Much Ado About Nothing: 1.1

Enter LEONATO and BEATRICE, with a MESSENGER

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| Leanato | I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Arragon comes this night to Messina. |
| Messenger | He is very near by this: he was not three leagues off when I left him. |
| Leanato | How many gentlemen have you lost in this action? |
| Messenger | But few of any sort, and none of name. |
| Beatrice | I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returned from the wars or no? |
| Messenger | I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort. |
| Leanato | My niece means Signior Benedick of Padua. |
| Messenger | O, he's returned; and as pleasant as ever he was. |
| Beatrice | I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars? For indeed I promised to eat all of his killing. |
| Leanato | Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not. |
| Messenger | He hath done good service, lady, in these wars. |
| Leanato | You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them. |
| Beatrice | Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one. |
| Messenger | I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books. |
| Beatrice | No; an he were, I would burn my study. |
| Messenger | I will hold friends with you, lady. |
| Beatrice | Do, good friend. |
| Leanato | You will never run mad, niece. |
| Beatrice | No, not till a hot January. |
| Messenger | Don Pedro is approached. |
|  | Enter DON PEDRO, BENEDICK |
| Don Pedro | Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble. |
| Leanato | Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace. |
| Don Pedro | You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter. |
| Benedick | If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is. |
| Beatrice | I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you. |
| Benedick | What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living? |
| Beatrice | Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such food to feed it as Signior Benedick? |
| Benedick | It is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none. |
| BEATRICE | A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me. |
| BENEDICK | God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face. |
| BEATRICE | Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were. |
| BENEDICK | I would my horse had the speed of your tongue- |
| DON PEDRO | That is the sum of all. |
| LEANATO | Please it your grace lead on? |
| DON PEDRO | Your hand, Leonato; we will go together. |