dire-lamenting elegies,
 Visit by night your lady's chamber-window
 85 With some sweet concert; to their instruments
 Tune a deploring dump: the night's dead silence
 Will well become such sweet-complaining grievance.
 This, or else nothing, will inherit her.

DUKE

This discipline shows thou hast been in love.

TURIO

90 And thy advice this night I'll put in practise.
 Therefore, sweet Proteus, my direction-giver,
 Let us into the city presently
 To sort some gentlemen well skill'd in music.
 I have a sonnet that will serve the turn
 95 To give the onset to thy good advice.

DUKE

About it, gentlemen!

PROTEUS

We'll wait upon your grace till after supper,
 And afterward determine our proceedings.

DUKE

Even now about it! I will pardon you.

100

Exeunt

and stones, make tigers tame, and huge sea monsters
 abandon the unfathomed parts of the sea. After sending
 your deeply sorrowful, yearning love poems, come to the
 window of your lady's room at night with a group of
 musicians. Sing a melancholic melody to the music of their
 instruments. The night's dead silence will be perfect for
 such a sweet lament. If this doesn't win her over, nothing
 will.

DUKE

This teaching shows that you have been in love.

TURIO

And I'll put your advice to practice tonight. Therefore, sweet
 Proteus, my giver of directions: let's go to the city at once,
 to choose some gentlemen who are skilled musicians. I
 have a sonnet that will work; it will do the trick, according
 to your good advice.

DUKE

Get on with it, gentlemen!


PROTEUS

We'll wait for your Grace until after dinner, and then we'll
 determine what to do afterwards.

DUKE

So get on with it now! I excuse you.

They all exit.

 The lute is a string instrument (somewhat similar to a guitar), a more contemporary stand-in for Orpheus' ancient lyre.

Act 4, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter certain Outlaws

FIRST OUTLAW

Fellows, stand fast; I see a passenger.

SECOND OUTLAW

If there be ten, shrink not, but down with 'em.

Enter VALENTINE and SPEED

THIRD OUTLAW

Stand, sir, and throw us that you have about ye:
 5 If not: we'll make you sit and rifle you.

SPEED

Sir, we are undone; these are the villains
 That all the travellers do fear so much.

VALENTINE

My friends--

FIRST OUTLAW

That's not so, sir: we are your enemies.

SECOND OUTLAW

10 Peace! We'll hear him.

THIRD OUTLAW

Ay, by my beard, will we, for he's a proper man.

Shakescleare Translation

Several OUTLAWS enter.

FIRST OUTLAW

Be ready, guys. I see a traveler.

SECOND OUTLAW

If there are ten of them, don't hesitate. Take them down.

VALENTINE and SPEED enter.

THIRD OUTLAW

Stop, sir, and give us what you've got there. If not, we'll
 make you sit, and we'll rob you.

SPEED

Sir, this is the end of us. These are the villains that all
 travelers are afraid of.

VALENTINE

My friends--

FIRST OUTLAW

No, sir. We are your enemies.

SECOND OUTLAW

Quiet! Let's hear him out.

THIRD OUTLAW

Yes, I swear by my beard that we will. He is a fine-looking
 man.

VALENTINE

15 Then know that I have little wealth to lose:
A man I am cross'd with adversity;
My riches are these poor habiliments,
Of which if you should here disfurnish me,
You take the sum and substance that I have.

SECOND OUTLAW

Whither travel you?

VALENTINE

To Verona.

FIRST OUTLAW

Whence came you?

VALENTINE

20 From Milan.

THIRD OUTLAW

Have you long sojourned there?

VALENTINE

Some sixteen months, and longer might have stay'd,
If crooked fortune had not thwarted me.

FIRST OUTLAW

What, were you banish'd thence?

VALENTINE

25 I was.

SECOND OUTLAW

For what offence?

VALENTINE

30 For that which now torments me to rehearse:
I kill'd a man, whose death I much repent;
But yet I slew him manfully in fight,
Without false vantage or base treachery.

FIRST OUTLAW

Why, ne'er repent it, if it were done so.
But were you banish'd for so small a fault?

VALENTINE

I was, and held me glad of such a doom.

SECOND OUTLAW

Have you the tongues?

VALENTINE

35 My youthful travel therein made me happy,
Or else I often had been miserable.

THIRD OUTLAW

By the bare scalp of Robin Hood's fat friar,
This fellow were a king for our wild faction!

FIRST OUTLAW

We'll have him. Sirs, a word.

SPEED

40 Master, be one of them; it's an honourable kind of
thievery.

VALENTINE

Peace, villain!

VALENTINE

Then you should know that I don't have much wealth to
lose. I am a man destroyed by misfortune. I only own these
poor clothes, and if you would deprive me of those, you'd
take everything that I have.

SECOND OUTLAW

Where are you heading?

VALENTINE

To Verona.

FIRST OUTLAW

Where did you come from?

VALENTINE

From Milan.

THIRD OUTLAW

Did you stay there for a long time?

VALENTINE

Around sixteen months; we might have stayed longer if
such bad luck hadn't come my way.

FIRST OUTLAW

What, were you banished from there?

VALENTINE

I was.

SECOND OUTLAW

For what crime?

VALENTINE

For something that's painful to repeat now. I killed a man,
and I regret his death very much. But I killed him in a fight
like a man should, without unfair advantage or lowly
treachery.

FIRST OUTLAW

Well, since it was done in that way, you don't have to regret
it. But were you banished for just this small crime?

VALENTINE

I was, and I was glad to get such a reasonable sentence.


SECOND OUTLAW

Can you speak any foreign languages?

VALENTINE

Thanks to the traveling I did in my younger years, I am
accomplished in speaking other languages. Otherwise, I
would have been miserable quite often.

THIRD OUTLAW

By the bare head of Robin Hood's fat priest , this guy
would be a king for our wild group!

FIRST OUTLAW


We'll have him. Sirs, a word.

SPEED

Master, you should be one of them! It's an honorable kind of
thievery.

VALENTINE

Quiet, rogue!

 Here, Shakespeare refers to Friar Tuck, a companion of the legendary Robin Hood, whose merry gang stole from the rich to give to the poor.

SECOND OUTLAW

Tell us this: have you any thing to take to?

VALENTINE

Nothing but my fortune.

THIRD OUTLAW

- 45 Know, then, that some of us are gentlemen,
Such as the fury of ungovern'd youth
Thrust from the company of awful men:
Myself was from Verona banished
For practising to steal away a lady,
50 An heir, and near allied unto the duke.

SECOND OUTLAW

And I from Mantua, for a gentleman,
Who, in my mood, I stabb'd unto the heart.

FIRST OUTLAW

- And I for such like petty crimes as these,
But to the purpose--for we cite our faults,
55 That they may hold excus'd our lawless lives;
And partly, seeing you are beautified
With goodly shape and by your own report
A linguist and a man of such perfection
As we do in our quality much want--

SECOND OUTLAW

- 60 Indeed, because you are a banish'd man,
Therefore, above the rest, we parley to you:
Are you content to be our general?
To make a virtue of necessity
And live, as we do, in this wilderness?

THIRD OUTLAW

- 65 What say'st thou? Wilt thou be of our consort?
Say ay, and be the captain of us all:
We'll do thee homage and be ruled by thee,
Love thee as our commander and our king.

FIRST OUTLAW

But if thou scorn our courtesy, thou diest.

SECOND OUTLAW

- 70 Thou shalt not live to brag what we have offer'd.

VALENTINE

I take your offer and will live with you,
Provided that you do no outrages
On silly women or poor passengers.

THIRD OUTLAW

- No, we detest such vile base practises.
75 Come, go with us, we'll bring thee to our crews,
And show thee all the treasure we have got,
Which, with ourselves, all rest at thy dispose.

Exeunt

SECOND OUTLAW

Tell us: do you have any resources?

VALENTINE

Nothing apart from my fortune.

THIRD OUTLAW

You should know that some of us are gentlemen, thrust from the company of respectful men like reckless youngsters. I was banished from Verona for plotting to steal a lady, an heir, who was closely allied with the Duke.

SECOND OUTLAW

And I was banished from Mantua because I stabbed a gentlemen in the heart in a rage.

FIRST OUTLAW

And I was banished for small crimes like these. But let's focus on our purpose. We acknowledge our faults so that they may justify our lawless lives. And also because we see that you are of a beautiful physical appearance; and by what you said to us, you're a linguist and a man of such perfection that we would want you in our profession.

SECOND OUTLAW

Indeed, because you are a banished man, we negotiate with you. We're suggesting this because of *this* reason above all. Would you be happy to be our general? To make a virtue of necessity and live like we do, in this wilderness?

THIRD OUTLAW

What do you say? Will you be a part of our company? Say yes, and be our captain. We'll perform acts of allegiance, be ruled by you, and love you as our commander and our king.

FIRST OUTLAW

But if you reject what we offer you, you'll die.

SECOND OUTLAW

You won't live to boast about what we've just offered you.

VALENTINE

I accept your offer and will live with you--but only if you won't commit any acts of violence on defenseless women or poor travelers.

THIRD OUTLAW

No, we hate such vicious practices. Come along with us! We'll take you to our gang, and show you all our treasures. Like us, they are at your disposal.

They all exit.

Act 4, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter PROTEUS

PROTEUS

Already have I been false to Valentine
And now I must be as unjust to Turio.
Under the colour of commending him,

Shakesclore Translation

PROTEUS enters.

PROTEUS

I have already lied to Valentine, and now I have to be unfair to Turio. Under the pretense of praising him, I have access to my own love, and can praise her. But Silvia is too

I have access my own love to prefer:
 5 But Silvia is too fair, too true, too holy,
 To be corrupted with my worthless gifts.
 When I protest true loyalty to her,
 She twits me with my falsehood to my friend;
 When to her beauty I commend my vows,
 10 She bids me think how I have been forsworn
 In breaking faith with Julia whom I loved:
 And notwithstanding all her sudden quips,
 The least whereof would quell a lover's hope,
 Yet, spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love,
 15 The more it grows and fawneth on her still.
 But here comes Turio: now must we to her window,
 And give some evening music to her ear.

Enter TURIO and Musicians

TURIO

How now, Sir Proteus, are you crept before us?

PROTEUS

Ay, gentle Turio: for you know that love
 20 Will creep in service where it cannot go.

TURIO

Ay, but I hope, sir, that you love not here.

PROTEUS

Sir, but I do; or else I would be hence.

TURIO

Who? Silvia?

PROTEUS

Ay, Silvia; for your sake.

TURIO

25 I thank you for your own. Now, gentlemen,
 Let's tune, and to it lustily awhile.

Enter, at a distance, Host, and JULIA in boy's clothes

HOST

Now, my young guest, methinks you're allycholly: I
 pray you, why is it?

JULIA

Marry, mine host, because I cannot be merry.

HOST

30 Come, we'll have you merry: I'll bring you where
 you shall hear music and see the gentleman that you
 asked for.

JULIA

But shall I hear him speak?

HOST

Ay, that you shall.

JULIA

35 That will be music.

Music plays

HOST

Hark, hark!

JULIA

Is he among these?

beautiful, too true, too saintly, to be corrupted by my
 worthless gifts. When I swear true loyalty to her, she'll taunt
 me for how falsely I've treated my friend. When I declare my
 vows to her beauty, she'll ask me to think about how I have
 broken a promise to Julia, whom I loved. Despite all her
 sudden sharp retorts--the smallest of which would crush a
 lover's hope--I'll be devoted to her like a dog. The more she
 rejects my love, the more it grows and flatters her still. But
 here comes Turio. Now we must go to her window, and play
 some evening music for her.

TURIO and musicians enter.

TURIO

How are you, Sir Proteus? Have you snuck here quietly
 before us?

PROTEUS

Yes, noble Turio. Because you know that love will crawl in
 service where it is forbidden to go.

TURIO

Yes. But I hope, sir, that you don't come here as a lover.

PROTEUS

But I do, sir. Otherwise I wouldn't be here.

TURIO

Whom do you love? Silvia?


PROTEUS

Yes, Silvia--in your name.

TURIO

Thank you, for your own sake, that you made your meaning
 clear. Now, gentlemen, let's play and do so heartily!

*In the distance, the **HOST** and **JULIA** (disguised as a boy)
 enter.*

 The host is an innkeeper.

HOST

My young guest, I think you're melancholic. Tell me, what's
 wrong?

JULIA

Indeed, I can't be happy, my host.

HOST

Come, we'll make you happy! I'll bring you where you will
 hear music, and see the gentleman that you asked for.

JULIA

But will I hear him speak?

HOST

Yes, you will.

JULIA

Now *that* will be music.

Music plays.

HOST

Listen, listen!

JULIA

Is he among these gentlemen?

HOST

Ay; but, peace! Let's hear 'em.

PROTEUS/MUSICIAN

40 *[sings the song]*
Who is Silvia? What is she?
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair and wise is she;
45 The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.
Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness.
Love doth to her eyes repair,
50 To help him of his blindness,
And, being help'd, inhabits there.
Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
55 Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

HOST

How now! Are you sadder than you were before? How do you, man? The music likes you not.

JULIA

You mistake; the musician likes me not.

HOST

60 Why, my pretty youth?

JULIA

He plays false, father.

HOST

How? Out of tune on the strings?

JULIA

Not so; but yet so false that he grieves my very heart-strings.

HOST

65 You have a quick ear.

JULIA

Ay, I would I were deaf; it makes me have a slow heart.

HOST

I perceive you delight not in music.

JULIA

Not a whit, when it jars so.

HOST

Hark, what fine change is in the music!

JULIA

70 Ay, that change is the spite.

HOST

You would have them always play but one thing?

JULIA

I would always have one play but one thing.
But, host, doth this Sir Proteus that we talk on
Often resort unto this gentlewoman?

HOST

Yes, but quiet! Let's hear them!

PROTEUS/MUSICIAN

[Singing]
Who is Silvia? What is she?
That all our lovers praise her?
She is saintly, beautiful and wise.
The heavens lent her such virtue,
So that she might be admired.
Is she as kind as she is beautiful?
Because beauty lives with kindness.
Love hastens to her eyes,
To help him with his blindness,
And being helped, stays there.
Then let us sing to Silvia,
That Silvia is perfection.
She is better than every mortal thing
Dwelling on this dull earth:
Let us bring wreaths to her.

HOST

What's this? Are you sadder than you were before? What's wrong, man? The music doesn't please you.


JULIA

You're wrong. The musician doesn't please me.

HOST

Why, my pretty young boy?

JULIA

He plays out of tune, [old man](#) .

HOST

Out of tune on the strings?

JULIA

No. But yet he's so [out of tune](#)  that he makes my heart-strings sad.

HOST

You have a sharp ear.

JULIA

Yes. I wish that I were deaf. This is making my heart heavy.

HOST

I see that you don't enjoy music.

JULIA

Not at all, when it sounds discordant like this.

HOST

Listen, what a nice variation in the music!

JULIA


Yes, that [change](#)  is what vexes me.


HOST


You would have them always play only one melody?

JULIA

I would always have *one* play only one melody. But, host, does this Sir Proteus that we are talking about come to see this gentlewoman often?

 In the original text, Julia refers to the Host as "father"--a respectful term of address for an old man, not an indication of parentage.

 Julia puns on the musician (Proteus) singing "false" or out of tune notes--and his "false" love for her. She sees how he's gone back on his vow.

 Again, Julia puns on the change in the music and Proteus' "change"--his new interest in Silvia, expressed in song.

HOST

75 I tell you what Lance, his man, told me: he loved her out of all nick.

JULIA

Where is Lance?

HOST

80 Gone to seek his dog; which tomorrow, by his master's command, he must carry for a present to his lady.

JULIA

Peace! Stand aside: the company parts.

PROTEUS

Sir Turio, fear not you: I will so plead That you shall say my cunning drift excels.

TURIO

Where meet we?

PROTEUS

85 At Saint Gregory's well.

TURIO

Farewell.

Exeunt TURIO and Musicians

Enter SILVIA above.

PROTEUS

Madam, good even to your ladyship.

SILVIA

I thank you for your music, gentlemen. Who is that that spake?

PROTEUS

90 One, lady, if you knew his pure heart's truth, You would quickly learn to know him by his voice.

SILVIA

Sir Proteus, as I take it.

PROTEUS

Sir Proteus, gentle lady, and your servant.

SILVIA

What's your will?

PROTEUS

95 That I may compass yours.

SILVIA

You have your wish; my will is even this:
That presently you hie you home to bed.
Thou subtle, perjured, false, disloyal man!
Think'st thou I am so shallow, so conceitless,
100 To be seduced by thy flattery,
That hast deceived so many with thy vows?
Return, return, and make thy love amends.
For me, by this pale queen of night I swear,
I am so far from granting thy request
105 That I despise thee for thy wrongful suit,
And by and by intend to chide myself
Even for this time I spend in talking to thee.

PROTEUS

I grant, sweet love, that I did love a lady;

HOST

I'll tell you what his servant Lance told me. He loved her beyond reckoning.

JULIA

Where is Lance?

HOST

He's gone to look for his dog, which he must carry to his lady as a present tomorrow--as his master ordered.

JULIA

Quiet! Let's back up. The men are leaving. [*JULIA and the HOST step back, unseen by the others*]

PROTEUS

Sir Turio, don't be afraid. I will carry on so that you shall say my clever plan is successful.

TURIO

Where should we meet?

PROTEUS

At Saint Gregory's Well.

TURIO

Goodbye.

TURIO and musicians exit.

SILVIA enters from above, at her window.

PROTEUS

Madam, good evening to your Ladyship.

SILVIA

Thank you for your music, gentlemen. Who was the man that spoke to me?

PROTEUS

One whose voice you would quickly learn to recognize, if you knew the truth of his pure heart.

SILVIA

I take it that it's Sir Proteus.

PROTEUS

Sir Proteus, noble lady. I am your servant.

SILVIA

What's your intent?

PROTEUS

That I may fulfill your wishes.

SILVIA

You have your wish. My wish is this: that you hurry home to bed immediately. You treacherous, lying, false, disloyal man! Do you think that I am so shallow, so witless that I can be seduced by your flattery; you that have deceived so many with your promises? Return, return, and make things right with your beloved. I swear by this moon that I am so far from agreeing to your request that I hate you and your insulting courtship. And for that, I plan to scold myself for spending even this time talking to you.

PROTEUS

I agree, sweet love, that I did love a lady. But she is dead.

But she is dead.

JULIA

110 *[Aside]* 'Twere false, if I should speak it;
For I am sure she is not buried.

SILVIA

Say that she be; yet Valentine thy friend
Survives; to whom, thyself art witness,
I am betroth'd : and art thou not ashamed
115 To wrong him with thy importunacy?

PROTEUS

I likewise hear that Valentine is dead.

SILVIA

And so suppose am I; for in his grave
Assure thyself my love is buried.

PROTEUS

Sweet lady, let me rake it from the earth.

SILVIA

120 Go to thy lady's grave and call hers thence,
Or, at the least, in hers sepulchre thine.

JULIA

[Aside] He heard not that.

PROTEUS

Madam, if your heart be so obdurate,
Vouchsafe me yet your picture for my love,
125 The picture that is hanging in your chamber;
To that I'll speak, to that I'll sigh and weep:
For since the substance of your perfect self
Is else devoted, I am but a shadow;
And to your shadow will I make true love.

JULIA

130 *[Aside]* If 'twere a substance, you would, sure,
deceive it,
And make it but a shadow, as I am.

SILVIA

I am very loath to be your idol, sir;
But since your falsehood shall become you well
135 To worship shadows and adore false shapes,
Send to me in the morning and I'll send it:
And so, good rest.

PROTEUS

As wretches have o'ernight
That wait for execution in the morn.
140

Exeunt PROTEUS and SILVIA severally

JULIA

Host, will you go?

HOST

By my halidom, I was fast asleep.

JULIA

Pray you, where lies Sir Proteus?

HOST

145 Marry, at my house. Trust me, I think 'tis almost
day.

JULIA

[To herself] That's not true, if I should say it. I'm sure
she's not buried yet.

Here, Julia tries not to give her true identity away in the Host's presence. (She knows Julia's not dead because she herself is alive, but she must pretend that it's knowledge she, a "boy," has obtained.)

SILVIA

Even if she is dead, your friend Valentine is alive. You know
that we are engaged, and yet you're not ashamed to wrong
him with your persistent courtship?

PROTEUS

I also heard that Valentine is dead.

SILVIA

So then, imagine that I am dead too. You can be sure that
my love is buried with Valentine in his grave.

PROTEUS

Sweet lady, let me gather your buried love from the earth.

SILVIA

Go to your lady's grave, and call her there. Or at least bury
your love with hers there.

JULIA

[To herself] He didn't hear that.

PROTEUS

Madam, if your heart is so unyielding, allow me to get your
picture for my love. The picture that is hanging in your
room. I'll speak to that; I'll sigh and cry to that. Since the
substance of your perfect self is devoted elsewhere, I am
only a shadow. I will woo your image.

JULIA

[To herself] If this picture of Silvia were a real live woman,
you would be unfaithful to it. You'd act as if it were a mere
shadow to be discarded--the same way you've treated me.

SILVIA

I hate to be your idol, sir. It would be just like you to worship
shadows and adore false shapes, because you are so false
to women. Send for the picture in the morning and I'll give
it to you. And so, goodnight.

PROTEUS

I feel like the wretches who have to wait overnight for an
execution in the morning.

PROTEUS and SILVIA exit in different directions.

JULIA

Host, will you go?

HOST

By all I consider holy, I fell asleep.

JULIA

Tell me, where is Sir Proteus staying?

HOST

Indeed, at my inn. Trust me, I think it's almost day.

JULIA

Not so; but it hath been the longest night
That e'er I watch'd and the most heaviest.

*Exeunt***JULIA**

No, it's not. But it has been the longest night that I've ever
stayed up, and the most sorrowful.

They exit.

Act 4, Scene 3

Shakespeare

*Enter EGLAMOUR***EGLAMOUR**

This is the hour that Madam Silvia
Entreated me to call and know her mind:
There's some great matter she'd employ me in.
Madam, madam!

*Enter SILVIA above***SILVIA**

5 Who calls?

EGLAMOUR

Your servant and your friend;
One that attends your ladyship's command.

SILVIA

Sir Eglamour, a thousand times good morrow.

EGLAMOUR

As many, worthy lady, to yourself:
10 According to your ladyship's impose,
I am thus early come to know what service
It is your pleasure to command me in.

SILVIA

O Eglamour, thou art a gentleman--
Think not I flatter, for I swear I do not--
15 Valiant, wise, remorseful, well accomplish'd:
Thou art not ignorant what dear good will
I bear unto the banish'd Valentine,
Nor how my father would enforce me marry
Vain Turio, whom my very soul abhors.
20 Thyself hast loved; and I have heard thee say
No grief did ever come so near thy heart
As when thy lady and thy true love died,
Upon whose grave thou vow'dst pure chastity.
Sir Eglamour, I would to Valentine,
25 To Mantua, where I hear he makes abode;
And, for the ways are dangerous to pass,
I do desire thy worthy company,
Upon whose faith and honour I repose.
Urge not my father's anger, Eglamour,
30 But think upon my grief, a lady's grief,
And on the justice of my flying hence,
To keep me from a most unholy match,
Which heaven and fortune still rewards with plagues.
I do desire thee, even from a heart
35 As full of sorrows as the sea of sands,
To bear me company and go with me:
If not, to hide what I have said to thee,
That I may venture to depart alone.

EGLAMOUR

Madam, I pity much your grievances;
40 Which since I know they virtuously are placed,
I give consent to go along with you,
Recking as little what betideth me
As much I wish all good befotune you.

Shakescleare Translation

*EGLAMOUR enters.***EGLAMOUR**

This is the time that Madam Silvia told me to come and talk
to her. There's something she wants me to do.

*[To SILVIA] Madam, madam!**SILVIA enters from above, at her window.***SILVIA**

Who's calling me?

EGLAMOUR

Your servant and your friend. One that is waiting to hear
your Ladyship's order.

SILVIA

Sir Eglamour, a thousand times good morning.

EGLAMOUR

As many good mornings to yourself, worthy lady. According
to your ladyship's command, I was supposed to come this
early to find out what service you'd like me to carry out.

SILVIA

Oh, Eglamour, you are a gentleman. Don't think that I'm
flattering you; I swear I'm not. You are brave, wise,
compassionate, well-accomplished. You know how much I
care about the banished Valentine, and how my father
wants to force me to marry the foolish Turio, whom I hate
with all my heart. You have been in love. And I have heard
you say that you have never felt more grief in your heart
than you did when your lady--your true love--died. And you
have vowed pure chastity on her grave. Sir Eglamour, I want
to go to Valentine in Mantua, where I heard he is. And since
the journey is dangerous, I would like your worthy
company, because I rely on your faith and honor. Don't
encourage my father's anger, Eglamour. Just think about
my grief--a lady's grief--and about the justice of my running
away from here; and from a most unholy marriage--which
heaven and fortune would always make horrible. This is
coming from a heart as full of sorrows as the sea is full of
sand. I want you to keep me company and go with me. If
you won't then keep secret what I have said to you so that I
may go alone.

EGLAMOUR

Madam, I am sorry for your distress. Since I know your
cause is right and virtuous, I agree to go with you. I don't
care much about what will happen to me. My wish is that
only good things happen to you. When are you planning on
going?

When will you go?

SILVIA

45 This evening coming.

EGLAMOUR

Where shall I meet you?

SILVIA

At Friar Patrick's cell,
Where I intend holy confession.

EGLAMOUR

50 I will not fail your ladyship. Good morrow, gentle lady.

SILVIA

Good morrow, kind Sir Eglamour.

Exeunt severally


SILVIA


This evening.

EGLAMOUR

Where shall I meet you?

SILVIA

At Friar  Patrick's cell, where I intend to make a holy confession.

 A friar is a monk, who lives in a monastic cell--a small room or hut.

EGLAMOUR

You can rely on me, your Ladyship. Have a good morning, gentle lady.

SILVIA

Good morning to you, too, kind Sir Eglamour.

They exit in different directions.

Act 4, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter LANCE, with his his Dog

LANCE

When a man's servant shall play the cur with him, look you, it goes hard: one that I brought up of a puppy; one that I saved from drowning, when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it.

5 I have taught him, even as one would say precisely, 'thus I would teach a dog.' I was sent to deliver him as a present to Mistress Silvia from my master; and I came no sooner into the dining-chamber but he steps me to her trencher and steals her capon's leg:
10 O, 'tis a foul thing when a cur cannot keep himself in all companies! I would have, as one should say, one that takes upon him to be a dog indeed, to be, as it were, a dog at all things. If I had not had more wit than he, to take a fault upon me that he did,
15 I think verily he had been hanged for't; sure as I live, he had suffered for't; you shall judge. He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentlemanlike dogs under the duke's table: he had not been there--bless the mark!--a pissing while, but
20 all the chamber smelt him. 'Out with the dog!' says one: 'What cur is that?' says another: 'Whip him out!' says the third: 'Hang him up!' says the duke. I, having been acquainted with the smell before, knew it was Crab, and goes me to the fellow that
25 whips the dogs: 'Friend,' quoth I, 'you mean to whip the dog?' 'Ay, marry, do I,' quoth he. 'You do him the more wrong,' quoth I; 'twas I did the thing you wot of.' He makes me no more ado, but whips me out of the chamber. How many masters would do this for
30 his servant? Nay, I'll be sworn, I have sat in the stocks for puddings he hath stolen, otherwise he had been executed; I have stood on the pillory for geese he hath killed, otherwise he had suffered for't. Thou thinkest not of this now. Nay, I remember the
35 trick you served me when I took my leave of Madam Silvia: did not I bid thee still mark me and do as I do? When didst thou see me heave up my leg and make water against a gentlewoman's farthingale? Didst thou ever see me do such a trick?


Enter PROTEUS and JULIA

Shakescleare Translation

LANCE enters with his dog, Crab.

LANCE

When a master's servant behaves like a dog to him, it is tough. I brought this one up from a puppy; I saved this one from drowning, when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters drowned. I have taught him, even as one would say precisely, "I would teach a dog like this." I was sent to deliver him as a present from my master to Mistress Silvia, and as soon as I came into the dining room, he comes to her plate and steals her chicken leg. Oh, it's a horrible thing when a dog can't behave himself in different kinds of company! But, as they really should say, I happen to have a dog that is a dog indeed--a dog in everything he does. If I didn't have more wisdom than he does--to plead guilty for his wrongdoing--I really think he would have been hanged for it. For as sure as I live, he's suffered for it, as you'll see. He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentlemanly dogs under the Duke's table. He had not been there (pardon my language) as long as the time it takes to piss--and everybody in the room smelled him. "Out with the dog!" someone says. "What dog is that?" someone else says. "Whip him!" a third says. "Hang him up" says the Duke. Since I have known the smell before, I knew it was Crab. So I go to the man that whips the dogs: "Friend," I say, "are you going to whip the dog?" "Yes, I am" he says. "You'll make things even worse for him if you do," I say. "I was the one who did the thing you know about." He makes no more fuss about it, but whips *me* out of the room. How many masters would do this for their servants? No, I swear, I have sat in the stocks  for sausages he has stolen. Otherwise, *he* would have been executed. I have also been punished for geese he has killed. Otherwise, *he* would have suffered for it. Don't think about this now. No, I remember the trick you played on me when I left Madam Silvia. Didn't I ask you to always pay attention to me, just like I pay attention to you? When did you see me raise up my leg and urinate onto a gentlewoman's skirt? Have you ever seen me do such a trick?

 For public punishment, criminals were placed in the stocks--wooden devices that locked their wrists and ankles in place.

PROTEUS and JULIA (disguised as a boy) enter.

PROTEUS

40 Sebastian is thy name? I like thee well
And will employ thee in some service presently.

JULIA

In what you please: I'll do what I can.

PROTEUS

I hope thou wilt.

PROTEUS

45 [to LANCE] How now, you whoreson peasant!
Where have you been these two days loitering?

LANCE

Marry, sir, I carried Mistress Silvia the dog you bade me.

PROTEUS

And what says she to my little jewel?

LANCE

50 Marry, she says your dog was a cur, and tells you
currish thanks is good enough for such a present.

PROTEUS

But she received my dog?

LANCE

No, indeed, did she not: here have I brought him
back again.

PROTEUS

55 What, didst thou offer her this from me?

LANCE

Ay, sir: the other squirrel was stolen from me by
the hangman boys in the market-place: and then I
offered her mine own, who is a dog as big as ten of
yours, and therefore the gift the greater.

PROTEUS

60 Go get thee hence, and find my dog again,
Or ne'er return again into my sight.
Away, I say! Stay'st thou to vex me here?

Exit LANCE

PROTEUS

A slave, that still an end turns me to shame!
Sebastian, I have entertained thee,
65 Partly that I have need of such a youth
That can with some discretion do my business,
For 'tis no trusting to yond foolish lout,
But chiefly for thy face and thy behavior,
Which, if my augury deceive me not,
70 Witness good bringing up, fortune and truth:
Therefore know thou, for this I entertain thee.
Go presently and take this ring with thee,
Deliver it to Madam Silvia:
She loved me well deliver'd it to me.

JULIA

75 It seems you loved not her, to leave her token.
She is dead, belike?

PROTEUS

Not so; I think she lives.

JULIA

Alas!

PROTEUS

[To JULIA] Is your name Sebastian? I like you, and so I'll give
you a job to do soon.

JULIA

I'll do whatever you'd like, if I can.

PROTEUS

I hope you will.

PROTEUS

[To LANCE] What's this? You bastard peasant! Where have
you been these past two days?

LANCE

I carried the dog to Mistress Silvia like you asked me to, sir.

PROTEUS

And what does she say to my pretty little dog?

LANCE

She says that your dog is badly-behaved. And she tells you
that a snide "thanks" is good enough for a present like that.

PROTEUS

But did she receive my dog?

LANCE

No, she didn't. I have brought him back here again.

PROTEUS

Wait a second! Did you offer her *this* dog from me?

LANCE

Yes, sir. Some mischievous boys in the market square stole
the other small dog from me. So then I offered her my own
dog, who is as big as ten of yours. And therefore the gift was
all the greater.

PROTEUS

Get out of here and go find my dog! And if you don't, I don't
ever want to see you again. Go away, I say! Are you staying
here to make me angry?

LANCE exits.

PROTEUS

He is a rascal that continuously makes me ashamed!
Sebastian, I have taken you into service, partly because I
need such a young boy who can carry out my business with
discretion. There's no point in trusting that foolish man
over there. But I have mostly employed you because of your
face and your manners, which—if my prediction is correct—
are evidence of a good upbringing, fortune, and truth.
Therefore, you should know that I have taken you for these
reasons. Go at once and take this ring with you. Deliver it to
Madam Silvia. The girl who gave it to me loved me well.

JULIA

It seems that you didn't love her, since you parted with her
token. Is she dead?

PROTEUS

No, I think she is alive.

JULIA

Ah!

PROTEUS

Why dost thou cry 'alas'?

JULIA

80 I cannot choose
But pity her.

PROTEUS

Wherefore shouldst thou pity her?

JULIA

Because methinks that she loved you as well
As you do love your lady Silvia:
85 She dreams of him that has forgot her love;
You dote on her that cares not for your love.
'Tis pity love should be so contrary;
And thinking of it makes me cry 'alas!'

PROTEUS

Well, give her that ring and therewithal
90 This letter. That's her chamber. Tell my lady
I claim the promise for her heavenly picture.
Your message done, hie home unto my chamber,
Where thou shalt find me, sad and solitary.

Exit

JULIA

How many women would do such a message?
95 Alas, poor Proteus! Thou hast entertain'd
A fox to be the shepherd of thy lambs.
Alas, poor fool! Why do I pity him
That with his very heart despiseth me?
Because he loves her, he despiseth me;
100 Because I love him I must pity him.
This ring I gave him when he parted from me,
To bind him to remember my good will;
And now am I, unhappy messenger,
To plead for that which I would not obtain,
105 To carry that which I would have refused,
To praise his faith which I would have dispraised.
I am my master's true-confirmed love;
But cannot be true servant to my master,
Unless I prove false traitor to myself.
110 Yet will I woo for him, but yet so coldly
As, heaven it knows, I would not have him speed.

Enter SILVIA, attended

JULIA

Gentlewoman, good day! I pray you, be my mean
To bring me where to speak with Madam Silvia.

SILVIA

115 What would you with her, if that I be she?

JULIA

If you be she, I do entreat your patience
To hear me speak the message I am sent on.

SILVIA

From whom?

JULIA

From my master, Sir Proteus, madam.

SILVIA

120 O, he sends you for a picture.

JULIA

Ay, madam.

PROTEUS

Why do you cry, "Ah?"

JULIA

I can't help myself: I feel sorry for her.

PROTEUS

Why should you feel sorry for her?

JULIA

Because I think that she loved you as well as you love your
lady Silvia. She dreams of the man who has forgotten her
love. You are obsessed with someone who doesn't care to
have your love. It's a pity that love should be so contrary.
And thinking of it makes me cry, "Ah!"

PROTEUS

Well, give her that ring, and with it, this letter. That's her
room there. Tell my lady that she should keep her promise
and give me her heavenly picture. Once you deliver the
message, go home to my room, where you will find me sad
and alone.

PROTEUS exits.

JULIA

How many women would carry such a message? Ah, poor
Proteus! You have employed a fox to be the shepherd of
your lambs. Oh, I am a poor fool! Why do I pity the man who
hates me with his heart? Because he loves *her*, he hates
me. And because I love *him*, I have to feel sorry for him. I
gave him this ring when we said goodbye--to make him
promise to remember me. And now I am an unhappy
messenger, who has to ask for the picture that I don't want
to get; to carry the ring which I should have refused; to
praise his faith--which I should have said bad things about. I
am my master's truly-confirmed love. But I cannot be a true
servant to my master, unless I betray myself. Yes, I will woo
Silvia for him. But I'll do it coldly since I don't want him to
succeed, as heaven knows.

SILVIA enters, accompanied by servants.

JULIA

Good day, gentlewoman! I beg you to take me where I can
speak with Madam Silvia.

SILVIA

What do you want with her? Pretend that I'm her.

JULIA

If you are her, then I ask you to patiently hear the message I
am sent here to deliver.

SILVIA

A message from whom?

JULIA

From my master, Sir Proteus, madam.

SILVIA

Oh, he sends you here for a picture.

JULIA

Yes, madam.

SILVIA

Ursula, bring my picture here.
Go give your master this: tell him from me,
One Julia, that his changing thoughts forget,
125 Would better fit his chamber than this shadow.

JULIA

Madam, please you peruse this letter.--
Pardon me, madam; I have unadvised
Deliver'd you a paper that I should not:
This is the letter to your ladyship.

SILVIA

130 I pray thee, let me look on that again.

JULIA

It may not be; good madam, pardon me.

SILVIA

There, hold!
I will not look upon your master's lines:
I know they are stuff'd with protestations
135 And full of new-found oaths; which he will break
As easily as I do tear his paper.

JULIA

Madam, he sends your ladyship this ring.

SILVIA

The more shame for him that he sends it me;
For I have heard him say a thousand times
140 His Julia gave it him at his departure.
Though his false finger have profaned the ring,
Mine shall not do his Julia so much wrong.

JULIA

She thanks you.

SILVIA

What say'st thou?

JULIA

145 I thank you, madam, that you tender her.
Poor gentlewoman! My master wrongs her much.

SILVIA

Dost thou know her?

JULIA

Almost as well as I do know myself:
To think upon her woes I do protest
150 That I have wept a hundred several times.

SILVIA

Belike she thinks that Proteus hath forsook her.

JULIA

I think she doth; and that's her cause of sorrow.

SILVIA

Is she not passing fair?

JULIA

She hath been fairer, madam, than she is:
155 When she did think my master loved her well,
She, in my judgment, was as fair as you:
But since she did neglect her looking-glass
And threw her sun-expelling mask away,
The air hath starved the roses in her cheeks

160

SILVIA

[To a servant] Ursula, bring my picture here.

[To JULIA] Go and give your master this. Tell him, from me,
that one Julia--whom he has forgotten in his changing
thoughts--would better suit his room than this shadow of a
picture.

JULIA

[She hands SILVIA a letter] Madam, please read this letter--
Wait! Pardon me, madam. I have accidentally given you a
paper that I shouldn't have. *[She hands SILVIA another
letter]* This is the letter addressed to your Ladyship.

SILVIA

Please, let me look at *that* one again.

JULIA

No, I don't think that's a good idea, good madam. Forgive
me.

SILVIA

Wait a moment! I will not read your master's lines. I know
they are full of declarations of love and recently-invented
oaths--which he will break as easily as I tear his letter apart.

JULIA

Madam, he sends your Ladyship this ring.

SILVIA

He should be ashamed for sending it to me, because I have
heard him say a thousand times that his Julia gave him this
ring when they said goodbye. Though his false finger has
abused the ring, my finger will not do his Julia so much
wrong by wearing the ring.

JULIA

She thanks you.

SILVIA

What did you say?

JULIA

I thank you, madam, that you care for her. Poor
gentlewoman! My master has really wronged her.

SILVIA

Do you know her?

JULIA

Almost as well as I know myself. I have thought about her
suffering a hundred times, and it has made me cry.

SILVIA

She probably thinks that Proteus has abandoned her.

JULIA

I think she does, and that's why she is mourning.

SILVIA

Isn't she beautiful?

JULIA

She has been more beautiful than she is now, madam.
When she thought that my master loved her, I think she was
as beautiful as you. But since she stopped looking in the
mirror and threw her mask away, the air has starved the
rosy blush on her cheeks, and eroded the lily-white color of
her face, so now she has become as black as I.

And pinch'd the lily-tincture of her face,
That now she is become as black as I.

SILVIA

How tall was she?

JULIA

About my stature; for at Pentecost,
When all our pageants of delight were play'd,
165 Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
And I was trimm'd in Madam Julia's gown,
Which served me as fit, by all men's judgments,
As if the garment had been made for me:
Therefore I know she is about my height.
170 And at that time I made her weep agood,
For I did play a lamentable part:
Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning
For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight;
Which I so lively acted with my tears
175 That my poor mistress, moved therewithal,
Wept bitterly; and would I might be dead
If I in thought felt not her very sorrow!

SILVIA

She is beholding to thee, gentle youth.
Alas, poor lady, desolate and left!
180 I weep myself to think upon thy words.
Here, youth, there is my purse; I give thee this
For thy sweet mistress' sake, because thou lovest her.
Farewell.

Exit SILVIA, with attendants

JULIA

And she shall thank you for't, if e'er you know her.
185 A virtuous gentlewoman, mild and beautiful
I hope my master's suit will be but cold,
Since she respects my mistress' love so much.
Alas, how love can trifle with itself!
Here is her picture: let me see; I think,
190 If I had such a tire, this face of mine
Were full as lovely as is this of hers:
And yet the painter flatter'd her a little,
Unless I flatter with myself too much.
Her hair is auburn, mine is perfect yellow:
195 If that be all the difference in his love,
I'll get me such a colour'd periwig.
Her eyes are grey as glass, and so are mine:
Ay, but her forehead's low, and mine's as high.
What should it be that he respects in her
200 But I can make respective in myself,
If this fond Love were not a blinded god?
Come, shadow, come and take this shadow up,
For 'tis thy rival. O thou senseless form,
Thou shalt be worshipp'd, kiss'd, loved and adored!
205 And, were there sense in his idolatry,
My substance should be statue in thy stead.
I'll use thee kindly for thy mistress' sake,
That used me so; or else, by Jove I vow,
I should have scratch'd out your unseeing eyes
210 To make my master out of love with thee!

Exit

SILVIA

How tall was she?

JULIA

About my height, because at Pentecost ², when all our
enjoyable plays are performed, I played the woman's part ³.
. And I dressed up in Madam Julia's dress, which fitted
me as well as my men's clothes, as if the dress was made for
me. Therefore, I know she is about my height. And, at that
time, I made her cry in earnest because I played a tragic
role. It was Ariadne ⁴'s passionate sorrowing for Theseus
not keeping his promise and unjustly running away,
madam. I was so convincing with my acting, and even shed
tears. Because of this, my poor mistress--moved by it all--
cried bitterly. If I didn't feel her sorrow in that moment, I
should have been dead!

SILVIA

She is indebted to you, gentle boy. Ah, poor lady,
abandoned and left behind! I cry just thinking about your
words. Here, boy, take my purse. I give you this for the sake
of your sweet mistress, because you love her. Goodbye.

SILVIA exits with her servants.

JULIA

And she *will* thank you for it, if you ever meet her. She is a
virtuous, kind and beautiful gentlewoman. I hope my
master's wooing will be received coldly, since Silvia
respects my mistress Julia's love so much. Ah, how love can
play with itself! Here is her picture. Let me see, I think if I
had accessories like these, my face would be as lovely as
hers. And yet the painter painted her more beautiful than
she is, unless I think of myself as more beautiful. Her hair is
auburn, mine is perfectly blond. If that's the only difference
in his love, I can get myself a wig of that color. Her eyes are
as gray as glass--and so are mine. Yes, but her forehead is
low, whereas mine is high. What does he admire in her that I
can make worthy of respect in myself--if this Love were not
a blinded god? Come, shadow. ⁵ Come and pick up this
picture of a shadow, since it's your rival. Oh, you
unconscious image: you will be worshiped, kissed, loved
and adored! And if Proteus' idolatry were to make sense, I
would be the idol instead of you. I'll treat you kindly for the
sake of your mistress Silvia, who likewise treated me kindly.
Or else I'll swear by Jove ⁶ that I should have scratched
out your unseeing eyes to make my master fall out of love
with you!

JULIA exits.

² In the original text, "Pentecost" (or Whitsun) is the Christian festival held on the seventh Sunday after Easter.

³ In Shakespeare's day, Englishwomen were not legally allowed to perform on the public stage. Men played women's roles dressed in drag. This adds layers of comic irony to Julia's cross-dressing.

⁴ In Greek mythology, Theseus left his lover Ariadne, even though she had rescued him from the deadly Minotaur's labyrinth.

⁵ Here, this "shadow" refers to Julia's disguise.

⁶ Jove was the ancient Roman king of the gods.

Act 5, Scene 1

Shakespeare

Enter EGLAMOUR

Shakescleare Translation

EGLAMOUR enters.

EGLAMOUR

The sun begins to gild the western sky;
 And now it is about the very hour
 That Silvia, at Friar Patrick's cell, should meet me.
 She will not fail, for lovers break not hours,
 5 Unless it be to come before their time;
 So much they spur their expedition.
 See where she comes.

Enter SILVIA

EGLAMOUR

Lady, a happy evening!

SILVIA

10 Amen, amen! Go on, good Eglamour,
 Out at the postern by the abbey-wall:
 I fear I am attended by some spies.

EGLAMOUR

Fear not: the forest is not three leagues off;
 If we recover that, we are sure enough.

15

Exeunt

EGLAMOUR

The sun begins to tinge the western sky with gold. And now it's time for Silva to meet me at Friar Patrick's place. She won't be late. Lovers never miss the time they're supposed to meet up--unless they arrive early if they really can't wait to see each other. Here she comes.

SILVIA enters.

EGLAMOUR

Good evening to you, lady!

SILVIA

Amen to that! Let's go, good Eglamour. Let's go out at the back gate by the abbey wall. I am afraid that some spies are following me.

EGLAMOUR

Don't be afraid. The forest is less than nine miles away. If we reach it, we'll be safe enough.

They exit.

Act 5, Scene 2

Shakespeare

Enter TURIO, PROTEUS, and JULIA

TURIO

Sir Proteus, what says Silvia to my suit?

PROTEUS

O, sir, I find her milder than she was;
 And yet she takes exceptions at your person.

TURIO

What, that my leg is too long?

PROTEUS

5 No; that it is too little.

TURIO

I'll wear a boot, to make it somewhat rounder.

JULIA

[Aside] But love will not be spurr'd to what
 it loathes.

TURIO

What says she to my face?

PROTEUS

10 She says it is a fair one.

TURIO

Nay then, the wanton lies; my face is black.

PROTEUS

But pearls are fair; and the old saying is,
 Black men are pearls in beautiful ladies' eyes.

JULIA

15 *[Aside]* 'Tis true; such pearls as put out
 ladies' eyes;
 For I had rather wink than look on them.

Shakescleare Translation

TURIO, PROTEUS, and JULIA enter.

TURIO

Sir Proteus, what does Silvia say about my wooing?

PROTEUS

Oh, sir, I think she is more gracious than she was before.
 And yet, she is not so sure about your physical appearance.

TURIO

What? Is it because my legs are too long?

PROTEUS

No, it's because your legs are too thin.

TURIO

I'll wear boots to make my legs look a bit thicker.

JULIA

[To herself] But love won't be inspired by something it
 hates.

TURIO

What does she say about my face?

PROTEUS

She says it's pale.

Turio

No, I think that willful woman lies. My face is tan.

PROTEUS

But pearls are white. And the old saying goes that tan men
 are pearls in the eyes of beautiful ladies.

JULIA

[To herself] That's true. Such pearls make ladies' eyes
 useless. I would rather shut my eyes than look at them.

TURIO

How likes she my discourse?

PROTEUS

Ill, when you talk of war.

TURIO

But well, when I discourse of love and peace?

JULIA

20 *[Aside]* But better, indeed, when you hold your peace.

TURIO

What says she to my valour?

PROTEUS

O, sir, she makes no doubt of that.

JULIA

[Aside] She needs not, when she knows it cowardice.

TURIO

What says she to my birth?

PROTEUS

25 That you are well derived.

JULIA

[Aside] True; from a gentleman to a fool.

TURIO

Considers she my possessions?

PROTEUS

O, ay; and pities them.

TURIO

Wherefore?

JULIA

30 *[Aside]* That such an ass should owe them.

PROTEUS

That they are out by lease.

JULIA

Here comes the duke.

Enter DUKE

DUKE

35 How now, Sir Proteus! How now, Turio!
Which of you saw Sir Eglamour of late?

TURIO

Not I.

PROTEUS

Nor I.

DUKE

Saw you my daughter?

PROTEUS

Neither.

TURIO

How does she like my conversation?

PROTEUS

She doesn't like it when you talk about violence.

TURIO

Then, what does she think when I speak about love and peace?

JULIA

[To herself] It's better when you just keep silent.

TURIO

What does she say about my bravery?

PROTEUS

Oh, sir, she has no doubt of that.

JULIA

[To herself] She doesn't need to doubt your bravery, because she knows that you're a coward.

TURIO

What does she say about my noble ancestry?

PROTEUS

That you are well descended.

JULIA

[To herself] True. You've gone from a gentleman to a fool.

turio

Does she consider my possessions?

PROTEUS

Oh, yes, and she feels sorry for them.

TURIO

Why?

JULIA

[To herself] Because such an ass owns them.

PROTEUS

That they are borrowed or rented and not entirely in your possession.

JULIA

Here comes the Duke.

The DUKE enters.

DUKE

Sir Proteus! How's it going? And Turio, how are you? Which of you saw Sir Eglamour recently?

TURIO

I didn't.

PROTEUS

Neither did I.

DUKE

Have you seen my daughter?

PROTEUS

Not her either.

DUKE

40 Why then,
She's fled unto that peasant Valentine;
And Eglamour is in her company.
'Tis true; for Friar Laurence met them both,
As he in penance wander'd through the forest;
45 Him he knew well, and guess'd that it was she,
But, being mask'd, he was not sure of it;
Besides, she did intend confession
At Patrick's cell this even; and there she was not;
These likelihoods confirm her flight from hence.
50 Therefore, I pray you, stand not to discourse,
But mount you presently and meet with me
Upon the rising of the mountain-foot
That leads towards Mantua, whither they are fled:
Dispatch, sweet gentlemen, and follow me.

*Exit***TURIO**

55 Why, this it is to be a peevish girl,
That flies her fortune when it follows her.
I'll after, more to be revenged on Eglamour
Than for the love of reckless Silvia.

*Exit***PROTEUS**

And I will follow, more for Silvia's love
60 Than hate of Eglamour that goes with her.

*Exit***JULIA**

And I will follow, more to cross that love
Than hate for Silvia that is gone for love.

*Exit***DUKE**

Well, then, she has run away to find that peasant Valentine,
and Eglamour has accompanied her. It's true. Friar
Lawrence has met them both as he wandered through the
forest, repenting. He recognized Eglamour, and guessed
that it was Silvia--but since she was masked, he wasn't sure
of it. Besides, she was planning on going to confession
tonight at Patrick's place, but she wasn't there. All of these
instances confirm that she has run away. Therefore, please,
don't delay by talking. Get on horseback at once, and meet
me by the base of the mountain that leads toward Mantua,
where they are going. Hurry up, sweet gentlemen, and
follow me.

*The DUKE exits.***TURIO**

Well, she's a foolish girl for fleeing from a good courtship
when it follows her. I'll go after her--not so much because I
love the uncaring Silvia, but more because I want to take
revenge on Eglamour.

*TURIO exits.***PROTEUS**

And I'll follow--because I love Silvia more than I hate
Eglamour, who accompanies her.

*PROTEUS exits.***JULIA**

And I'll follow, so I can frustrate Proteus' love--not because I
hate Silvia, who has left for love's sake.

JULIA exits.

Act 5, Scene 3

Shakespeare

*Enter Outlaws with SILVIA***FIRST OUTLAW**

Come, come,
Be patient; we must bring you to our captain.

SILVIA

A thousand more mischances than this one
Have learn'd me how to brook this patiently.

SECOND OUTLAW

5 Come, bring her away.

FIRST OUTLAW

Where is the gentleman that was with her?

THIRD OUTLAW

Being nimble-footed, he hath outrun us,
But Moyses and Valerius follow him.
Go thou with her to the west end of the wood;
10 There is our captain: we'll follow him that's fled;
The thicket is beset; he cannot 'scape.

Shakesclore Translation

*OUTLAWS enter with SILVIA.***FIRST OUTLAW**

Come, come and be patient. We have to bring you to our
captain.

SILVIA

A thousand misfortunes greater than this one have taught
me how to endure this patiently.

SECOND OUTLAW

Come, bring her here.

FIRST OUTLAW

Where is the gentleman that was with her?

THIRD OUTLAW

He moved quickly and lightly, so he outran us. But Moyses
and Valerius are following him. Go with her to the west end
of the forest--that's where our captain is. We'll follow the
one who ran away. The bushes surround him; he can't
escape.

FIRST OUTLAW

Come, I must bring you to our captain's cave:
Fear not; he bears an honourable mind,
And will not use a woman lawlessly.

SILVIA

15 O Valentine, this I endure for thee!

Exeunt

FIRST OUTLAW

Come, I must bring you to our captain's cave. Don't be afraid. He has an honorable mind, and won't mistreat a woman.

SILVIA

Oh, Valentine, I bear all of this for you!

They all exit.

Act 5, Scene 4

Shakespeare

Enter VALENTINE.

VALENTINE

How use doth breed a habit in a man!
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns:
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
5 And to the nightingale's complaining notes
Tune my distresses and record my woes.
O thou that dost inhabit in my breast,
Leave not the mansion so long tenantless,
Lest, growing ruinous, the building fall
10 And leave no memory of what it was!
Repair me with thy presence, Silvia;
Thou gentle nymph, cherish thy forlorn swain!
What halloing and what stir is this to-day?
These are my mates, that make their wills their law,
15 Have some unhappy passenger in chase.
They love me well; yet I have much to do
To keep them from uncivil outrages.
Withdraw thee, Valentine: who's this comes here?

Enter PROTEUS, SILVIA, and JULIA

PROTEUS

Madam, this service I have done for you,
20 Though you respect not aught your servant doth,
To hazard life and rescue you from him
That would have forced your honour and your love;
Vouchsafe me, for my meed, but one fair look;
A smaller boon than this I cannot beg
25 And less than this, I am sure, you cannot give.

VALENTINE

[Aside] How like a dream is this I see and hear!
Love, lend me patience to forbear awhile.

SILVIA

O miserable, unhappy that I am!

PROTEUS

Unhappy were you, madam, ere I came;
30 But by my coming I have made you happy.

SILVIA

By thy approach thou makest me most unhappy.

JULIA

[Aside] And me, when he approacheth to your presence.

SILVIA

Had I been seized by a hungry lion,
I would have been a breakfast to the beast,
35 Rather than have false Proteus rescue me.

Shakesclare Translation

VALENTINE enters.

VALENTINE

Increasing familiarity can make people feel more at home, no matter where they are! This shadowy deserted place--a forest that no one ever visits--now feels better to me than towns bustling with people. Here, I can sit alone, and no one sees me. I can tune the sad songs I sing to the nightingale's sorrowful notes. Oh, you that live in my breast: don't leave my love's dwelling place so long without a tenant. Otherwise, it will become a ruin, and the building will fall and leave no memory of what it was! Revive me with your presence, Silvia. You gentle, beautiful creature: treasure me, your abandoned lover! What's this shouting and what hustle do we have here today? These are my friends that make their desires into their laws. They are following some unfortunate traveler. They love me, but I have a lot to do to keep them from committing uncivil and shocking acts. Valentine, keep away for now. Who's coming here?

PROTEUS, SILVIA, and JULIA (disguised as a boy) enter.

PROTEUS

Madam, I have done you this service. But you don't value what I--your servant--have done. I risked my life and rescued you from the outlaw that would have raped you. Give me just one beautiful look as my reward. I cannot ask for a smaller favor. And I am sure this is the least you can do for me.

VALENTINE

[To himself] What I see and hear is like a dream! Love, give me patience to wait for a while.

SILVIA

Oh, I am miserable and unhappy!

PROTEUS

You were unhappy before I came, madam. But my coming here has made you happy.

SILVIA

But your loving advances make me very unhappy.

JULIA

[To herself] And when he makes those advances to you, Silvia, it makes *me* unhappy.

SILVIA

If I were taken by a hungry lion, I would rather have been the beast's breakfast than have the false Proteus rescue me. Oh, Heaven may be the judge of how much I love Valentine,

O, Heaven be judge how I love Valentine,
Whose life's as tender to me as my soul!
And full as much, for more there cannot be,
I do detest false perjured Proteus.

40 Therefore be gone; solicit me no more.

PROTEUS

What dangerous action, stood it next to death,
Would I not undergo for one calm look!
O, 'tis the curse in love, and still approved,
When women cannot love where they're beloved!

SILVIA

45 When Proteus cannot love where he's beloved.
Read over Julia's heart, thy first best love,
For whose dear sake thou didst then rend thy faith
Into a thousand oaths; and all those oaths
Descended into perjury, to love me.
50 Thou hast no faith left now, unless thou'dst two;
And that's far worse than none; better have none
Than plural faith which is too much by one:
Thou counterfeit to thy true friend!

PROTEUS

In love
55 Who respects friend?

SILVIA

All men but Proteus.

PROTEUS

Nay, if the gentle spirit of moving words
Can no way change you to a milder form,
I'll woo you like a soldier, at arms' end,
60 And love you 'gainst the nature of love,—force ye.

SILVIA

O heaven!

PROTEUS

I'll force thee yield to my desire.

VALENTINE

Ruffian, let go that rude uncivil touch,
Thou friend of an ill fashion!

PROTEUS

65 Valentine!

VALENTINE

Thou common friend, that's without faith or love,
For such is a friend now; treacherous man!
Thou hast beguiled my hopes; nought but mine eye
Could have persuaded me: now I dare not say
70 I have one friend alive; thou wouldst disprove me.
Who should be trusted, when one's own right hand
Is perjured to the bosom? Proteus,
I am sorry I must never trust thee more,
But count the world a stranger for thy sake.
75 The private wound is deepest: O time most accurst,
'Mongst all foes that a friend should be the worst!

PROTEUS

My shame and guilt confounds me.
Forgive me, Valentine: if hearty sorrow
Be a sufficient ransom for offence,
80 I tender 't here; I do as truly suffer
As e'er I did commit.

VALENTINE

Then I am paid;
And once again I do receive thee honest.
Who by repentance is not satisfied

85

whose life's as precious to me as my soul! And I hate the
false, lying Proteus the most—more than words can express.
Therefore, leave. Don't pursue me anymore.

PROTEUS

I would take on any fight—even a deadly one—just for one
loving glance! Oh, it's still proved true that love's curse is a
woman who cannot reciprocate love.

SILVIA

No, when *Proteus* can't reciprocate love. Study Julia's
heart, your first and truest love. You tore up your fidelity to
Julia into a thousand false promises (which are now just
lies) in order to love me. You have no fidelity left now—
unless you maintain two separate senses of loyalty, one to
her and one to me. And *that's* worse than if you had
none. It's better to be faithful to no one than to be faithful
to two women. That's too much for either woman to bear.
You are a false imitation of a true friend like Valentine!

PROTEUS

Who takes a friend into consideration when it comes to
love?

SILVIA

All men do, except Proteus.

PROTEUS

No, if the gentle nature of my wooing words cannot in any
way make you behave more mildly, then I'll woo you like a
soldier. I'll rape you at knife point, and love you in a way
that goes against the nature of love.

SILVIA

Oh God!

PROTEUS

I'll force you to give in to my desire.

VALENTINE

Rascal, stop that rude, brutish behavior, you wicked friend!

PROTEUS

Valentine!

VALENTINE

You are an ordinary friend that's without faith or love. And
such a friend is now a treacherous man! You have deceived
my hopes: nothing could have persuaded me about that
except for witnessing your behavior firsthand. Now I won't
dare to say that I have only one friend that's alive—because
you would prove me wrong. Who should be trusted, when
one's closest friend is a liar? Proteus, I am sorry I must
never trust you again, but consider you a stranger. The
personal wound is the deepest one. Oh, what an awful
moment! Its terrible when a friend should be the worst
among your enemies.

PROTEUS

My shame and guilt overcome me. Forgive me, Valentine. If
hearty sorrow can be enough to make up for my offense, I
offer it here. I do suffer for the wrongs I've committed.

VALENTINE

Then I am satisfied. And once again, I'll regard you as an
honest man. He who is not satisfied with someone else's
repentance is not of heaven or of earth. For repentance

Is nor of heaven nor earth, for these are pleased.
By penitence the Eternal's wrath's appeased:
And, that my love may appear plain and free,
All that was mine in Silvia I give thee.

JULIA

O me unhappy!

90

*Swoons***PROTEUS**

Look to the boy.

VALENTINE

Why, boy! Why, wag! How now! What's the matter?
Look up; speak.

JULIA

95 O good sir, my master charged me to deliver a ring
to Madam Silvia, which, out of my neglect, was never
done.

PROTEUS

Where is that ring, boy?

JULIA

Here 'tis; this is it.

PROTEUS

100 How! Let me see:
Why, this is the ring I gave to Julia.

JULIA

O, cry you mercy, sir, I have mistook:
This is the ring you sent to Silvia.

PROTEUS

But how camest thou by this ring? At my depart
I gave this unto Julia.

JULIA

105 And Julia herself did give it me;
And Julia herself hath brought it hither.

PROTEUS

How! Julia!

JULIA

110 Behold her that gave aim to all thy oaths,
And entertain'd 'em deeply in her heart.
How oft hast thou with perjury cleft the roset!
O Proteus, let this habit make thee blush!
Be thou ashamed that I have took upon me
Such an immodest raiment, if shame live
In a disguise of love:
115 It is the lesser blot, modesty finds,
Women to change their shapes than men their minds.

PROTEUS

Than men their minds! 'Tis true.
O heaven! Were man
But constant, he were perfect. That one error
120 Fills him with faults; makes him run through all the
sins:
Inconstancy falls off ere it begins.
What is in Silvia's face, but I may spy
More fresh in Julia's with a constant eye?

VALENTINE

125 Come, come, a hand from either:
Let me be blest to make this happy close;
'Twere pity two such friends should be long foes.

pleases both people on earth, and also God. Repentance
calms God's anger. And to prove that my friendship can be
honest and generous, I give you my claim to Silvia.

JULIA

Oh, I am unhappy!

*JULIA faints.***PROTEUS**

Take care of that boy.

VALENTINE

Boy! Come on, boy! What's the matter? Look up and speak.

JULIA

Oh, good sir. My master instructed me to deliver a ring to
Madam Silvia, which I forgot to do.

PROTEUS

Where is that ring, boy?

JULIA

Here it is.

PROTEUS

Let me see. But this is the ring I gave to Julia!

JULIA

Oh, forgive me sir. I have made a mistake. This is the ring
you sent to Silvia.

PROTEUS

But how is it that *you* have this ring? I gave it to Julia when
we said goodbye.

JULIA

And Julia herself gave it to me. And Julia herself has
brought it here.

PROTEUS

Julia?! Is that you?

JULIA


Look at me, the woman who was once the object of all your
promises. I received them deeply in my heart. How often
have you split the bottom of my heart when you broke a
promise! Oh, Proteus, let my outfit make you blush! Be
ashamed that I have been wearing such immodest
clothing--if it can be shameful to wear a disguise for the
sake of love. It's much more appropriate and a lesser fault
for women to be deceptive in their appearance than for
men to be deceptive in their love.

PROTEUS

Than for men to be unfaithful! That's true. Oh heaven! If
only man could be faithful, then he would be perfect.
Because one mistake fills him with faults, he commits so
many sins. Being unfaithful gets old very fast. What is in
Silvia's face, that I can't see more clearly in Julia's with
faithful eyes?

VALENTINE

Come, come, give me your hands. Let me be blessed to
make a happy end to this. It would be a pity if two friends
like you should be enemies.

 In Shakespeare's time, sumptuary laws were strict guidelines for what people could wear according to their gender and social rank. Cross-dressing was considered immodest and controversial.

PROTEUS

Bear witness, Heaven, I have my wish for ever.

JULIA

And I mine.

130

Enter Outlaws, with DUKE and TURIO

OUTLAWS

A prize, a prize, a prize!

VALENTINE

Forbear, forbear, I say! It is my lord the duke.
Your grace is welcome to a man disgraced,
Banished Valentine.

DUKE

135 Sir Valentine!

TURIO

Yonder is Silvia; and Silvia's mine.

VALENTINE

Turio, give back, or else embrace thy death;
Come not within the measure of my wrath;
Do not name Silvia thine; if once again,
140 Verona shall not hold thee. Here she stands;
Take but possession of her with a touch:
I dare thee but to breathe upon my love.

TURIO

Sir Valentine, I care not for her, I;
I hold him but a fool that will endanger
145 His body for a girl that loves him not:
I claim her not, and therefore she is thine.

DUKE

The more degenerate and base art thou,
To make such means for her as thou hast done
And leave her on such slight conditions.
150 Now, by the honour of my ancestry,
I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,
And think thee worthy of an empress' love:
Know then, I here forget all former griefs,
Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again,
155 Plead a new state in thy unrival'd merit,
To which I thus subscribe: Sir Valentine,
Thou art a gentleman and well derived;
Take thou thy Silvia, for thou hast deserved her.

VALENTINE

I thank your grace; the gift hath made me happy.
160 I now beseech you, for your daughter's sake,
To grant one boon that I shall ask of you.

DUKE

I grant it, for thine own, whate'er it be.

VALENTINE

These banish'd men that I have kept withal
Are men endued with worthy qualities:
165 Forgive them what they have committed here
And let them be recall'd from their exile:
They are reformed, civil, full of good
And fit for great employment, worthy lord.

DUKE

Thou hast prevail'd; I pardon them and thee:
170 Dispose of them as thou know'st their deserts.
Come, let us go: we will include all jars
With triumphs, mirth and rare solemnity.

PROTEUS

Heaven, be my witness. I will keep my wish forever.

JULIA

And I will keep mine.

OUTLAWS enter along with the DUKE and TURIO.

OUTLAWS

A prize, a prize, a prize!

VALENTINE

Stop, stop, I say! It is my lord, the Duke. It is I, a dishonored
man--the banished Valentine--who welcomes Your Grace.

DUKE

Sir Valentine!

TURIO

There's Silvia, and Silvia is mine.

VALENTINE

Turio, move back, or else accept your death. Don't come
close to the range of my anger. Do not call Silvia yours. If
you do that once more, Verona won't protect you. Here she
is. Go ahead, try to only touch her and take her as your own;
I *dare* you to do so much as *breathe* on my love.

TURIO

Sir Valentine, I don't care about her. I think a man would be
foolish to put his body in danger for a girl that doesn't love
him. I don't call her mine, and therefore she is yours.

DUKE

[To TURIO] You are all the more degenerate and lowly,
because you went to such lengths to win her, and then just
left her based on such insubstantial grounds.

[To VALENTINE] Now, by the honor of my ancestry, I
congratulate your spirit, Valentine. And I think you are
worthy of an empress' love. Know that I will now forget all
previous trouble, cancel all hatred, and allow you to return
to your home again. Ask for a new set of circumstances
based on your unquestionable merit, and I'll agree to
them. Sir Valentine, you are a gentleman. Take Silvia,
because you have earned her.

VALENTINE

Thank you, your Grace. The gift has made me happy. I now
ask you--for your daughter's sake--to do me one more favor.

DUKE

I'll grant your request, whatever it may be.

VALENTINE

These banished men that I have lived with have some
valuable qualities. Forgive them for what they have done
here, and let them return home from their exile. They are
reformed, civil, full of goodness, and ready to do you great
service, noble Lord.

DUKE

You have convinced me. I pardon them, and I pardon you.
Make arrangements for them in accordance with what they
deserve. Come, let's go. We will bring this all to an end with
festivities, joy, and a marvelous celebration.

VALENTINE

And, as we walk along, I dare be bold
With our discourse to make your grace to smile.

175 What think you of this page, my lord?

DUKE

I think the boy hath grace in him; he blushes.

VALENTINE

I warrant you, my lord, more grace than boy.

DUKE

What mean you by that saying?

VALENTINE

Please you, I'll tell you as we pass along,
That you will wonder what hath fortified.
Come, Proteus; 'tis your penance but to hear
The story of your loves discovered:
That done, our day of marriage shall be yours;
One feast, one house, one mutual happiness.

180

Exeunt

VALENTINE

And as we walk along, I will dare to be bold with our
conversation--so I can make your Grace smile. [*Referring to
JULIA*] What do you think of this boy, my lord?

DUKE

I think the boy is charming. He blushes.

VALENTINE

I guarantee, my lord, that this person is more beautiful and
charming than this person is a boy.

DUKE

What do you mean by that?

VALENTINE

If you wish, I'll tell you while we walk--and you will marvel
at what has happened.

[*To PROTEUS*] Come, Proteus. Your punishment will be to
listen to the story of your discovered love. When that's
done, our wedding day will also be yours. One feast, one
house, and one mutual happiness.

They all exit.

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