

Act 1 Scene 1

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 honored 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 lov'st, 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 noteworthy 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?

VALENTINE and **PROTEUS** enter.

VALENTINE

Stop trying to persuade me, Proteus. Young homebodies have dull minds. If you weren't so tied to the girl you love, I'd ask you to come with me to see the distant wonders of the world rather than waste your youth living aimlessly as a sluggard at home. But, since you're in love, love constantly and thrive in your love. I would do the same were I in love.

PROTEUS

Are you going now? Goodbye, Valentine, my dear friend! Think of me when you happen to see some rare and noteworthy object in your travels. Wish me happiness, too, when you have good fortune. And if you're ever in danger, trust that my prayers will protect you, for I will pray for you, Valentine.

VALENTINE

And you'll be praying for me on [a book about love](#) , I suspect?

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 crossed 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 swam 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 heartsore sighs, one fading moment's mirth
With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights.

PROTEUS

I'll pray for you on a book I love.

VALENTINE

No doubt on some shallow story of "true" love, like the one
about young [Leander crossing the Hellespont](#) .

PROTEUS

That's a deep story of a deeper love—the love was so deep it
covered his shoes.

VALENTINE

It's true. And your love is so deep it covers your boots, and yet
you never swam across the Hellespont.

PROTEUS

Covers my boots? Don't make fun of me.

VALENTINE

No, I won't, for it doesn't profit you any.

PROTEUS

What?

VALENTINE

When you're in love, your love-sick groans only earn her scorn,
your brokenhearted sighs just get you flirtatious glances, and
twenty tedious, sleepless nights spent pining for your

If haply won, perhaps a hapless gain;
If lost, why then a grievous labour won;
35 However, but a folly bought with wit,
Or else a wit by folly vanquishèd.

PROTEUS

So, by your circumstance, you call me fool.

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

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

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

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

VALENTINE

And writers say, as the most forward bud

sweetheart only yield you a brief moment of happiness. If by chance you succeed, it may turn out to be an unlucky win. And if you don't, then you've only managed to waste your time. Either way, you win foolishness by being clever, or your cleverness is killed by foolishness.

PROTEUS

So, by your logic, I'm a fool.

VALENTINE

Because of your logic, I fear you'll become a fool.

PROTEUS

It's love you have a problem with. But don't blame me—I'm not Love.

VALENTINE

Love is your master, because he's got the better of you. And in my opinion, anyone who's been taken in by a fool shouldn't be considered very wise himself.

PROTEUS

Yet writers say that just as the destructive caterpillar dwells within the sweetest flower buds, love inhabits the cleverest minds.

VALENTINE

Is eaten by the canker ere it blow,
Even so by love the young and tender wit
Is turned to folly, blasting in the bud,
50 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?
Once more adieu! My father at the road
55 Expects my coming, there to see me shipped.

PROTEUS

And thither will I bring thee, Valentine.

VALENTINE

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
60 Betideth here in absence of thy friend;
And I 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 VALENTINE

And writers also say that just as the caterpillar eats the
greatest flower bud before it blooms, so too does love make
young and fragile minds foolish. It destroys the young lover,
who loses his youth while still in his prime, and takes away all
his future hopes. But why am I wasting my time giving advice
to you, a man who is devoted to foolish love? So, once again,
farewell! My father expects to meet me at the harbor to see
my ship off.

PROTEUS

I'll go with you, Valentine.

VALENTINE

My dear Proteus, no. We should say goodbye to each other
now. Write to me in Milan, and tell me of your luck with love
and whatever other news happens while I'm away. I'll likewise
write to you.

PROTEUS

May you find happiness in Milan!

VALENTINE

And the same to you here at home! Farewell!

VALENTINE exits.

PROTEUS

He after honor hunts, I after love.

65 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,
War with good counsel, set the world at naught;
70 Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.

*Enter **SPEED***

SPEED

Sir Proteus, save you! Saw you my master?

PROTEUS

But now he parted hence, to embark for Milan.

SPEED

Twenty to one, then, he is shipped already,
And I have played the sheep in losing him.

PROTEUS

75 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

He hunts for honor, while I hunt for love. He leaves his friends
to bring them more honor, but I neglect myself, my friends,
and everything else for love. Oh, Julia, you've transformed me.
You've made me neglect my studies, waste my time, argue
against all reasonable advice, and set myself against the world.
You've made my brain weak from thinking about you so much,
and my heart sick with melancholy.

***SPEED** enters.*

SPEED

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

PROTEUS

He just left here a minute ago on his way to Milan.

SPEED

I'd wager twenty to one, then, that his ship has already left. I'm
foolish for having lost him.

PROTEUS

Indeed, sheep often go astray when the shepherd has gone
away.

SPEED

You're saying that my master is a shepherd, then, and I'm a
sheep?

PROTEUS

I do.

SPEED

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

PROTEUS

80 A silly answer, and fitting well a sheep.

SPEED

This proves me still a sheep.

PROTEUS

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

85 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

PROTEUS

Yes.

SPEED

Well then, my horns are his horns, whether I'm awake or asleep.

PROTEUS

What a silly answer—very fitting for a sheep.

SPEED

This means you think I'm still a sheep.

PROTEUS

Yes, and your master a shepherd.

SPEED

No, I can disprove that with an example.

PROTEUS

It'll be a challenge, but I'll prove it with another example.

SPEED

The shepherd looks for the sheep, but the sheep doesn't look for the shepherd. I'm looking for my master, but my master isn't looking for me. Therefore, I'm not a 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

Such another proof will make me cry "Baa."

PROTEUS

But dost thou hear? Gav'st 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 labor.

PROTEUS

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

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.

The sheep follows the shepherd because it wants food, but the shepherd doesn't follow the sheep for food. You follow your master for your pay, but your master doesn't follow you for pay. Therefore, you're a sheep.

SPEED

Another bad example like that and I'll say, "Baa."

PROTEUS

But anyway, what happened? Did you give my letter to Julia?

SPEED

Yes, sir. I, a lost sheep, gave your letter to her, a [prostitute](#). And she, the prostitute, gave me, a lost sheep, nothing for all my hard work.

PROTEUS

The world isn't big enough for all these darn sheep.

SPEED

If it's too crowded for you, then you should stick her.

PROTEUS

No, now you've really gone astray. I ought to pound you.

SPEED

No, sir, less than a pound will suffice for delivering your letter.

PROTEUS

You mistake. I mean the pound—a pinfold.

SPEED

95 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

[Nodding] Ay.

PROTEUS

Nod-ay—why, that's "noddy."

SPEED

100 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

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

PROTEUS

PROTEUS

You misunderstood. I meant *give you a pounding*, pinhead.

SPEED

You've gone from a pound down to a pinhead? No, I want more
than that—that's far too little payment for delivering a letter to
your lover.

PROTEUS

So what did she say?

SPEED

(nodding) Ay.

PROTEUS

Nod-ay? Well, that's "naughty."

SPEED

You misunderstood, sir. I said she nodded, and you asked me if
she nodded, and I said, "Ay."

PROTEUS

And all that put together is "naughty."

SPEED

Now that you've taken the trouble to figure it out, take that for
your trouble and consider it your answer.

PROTEUS

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

SPEED

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

PROTEUS

105 Why, sir, how do you bear with me?

SPEED

Marry, sir, the letter, very orderly, having nothing but the word "noddly" 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

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

PROTEUS

[Giving him money] Well, sir, here is for your pains. What said she?

No, no, you shall have it for delivering the letter.

SPEED

Well, I guess I must be willing to put up with you.

PROTEUS

Why, sir, what do you mean, "put up with me"?

SPEED

Geez, sir, I mean getting nothing but the word "naughty" as payment for my delivery.

PROTEUS

Damn, you have a quick wit.

SPEED

And yet I can't speed past your slowness in paying me.

PROTEUS

Come on, come on, tell me briefly. What did she say?

SPEED

Open your wallet, and the money and her response will both be delivered.

PROTEUS

(giving him money) Well, sir, here's something for your trouble. What did she say?

SPEED

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

PROTEUS

Why, couldst thou perceive so much from her?

SPEED

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 hard as steel.

PROTEUS

¹¹⁵ 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 letters yourself. And so, sir, I'll commend you to my master.

PROTEUS

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

Exit **SPEED**

SPEED

Honestly, sir, I think you'll have a hard time winning her.

PROTEUS

Why? Did you get that from speaking with her?

SPEED

Sir, I couldn't get anything at all out of her, not even so much as a tip for delivering your letter. And since she was so stingy to me for having delivered your thoughts, I fear she'll prove just as stingy with you. Don't give her any little gifts except stones, because she's as hard as steel.

PROTEUS

What did she say? Nothing?

SPEED

No, not even so much as "Take this for your trouble." I can attest to your generosity since you've given me a small tip. In return, you can deliver your own letters from now on. And so, sir, I'll say hello to my master for you.

PROTEUS

Go on, get out of here. You'll save your ship from sinking since [you're destined to die on dry land](#) .

SPEED *exits.*

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

Exit

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.

JULIA

What think'st thou of the fair Sir Eglamour?

LUCETTA

I must send a letter with a better messenger. I'm afraid my
Julia wouldn't accept my letter because she received it from
such a worthless postman.

PROTEUS *exits.*

Act 1 Scene 2

JULIA and LUCETTA enter.

JULIA

Now that we're alone, tell me, Lucetta, would you recommend
that I fall in love?

LUCETTA

Yes, madam, so you stumble into it on purpose.

JULIA

Of all the attractive gentlemen that speak with me daily, which
do you think would be best to love?

LUCETTA

Please tell me their names again, and I'll tell you my opinion
about them as best I can.

JULIA

What do you think of the attractive 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.

As a knight, he's well spoken, elegant, and fine. But if I were you, I wouldn't fall in love with him.

JULIA

What do you think of Mercatio, who is rich?

LUCETTA

I like his money a lot, but him only so-so.

JULIA

What do you think of kind Proteus?

LUCETTA

Good Lord, how foolish people are!

JULIA

What's that for? Why this outburst at his name?

LUCETTA

Pardon me, dear madam, it's inexcusable that I, the unworthy servant that I am, should criticize such lovely gentlemen.

JULIA

Why don't you think well of Proteus out of all the rest?

LUCETTA

Fine then—of all the good men, I think Proteus is 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

JULIA

What's your reason?

LUCETTA

I have no other reason than a woman's intuition: I think he's the best simply because I do.

JULIA

And would you have me throw my love at him?

LUCETTA

Yes, if you thought your love wouldn't be thrown away.

JULIA

But, of all the others, he has never proposed to me.

LUCETTA

Yet, of all the others, I think he loves you the most.

JULIA

The fact that he doesn't say much to me shows he doesn't love me much.

LUCETTA

Fire that's most enclosed burns most of all.

JULIA

Those who don't show their love don't love at all.

LUCETTA

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

JULIA

I would I knew his mind.

LUCETTA

[Giving a letter] 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

Sir 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 harbor wanton lines?

To whisper and conspire against my youth?

Now trust me, 'tis an office of great worth,

45 And you an officer fit for the place.

There, take the paper. See it be returned,

Oh, those who tell others of their love love the least of all.

JULIA

I wish I knew how he felt.

LUCETTA

(giving her a letter) Read this paper, madam.

JULIA

"To Julia." Tell me, who's it from?

LUCETTA

The letter will say.

JULIA

Tell me, who gave it to you?

LUCETTA

Sir Valentine's servant, but I think it was sent from Proteus. He

would have given it to you himself, but I ran into him first and

took it in your name. Please forgive me.

JULIA

Well, you're a fine go-between! Do you dare receive love letters, and to whisper and conspire against me because of my lack of experience? Trust me, it's an important job, and you're just the kind of person for it. There, take the letter. See that it's returned, or else don't let me see you again. (*giving the letter back*)

Or else return no more into my sight. [*Giving the letter back*]

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.

What fool is she, that knows I am a maid

55 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

That, like a testy babe, will scratch the nurse

60 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,

LUCETTA

A request for your love deserves more in return than your hatred.

JULIA

Will you get going?

LUCETTA

Just think about it.

LUCETTA *exits.*

JULIA

Then again, I wish I had read the letter. It would be embarrassing to call her back again and do the very thing I chided her for. How foolish she is, since she knows I'm a single girl but still wouldn't make me read it! Out of modesty girls say "no" when they wish the giver would construe it as "yes." How difficult this foolish thing called love is, like a cranky baby that will scratch its nurse and then immediately after show affection. How rudely I scolded Lucetta, when really I wanted her here. I've taught myself to appear angry even when my heart smiles with joy! My punishment is to call Lucetta back and ask forgiveness for my mistake. Hey, Lucetta!

When inward joy enforced my heart to smile!

65 My penance is to call Lucetta back
And ask remission for my folly past.
What ho! Lucetta!

Enter LUCETTA

LUCETTA

What would your ladyship?

JULIA

Is 't near dinner time?

LUCETTA

70 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

Nothing.

JULIA

75 Why didst thou stoop, then?

LUCETTA enters.

LUCETTA

What would you like, my lady?

JULIA

Is it almost dinnertime?

LUCETTA

I wish it were, so that you could chew on your food instead of
your servant.

She drops the letter and stoops to pick it up.

JULIA

What is that that you picked up so carefully?

LUCETTA

Nothing.

JULIA

Why did you bend over, then?

LUCETTA

To take a paper up that I let fall.

JULIA

And is that paper nothing?

LUCETTA

Nothing concerning me.

JULIA

Then let it lie for those that it concerns.

LUCETTA

80 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,
Give me a note; your ladyship can set.

JULIA

85 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.

LUCETTA

To pick up the paper that I dropped.

JULIA

And that paper is nothing?

LUCETTA

Nothing that concerns me.

JULIA

Then let it lie on the ground for the people it does concern.

LUCETTA

Madam, it will not lie about what it concerns unless a liar reads it.

JULIA

Some lover of yours has written a poem to you.

LUCETTA

I'll sing it, madam, to a tune. Give me the note to sing it in. Your ladyship can choose it.

JULIA

I place as little value as possible in such trifles. You should sing it to the tune of "Light o' Love."

LUCETTA

The poem is too heavy for so light a tune.

JULIA

Heavy! Belike it hath some burden then?

LUCETTA

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

JULIA

90 And why not you?

LUCETTA

I cannot reach so high.

JULIA

Let's see your song. How now, minion?

She takes the letter

LUCETTA

Keep tune there still; so you will sing it out.
And yet methinks I do not like this tune.

JULIA

95 You do not?

LUCETTA

No, madam, 'tis too sharp.

JULIA

You, minion, are too saucy.

JULIA

Too heavy! I guess the note is serious, then?

LUCETTA

Yes, and it would be melodious, too, if you'd sing it.

JULIA

And why won't *you* sing it?

LUCETTA

I cannot reach such high notes.

JULIA

Let's see your poem. What is it, you hussy?

She takes the letter.

LUCETTA

Keep your mood in check and get over your anger. I don't like
this new tune you're singing.

JULIA

You don't?

LUCETTA

No, madame, it's too sharp.

JULIA

You, hussy, are too sassy.

LUCETTA

Nay, now you are too flat,
And mar the concord with too harsh a descant.

100 There wanteth but a mean to fill your song.

JULIA

The mean is drowned with your unruly bass.

LUCETTA

Indeed, I bid the base for Proteus.

JULIA

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

She tears the letter and drops the pieces.

105 Go, get you gone, and let the papers lie.
You would be fing'ring them to anger me.

LUCETTA

She makes it strange, but she would be best pleased
To be so angered with another letter.

Exit

JULIA

Nay, would I were so angered with the same!

LUCETTA

No, now you're too flat. You're ruining the harmony with a melody that's too harsh. Your song only needs a [tenor](#).

JULIA

The tenor is ruined with your unruly bass.

LUCETTA

Indeed, I sing for Proteus.

JULIA

This letter won't trouble me from now on. Here's a fuss over a love letter!

She tears the letter and drops the pieces.

Go, get out of here, and leave the papers where they are. I know you'd try to pick them up just to anger me.

LUCETTA

She pretends not to care, but she would be happy to be so angered by another love letter.

LUCETTA *exits.*

JULIA

No, I wish I were so angry with this one!

She picks up some fragments.

110 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.
Look, here is writ "kind Julia." Unkind Julia!
115 As in revenge of thy ingratitude,
I throw thy name against the bruising stones,
Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.

She throws down a fragment.

And here is writ "love-wounded Proteus."
Poor wounded name! My bosom as a bed
120 Shall lodge thee till thy wound be thoroughly healed;
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
Till I have found each letter in the letter,
125 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,
"Poor forlorn Proteus, passionate Proteus,
130 To the sweet Julia." That I'll tear away;
And yet I will not, sith so prettily

She picks up some fragments.

Stupid hands, to tear up such lovely words! Destructive fingers,
to feed on such sweet words and then rip up the letter they
came from! I'll apologize by kissing each piece of paper. Here,
this one says "kind Julia." It should say "unkind Julia"! Out of
revenge for my own ingratitude I'll throw the paper on the floor
and hatefully trample my name in disdain.

She throws down a fragment.

And here's one that says "love-wounded Proteus." Poor
wounded name! My breast will serve as your bed until your
wounds are completely healed. I cleanse them with a healing
kiss. But "Proteus" was written down two or three times. Be still,
good wind, and don't blow these pieces of paper away until
I've found each word in the letter, except for the piece with my
own name on it—may some whirlwind take that piece, hurl it
onto a frightening cliff, and from there throw it into the raging
sea! Look, his name is written twice in this line: "Poor forlorn
Proteus, passionate Proteus, to the sweet Julia." I'll tear that last
part off. Then again, maybe I won't, since he tied it so prettily to
his own sorrowful names. I'll fold them up, one on top of
another. Now the names may kiss, hug, battle, or do what they
will.

He couples it to his complaining names.
Thus will I fold them, one upon another.
Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

She puts some folded papers in her bosom.

Enter LUCETTA

LUCETTA

135 Madam,
Dinner is ready, and your father stays.

JULIA

Well, let us go.

LUCETTA

What, shall these papers lie like telltales here?

JULIA

If you respect them, best to take them up.

LUCETTA

140 Nay, I was taken up for laying them down;
Yet here they shall not lie, for catching cold.

She gathers up the remaining fragments.

JULIA

She puts some folded papers in her shirt.

LUCETTA enters.

LUCETTA

Madame, dinner is ready, and your father waits for you.

JULIA

Well, let's go then.

LUCETTA

What, should these papers just lie on the ground revealing everything?

JULIA

If you respect them, then it would be best to pick them up.

LUCETTA

No, you yelled at me for dropping them in the first place. But we shouldn't leave them here or they'll catch a cold.

She gathers up the remaining fragments.

JULIA

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

LUCETTA

Ay, madam, you may say what sights you see;

I see things too, although you judge I wink.

JULIA

145 Come, come; will 't please you go?

Exeunt

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 wondered 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,

I see you have a strong desire for them.

LUCETTA

Yes, madame, you can interpret my behavior as you like. But I

see things, too, even though you think my eyes are closed.

JULIA

Come on, come on. Will you please hurry up?

They exit.

Act 1 Scene 3

ANTONIO and PANTHINO enter.

ANTONIO

Tell me, Panthino, what were you and my brother talking so

seriously about in the walkway back there?

PANTHINO

We were talking about his nephew, your son, Proteus.

ANTONIO

Why? What about him?

PANTHINO

He wondered why your lordship would let him spend his youth

here at home. Other men with lesser reputations send their

sons to seek opportunities abroad, or to find their fortunes

fighting in the wars, or to discover far away islands, or to study

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 considered well his loss of time,
And how he cannot be a perfect man,
Not being tried and tutored 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?

PANTHINO

I think your lordship is not ignorant
How his companion, youthful Valentine,
Attends the Emperor in his royal court.

ANTONIO

I know it well.

in the universities. He said that Proteus was capable of doing any or all of these things, and he asked me to urge you not to let him spend any more time at home. It would be a shame for him in old age not to have traveled in his youth.

ANTONIO

You don't need to urge me on this matter. I've thought about it a lot this month. I've considered how much time he's wasting, and how he cannot be a complete man without having some real-world trials and tests. Experience comes from hard work and is perfected over the course of time. Tell me, though, where would it be best to send him?

PANTHINO

I think your lordship knows that his friend, the young Valentine, has gone off to visit the emperor in his royal court in Milan.

ANTONIO

I'm fully aware.

PANTHINO

30 'Twere good, I think, your lordship sent him thither.
There shall he practice 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 Tomorrow, 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

Good company. With them shall Proteus go—

45 And in good time! Now will we break with him.

PROTEUS

PANTHINO

It would be good, I think, if your lordship sent him there. There
he can take part in jousts and tournaments, listen to learned
discussions, speak with noblemen, and witness everything
befitting his youth and nobleness of birth.

ANTONIO

I like what you say. You've advised me well. And so you may
see how much I like it, I'll announce it publicly. I'll send him off
to the emperor's court immediately.

PANTHINO

If it pleases you, Don Alphonso and some other noblemen are
setting off tomorrow to visit the emperor and to offer their
services to help him in whatever he needs.

ANTONIO

Sounds like a good group. Proteus will go with them.

PROTEUS enters, reading a letter.

Just in time! I'll talk to him now.

PROTEUS

[To himself] Sweet love, sweet lines, sweet life!
Here is her hand, the agent of her heart;
Here is her oath for love, her honor'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

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

ANTONIO

Lend me the letter. Let me see what news.

PROTEUS

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

ANTONIO

And how stand you affected to his wish?

PROTEUS

(to himself) Sweet love, sweet poetry, sweet life! Here is a letter
in her handwriting, which does the bidding of her heart. Here is
her pledge of love, which vows she will be faithful. Oh, I wish
our fathers would approve of our love and consent to let us
marry, sealing our happiness forever. Oh, heavenly Julia!

ANTONIO

What's that you say? What's that letter you're reading there?

PROTEUS

Your lordship, it's just a short note of greeting from Valentine,
delivered to me by a friend of his.

ANTONIO

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

PROTEUS

There is no news, my lord. He just writes how happy he is and
that the emperor likes him and honors him each day. He
wishes I were with him to share his good luck.

ANTONIO

And how do you feel about his wish?

PROTEUS

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

ANTONIO

My will is something sorted with his wish.
65 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.
Tomorrow 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.

ANTONIO

75 Look what thou want'st shall be sent after thee.
No more of stay. Tomorrow thou must go.
Come on, Panthino; you shall be employed
To hasten on his expedition.

Exeunt ANTONIO and PANTHINO.

PROTEUS

Thus have I shunned the fire for fear of burning,

Like one who is used to following your orders and not able to
honor Valentine's wishes.

ANTONIO

My wish is similar to Valentine's. Now don't think that I decided
this rashly, because I get what I want, and that's final. I've
decided that you should spend some time with Valentine in
the emperor's court. I'll provide you with the same money for
room and board that he receives from his family. Be ready to
go tomorrow. Don't try to get out of it now, because I've made
up my mind.

PROTEUS

My lord, I can't get ready that quickly. Please, think about this a
day or two longer.

ANTONIO

Look, whatever you want will be sent to you after you leave.
You're not going to stay here any longer. You must go
tomorrow. Come on, Panthino, you will help get everything
ready so he can leave as soon as possible.

ANTONIO and PANTHINO exit.

PROTEUS

80 And drenched me in the sea, where I am drowned.

I feared 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!

Enter PANTHINO.

PANTHINO

Sir Proteus, your father calls for you.

90 He is in haste; therefore, I pray you, go.

PROTEUS

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

Exeunt.

Enter VALENTINE and SPEED

SPEED

Sir, your glove.

I dove into the sea to avoid being burned by the fire, and now
I'm drowning instead. I was afraid to show Julia's letter to my
father because I didn't want him to disapprove of my love, but
taking advantage of my lie he raised more obstacles against it.
Oh, our new love is like the uncertain days of April, which will
be sunny one moment, and suddenly a cloud takes the
sunshine away!

PANTHINO enters.

PANTHINO

Sir Proteus, your father calls for you. He's in a hurry, so I beg
you, go quickly.

PROTEUS

This is how it is: my heart agrees to it but wants to say no a
thousand times.

They exit.

Act 2 Scene 1

VALENTINE and SPEED enter.

SPEED

Sir, here is your glove.

He offers a glove.

VALENTINE

Not mine. My gloves are on.

SPEED

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

VALENTINE

Ha! let me see. Ay, give it me, it's mine.

5 Sweet ornament that decks a thing divine!

Ah, Sylvia, Sylvia!

SPEED

[Calling] Madam Sylvia! Madam Sylvia!

VALENTINE

How now, sirrah?

SPEED

She is not within hearing, sir.

VALENTINE

10 Why, sir, who bade you call her?

SPEED

Your worship, sir, or else I mistook.

VALENTINE

He offers a glove.

VALENTINE

That isn't mine. I'm already wearing my gloves.

SPEED

Well, then, this may be your glove, because it's all by itself.

VALENTINE

Ha! Let me see it. Yes, give it to me. It's mine. Sweet accessory that Sylvia's divine hand wears. Ah Sylvia, Sylvia!

SPEED

(calling) Madame Sylvia! Madama Sylvia!

VALENTINE

What are you doing, [pal](#) ?

SPEED

She's too far away to hear me, sir.

VALENTINE

But, sir, who asked you to call out for her?

SPEED

You did, sir, or else I misunderstood you.

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 Sylvia?

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 malcontent; to relish a love-song, like a robin redbreast; to walk alone, like one that had the pestilence; to sigh, like a schoolboy 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.

Well, you're always too presumptuous.

SPEED

Even though last time I was scolded for being too slow.

VALENTINE

Enough, sir. Tell me, do you know Madame Sylvia?

SPEED

The Madame Sylvia you love, your worship?

VALENTINE

Why, how do you know that I am in love?

SPEED

Because of all the right signs, of course: First, like Sir Proteus, you have started to fold your arms like you're unhappy about something. You go around singing love songs like a redbreasted robin. You walk alone, like one who has the plague. You sigh like a schoolboy who has lost his textbook. You weep, like a young girl who has just buried her grandmother. You don't eat, like one who's on a diet. You can't sleep, like one who fears being robbed. You whine, [like a beggar on Hallowmas](#) It used to be that when you laughed, you crowed like a rooster. When you walked, you walked like a lion. When you didn't eat, it was because you'd just finished lunch. When you looked sad, it was because you

VALENTINE

Are all these things perceived in me?

SPEED

They are all perceived without ye.

VALENTINE

20 Without me? They cannot.

SPEED

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.

VALENTINE

But tell me, dost thou know my lady Sylvia?

SPEED

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

VALENTINE

25 Hast thou observed that? Even she I mean.

were out of money. And now a mistress has changed you. When I look at you, I can hardly recognize you as my master.

VALENTINE

Can you see all these things in me?

SPEED

They are all outside of you, in your outward appearance.

VALENTINE

Outside of me? They cannot be outside of me.

SPEED

Outside of you? No, I'm sure, because if you weren't so obvious no one would see them. But your appearance is so marked by these foolish traits that they must be inside you, and they shine through you as if you were water in a jar. Everyone that sees you is like a physician who knows why you're sick.

VALENTINE

But tell me, do you know my lady Sylvia?

SPEED

The woman you stare at while she sits at the dinner table?

VALENTINE

Have you noticed me doing that? Yes, that's the woman I mean.

SPEED

Why, sir, I know her not.

VALENTINE

Dost thou know her by my gazing on her, and yet know'st her not?

SPEED

Is she not hard-favored, sir?

VALENTINE

Not so fair, boy, as well-favored.

SPEED

³⁰ Sir, I know that well enough.

VALENTINE

What dost thou know?

SPEED

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

VALENTINE

I mean that her beauty is exquisite but her favor infinite.

SPEED

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

SPEED

Well, sir, I don't know her at all.

VALENTINE

Do you know her only by my staring at her and not otherwise?

SPEED

Isn't she ugly, sir?

VALENTINE

She's not as beautiful, boy, as she is gracious.

SPEED

Sir, I know that very well.

VALENTINE

What do you know?

SPEED

The she isn't as pretty as she is looked on favorably by you.

VALENTINE

I mean that her beauty is exquisite but her graciousness is infinite.

SPEED

That's because the first one is done with makeup and the other can't be counted.

VALENTINE

35 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 esteem'st thou me? I account of her beauty.

SPEED

You never saw her since she was deformed.

VALENTINE

How long hath she been deformed?

SPEED

40 Ever since you loved her.

VALENTINE

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

SPEED

If you love her, you cannot see her.

VALENTINE

Why?

VALENTINE

What do you mean, done with makeup? And why can't you count the other?

SPEED

I mean, sir, she's so painted with makeup to look beautiful that no man values her beauty.

VALENTINE

So what do you think of me, then? I think she's very beautiful.

SPEED

You haven't seen her since she was deformed.

VALENTINE

How long has she been deformed?

SPEED

Ever since you fell in love with her.

VALENTINE

I have loved her ever since I first saw her, and I still think she's beautiful.

SPEED

If you love her then you cannot see her.

VALENTINE

Why not?

SPEED

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

45 What should I see then?

SPEED

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

True, sir. I was in love with my bed. I thank you, you swunged me for my love, which makes me the bolder to chide you for yours.

VALENTINE

In conclusion, I stand affected to her.

SPEED

50 I would you were set; so your affection would cease.

SPEED

Because Love is blind. Oh, if you had my eyes, or if you could see as clearly as you did when you scolded Sir Proteus for [not wearing a garter](#) !

VALENTINE

What would I see then?

SPEED

Your own current foolishness and her enormous deformity. Proteus, because he was in love, forgot to put on a garter to keep his stockings up, and you, also being in love, can't see well enough to even put on your stockings.

VALENTINE

Then maybe, boy, you're in love, because this morning you couldn't see well enough to polish my shoes.

SPEED

True, sir. I was in love with my bed. I thank you—you hit me because I was so in love, which has made me bold enough to scold you for your love.

VALENTINE

In conclusion, I'm in love with her.

SPEED

VALENTINE

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

SPEED

And have you?

VALENTINE

I have.

SPEED

Are they not lamely writ?

VALENTINE

55 No, boy, but as well as I can do them. Peace, here she comes.

Enter SYLVIA

SPEED

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

VALENTINE

Madam and mistress, a thousand good-morrows.

I wish you weren't standing erect. Maybe then your love would go away.

VALENTINE

Last night she asked me to write some lines of poetry to the one she loves.

SPEED

And did you?

VALENTINE

I did.

SPEED

They're badly written, aren't they?

VALENTINE

No, boy, I wrote them as well as I could. Be quiet now—here she comes.

SYLVIA enters.

SPEED

(aside) Oh, what a puppet show! Such a wonderful puppet she makes. Now he'll give his commentary on the show.

VALENTINE

Madame and mistress, I wish you a thousand good mornings.

SPEED

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

SYLVIA

Sir Valentine and servant, to you two thousand.

SPEED

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

VALENTINE

As you enjoined 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.

He gives Sylvia a letter.

SYLVIA

65 I thank you, gentle servant. 'Tis very clerkly done.

VALENTINE

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

SYLVIA

Perchance you think too much of so much pains?

SPEED

(aside) And God give you a good evening! What manners!

SYLVIA

Sir Valentine and servant, to you I wish two thousand good mornings.

SPEED

(aside) He should outdo her in compliments, but she outdoes him.

VALENTINE

As you asked, I have written your letter to that secret,
anonymous friend of yours. Though I didn't want to do it, I
wrote it out of duty to your ladyship.

He gives Sylvia a letter.

SYLVIA

I thank you, gentle servant. It's very smartly written.

VALENTINE

Now trust me, madame, it wasn't easy to write this, because I
had to be somewhat vague since I didn't know to whom it
would go.

SYLVIA

Perhaps you think it was too much trouble?

VALENTINE

70 No, madam. So it stead you, I will write—
Please you command—a thousand times as much.
And yet—

SYLVIA

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

She offers him the letter.

SPEED

[Aside] And yet you will, and yet another “yet.”

VALENTINE

What means your ladyship? Do you not like it?

SYLVIA

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

She gives back the letter.

VALENTINE

Madam, they are for you.

VALENTINE

No, madame. If it helps you, I will write a thousand times as many lines if you like. And yet . . .

SYLVIA

A fine pause! I can guess what you're going to say next. And yet I will not say it. And yet I don't care. And yet you can take this back. And yet thanks anyway, meaning I won't bother you again.

She offers him the letter.

SPEED

(aside) And yet you will, and yet say another “yet.”

VALENTINE

What do you mean, your ladyship? Don't you like it?

SYLVIA

Yes, yes. The lines are very nicely written, but since you wrote them so unwillingly, take them back. No, take them.

She gives back the letter.

VALENTINE

Madame, they are for you.

SYLVIA

Ay, ay. You writ them, sir, at my request,
But I will none of them. They are for you.

85 I would have had them writ more movingly.

VALENTINE

Please you, I'll write your ladyship another.

SYLVIA

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?

SYLVIA

90 Why, if it please you, take it for your labor.
And so good morrow, servant.

Exit SYLVIA

SPEED

[Aside] O jest unseen, inscrutable, invisible
As a nose on a man's face or a weathercock on a steeple!
My master sues to her, and she hath taught her suitor,
95 He being her pupil, to become her tutor.
O excellent device! Was there ever heard a better,

SYLVIA

Yes, yes. You wrote them, sir, at my request, but I don't want them. They are for you. I wish they had been more movingly written.

VALENTINE

If it pleases you, I'll write another for your ladyship.

SYLVIA

And when it's written, read it over for my sake. And if it pleases you, fine. And if it doesn't, well, that's also fine.

VALENTINE

If it pleases me, madame, what then?

SYLVIA

Why, if it pleases you, then take it as payment for your hard work. And so good morning and goodbye to you, servant.

SYLVIA exits.

SPEED

(aside) Oh, that joke is as hard to see as a nose on a man's face or a weathercock on a steeple! My master pleads with her, and she has taught him, her student, to become her teacher. What an excellent trick! Has anyone ever heard anything better than my master, the scribe, writing the letter to himself?

That my master, being scribe, to himself should write the letter?

VALENTINE

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

SPEED

Nay, I was rhyming. 'Tis you that have the reason.

VALENTINE

100 To do what?

SPEED

To be a spokesman from Madam Sylvia.

VALENTINE

To whom?

SPEED

To yourself. Why, she woos you by a figure.

VALENTINE

What figure?

SPEED

105 By a letter, I should say.

VALENTINE

Why, she hath not writ to me.

VALENTINE

What's that, sir? What are you reasoning to yourself over there?

SPEED

No, I was rhyming. It's you who's been doing the reasoning.

VALENTINE

Reasoning what?

SPEED

To be a spokesman for Madame Sylvia.

VALENTINE

To whom?

SPEED

To yourself. Why, she's wooing you indirectly with this trick.

VALENTINE

What trick?

SPEED

By a letter, I should say.

VALENTINE

But, she hasn't written to me.

SPEED

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

VALENTINE

No, believe me.

SPEED

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

VALENTINE

110 She gave me none, except an angry word.

SPEED

Why, she hath given you a letter.

VALENTINE

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

115 I'll warrant you, 'tis as well.

For often have you writ to her, and she, in modesty,

SPEED

Why would she need to when she's made you write to yourself? Why, don't you get the joke?

VALENTINE

No, believe me.

SPEED

No believing you, indeed, sir. Did you think she was being serious?

VALENTINE

She gave me nothing except an angry word.

SPEED

Why, she's given you a letter.

VALENTINE

That's the letter I wrote to her friend.

SPEED

And she's delivered that letter, and that's the end of it.

VALENTINE

I wish it were that good.

SPEED

I promise you, it is that good. Because you've often written to her, and she, whether out of modesty or because she didn't

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.

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

VALENTINE

I have dined.

SPEED

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

*Enter **PROTEUS** and **JULIA***

PROTEUS

Have patience, gentle Julia.

JULIA

I must, where is no remedy.

PROTEUS

have the time, or out of fear that the messenger carrying the
letter would discover her feelings, couldn't reply. So she taught
the man she loves to write to himself. I say all this very
carefully, because I read it in her as if it were printed on a page.
Why do you look so pensive, sir? It's lunchtime.

VALENTINE

I've already eaten.

SPEED

Yes, but listen, sir: even though [the chameleon Love](#) can feed
off the air, I need real food for nourishment, and I'm eager to
have meat. Oh, don't be like your mistress—have a heart!

They exit.

Act 2 Scene 2

***PROTEUS** and **JULIA** enter.*

PROTEUS

Be patient, gentle Julia.

JULIA

I have to be, since there is no way to fix the situation.

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.

PROTEUS

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

He gives her a ring.

JULIA

And seal the bargain with a holy kiss.

They kiss.

PROTEUS

Here is my hand for my true constancy;

And when that hour o'erslips me in the day

10 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.

The tide is now—nay, not thy tide of tears;

15 That tide will stay me longer than I should.

Julia, farewell!

I will return as soon as I can.

JULIA

If you're not unfaithful you'll return sooner. Keep this to

remember me by, for my sake.

She gives him a ring.

PROTEUS

Well, then, we'll exchange rings. Here, you take this.

He gives her a ring.

JULIA

And we will seal the bargain with a holy kiss.

They kiss.

PROTEUS

Here is my hand to show my fidelity. And if an hour in the day

passes when I don't sigh when thinking of you, Julia, then may

some disaster torment me in the next hour to punish my love's

forgetfulness! My father is waiting for me. Don't say anything.

The tide is right for me to set out—no, not your tide of tears.

Those tears will keep me here longer than I should stay.

Farewell, Julia!

Exit JULIA

What, gone without a word?

Ay, so true love should do; it cannot speak,

For truth hath better deeds than words to grace it.

Enter PANTHINO

PANTHINO

20 Sir Proteus, you are stayed for.

PROTEUS

Go. I come, I come.

Alas! This parting strikes poor lovers dumb.

Exeunt

Enter LANCE leading his dog, Crab

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 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,

JULIA exits.

What, she's gone without saying a word? Yes, that's how it should be with true love. It cannot speak, because truth is best expressed through action, not words.

PANTHINO enters.

PANTHINO

Sir Proteus, everyone is waiting for you.

PROTEUS

Go on. I'm coming, I'm coming. Too bad! This parting has left us poor lovers without words.

They exit.

Act 2 Scene 3

LANCE enters, leading his dog, Crab.

LANCE

No, it'll be this time tomorrow before I've stopped crying. All the members of the Lance family have this fault. I've received my portion of the family trait, just like the [prodigious son](#), and now I'm going with Sir Proteus to the Imperial court in Milan. I think Crab, my dog, has the sourest personality of any dog alive. Even with my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, and our cat wringing her

yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear. He is a stone, a very pebblestone, 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 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 worser sole. This shoe, with the hole in it, is my mother, and this my father. A vengeance on 't! There 'tis. Now, sir, 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—O, the dog is me, and I am myself. Ay, so, 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 moved woman! Well, I kiss her. Why there '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

hands, this cruel-hearted mutt didn't shed a single tear. Even a Jew would have wept to see us saying goodbye to each other. Why, my grandmother—who doesn't have use of her eyes, you see—cried herself blind when I said goodbye. No, I'll demonstrate what happened. This shoe represents my father. No, this left shoe is my father. No, no, this left shoe is my mother. No, that can't be right either. Yes it is, it is—it has the sole that isn't as good. This shoe, with the hole in it, is my mother, and this one is my father. Take that! That's right now. Now, sir, this wooden stick is my sister, because, you see, it is as white as a lily and as thin as a twig. This hat is Nan, our maid. I am the dog. No wait, the dog is himself, and I am the dog—oh, I mean, the dog is me, and I am myself. Okay, okay, that's it. Now I go to my father and say, "Father, give me your blessing." Now the shoe can't say a word because it's crying so hard. Now I'll kiss my father. Well, he keeps crying. Now I come to my mother. Oh, I wish this shoe could speak full of emotion now! Well, I kiss her. And that's the way it happened. Here's how she breathed from crying so much. Now I come to my sister. Listen to the moans she makes because she's so sad. All the while the dog doesn't shed a single tear or speak a word. See how I flatten the dust with my tears?

***PANTHINO** enters.*

PANTHINO

Lance, away, away, aboard! Thy master is shipped, and thou art to post after with oars. What's the matter? Why weep'st 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

What's the unkindest tide?

LANCE

5 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 master, lose thy service, and, in losing thy service—

***LANCE** puts his hand over **PANTHINO**'s mouth.*

Why dost thou stop my mouth?

LANCE

For fear thou shouldst lose thy tongue.

PANTHINO

Lance, go on, go on, board the ship! Your master is already aboard, and you're supposed to hurry after him in a rowboat. What's the matter? Why are you crying, man? Get on, you ass! You'll lose the tide if you delay any longer.

LANCE

It doesn't matter if this tied-up dog is lost, because it's the unkindest tied-up thing any man ever tied up.

PANTHINO

What's the unkindest tide?

LANCE

Why, the dog that's tied up right here—Crab, my dog.

PANTHINO

No, no, man, I mean you'll lose the ocean tide. And if you lose the ocean tide, then you'll lose the whole trip, and if you lose the whole trip, then you'll lose your master, and if you lose your master, then you'll lose your job, and if you lose your job...

***Lance** puts his hand over **Panthino**'s mouth.*

Why are you covering my mouth?

LANCE

Because I was afraid you'd lose your tongue.

PANTHINO

Where should I lose my tongue?

LANCE

¹⁰ In thy tale.

PANTHINO

In thy tail!

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

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

LANCE

¹⁵ Sir, call me what thou dar'st.

PANTHINO

Will thou go?

LANCE

Well, I will go.

Exeunt

Where would I lose my tongue?

LANCE

In your tale.

PANTHINO

Up your tail!

LANCE

Lose the tide, and the voyage, and my master, and my job, and the tied-up dog! Why, man, if the river where the ship is moored dried up, I'd be able to fill it with my tears. And if the wind weren't blowing, I could blow the boat forward with my sighs.

PANTHINO

Come on, come on, man. I was sent here to get you.

LANCE

Sir, you can call me whatever you like.

PANTHINO

Well, are you going to go?

LANCE

Yes, I'll go.

They exit.

Act 2 Scene 4

Enter **VALENTINE, SYLVIA, THURIO, and SPEED**

SYLVIA

Servant!

VALENTINE

Mistress?

SPEED

Master, Sir Thurio 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 **SPEED***

SYLVIA

Servant, you are sad.

VALENTINE

VALENTINE, SYLVIA, THURIO, and SPEED enter.

SYLVIA

Servant!

VALENTINE

Mistress?

SPEED

Master, Sir Thurio is frowning at you.

VALENTINE

Yes, boy, it's because he's in love.

SPEED

Not with you.

VALENTINE

With my mistress, then.

SPEED

It would be good if you punched him.

***SPEED** exits.*

SYLVIA

Servant, you are sad.

VALENTINE

Indeed, madam, I seem so.

THURIO

¹⁰ Seem you that you are not?

VALENTINE

Haply I do.

THURIO

So do counterfeits.

VALENTINE

So do you.

THURIO

What seem I that I am not?

VALENTINE

¹⁵ Wise.

THURIO

What instance of the contrary?

VALENTINE

Your folly.

THURIO

And how quote you my folly?

VALENTINE

Indeed, madame, I seem to be.

THURIO

It seems you're sad when you are not?

VALENTINE

As it happens, I seem to be something I'm not.

THURIO

Just like a fake.

VALENTINE

You also seem to be something you're not.

THURIO

What do I seem like that I am not?

VALENTINE

Wise.

THURIO

What proof do you have to the contrary?

VALENTINE

Your foolishness.

THURIO

And what do you know of my foolishness?

VALENTINE

I quote it in your jerkin.

THURIO

20 My "jerkin" is a doublet.

VALENTINE

Well, then, I'll double your folly.

THURIO

How?

SYLVIA

What, angry, Sir Thurio? Do you change color?

VALENTINE

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

THURIO

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

VALENTINE

You have said, sir.

THURIO

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

VALENTINE

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

Because you're wearing a [jerkin](#) .

THURIO

My "jerkin" is actually a [doublet](#) .

VALENTINE

Well, then, you're doubly foolish.

THURIO

Why?

SYLVIA

What, are you angry, Sir Thurio? Is your face turning red?

VALENTINE

Leave him be, madame. He's just a kind of chameleon.

THURIO

One that would rather feed off your blood, Valentine, than its usual diet of air.

VALENTINE

So you say, sir.

THURIO

Yes, sir, and it'll be done, too.

VALENTINE

I know it's done, sir. You always end before you begin.

SYLVIA

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

VALENTINE

30 'Tis indeed, madam, we thank the giver.

SYLVIA

Who is that, servant?

VALENTINE

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

THURIO

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

VALENTINE

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.

SYLVIA

35 No more, gentlemen, no more. Here comes my father.

Enter the DUKE

SYLVIA

A fine volley of words, gentlemen, and quickly fired.

VALENTINE

It is indeed, madame. We have the giver to thank for that.

SYLVIA

And who is the giver, servant?

VALENTINE

Yourself, sweet lady, for you provided the spark that set it off. Sir Thurio gets his witty remarks from your ladyship's good looks, and appropriately he spends what he borrows in your presence.

THURIO

Sir, if you spar word for word with me, I shall make your wit dry up.

VALENTINE

I know it well, sir. You have a whole treasury of words, and, I think, no other treasure to give your servants, since it appears, by their ragged clothing, that they live by your worthless words alone.

SYLVIA

No more, gentlemen, no more. Here comes my father.

The DUKE enters.

DUKE

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

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

Know ye Don Antonio, your countryman?

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

Hath he not a son?

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

You know him well?

DUKE

Now, my daughter Sylvia, you are being assaulted. Sir
Valentine, your father is healthy. What would you say to a letter
from your friends filled with good news?

VALENTINE

My lord, I would be thankful to anyone who brought good
news from home.

DUKE

Do you know Don Antonio, who is also from your country?

VALENTINE

Yes, my good lord. I know the gentleman is noble and has a
good reputation, which is well-deserved.

DUKE

Doesn't he have a son?

VALENTINE

Yes, my good lord, a son that is also deserving of the honor
and reputation of his esteemed father.

DUKE

Do you know him well?

VALENTINE

50 I knew 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,
55 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 unmellowed, but his judgment ripe.
And, in a word—for far behind his worth
60 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
65 As meet to be an emperor's counselor.
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

70 Should I have wished a thing, it had been he.

VALENTINE

I know him as well as I know myself, since he and I have been
in each other's company and spent time together since we
were infants. And even though I myself have been an
unproductive delinquent and have wasted my youth on
frivolity, Sir Proteus—that's his name, you see—made good use
of his time. He may be young, but he has the experience of a
much older person. His hair isn't gray, but his judgment is wise.
Any praise I give is far less than he deserves, but in a word, he
is perfect physically and mentally, with all the good graces of a
true gentleman.

DUKE

Damn! Sir, if this account is true, he is as worthy of an
empress's love as he is fit to be an emperor's adviser. Well, sir,
this gentleman has come to me with commendations from
powerful men, and he intends to spend his time here for a
while. I think it's good news for you.

VALENTINE

If I had wished for anything, it would have been for him to
come.

DUKE

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

*Exit the **DUKE***

VALENTINE

75 This is the gentleman I told your ladyship
Had come along with me but that his mistress
Did hold his eyes locked in her crystal looks.

SYLVIA

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

VALENTINE

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

SYLVIA

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.

THURIO

DUKE

Then give him the welcome he deserves. I'm speaking to you,
Sylvia, and you, Sir Thurio. Valentine needs no urging. I will
send him to you here shortly.

*The **DUKE** exits.*

VALENTINE

This is the gentlemen I told your ladyship would have come
along with me had the woman he loved not captivated him
with her beauty.

SYLVIA

Perhaps now she's freed him because some other lover has
pledged devotion to her.

VALENTINE

No, I'm sure she still holds him prisoner.

SYLVIA

No, if that were true, then he would be blind, and if he were
blind, how could he see to find his way to you?

VALENTINE

Why, lady, Love has twenty pairs of eyes.

THURIO

They say that Love hath not an eye at all.

VALENTINE

85 To see such lovers, Thurio, as yourself.

Upon a homely object Love can wink.

SYLVIA

Have done, have done. Here comes the gentleman.

Enter PROTEUS

VALENTINE

Welcome, dear Proteus!—Mistress, I beseech you,

Confirm his welcome with some special favor.

SYLVIA

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

VALENTINE

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

SYLVIA

Too low a mistress for so high a servant.

PROTEUS

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

They say that Love is blind and has no eyes at all.

VALENTINE

Love has no eyes for people like you, Thurio. Love can shut its
eyes to ugly things.

SYLVIA

Stop, stop. Here comes the gentleman.

PROTEUS enters.

VALENTINE

Welcome, dear Proteus! Mistress, I beg you, make him feel
welcome by giving him some sign of your affection.

SYLVIA

His worthiness is enough for us to welcome here if he's the one
you've often wished to hear from.

VALENTINE

Mistress, it is he. Sweet lady, take him into your service to be
my fellow servant to your ladyship.

SYLVIA

I'm too unworthy a mistress for so noble a servant.

PROTEUS

Not so, sweet lady. I'm too unworthy a servant to have caught a
look from a worthy mistress.

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

My duty will I boast of, nothing else.

SYLVIA

100 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.

SYLVIA

That you are welcome?

PROTEUS

That you are worthless.

Enter a Servant

SERVANT

105 Madam, my lord your father would speak with you.

SYLVIA

I wait upon his pleasure.

Exit Servant

VALENTINE

Don't talk about unworthiness. Sweet lady, ask him to be your servant.

PROTEUS

I'll only boast of my duty, nothing else.

SYLVIA

And duty never did go unrewarded. Servant, I, a worthless mistress, welcome you.

PROTEUS

I'll die fighting anyone who says that but you.

SYLVIA

That you are welcome?

PROTEUS

That you are worthless.

A Servant enters.

SERVANT

Madame, my lord—your father—would like to speak with you.

SYLVIA

I'll be there in a moment.

The Servant exits.

Come, Sir Thurio,
Go with me. Once more, new servant, welcome.
I'll leave you to confer of home affairs.

110 When you have done we look to hear from you.

PROTEUS

We'll both attend upon your ladyship.

Exeunt SYLVIA and THURIO

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

Your friends are well and have them much commended.

VALENTINE

And how do yours?

PROTEUS

115 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;
I know you joy not in a love discourse.

Come, Sir Thurio, go with me. Again, I welcome you, new servant. I'll leave you to talk with your friend about affairs back home. We look forward to seeing you when you're finished.

PROTEUS

We'll both be back to serve you shortly, your ladyship.

SYLVIA and THURIO exit.

VALENTINE

Now tell me, how is everyone back home?

PROTEUS

Your friends are well and send their regards.

VALENTINE

And how are your friends?

PROTEUS

They were all fine and healthy when I left.

VALENTINE

How is your lady, and is your love thriving?

PROTEUS

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

VALENTINE

Ay, Proteus, but that life is altered now.

- 120 I have done penance for contemning Love,
Whose high imperious thoughts have punished me
With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,
With nightly tears, and daily heartsore sighs;
For, in revenge of my contempt of love,
125 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,
And hath so humbled me as I confess
There is no woe to his correction,
130 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
Upon the very naked name of love.

PROTEUS

Enough. I read your fortune in your eye.

- 135 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**VALENTINE**

Yes, Proteus, but my life is different now. I have atoned for condemning Love. Overbearing thoughts of love punish me with bitter periods of not eating, remorseful groans, nightly tears, and daily lovesick sighs. In revenge for my contempt, Love keeps me awake and makes my eyes watch the woman responsible for my heart's sorrow. Oh, kind Proteus, Love's a powerful ruler and has so humbled me that I confess there is no sorrow as bad as his punishment and no joy equal to being in love. Now, speak no more unless it's about love. Now I can eat again, have lunch and dinner, and sleep thinking of love.

PROTEUS

Enough. I knew how you felt from the look in your eyes. Was that the woman you worship like an idol?

VALENTINE

That was she. Isn't she a heavenly saint?

PROTEUS

No, but she is a model of beauty here on earth.

VALENTINE

Call her divine.

PROTEUS

I will not flatter her.

VALENTINE

140 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

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

PROTEUS

Except my mistress.

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

Have I not reason to prefer mine own?

VALENTINE

Call her a goddess.

PROTEUS

I will not fawn over her.

VALENTINE

Oh, flatter me, then, because those who are in love delight in
praise.

PROTEUS

When I was lovesick, you gave me the hard truth, and now I
must give it to you.

VALENTINE

Then speak the truth about her. If she isn't a goddess, then call
her an angel who is superior to all the creatures on earth.

PROTEUS

Except my mistress.

VALENTINE

No exceptions, my friend, unless you mean to insult my love.

PROTEUS

Don't I have reason to put forward my own girl?

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

Why, Valentine, what braggartism is this?

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

Then, let her alone.

VALENTINE

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,
165 The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.
Forgive me that I do not dream on thee,
Because thou seest me dote upon my love.
My foolish rival, that her father likes
Only for his possessions are so huge,

And I will help you to put her forward, too. She shall have the
dignity of having this high honor: she can carry the train of my
lady's dress so that the dirty ground can't steal a kiss of her
clothing. If it did, the ground would swell so much with pride
that it would no longer accept the roots of the summer
flowers, and rough winter would last forever.

PROTEUS

Geez, Valentine, why are you bragging so much?

VALENTINE

Pardon me, Proteus, any praise I can give is nothing in
comparison with her. She is unique and alone among women.

PROTEUS

Then leave her alone.

VALENTINE

Not for the world. Why, man, she is mine, and having a jewel
such as her, I'm as rich as if I had twenty oceans with sands
made of pearls, water of nectar, and rocks of pure gold.
Forgive me for not paying attention to you, because I'm doting
on the woman I love, as you can tell. Her father likes my foolish
rival, Thurio, because he has so much wealth. Thurio has gone
with her, and I must follow after them, because love, as you
know, is prone to jealousy.

170 Is gone with her along, and I must after,
For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy.

PROTEUS

But she loves you?

VALENTINE

Ay, and we are betrothed. Nay, more, our marriage-hour,
With all the cunning manner of our flight,
175 Determined of—how I must climb her window,
The ladder made of cords, and all the means
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

180 Go on before; I shall enquire you forth.
I must unto the road, to disembark
Some necessities that I needs must use,
And then I'll presently attend you.

VALENTINE

Will you make haste?

Exit VALENTINE

PROTEUS

185 I will.

PROTEUS

But does she love you?

VALENTINE

Yes, and we're engaged to be married. No, what's more, we've
determined all the details of how we'll sneak away and elope—
how I must climb up to her window on a ladder made of rope.
Everything is arranged and agreed upon for my happiness.
Good Proteus, go with me to my bedroom to give me some
advice on these matters.

PROTEUS

Go on ahead. I'll find you shortly. I must go down to the harbor
to bring ashore some necessities that I need. Then I'll come
see you right away.

VALENTINE

Will you hurry?

VALENTINE exits.

PROTEUS

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.
190 Is it my mind, or Valentine's praise,
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 thawed,
195 Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire
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,
200 And that's the reason I love him so little.
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 dazzlèd my reason's light;
205 But when I look on her perfections,
There is no reason but I shall be blind.
If I can check my erring love, I will;
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill.

Exit

I will. Just as [one heat can extinguish another](#) , or as one nail can drive another out with force, so too has a new love, Sylvia, driven out the memory of my former love, Julia. Is it my own attraction for her, or Valentine's praise, or her own perfection, or going against my love for Julia that makes me feel this way? She is beautiful, but so is Julia, whom I love—whom I did love, because now my love for her has melted away, like a wax figure melted by a fire that no longer looks as it did. I think that my fondness for Valentine has diminished, too, and that I like him less than I used to. Oh, but I love his lady, Sylvia, far too much, and that's why I like him less now. How can I keep from loving her after further deliberation when I begin to love her with no deliberation at all! It's only her surface I've seen so far, and that has already confused my sense of reason. But when I look at her perfection, there is no doubt I will be blind with love. If I can stop my love, I will. If not, I'll use my skill to win her.

He exits.

Act 2 Scene 5

*Enter, meeting, **SPEED** and **LANCE** with his dog Crab*

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 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 did thy master part with Madam Julia?

LANCE

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

SPEED

5 But shall she marry him?

LANCE

No.

SPEED

How then? Shall he marry her?

***SPEED** and **LANCE**, with his dog, Crab, enter and meet.*

SPEED

Lance, honestly, welcome to Milan!

LANCE

Don't lie, my friend, because I am not welcome. I always believe a man is never sunk until he's hanged, nor ever welcome to a place until the bill has been paid and the hostess says, "Welcome!"

SPEED

Come you, you lunatic, I'll go to the pub with you soon, where you can have five thousand welcomes for five pence. But tell me, pal, how did your master say goodbye to Madame Julia?

LANCE

You know, after they said their earnest goodbyes, they parted with a few jokes.

SPEED

But will she marry him?

LANCE

No.

SPEED

What then? Will he marry her?

LANCE

No, neither.

SPEED

What, are they broken?

LANCE

10 No, they are both as whole as a fish.

SPEED

Why, then, how stands the matter with them?

LANCE

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

15 What thou sayest?

LANCE

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

LANCE

No, not that either.

SPEED

What, have they broken up?

LANCE

No, they're as whole as ever.

SPEED

Well, then, where do they stand on the matter?

LANCE

Indeed, that's the way it is: when he stands erect, he's in good standing with her.

SPEED

What an ass you are! I don't understand you.

LANCE

What a blockhead you are, since you can't understand me! My wooden staff understands me.

SPEED

What are you talking about?

LANCE

Yes, and it's what I do, too. Look here—I simply have to lean, and my staff understands me.

SPEED

It stands under thee, indeed.

LANCE

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

SPEED

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

LANCE

20 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

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

25 Than how?

SPEED

It stands under you, indeed.

LANCE

Well, standing-under, under-standing—it's all the same.

SPEED

But tell me honestly, will they get married?

LANCE

Ask my dog. If he says yes, then they will. If he says no, then they will. If he shakes his tail and says nothing, then they will.

SPEED

So no matter what then, they will get married.

LANCE

You'll never get me to reveal the secret except in riddles.

SPEED

It's best that I find out that way. But, Lance, what can you tell me about the fact that my master has become a well-known lover?

LANCE

I never knew him otherwise.

SPEED

Than what?

LANCE

A notable lubber, as thou reportest him to be.

SPEED

Why, thou whoreson ass, thou mistak'st me.

LANCE

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

SPEED

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

LANCE

30 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

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.

LANCE

A well-known [lubber](#) —and idiot, as you've told me he is.

SPEED

Why, you jackass [son of a whore](#) ! You misunderstand me.

LANCE

Why, fool, I didn't mean you. I meant your master.

SPEED

I tell you, my master has become an excellent lover.

LANCE

Well, I tell you that I don't really care, even if he burns himself from being so "hot" in love. Come with me to the pub if you will. If not, then you're a Hebrew, a Jew, and not worthy to be called a Christian.

SPEED

Why?

LANCE

Because you don't even have enough compassion in you to go to [the church's ale festival](#) with a Christian. So, are you coming?

SPEED

I'm at your service.

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 2 Scene 6

Enter PROTEUS solus

PROTEUS

To leave my Julia, shall I be forsworn;
To love fair Sylvia, shall I be forsworn;
To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn.
And ev'n 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 resolvèd will
To learn his wit t' exchange the bad for better.
Fie, fie, unreverent tongue, to call her bad
15 Whose sovereignty so oft thou hast preferred
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

PROTEUS enters by himself.

PROTEUS

If I leave my Julia, I'll break my vow and prove it a lie. If I love the beautiful Sylvia, I'll break my vow. If I wrong my friend, Valentine, I'll very much break my vow. And even that love that made me first declare my devotion provokes me to break my vow three times over. Love made me swear an oath, and love bids me to break it. Oh, sweet, seductive Love, if you have sinned, teach me, your tempted servant, how to pardon that sin. At first, I adored a twinkling star, but now I worship a heavenly sun. Vows made carelessly may be broken with careful thought, and the man who doesn't have the will to teach his mind to trade something bad for something better lacks intelligence. Shame, shame! What a disrespectful tongue I have to call Julia bad, when my tongue has so often praised her superiority with twenty thousand devout oaths of love! I cannot stop loving her, and yet I do. But in ceasing to love her I go to the woman I should love. I lose Julia, and I lose Valentine. If I keep them, then I will lose myself. If I lose them, then I'll gain myself instead of Valentine, and I'll gain Sylvia instead of Julia. I cherish myself more than I cherish any friend, for love of oneself is always most precious. And Sylvia—with heaven, which made her white and beautiful, as witness—makes Julia

For Valentine, myself; for Julia, Sylvia.
I to myself am dearer than a friend,
For love is still most precious in itself,
25 And Sylvia—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 Sylvia 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
To climb celestial Sylvia'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 Thurio, he intends, shall wed his daughter;
40 But, Valentine being gone, I'll quickly cross
By some sly trick blunt Thurio's dull proceeding.
Love, lend me wings to make my purpose swift,
As thou hast lent me wit to plot this drift!

Exit

look like a [dark-skinned Ethiopian](#) . I will forget that Julia is alive, and remember that my love for her is gone. I'll consider Valentine an enemy and focus on Sylvia as a more important friend. I cannot now keep my promise to myself without acting treacherously toward Valentine. Tonight he plans to climb a rope ladder to the heavenly Sylvia's bedroom window with me helping as his partner. Now I'll go immediately and inform her father of their secret and their plan to run away. He will be enraged and will banish Valentine, because he intends Thurio to marry his daughter. With Valentine gone, I'll ruin stupid Thurio's plans with some sly trick. Love, lend me wings so that I may accomplish my aims quickly, as you've lent me cleverness to plot this scheme!

He exits.

Act 2 Scene 7

Enter **JULIA** and **LUCETTA**

JULIA

Counsel, Lucetta. Gentle girl, assist me;
And ev'n in kind love I do conjure thee,
Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
Are visibly characterized and engraved,
5 To lesson me and tell me some good means
How, with my honor, 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

15 O, know'st thou not his looks are my soul's food?
Pity the dearth that I have pinèd in
By longing for that food so long a time.

JULIA and **LUCETTA** enter.

JULIA

I need your advice, Lucetta. Kind girl, help me. And even in
kind love I ask you to help me. You are my drawing board
where all my thoughts can be visibly laid out and arranged.
Teach me and tell me a good way I can make a journey to my
loving Proteus with my honor intact.

LUCETTA

Unfortunately, the way is exhausting and long!

JULIA

A truly devoted traveler doesn't fear crossing entire kingdoms
with small steps. She who has Love's wings to help her fly will
get much less tired, especially when she makes the flight to
one who so dear and of such divine perfection as Sir Proteus.

LUCETTA

It would be better if you waited until Proteus returns.

JULIA

Oh, don't you know that his looks are food for my soul? Pity the
famine I've endured by being without that food for so long. If
you only knew the inner touch of love, you would as soon try

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 stopped, impatiently doth rage;
But when his fair course is not hinderèd,
He makes sweet music with th' enameled 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 blessèd soul doth in Elysium.

LUCETTA

to start a fire with snow as you would try to snuff the love's fire
with words.

LUCETTA

I do not seek to snuff your love's hot fire but merely want to
reduce the intensity of the fire so that it doesn't burn out of
your control.

JULIA

The more you try to smother the fire, the more it burns. A
gentle current of water will rage turbulently if blocked, you
know. But when the current isn't hindered, it makes a sweet
noise over the smooth, shiny stones, giving a gentle kiss to
every blade of sedge grass that it passes over on its journey.
And so it wanders past many curvy nooks as it heads playfully
to the wild ocean. So let me go, and don't hinder my course. I'll
be as patient as a gentle stream and enjoy each tiring step,
until the last step has brought me to my love. There I'll rest, just
like a blessed soul rests in [Elysium](#) after a tumultuous life.

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 beseem 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 likes, Lucetta.

LUCETTA

You must needs have them with a codpiece, madam.

JULIA

But what clothing will you wear on your journey?

JULIA

I won't dress like a woman so that I can prevent the shameless
sexual advances of lustful men. Kind Lucetta, outfit me with
clothing appropriate for a young man from a good family.

LUCETTA

Well, then, your ladyship must cut your hair.

JULIA

No, girl, I'll tie it up in strange knots with silk ribbons. Fancy frills
would look more appropriate on a young man who is slightly
older than I'll appear to be.

LUCETTA

In what style, madame, should I make your pants?

JULIA

Any style that won't make men ask, "Tell me, good lord, how
big around is the hoop in your hoop skirt?" Why, you should
make them in whatever style you like best, Lucetta.

LUCETTA

You'll need to wear a cup in your crotch, madame.

JULIA

Out, out, Lucetta! That will be ill-favored.

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 lov'st me, let me have
What thou think'st meet and is most mannerly.
But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me
60 For undertaking so unstaid 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,

Not so, Lucetta! That would be ugly.

LUCETTA

Tight leggings, madame, won't be much of a disguise unless
you wear a cup.

JULIA

Lucetta, if you love me, let me have whatever you think is the
most appropriate and fitting. But tell me, girl, what will people
think of me for going on such a risky journey? I'm afraid it
would make others think less of me.

LUCETTA

If that's what you think, then stay home and don't go.

JULIA

No, I won't stay.

LUCETTA

Then go, and don't worry what others might say. If Proteus is
happy with your journey it doesn't matter who's displeased
when they find out you've left. I'm afraid, though, that he won't
be pleased.

JULIA

That is the least of my fears, Lucetta. A thousand oaths, an
ocean of tears he cried, and many examples of his infinite love

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,
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 lov'st 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!

for me guarantee that Proteus will welcome me.

LUCETTA

These are the tricks of deceitful men.

JULIA

Crude men who use them for crude reasons! But more honest
stars were in the sky when Proteus was born. He carries out
what he says he will, his oaths are prophecies, his love is
sincere, his thoughts are pure, his tears are honest messengers
sent from his heart, and his heart is as far from lying as heaven
is from earth.

LUCETTA

I pray to God he proves to be that way when you see him!

JULIA

Now, if you love me, don't wrong him by doubting his honesty.
Earn my love by loving him, and go with me right now to my
bedroom to take note of what other items I need for my
lovesick journey. All that I own I leave in your care, including
my goods, my lands, and my reputation. Now help me leave
right away. Come, don't say anything, but let's go immediately.
I'm impatient from the delay.

90 I am impatient of my tarriance.

Exeunt

Enter DUKE, THURIO, and PROTEUS

DUKE

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

Exit THURIO

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

PROTEUS

My gracious lord, that which I would discover
5 The law of friendship bids me to conceal;
But when I call to mind your gracious favors
Done to me, undeserving as I am,
My duty pricks me on to utter that
Which else no worldly good should draw from me.
10 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
On Thurio, whom your gentle daughter hates;
15 And should she thus be stolen away from you,

They exit.

Act 3 Scene 1

DUKE, THURIO, and PROTEUS enter.

DUKE

Sir Thurio, leave us alone a while, please. We have some
private matters to discuss.

THURIO exits.

Now tell me, Proteus, why did you want to see me?

PROTEUS

My gracious lord, the rules of friendship require that I keep
secret what I'm about to reveal to you. But when I think of all
you've graciously done for me, undeserving as I am, my duty
urges me to divulge what nothing else in the world could pull
out of me. You should know, your highness, that Sir Valentine,
my friend, intends to run away with your daughter tonight. I
was informed of the plot. I know you've decided to marry her
to Thurio, whom your lovely daughter hates. And should she
be taken away from you this way, it would greatly upset you in
your old age. So, for the sake of my duty, I chose to go against
my friend and his intended scheme rather than hide it and

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
Than, by concealing it, heap on your head
20 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.
This love of theirs myself have often seen,
25 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,
And so, unworthily, disgrace the man—
30 A rashness that I ever yet have shunned—
I gave him gentle looks, thereby to find
That which thyself hast now disclosed to me.
And, that thou mayst perceive my fear of this,
Knowing that tender youth is soon suggested,
35 I nightly lodge her in an upper tower,
The key whereof myself have ever kept;
And thence she cannot be conveyed away.

PROTEUS

Know, noble lord, they have devised a means

burden your mind with a pack of sorrows that would weigh you
down and send you to an early grave.

DUKE

Proteus, I thank you for your honest concern. In return, ask
anything you want of me while I still live. I've often happened
to see this love of theirs for myself, when they've thought me
asleep, and frequently I've considered forbidding Sir Valentine
from seeing her or attending my court. But I've been afraid my
jealousy might be misplaced, and as a result I might
needlessly disgrace him—I've always disdained foolish
impulsiveness. So I treated him kindly, only to learn of this
deceitful plot you've just revealed. And, so you know how
much I fear this, I make her sleep in one of the upper towers of
the castle every night, because I know how impressionable
youth can be led astray. I always keep the key myself, so that
she cannot be taken away.

PROTEUS

How he her chamber window will ascend
40 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.
But, good my lord, do it so cunningly
45 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 honor, he shall never know
That I had any light from thee of this.

PROTEUS

50 Adieu, my lord. Sir Valentine is coming.

*Exit **PROTEUS***

*Enter **VALENTINE** hurrying elsewhere, concealing a rope ladder beneath his cloak*

DUKE

Sir Valentine, whither away so fast?

VALENTINE

Please it your Grace, there is a messenger
That stays to bear my letters to my friends,

You should know, my noble lord, they have devised a way for him to climb up to her bedroom window and bring her down using a rope ladder. That's why this young lover has gone away, but he's coming back with it soon, allowing you to intercept him, if you like. But, my good lord, be cunning about it, so that he won't know I told you. It was because of my love for you, not hatred for my friend, that I told you of this plot.

DUKE

I swear on my honor he will never know I learned this information from you.

PROTEUS

Goodbye, my lord. Sir Valentine is coming.

***PROTEUS** exits.*

***VALENTINE** enters, hurrying to go somewhere and concealing a rope beneath his cloak.*

DUKE

Sir Valentine, what's the rush?

VALENTINE

If you please, Your Grace, there is a messenger that waits to take my letters to my friends, and I am on my way to deliver

And I am going to deliver them.

DUKE

55 Be they of much import?

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

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

VALENTINE

I know it well, my lord, and sure the match
Were rich and honorable. Besides, the gentleman
65 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

No, trust me. She is peevish, sullen, froward,
Proud, disobedient, stubborn, lacking duty,
70 Neither regarding that she is my child
Nor fearing me as if I were her father.

them.

DUKE

Are they very important?

VALENTINE

In essence they describe how healthy and happy I am here in
your kingdom.

DUKE

No, then, they don't matter. Stay with me a while. I want to tell
you about some affairs that affect me personally, which you
must keep secret. You're surely aware that I have sought to
match my friend Sir Thurio with my daughter.

VALENTINE

I know that very well, my lord, and surely the match would be
profitable and honorable. Besides, the gentleman is full of
virtue, wealth, worth, and qualities fit for a wife such as your
beautiful daughter. Can Your Grace not get her to want him for
a husband?

DUKE

No, trust me. She is irritable, sullen, difficult, proud,
disobedient, stubborn, irresponsible, and neither does she care
that she must obey me as my child nor does she fear me as
her father. And, may I tell you, after thinking about it, this pride

And, may I say to thee, this pride of hers,
Upon advice, hath drawn my love from her;
And, where I thought the remnant of mine age
75 Should have been cherished by her childlike duty,
I now am full resolved to take a wife,
And turn her out to who will take her in.
Then let her beauty be her wedding dower,
For me and my possessions she esteems not.

VALENTINE

80 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,
And naught esteems my aged eloquence.
Now therefore would I have thee to my tutor—
85 For long ago I have forgot to court;
Besides, the fashion of the time is changed—
How and which way I may bestow myself
To be regarded in her sun-bright eye.

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

of hers has made me love her less. I once thought she would
fulfill her duty and take care of me in my old age, but now I've
resolved to find a new wife and marry my daughter off to
whomever will take her. Her beauty will be her dowry, because
she doesn't value me or my possessions.

VALENTINE

What part would Your Grace like me to play in this?

DUKE

There is a lady here in Verona whom I love, but she is hard to
please and coy and doesn't appreciate my old-fashioned
eloquence. I'd like you to teach me how to win her over, since I
long ago forgot how to court a woman, and besides, times
have changed. How should I act in order for her bright eyes to
take notice of me?

VALENTINE

Win her with gifts if she doesn't pay attention to words. Jewels,
which can't speak, often sway a woman's mind more than fast-
talking.

DUKE

But she did scorn a present that I sent her.

VALENTINE

A woman sometime scorns what best contents her.

Send her another. Never give her o'er,

95 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.

If she do chide, 'tis not to have you gone,

Forwhy the fools are mad if left alone.

100 Take no repulse, whatever she doth say;

For "Get you gone," she doth not mean "Away!"

Flatter and praise, commend, extol their graces;

Though ne'er so black, say they have angels' faces.

That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man

105 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,

And kept severely from resort of men,

That no man hath access by day to her.

VALENTINE

110 Why then I would resort to her by night.

DUKE

Ay, but the doors be locked and keys kept safe,

But she already sneered at one present I sent her.

VALENTINE

A woman will sometimes scorn the very thing that pleases her most. Send her another gift. Never give up, because her initial disdain will make her eventual feelings of love even stronger. If she frowns, it's not out of hatred for you but rather to make you love her even more. If she chides you, it's not so that you'll go away, because [the fools](#) will go crazy if they're left alone. Don't be offended, whatever she says. By "Get out of here," she doesn't really mean, "Go away!" Flatter and praise women, compliment them, talk about their graces. Even if they have the blackest skin, say they have the faces of angels. In my opinion, any man that has a tongue isn't really a man unless he can use it to win a woman.

DUKE

But the family of the woman I'm talking about has promised her to a young, worthy gentleman, and they've strictly kept her away from other men so that no man can meet with her during the day.

VALENTINE

Why, then I would see her at night.

DUKE

That no man hath recourse to her by night.

VALENTINE

What lets but one may enter at her window?

DUKE

Her chamber is aloft, far from the ground,

115 And built so shelving that one cannot climb it
Without apparent hazard of his life.

VALENTINE

Why then, a ladder quaintly made of cords
To cast up, with a pair of anchoring hooks,
Would serve to scale another Hero's tower,

120 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

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

DUKE

This very night; for Love is like a child,

125 That longs for everything that he can come by.

Yes, but the doors are locked and the keys tightly guarded so
that no man has access to her at night.

VALENTINE

What's stopping anyone from entering her room through the
window?

DUKE

Her room is high up, far from the ground, and it projects out
like a shelf so that one cannot climb it without risking his life.

VALENTINE

Why then, a skillfully made ladder of rope to toss up, with a
pair of grappling hooks to anchor it, would work to scale this
[new Hero's tower](#) , allowing another daring Leander to climb it.

DUKE

Now, from one nobleman by birth to another, tell me where I
can get such a ladder.

VALENTINE

When would you need to use it? Please, sir, tell me that.

DUKE

Tonight, because Love is like a child that wants everything he
sees.

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

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
130 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

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

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

How shall I fashion me to wear a cloak?
I pray thee, let me feel thy cloak upon me.

He pulls open VALENTINE's cloak.

VALENTINE

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

DUKE

But listen, I will go see her alone. What's the best way to carry
the ladder there?

VALENTINE

It will be so light, my lord, that you'll be able to carry it under
any size cloak.

DUKE

A cloak as long as yours will do?

VALENTINE

Yes, my lord.

DUKE

Then let me see your cloak. I'll get one of that same length.

VALENTINE

Why, any cloak will work just fine, my lord.

DUKE

How will I get used to wearing a cloak? Please, let me try on
your cloak.

He pulls open Valentine's cloak.

What letter is this same? What's here? "To Sylvia!"

And here an engine fit for my proceeding.

140 I'll be so bold to break the seal for once.

Reads

"My thoughts do harbor with my Sylvia 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!

145 My herald thoughts in thy pure bosom rest them,
While I, their king, that thither them importune,
Do curse the grace that with such grace hath blest them,
Because myself do want my servants' fortune.

I curse myself, for they are sent by me,

150 That they should harbor where their lord should be."

What's here?

"Sylvia, this night I will enfranchise thee."

'Tis so; and here's the ladder for the purpose.

Why, Phaëthon, for thou art Merops' son

155 Wilt thou aspire to guide the heavenly car

And with thy daring folly burn the world?

Wilt thou reach stars because they shine on thee?

Go, base intruder, overweening slave!

Bestow thy fawning smiles on equal mates,

160 And think my patience, more than thy desert,

What's this letter? What does it say? "To Sylvia"! And a tool for climbing like the kind you suggested. I'll be so bold as to break the seal.

He reads.

"My thoughts are with my Sylvia every night. They are like my slaves, and I send them flying. Oh, I wish that I could come and go to her just as easily, and lie where my thoughts, which cannot feel, are lying. Let my thoughts, which come to you as my messengers, rest in your breast, while I, their king who sent them, curse the luck that has blessed them with such favor. I want to be as fortunate as my slaves. I curse myself, too, because I sent them to the place where I, their lord, should be." What's this here at the end? "Sylvia, this night I will free you." So that's it, and here's the ladder you planned to use. Why,

[Phaethon—for you are Merops' son](#)—will you try to drive the sun god's chariot and burn the world in your brash idiocy? Will you grasp at the stars because they shine on you, as you grasp at my daughter for favoring you? Go, vulgar intruder, arrogant slave! Flash your fawning smiles on someone in your own class, and know that my patience—which is more than you deserve—allows you to leave this place. Thank me for this more than you've thanked me for all the favors I've granted you, which were too many. But if you stay here in my kingdom any longer than it takes to hurry away, then by heaven my

Is privilege for thy departure hence.
Thank me for this more than for all the favors
Which, all too much, I have bestowed on thee.
But if thou linger in my territories

165 Longer than swiftest expedition

Will give thee time to leave our royal court,
By heaven, my wrath shall far exceed the love
I ever bore my daughter or thyself.

Begone! I will not hear thy vain excuse,

170 But, as thou lov'st thy life, make speed from hence.

*Exit **DUKE***

VALENTINE

And why not death rather than living torment?
To die is to be banished from myself,
And Sylvia is myself. Banished from her
Is self from self—a deadly banishment!

175 What light is light, if Sylvia be not seen?

What joy is joy, if Sylvia be not by?
Unless it be to think that she is by
And feed upon the shadow of perfection.
Except I be by Sylvia in the night,

180 There is no music in the nightingale;

Unless I look on Sylvia in the day,
There is no day for me to look upon.
She is my essence, and I leave to be

anger will be far greater than any love I've ever felt for my daughter or for you. Get out of here! I will not hear your futile excuses. If you love your life, then you'll hurry on your way from here.

*The **DUKE** exits.*

VALENTINE

Why not death instead of being tortured alive? To die is to be banished from myself, and Sylvia is my very being. Being banished from her is like being banished from myself—a deadly banishment! What good is light if I can't see Sylvia? What joy is joy if Sylvia isn't nearby? Unless I can be happy to think she is near and live on the mere thought of her perfection. Unless I can be near Sylvia in the night, there is no music in the nightingale's singing. Unless I can look on Sylvia in the day, the day doesn't even exist. She is my essence, and I'll cease to exist if I'm not cared for, shined upon, valued, and kept alive by her gentle power. I don't run from death if I run from the duke's deadly threats. If I stay here, I am just waiting for death, but if I flee this place, then I flee from life itself.

If I be not by her fair influence
185 Fostered, illumined, cherished, kept alive.
I fly not death, to fly his deadly doom;
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

190 So-ho, so-ho!

PROTEUS

What seest thou?

LANCE

Him we go to find. There's not a hair on 's head but 'tis a
Valentine.

PROTEUS

Valentine?

VALENTINE

No.

PROTEUS

195 Who then? His spirit?

***PROTEUS** and **LANCE** enter.*

PROTEUS

Run, boy, run, run, and find him.

LANCE

I found him! I found him!

PROTEUS

What do you see?

LANCE

The man we were looking for. It's a Valentine, down to the last
hair.

PROTEUS

Valentine?

VALENTINE

No.

PROTEUS

Who are you then? His ghost?

VALENTINE

Neither.

PROTEUS

What then?

VALENTINE

Nothing.

LANCE

Can nothing speak? Master, shall I strike?

PROTEUS

200 Who wouldst thou strike?

LANCE

Nothing.

PROTEUS

Villain, forbear.

LANCE

Why, sir, I'll strike nothing. I pray you—

PROTEUS

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

VALENTINE

205 My ears are stopped and cannot hear good news,

VALENTINE

Not his ghost either.

PROTEUS

What are you then?

VALENTINE

Nothing.

LANCE

Can "nothing" speak? Master, should I attack?

PROTEUS

Who would you attack?

LANCE

"Nothing."

PROTEUS

Stop, man.

LANCE

But, sir, I'm going to attack "nothing." Please—

PROTEUS

Man, I say stop. Valentine, my friend, let's talk.

VALENTINE

So much of bad already hath possessed them.

PROTEUS

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

VALENTINE

Is Sylvia dead?

PROTEUS

²¹⁰ No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

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

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

No Valentine, if Sylvia have forsworn me.
²¹⁵ What is your news?

LANCE

Sir, there is a proclamation that you are vanished.

PROTEUS

That thou art banished—O, that's the news!—

My ears are plugged up and cannot hear good news—they are already filled with bad news.

PROTEUS

Then I'll stay silent and not tell you, because my news is harsh, uncomfortable to hear, and bad.

VALENTINE

Is Sylvia dead?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

There is no Valentine, indeed, for sacred Sylvia. Has she renounced her love for me?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

There's no Valentine if Sylvia ever stops loving me. What's your news?

LANCE

Sir, there's been an announcement that you are banished.

PROTEUS

From hence, from Sylvia, and from me thy friend.

VALENTINE

O, I have fed upon this woe already,

220 And now excess of it will make me surfeit.

Doth Sylvia know that I am banished?

PROTEUS

Ay, ay; and she hath offered to the doom—

Which, unreversed, stands in effectual force—

A sea of melting pearl, which some call tears.

225 Those at her father's churlish feet she tendered;

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,

230 Sad sighs, deep groans, nor silver-shedding tears

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,

235 That to close prison he commanded her,

With many bitter threats of biding there.

VALENTINE

No more, unless the next word that thou speak'st

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

VALENTINE

Oh, I've already had my fill of this awful news, and now hearing more of it will make me sick. Does Sylvia know that I'm banished?

PROTEUS

Yes, yes, and she's responded to the sentence—which, if not revoked, will be enforced—by crying a sea of melting pearls, which some people call tears. She cried them out at the feet of her ill-mannered father, and did so upon her knees, wringing her hands, whose beautiful whiteness appropriately seemed to result from her sorrow. But neither begging on her knees, nor extending her pure hands, nor heaving sad sighs, deep groans, or crying tears that flow like silver streams would move her unsympathetic father to change his order that Valentine must die if captured. Besides, her begging to repeal the order of banishment against you bothered him so much that he ordered her locked away and threatened to keep her there permanently.

VALENTINE

Have some malignant power upon my life!
If so, I pray thee, breathe it in mine ear,
240 As ending anthem of my endless dolor.

PROTEUS

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;
245 Besides, thy staying will abridge thy life.
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 delivered
250 Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love.
The time now serves not to expostulate.
Come, I'll convey thee through the city gate,
And, ere I part with thee confer at large
Of all that may concern thy love affairs.
255 As thou lov'st Sylvia, though not for thyself,
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

Don't say any more, or the next word you say may kill me! If so,
I beg you to whisper it into my ear as a final hymn for my
endless misery.

PROTEUS

Stop grieving over things you can't help, and think of ways to
fix the things that cause you grief. Time nurtures and breeds all
good things. If you stay here, you can't see your love. Besides,
staying here will shorten your life. Hope is a lover's crutch—
walk forward with it and use it to prop yourself up against
despair. Your letters can be here though you are far away, and
if you write them to me I will deliver them to the milk-white
breast of your love. Now is not the time to complain. Come, I'll
escort you through the city gate, and we can talk about
everything concerning your love affairs before I part with you.
Consider the danger you're in, if not for yourself then for your
love of Sylvia, and come along with me!

VALENTINE

Please, Lance, if you see my servant boy, tell him to hurry and
meet me at the north gate.

PROTEUS

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

VALENTINE

260 O my dear Sylvia! Hapless Valentine!

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 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 wages. She hath more qualities than a water spaniel, which is much in a bare Christian.

Pulling out a paper

Here is the catalog of her condition. "Imprimis: She can fetch and carry." Why, a horse can do no more. Nay, a horse cannot fetch, but only 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

Go, boy, find him. Come, Valentine.

VALENTINE

Oh, my dear Sylvia! Unlucky Valentine!

VALENTINE and PROTEUS exit.

LANCE

You know, I'm just a fool, but I still have enough brains to think my master is kind of a scoundrel. But it's fine if he is a scoundrel if he's only a scoundrel regarding love. No one thinks I am in love, yet I am. But a whole team of horses couldn't tear that secret, or who it is I love, out of me. And yet it's a woman, but what kind of woman I won't even say to myself. It's a milkmaid, but she's not a virgin [since she has given birth](#). Yet she is a maid, because she is her master's maid and works for wages. She has more abilities than a water spaniel, which is a lot for a simple Christian.

Pulling out a paper

Here is a list of all her traits. "In the first place, she can fetch and carry." Why, a horse can't do more. No, a horse can't fetch. It can only carry. Therefore, she is better than a horse. "Also: she can milk." Look at that! What a sweet virtue for a maid with clean hands.

SPEED enters.

SPEED

How now, Signor Lance, what news with your mastership?

LANCE

265 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 black'st news that ever thou heardest.

SPEED

Why, man, how black?

LANCE

Why, as black as ink.

SPEED

270 Let me read them.

LANCE

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

SPEED

Thou liest. I can.

LANCE

SPEED

How goes it, Signor Lance? Any news of your mastership?

LANCE

About my master's ship? Well, it's at sea.

SPEED

There you go again—you misunderstand me. What news is that, then, on your piece of paper?

LANCE

The darkest news that you've ever heard.

SPEED

Why, man, how dark?

LANCE

Well, as dark as ink.

SPEED

Let me read it.

LANCE

Get away, you blockhead! You can't read.

SPEED

You lie. I can.

LANCE

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

SPEED

Marry, the son of my grandfather.

LANCE

275 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, [giving him the paper] and Saint Nicholas be thy speed!

SPEED

[Reads.] "Imprimis, She can milk."

LANCE

Ay, that she can.

SPEED

280 "Item: She brews good ale."

LANCE

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

I'll test you. Tell me: who conceived you?

SPEED

The son of my grandfather, of course.

LANCE

Oh, illiterate loafer! It was the son of your grandmother. This proves that you cannot read.

SPEED

Come on, fool, come on. Test me with the paper.

LANCE

(giving him the paper) There, and [Saint Nicholas](#) protect you!

SPEED

(reads) "In the first place, she can milk."

LANCE

Yes, that she can.

SPEED

"Also: she can brew good beer."

LANCE

And that's where the proverb comes in—"Blessing of your heart, you brew good ale."

SPEED

"Item: She can sew."

LANCE

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

SPEED

"Item: She can knit."

LANCE

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

SPEED

"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

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

SPEED

290 "Item: She hath many nameless virtues."

SPEED

"Also: she can sew."

LANCE

To that I say, "Can she so?"

SPEED

"Also: she can knit."

LANCE

What does a man care if a girl's dowry doesn't include
stockings, when she can knit him a stocking?

SPEED

"Also: she can wash and scour."

LANCE

That's a special virtue, because then she doesn't need to be
[washed and scoured to keep her in line](#) .

SPEED

"Also: she can spin yarn."

LANCE

Then I can take it easy, since she can spin for a living.

SPEED

"Also: she has many virtues that can't be named."

LANCE

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

SPEED

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

295 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.

LANCE

That's the same as saying they're bastard virtues that don't know their fathers and therefore have no names.

SPEED

Now comes a list of her vices.

LANCE

Following right behind her virtues.

SPEED

"Also: she is not to be kissed while fasting, because of her bad breath."

LANCE

Well, that fault can be fixed with some breakfast. Read on.

SPEED

"Also: she has a sweet tooth."

LANCE

That makes up for her sour breath.

SPEED

"Also: she talks in her sleep."

LANCE

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

SPEED

300 "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

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

SPEED

"Item: She hath no teeth."

LANCE

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

SPEED

"Item: She is curst."

LANCE

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

SPEED

"Item: She will often praise her liquor."

SPEED

"Also: she is slow with words."

LANCE

What a scoundrel who listed this among her vices! To speak little is a woman's only virtue! Please, cross that out and list it as her chief virtue.

SPEED

"Also: she is proud."

LANCE

Cross that out, too. It was Eve's legacy to all women, so it can't be taken from her.

SPEED

"Also: she has no teeth."

LANCE

I don't care about that either, because I love gums.

SPEED

"Also: she's a bitch."

LANCE

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

SPEED

"Also: she will taste and appraise her liquor before buying it."

LANCE

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

SPEED

310 "Item: She is too liberal."

LANCE

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

"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

315 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

LANCE

If her liquor is good, then she should. And if she won't, I will, because good things should be praised.

SPEED

"Also: she is too loose."

LANCE

That can't mean her tongue, since it's already written down that she's slow with words. And it isn't about her purse, because I'll keep that shut. Now she may be loose in another way, and that I can't help. Well, keep going.

SPEED

"Also: she has more hair than brains, and more faults than hair, and more wealth than faults."

LANCE

Stop right there. I'll take her. She was mine and then not mine two or three times in that last item. Repeat it once more.

SPEED

"Also: she has more hair than brains—"

LANCE

More hair than brains? Maybe that's so. I'll prove it. The top of a saltshaker hides the salt, so therefore it is more than the salt. The hair that covers the brains is more than the brains,

that covers the wit is more than the wit, for the greater hides the less. What's next?

SPEED

"And more faults than hairs—"

LANCE

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

SPEED

"And more wealth than faults."

LANCE

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

SPEED

320 What then?

LANCE

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

SPEED

For me?

LANCE

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

because the larger thing hides the smaller thing. Okay, what's next?

SPEED

"And more faults than hair—"

LANCE

That's awful. Oh, I wish that weren't on the list!

SPEED

"And more wealth than the faults."

LANCE

Why, that line makes the many faults a good thing. Well, I'll have her. If it is a good match, since nothing is impossible—

SPEED

What then?

LANCE

Why, then I'll tell you that your master is waiting for you at the north gate.

SPEED

For me?

LANCE

For you? Yeah, who are you? He's been waiting for a better man than you.

SPEED

And must I go to him?

LANCE

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

SPEED

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

Exit SPEED

LANCE

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

Exit

Enter DUKE and THURIO

DUKE

Sir Thurio, fear not but that she will love you,
Now Valentine is banished from her sight.

THURIO

Since his exile she hath despised me most,

SPEED

And I have to go to him?

LANCE

You must run to him, because you have stayed so long that
simply walking isn't going to cut it.

SPEED

Why didn't you tell me sooner? A disease take your love
letters!

SPEED exits.

LANCE

Now he'll get beaten for reading my letter. What a rude slave
for having stuck his nose in someone else's secrets. I'll follow
after him, to rejoice in seeing his master whip him.

He exits.

Act 3 Scene 2

The DUKE and THURIO enter.

DUKE

Sir Thurio, don't worry. She is sure to love you now that
Valentine has been banished from her sight.

THURIO

Forsworn my company and railed at me,
5 That I am desperate of obtaining her.

DUKE

This weak impress of love is as a figure
Trenchèd 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***

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

PROTEUS

Gone, my good lord.

DUKE

My daughter takes his going grievously.

PROTEUS

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

DUKE

So I believe, but Thurio thinks not so.
Proteus, the good conceit I hold of thee—

Since his exile she has despised me even more, she has
refused to be around me, and she has condemned me, so that
I have no hope of winning her.

DUKE

The weak impression love makes on the heart is like an ice
sculpture, which melts into water and loses its form after being
exposed to heat for just an hour. A little time will ease her
disdain, and worthless Valentine will be forgotten.

***PROTEUS** enters.*

How's it going, Sir Proteus? Is your countryman gone, as our
proclamation commands?

PROTEUS

He's gone, my good lord.

DUKE

My daughter is upset over his departure.

PROTEUS

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

DUKE

That's what I believe, too, but Thurio doesn't think so. Proteus,
the high esteem I have for you—for you've shown me that you

For thou hast shown some sign of good desert—
Makes me the better to confer with thee.

PROTEUS

20 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 Thurio and my daughter.

PROTEUS

I do, my lord.

DUKE

25 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.
What might we do to make the girl forget
30 The love of Valentine, and love Sir Thurio?

PROTEUS

The best way is to slander Valentine
With falsehood, cowardice, and poor descent,

deserve it—makes me more inclined to discuss this matter
with you.

PROTEUS

Let me die if I ever live to see the day I am disloyal to Your
Grace.

DUKE

You know how much I would like to arrange a marriage
between Sir Thurio and my daughter.

PROTEUS

I do, my lord.

DUKE

And also, I think, you're aware that she refuses to obey my will?

PROTEUS

She refused when Valentine was here, my lord.

DUKE

Yes, and oddly enough she continues to oppose me. What can
we do to make this girl forget her love for Valentine and love
Sir Thurio?

PROTEUS

The best way is to slander Valentine and make up lies about
his infidelity, cowardice, and poor parentage—three things

Three things that women highly hold in hate.

DUKE

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

PROTEUS

35 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

And that, my lord, I shall be loath to do.

40 '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;

Therefore the office is indifferent,

45 Being entreated to it by your friend.

PROTEUS

You have prevailed, my lord. If I can do it

By aught that I can speak in his dispraise,

women strongly hate.

DUKE

Yes, but she'll think these things are only said out of hatred for him.

PROTEUS

Yes, if his enemy tells her these things. Therefore, someone she believes to be his friend must tell her the details.

DUKE

Then you must make it your job to slander him.

PROTEUS

I would hate to do that, my lord. It's a job unsuitable for a gentleman, especially against his own friend.

DUKE

If your praise can't help him, then your slander can't do him any harm. Therefore the task is neither good nor bad, since I, your friend, ask you to do it.

PROTEUS

You've convinced me, my lord. If I do what I can to speak against him, she won't love him much longer. But even if she

She shall not long continue love to him.
But say this weed her love from Valentine,
50 It follows not that she will love Sir Thurio.

THURIO

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;
Which must be done by praising me as much
55 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
And cannot soon revolt and change your mind.
60 Upon this warrant shall you have access
Where you with Sylvia may confer at large;
For she is lumpish, heavy, melancholy,
And, for your friend's sake, will be glad of you,
Where you may temper her by your persuasion
65 To hate young Valentine and love my friend.

PROTEUS

As much as I can do, I will effect.
But you, Sir Thurio, are not sharp enough;
You must lay lime to tangle her desires

stops loving Valentine, it doesn't mean she will love Sir Thurio.

THURIO

So, as you break down her love for him, you must build it back
up around me, so that it doesn't come apart and become
useless to everyone. You must do this by praising me as much
as you dispraise Sir Valentine.

DUKE

And, Proteus, we feel we can trust you with this task because
we know, from what Valentine told us, that you're already in
love and can't quickly fall out of love. For this reason you will
be allowed to speak to Sylvia as you like. She is sad, sullen,
and melancholy, and she'll be happy to see you because
you're close to Valentine. Then you can shape her by your
persuasion to hate young Valentine and love my friend, Sir
Thurio.

PROTEUS

I will do as much as I can. But you, Sir Thurio, aren't doing
enough to win her. To entice her and capture her desires, you

By wailful sonnets, whose composèd rhymes
70 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
You sacrifice your tears, your sighs, your heart.
Write till your ink be dry, and with your tears
75 Moist it again, and frame some feeling line
That may discover such integrity:
For Orpheus' lute was strung with poets' sinews,
Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones,
Make tigers tame, and huge leviathans
80 Forsake unsounded deeps to dance on sands.
After your dire-lamenting elegies,
Visit by night your lady's chamber window
With some sweet consort. To their instruments
Tune a deploring dump; the night's dead silence
85 Will well become such sweet-complaining grievance.
This, or else nothing, will inherit her.

DUKE

This discipline shows thou hast been in love.

THURIO

And thy advice this night I'll put in practice.

must write sonnets whose well-crafted rhymes should be
filled with vows of devotion.

DUKE

Yes, poetry bred by heaven is very powerful.

PROTEUS

Say that you sacrifice your tears, your sighs, and your heart on
the altar of her beauty. Write until your ink dries up and then
moisten it again with your tears, and craft some emotional line
that reveals your sincerity—after all, [Orpheus's lute](#) was made
from the same stuff as poetry and could soften steel and
stones, make tigers tame, and cause huge whales to leave the
deep ocean and dance on the sand. After you give her your
love poems, go to her bedroom window at night with a group
of musicians. While they play, sing a sad melody, and the silent
night will enhance such sweet heartsick yearning. If that
doesn't win her, nothing will.

DUKE

Your instructions show that you've been in love before.

THURIO

Therefore, sweet Proteus, my direction-giver,
90 Let us into the city presently
To sort some gentlemen well skilled in music.
I have a sonnet that will serve the turn
To give the onset to thy good advice.

DUKE

About it, gentlemen!

PROTEUS

95 We'll wait upon Your Grace till after supper,
And afterward determine our proceedings.

DUKE

Even now about it! I will pardon you.

Exeunt

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

And I'll act on your advice tonight. Therefore, good Proteus, my
guide, let's go into the city to find some gentlemen skilled at
playing instruments. I have a sonnet that will work to set your
plan into action.

DUKE

Let's do it, gentlemen!

PROTEUS

We'll visit Your Grace after supper and then determine our next
move.

DUKE

Like I said, let's do it! You're excused.

They exit.

Act 4 Scene 1

Several OUTLAWS enter.

FIRST OUTLAW

Men, get ready. I see a traveler.

SECOND OUTLAW

Even if there are ten of them, don't back down. Take them
down.

VALENTINE and SPEED enter.

THIRD OUTLAW

Stand, sir! And throw us that you have about ye.
If not, we'll make you sit, and rifle you.

SPEED

5 Sir, we are undone. These are the villains
That all the travelers do fear so much.

VALENTINE

My friends—

FIRST OUTLAW

That's not so, sir. We are your enemies.

SECOND OUTLAW

Peace! We'll hear him.

THIRD OUTLAW

10 Ay, by my beard will we, for he is a proper man.

VALENTINE

Then know that I have little wealth to lose.
A man I am, crossed with adversity;
My riches are these poor habiliments,
Of which if you should here disfurnish me

15 You take the sum and substance that I have.

THIRD OUTLAW

Stop, sir! Give us what you have on you. If you don't, we'll make
you sit and we'll search you.

SPEED

Sir, we're ruined. These are the bandits that all the travelers in
this area fear so much.

VALENTINE

My friends—

FIRST OUTLAW

That's not how it is, sir. We are your enemies.

SECOND OUTLAW

Quiet! Let's hear him out.

THIRD OUTLAW

Yeah, by the hair on my chin we'll hear him out, because he is a
handsome man.

VALENTINE

You should know that I have little wealth to lose. I am a man
who's been struck by hardship. My only riches are these poor
clothes I'm wearing, and if you take them then you take the
sum total of everything I own.

SECOND OUTLAW

Whither travel you?

VALENTINE

To Verona.

FIRST OUTLAW

Whence came you?

VALENTINE

From Milan.

THIRD OUTLAW

²⁰ Have you long sojourned there?

VALENTINE

Some sixteen months, and longer might have stayed
If crooked fortune had not thwarted me.

FIRST OUTLAW

What! were you banished thence?

VALENTINE

I was.

SECOND OUTLAW

²⁵ For what offence?

VALENTINE

For that which now torments me to rehearse:

SECOND OUTLAW

Where are you going?

VALENTINE

To Verona.

FIRST OUTLAW

Where did you come from?

VALENTINE

From Milan.

THIRD OUTLAW

How long were you there?

VALENTINE

About sixteen months, and I might have stayed longer if bad
luck hadn't thwarted me.

FIRST OUTLAW

What! Were you banished?

VALENTINE

I was.

SECOND OUTLAW

For what crime?

VALENTINE

I killed a man, whose death I much repent,
But yet I slew him manfully in fight
Without false vantage or base treachery.

FIRST OUTLAW

30 Why, ne'er repent it, if it were done so.
But were you banished for so small a fault?

VALENTINE

I was, and held me glad of such a doom.

SECOND OUTLAW

Have you the tongues?

VALENTINE

My youthful travel therein made me happy,
35 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.

The Outlaws confer in whispers.

SPEED

Master, be one of them.

For something that now hurts me to repeat: I killed a man,
whose death I greatly regret, even though I killed him in a fair
fight without deceit or wicked treachery.

FIRST OUTLAW

Why, never regret it if that's the way it happened. Were you
really banished for such a small offense?

VALENTINE

I was, and was grateful to have just been banished.

SECOND OUTLAW

Do you speak any other languages?

VALENTINE

I traveled when I was young, which made me happy.
Otherwise, I would have been miserable.

THIRD OUTLAW

By the bald head of Robin Hood's fat Friar Tuck! This fellow
would make a great king for our group of bandits!

FIRST OUTLAW

We'll take him. Sirs, a word with you all.

The Outlaws confer in whispers.

SPEED

Master, become one of them. It's an honorable kind of thievery.

40 It's an honorable kind of thievery.

VALENTINE

Peace, villain!

SECOND OUTLAW

[Returning to Valentine] Tell us this: have you anything to take to?

VALENTINE

Nothing but my fortune.

THIRD OUTLAW

Know, then, that some of us are gentlemen,
45 Such as the fury of ungoverned youth
Thrust from the company of awful men.
Myself was from Verona banished
For practicing to steal away a lady,
An heir, and near allied unto the Duke.

SECOND OUTLAW

50 And I from Mantua, for a gentleman
Who, in my mood, I stabbed unto the heart.

FIRST OUTLAW

And I for suchlike petty crimes as these.
But to the purpose—for we cite our faults
That they may hold excused our lawless lives;

VALENTINE

Quiet, rascal!

SECOND OUTLAW

(returning to Valentine) Tell us this: do you have any way to support yourself?

VALENTINE

Nothing but my luck.

THIRD OUTLAW

You should know, then, that some of us are gentlemen who were forced out of respectable society by our unrestrained youth. I myself was banished from Verona for planning to elope with a lady, an heir who was close to the Duke.

SECOND OUTLAW

And I am from Mantua. I stabbed a gentleman in the heart out of anger.

FIRST OUTLAW

And I was banished for such petty crimes like these. But to get to the point, we state our crimes in part because they explain why we live lives of lawlessness, and also partly because

55 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

Indeed, because you are a banished man,
60 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

What sayst thou? Wilt thou be of our consort?
65 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

Thou shalt not live to brag what we have offered.

VALENTINE

70 I take your offer and will live with you,
Provided that you do no outrages
On silly women or poor passengers.

seeing that you're attractive, and by your own description a linguist, and since we are in need of a man of such qualities in our profession—

SECOND OUTLAW

In fact, because you are a banished man, and for that more than any other reason, we'd like to speak to you. Would you like to be our leader, to consider poverty an asset, and live as we do in this forest?

THIRD OUTLAW

What do you say? Will you join our band of highwaymen?
Say yes, and become our captain. We'll respect you, be ruled by you, and love you as our leader and our king.

FIRST OUTLAW

But if you reject our offer you die.

SECOND OUTLAW

You won't live to brag about what we've offered.

VALENTINE

I accept your offer and will live with you, provided that you do not harm any helpless women or poor passengers.

THIRD OUTLAW

No, we detest such vile base practices.

Come, go with us. We'll bring thee to our crews

75 And show thee all the treasure we have got,
Which, with ourselves, all rest at thy dispose.

Exeunt

Enter PROTEUS

PROTEUS

Already have I been false to Valentine,

And now I must be as unjust to Thurio.

Under the color of commending him,

I have access my own love to prefer.

5 But Sylvia 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.

THIRD OUTLAW

No, we detest such vile, wicked practices. Come, go with us.

We'll take you to the rest of our band and show you all the
treasure we have, which along with ourselves is at your
disposal.

They exit.

Act 4 Scene 2

PROTEUS enters.

PROTEUS

I've already had to lie to Valentine, and now I must be just as unfair to Thurio. Under the guise of praising him, I now have the ability to express my own feelings of love to Sylvia. But Sylvia is too beautiful, too faithful, too holy to be corrupted by my worthless praises. When I declare my loyalty to her, she criticizes me for being false to my friend, Valentine. When I praise her beauty, she tells me to think about how I've been unfaithful to Julia, whom I once loved. And yet, despite all of her scolding, the least of which could kill a lover's hopes, my love grows and fawns on her like a dog the more she spurns it. But here comes Thurio. Now we must go to her window and play some evening music for her to hear.

But here comes Thurio. Now must we to her window
And give some evening music to her ear.

*Enter **THURIO** and Musicians*

THURIO

How now, Sir Proteus, are you crept before us?

PROTEUS

Ay, gentle Thurio, for you know that love
20 Will creep in service where it cannot go.

THURIO

Ay, but I hope, sir, that you love not here.

PROTEUS

Sir, but I do, or else I would be hence.

THURIO

Who? Sylvia?

PROTEUS

Ay, Sylvia—for your sake.

THURIO

25 I thank you for your own.—Now, gentlemen,
Let's tune, and to it lustily awhile.

*Enter, at a distance, **HOST**, and **JULIA** disguised as a page.*

***THURIO** and musicians enter.*

THURIO

How's it going, Sir Proteus? Did you creep over here before us?

PROTEUS

Yes, kind Thurio, because you know that love has to creep
where it isn't allowed to walk.

THURIO

Yes, but I hope, sir, that you aren't in love in this situation.

PROTEUS

But I am, or else I wouldn't be here.

THURIO

Who are you in love with? Sylvia?

PROTEUS

Yes, Sylvia—for your sake.

THURIO

I thank you for your own sake. Now, gentlemen, let's start
playing, and be sure to give it all you've got.

*The Host and **JULIA** enter at a distance. **JULIA** is disguised as a*

They talk apart.

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

Come, we'll have you merry. I'll bring you where you shall hear music and see the gentleman that you asked for.

JULIA

30 But shall I hear him speak?

HOST

Ay, that you shall.

JULIA

That will be music.

Music plays.

HOST

Hark! hark!

JULIA

Is he among these?

page, and they talk apart from the others.

HOST

Now, my young guest, it seems to me you feel melancholy. Please tell me, why is it?

JULIA

In fact, my host, it's because I cannot be happy.

HOST

Come, we'll make you happy. I'll take you where you shall hear music and see the gentleman that you asked for.

JULIA

But will I hear him speak?

HOST

Yes, you will.

JULIA

That's music that I hear.

Music plays.

HOST

Listen! Listen!

JULIA

Is he among these musicians?

HOST

35 Ay, but peace! Let's hear 'em.

*Song***MUSICIAN**

Who is Sylvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
40 That she might admirèd be.
Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness.
Love doth to her eyes repair
To help him of his blindness,
45 And, being helped, inhabits there.
Then to Sylvia let us sing,
That Sylvia is excelling.
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling.
50 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

Yes, but be quiet! Let's listen to them.

*Song***MUSICIAN**

Who is Sylvia? What is she like,
That all our young men praise her?
She is holy and fair and wise;
And Heaven has lent her such grace
So that she may be admired.
Is she as kind as she is beautiful?
Because beauty and kindness are joined.
Cupid makes visits to her eyes
To cure him of his blindness,
And, being cured, he stays there to live.
Then let us sing to Sylvia,
That Sylvia is superior.
She surpasses every mortal thing
That lives on this dull earth.
Let us bring her flower garlands.

HOST

What's this? Are you sadder than you were before? What's
going on, man? You don't like the music?

JULIA

You're mistaken. The musician doesn't like me.

HOST

Why, my pretty youth?

JULIA

He plays false, father.

HOST

55 How? Out of tune on the strings?

JULIA

Not so, but yet so false that he grieves my very heartstrings.

HOST

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

60 Not a whit, when it jars so.

HOST

Hark, what fine change is in the music!

JULIA

Ay, that change is the spite.

HOST

Why, my young friend?

JULIA

He is being false, sir.

HOST

How so? Are his instrument's strings out of tune?

JULIA

No, but he's being so false that it hurts my very heartstrings.

HOST

You have a good ear.

JULIA

Yes, but I wish I were deaf. It makes my heart sad.

HOST

I see you don't enjoy listening to music.

JULIA

Not at all, when it sounds so awful.

HOST

Listen, how they change their tune!

JULIA

Yes, that "change" is the problem.

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

65 I tell you what Lance, his man, told me: he loved her out of all nick.

JULIA

Where is Lance?

HOST

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.

JULIA and the HOST stand aside.

PROTEUS

Sir Thurio, fear not you. I will so plead
70 That you shall say my cunning drift excels.

THURIO

HOST

Would you prefer that they always play just one thing?

JULIA

I would always have one of them play only one song. But, host, does this Sir Proteus we're talking about often go to this lady?

HOST

I'll tell you what Lance, his servant, told me: he loved her more than anything.

JULIA

Where is Lance?

HOST

Gone to find his dog, which he must deliver as a present to Sylvia tomorrow upon his master's command.

JULIA

Quiet! Step aside. The musicians are leaving.

Julia and the Host stand aside.

PROTEUS

Sir Thurio, don't worry. I will plead to Sylvia so effectively that you'll say my cunning scheme is excellent.

THURIO

Where meet we?

PROTEUS

At Saint Gregory's well.

THURIO

Farewell.

*Exeunt **THURIO** and Musicians*

*Enter **SYLVIA** above, at her window*

PROTEUS

Madam, good even to your ladyship.

SYLVIA

⁷⁵ I thank you for your music, gentlemen.

Who is that that spake?

PROTEUS

One, lady, if you knew his pure heart's truth,
You would quickly learn to know him by his voice.

SYLVIA

Sir Proteus, as I take it.

PROTEUS

⁸⁰ Sir Proteus, gentle lady, and your servant.

SYLVIA

Where will we meet?

PROTEUS

At Saint Gregory's well.

THURIO

Farewell.

***THURIO** and the musicians exit.*

***SYLVIA** enters above, at her window.*

PROTEUS

Madame, good evening to your ladyship.

SYLVIA

I thank you for your music, sir. Who is that who spoke?

PROTEUS

Someone, lady, whom you would quickly learn to recognize by
his voice if you knew how he truly felt.

SYLVIA

Sir Proteus, I take it.

PROTEUS

Sir Proteus, gentle lady, and also your servant.

SYLVIA

What's your will?

PROTEUS

That I may compass yours.

SYLVIA

You have your wish. My will is even this:

That presently you hie you home to bed.

85 Thou subtle, perjured, false, disloyal man!

Think'st thou I am so shallow, so conceitless,

To be seduced by thy flattery,

That hast deceived so many with thy vows?

Return, return, and make thy love amends.

90 For me, by this pale queen of night I swear,

I am so far from granting thy request

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

95 I grant, sweet love, that I did love a lady,

But she is dead.

JULIA

[Aside] 'Twere false, if I should speak it,

For I am sure she is not buried.

SYLVIA

What do you want?

PROTEUS

For you to want me.

SYLVIA

Then you have your wish. I want this of you: that you take

yourself home to bed. You sly, lying, false, disloyal man! Do

you think I'm so shallow, so stupid, that you can seduce me

with your flattery when you've deceived so many others with

your vows? Go back, go back, and apologize to your love. I

swear on the moon, I am so far from granting your request that

I despise you for your misguided plea. In a moment I intend to

scold myself for spending even this much time talking to you.

PROTEUS

I admit, sweet love, that I did love a lady. But she is dead.

JULIA

(aside) That's false, if I do say so myself, because I'm sure she's

not dead and buried.

SYLVIA

Say that she be, yet Valentine, thy friend,
100 Survives, to whom—thyself art witness—
I am betrothed. And art thou not ashamed
To wrong him with thy importunacy?

PROTEUS

I likewise hear that Valentine is dead.

SYLVIA

And so suppose am I, for in his grave,
105 Assure thyself, my love is buried.

PROTEUS

Sweet lady, let me rake it from the earth.

SYLVIA

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

110 Madam, if your heart be so obdurate,
Vouchsafe me yet your picture for my love,
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

Even if she is dead, Valentine—your friend—is still alive, and
you know that I'm betrothed to him. Aren't you ashamed to
wrong him with your disrespect?

PROTEUS

I also hear that Valentine is dead.

SYLVIA

Then consider me dead, too, because you can be sure my love
is buried with him in his grave.

PROTEUS

Sweet lady, let me dig up your love from the earth.

SYLVIA

Go to your lady's grave and dig up her love then. Or at least
bury yours in her tomb.

JULIA

(aside) He didn't hear that.

PROTEUS

Madame, if your heart is so stubborn, at least indulge my love
by giving me a portrait of yourself—the picture that is hanging
in your bedroom. I'll speak, sigh, and weep to that. Since you
are completely devoted to someone else, I am nothing, and
therefore I will love your image and not you.

115 Is else devoted, I am but a shadow,
And to your shadow will I make true love.

JULIA

[Aside] If 'twere a substance, you would, sure, deceive it,
And make it but a shadow, as I am.

SYLVIA

I am very loath to be your idol, sir.
120 But since your falsehood shall become you well
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
125 That wait for execution in the morn.

*Exeunt **PROTEUS** and **SYLVIA** separately*

JULIA

Host, will you go?

HOST

By my halidom, I was fast asleep.

JULIA

Pray you, where lies Sir Proteus?

JULIA

(aside) If it were a real woman you would certainly deceive her
and make her into nothing, just as I am nothing now.

SYLVIA

I don't want to be your idol, sir. But since it's appropriate that
your deceiving self should worship shadows and adore images
rather than the real thing, send your servant to me in the
morning, and I'll send you the portrait. So go on, and good
night.

PROTEUS

I'll have as good a night as the condemned man who awaits
execution in the morning.

***PROTEUS** and **SYLVIA** exit separately.*

JULIA

Host, are you leaving?

HOST

My goodness, I was fast asleep.

JULIA

Please, where is Sir Proteus staying?

HOST

Marry, at my house. Trust me, I think 'tis almost day.

JULIA

130 Not so; but it hath been the longest night
That e'er I watched, and the most heaviest.

Exeunt

*Enter Sir **EGLAMOUR**.*

EGLAMOUR

This is the hour that Madam Sylvia
Entreated me to call and know her mind.
There's some great matter she'd employ me in.
Madam, madam!

*Enter **SYLVIA** above, at her window.*

SYLVIA

5 Who calls?

EGLAMOUR

Your servant and your friend;
One that attends your ladyship's command.

SYLVIA

Sir Eglamour, a thousand times good morrow.

HOST

Why, at my house. Oh my word, I think it's almost dawn.

JULIA

No, it isn't. It's been the longest night I've ever had, and the saddest.

They exit.

Act 4 Scene 3

*Sir **EGLAMOUR** enters.*

EGLAMOUR

This is the time that Madame Sylvia asked me to come by so that she could tell me something. There's an important matter she'd like my help with. Madame! Madame!

***SYLVIA** enters above at her window.*

SYLVIA

Who's there?

EGLAMOUR

Your servant and your friend—one that is here to obey your ladyship's orders.

SYLVIA

Sir Eglamour, good morning a thousand times over.

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.

SYLVIA

O Eglamour, thou art a gentleman—
Think not I flatter, for I swear I do not—

- 15 Valiant, wise, remorseful, well accomplished.
Thou art not ignorant what dear good will
I bear unto the banished Valentine,
Nor how my father would enforce me marry
Vain Thurio, 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 vowedst 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 honor 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

EGLAMOUR

As many to you, my worthy lady. I've come as your ladyship
asked and have arrived a little early to find out what you'd like
me to do for you.

SYLVIA

Oh, Eglamour, you are a gentleman, valiant, wise, and very
successful. Don't think I'm trying to flatter you, because I swear
I'm not. I'm sure you know how dearly I feel about the banished
Valentine, and how my father wants to force me to marry that
conceited Thurio, whom I hate down to my very soul. You've
been in love before, and I've heard you say you've never
experienced more grief than when your lady and true love
died. You swore a vow of chastity on her grave. Sir Eglamour, I
want to go to Valentine in Mantua, where I hear he is living.
Because the journey there is a dangerous one, I'd like you to
accompany me, as I trust in your faith and honor. Don't use my
father's anger as an excuse, Eglamour, but think about my grief
—a lady's grief—and about why it's fair that I run away to avoid
this terrible marriage, the kind heaven always afflicts with
problems. Even though my heart is as full of sorrow as the sea
is full of sand, I want you to keep me company and go with me.
If you don't want to go, then please don't reveal what I've said
to you, so that I can leave without anyone knowing.

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 befortune you.
When will you go?

SYLVIA

45 This evening coming.

EGLAMOUR

Where shall I meet you?

SYLVIA

At Friar Patrick's cell,
Where I intend holy confession.

EGLAMOUR

I will not fail your ladyship.

EGLAMOUR

Madame, I pity you for your grievances. Since I know they are
legitimate, I agree to go along with you. I'm not concerned
what may happen to me, and I wish you the best of luck. When
will you go?

SYLVIA

This evening.

EGLAMOUR

Where should I meet you?

SYLVIA

At Friar Patrick's chambers, where I intend to take holy
confession.

EGLAMOUR

I won't fail you, your ladyship. Good day, gentle lady.

50 Good morrow, gentle lady.

SYLVIA

Good morrow, kind Sir Eglamour.

Exeunt separately.

SYLVIA

Good day, kind Sir Eglamour.

They exit separately.

Act 4 Scene 4

Enter LANCE with his dog, Crab

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. 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 Sylvia 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. 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, 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 all

LANCE enters with his dog, Crab.

LANCE

When a man's pet behaves like a stupid mongrel, mind you, it's hard to take—a dog that I brought up from a puppy, one that I saved from drowning when three or four of his newborn brothers and sisters were drowned. I have trained him quite literally "as I would teach a dog," as the saying goes. I was sent to deliver him as a present to Mistress Sylvia from my master, but no sooner had I stepped into the dining room than he ran ahead of me to the plate and stole her drumstick. Oh, it is a foul thing when a mongrel can't behave himself in front of company! It seems I have a dog that tries to be a dog indeed—dog-gone good at all things, as one would say. If I hadn't had the brains to take the blame for what he'd done, I honestly think he would have been hanged for it. As sure as I'm alive he would have been punished for it. You be the judge. He thrusts himself under the duke's table and into the company of three or four fancier dogs. He hadn't been there a second or two

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 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 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 think'st not of this now. Nay, I remember the trick you served me when I took my leave of Madam Sylvia. 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** disguised*

PROTEUS

[To JULIA] Sebastian is thy name? I like thee well,
And will employ thee in some service presently.

JULIA

before everyone in the whole room could smell his piss—
pardon my French! "Out with the dog!" says one person; "What mangy mutt is that?" asks another. "Whip him," says a third. "Hang him!" says the duke. I, having smelled that smell before, knew it was Crab, so I went to the fellow whose job it is to whip the dogs. "Friend," I said, "are you going to whip the dog?" "Yes, in fact, I am," he replied. "Then you're doing him a great injustice," I answered back, "because it was I who peed all over the place." He didn't say anything else but just whipped me out of the room. How many masters would do this for their pets? No, I swear I've sat in the stocks for meat pies he has stolen—otherwise he would have been executed. I have stood on the pillory for geese he has killed—otherwise he would have suffered the consequences. You don't remember any of this now, do you, Crab? No, I remember the trick you pulled on me when I said goodbye to Madame Sylvia. Didn't I tell you that you should still obey me and do as I do? When did you ever see me lift up my leg and urinate on a noble woman's undergarments? Did you ever see me do such a thing?

***PROTEUS** and **JULIA** enter in disguise.*

PROTEUS

(to Julia) Your name is Sebastian, right? I like you, and I'd like to hire you for a job I need done.

JULIA

In what you please. I'll do what I can.

PROTEUS

5 I hope thou wilt.

To LANCE

How now, you whoreson peasant,
Where have you been these two days loitering?

LANCE

Marry, sir, I carried Mistress Sylvia the dog you bade me.

PROTEUS

And what says she to my little jewel?

LANCE

10 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.

He points to his dog.

PROTEUS

What, didst thou offer her this from me?

Name it. I'll do what I can.

PROTEUS

I hope you will.

To LANCE

How's it going, you poor son of a bitch? Where have you been
hanging around these past two days?

LANCE

Well, sir, I brought the dog to Mistress Sylvia, as you instructed.

PROTEUS

What did she say about my little jewel of a gift?

LANCE

Actually, she said your dog was a mongrel and said that a
shabby thanks is good enough for such a present.

PROTEUS

But she accepted my dog?

LANCE

No, indeed, she didn't. Here, I've brought him back again.

He points to his dog.

PROTEUS

What, did you offer her this mutt from me?

LANCE

Ay, sir: the other squirrel was stolen from me by the hangman boys in the marketplace, and then I offered her mine own, who is a dog as big as ten of yours, and therefore the gift the greater.

PROTEUS

- 15 Go get thee hence, and find my dog again,
Or ne'er return again into my sight.
Away, I say! Stayest thou to vex me here?

Exit LANCE with Crab

- A slave, that still an end turns me to shame!—
Sebastian, I have entertained thee,
20 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,
25 Witness good bringing up, fortune, and truth.
Therefore know thou, for this I entertain thee.
Go presently, and take this ring with thee.

Giving a ring

Deliver it to Madam Sylvia—

LANCE

Yes, sir. The other runt was stolen from me by a gang of boys in the marketplace. So, I offered her my own, which is a bigger dog than ten of your little dogs, and so a better gift.

PROTEUS

Go on and get out of here, and find my dog again, or never let me see you again. Away, I say! Are you staying here to make me angry?

LANCE exits with Crab.

What a scoundrel, who never fails to disgrace me! Sebastian, I've hired you partly because I have need of a young man who can take care of some business for me quietly, and there's no trusting that foolish lout Lance. But I've chiefly hired you for the way you look and act, which if my intuition doesn't deceive me mean you are honest, lucky, and have been brought up well. Know that this is why I hired you. Now go, and take this ring with you.

He gives Julia, disguised as Lance, a ring.

The woman who gave it to me loved me very much. Deliver it

She loved me well delivered it to me.

JULIA

30 It seems you loved not her, to leave her token.
She's dead, belike?

PROTEUS

Not so. I think she lives.

JULIA

Alas!

PROTEUS

Why dost thou cry "Alas"?

JULIA

35 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 Sylvia.
She dreams on him that has forgot her love;
40 You dote on her that cares not for your love.
'Tis pity love should be so contrary;
And thinking on it makes me cry "alas!"

to Madame Sylvia.

JULIA

It seems you didn't love her if you're giving away her gift. Is she dead?

PROTEUS

No. I think she's alive.

JULIA

Oh no!

PROTEUS

Why do you cry "Oh no!"?

JULIA

I can't help but feel sorry for her.

PROTEUS

Why would you feel sorry for her?

JULIA

Because I suspect she loved you as much as you love your lady Sylvia. She dreams of that man who has forgotten her love. You dote on a woman who doesn't care for your love. It's a pity love is so difficult, and thinking about it makes me cry "Oh no!"

PROTEUS

Well, give her that ring and therewithal

This letter. [*Giving a letter*] That's her chamber. Tell my lady

45 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 **PROTEUS**

JULIA

How many women would do such a message?

Alas, poor Proteus! thou hast entertained

50 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;

Because I love him, I must pity him.

55 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,

To carry that which I would have refused,

60 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.

Yet will I woo for him, but yet so coldly

PROTEUS

Well, give her that ring and with it this letter. (*giving a letter*)

That's her room. Tell her I want the heavenly picture she
promised me. When you've finished delivering the message,
return home to my room, where you'll find me sad and alone.

PROTEUS *exits.*

JULIA

How many women would deliver such a message? Too bad,
poor Proteus! You've hired a fox to be the shepherd of your
lambs. Why, poor fool that I am, do I pity the man who
despises me? He despises me because he loves her, and I feel
sorry for him because I love him. This is the ring I gave him
when he left, and it was to remind him always of my feelings.
And now I'm an unhappy messenger who is supposed to ask
for the picture I don't want him to have, to deliver the ring I
want Sylvia to refuse, and to praise his loyalty, which I want to
disparage. I am my master's true love, but I can't be a loyal
servant to my master without being a traitor to myself. Still I'll
woo Sylvia for him, but heaven knows I'll do it coldly, because I
don't want him to win her.

65 As, heaven it knows, I would not have him speed.

*Enter **SYLVIA** attended*

Gentlewoman, good day! I pray you be my means
To bring me where to speak with Madam Sylvia.

SYLVIA

What would you with her, if that I be she?

JULIA

If you be she, I do entreat your patience
70 To hear me speak the message I am sent on.

SYLVIA

From whom?

JULIA

From my master, Sir Proteus, madam.

SYLVIA

O, he sends you for a picture?

JULIA

Ay, madam.

SYLVIA

75 Ursula, bring my picture there.

*A servant brings **SYLVIA** a picture, which she gives to **JULIA**.*

***SYLVIA** enters with servants.*

Gentlewoman, good day! Would you please take me to
Madame Sylvia so that I may speak with her?

SYLVIA

What do you want with her, assuming I am she?

JULIA

If you are she, I ask your patience to hear me deliver the
message I've been instructed to bring you.

SYLVIA

From whom?

JULIA

From my master, Sir Proteus, madam.

SYLVIA

Oh, did he send you for a picture of me?

JULIA

Yes, madame.

SYLVIA

Ursula, bring my picture there.

A servant brings Sylvia a picture, which she gives to Julia.

Go, give your master this. Tell him from me,
One Julia, that his changing thoughts forget,
Would better fit his chamber than this shadow.

JULIA

Madam, please you peruse this letter.—

She offers a letter and withdraws it.

80 Pardon me, madam; I have unadvised
Delivered you a paper that I should not.

She gives another letter.

This is the letter to your ladyship.

SYLVIA

I pray thee, let me look on that again.

JULIA

It may not be. Good madam, pardon me.

SYLVIA

85 There, hold!
I will not look upon your master's lines.
I know they are stuffed with protestations
And full of newfound oaths, which he will break
As easily as I do tear his paper.

Go, give your master this. Tell him from me that a woman
named Julia, whom his fickle heart has forgotten, would be
more appropriate for his bedroom than this image of me.

JULIA

Madame, please read this letter.

She offers a letter, but then takes it back.

Pardon me, madame—I accidentally gave you a paper I
shouldn't have.

She gives another letter.

This is the letter for your ladyship.

SYLVIA

Please, let me look at that other letter again.

JULIA

I can't do that. Forgive me, good madam.

SYLVIA

Wait, stop! I will not look at your master's letter. I know it is
filled with vows and full of newly made oaths, which he will
break as easily as I tear up his letter.

She tears the letter.

JULIA

90 [Offering the ring] Madam, he sends your ladyship this ring.

SYLVIA

The more shame for him that he sends it me,

For I have heard him say a thousand times

His Julia gave it him at his departure.

Though his false finger have profaned the ring,

95 Mine shall not do his Julia so much wrong.

JULIA

She thanks you.

SYLVIA

What sayst thou?

JULIA

I thank you, madam, that you tender her.

Poor gentlewoman! My master wrongs her much.

SYLVIA

100 Dost thou know her?

JULIA

Almost as well as I do know myself.

To think upon her woes I do protest

She tears the letter.

JULIA

(offering the ring) Madame, he sends your ladyship this ring.

SYLVIA

He should be even more ashamed for sending it to me, since I

have heard him say a thousand times that his love Julia gave it

to him when he departed. Even though his deceitful finger has

sullied the ring, my finger will not mistreat Julia so much.

JULIA

She thanks you.

SYLVIA

What did you say?

JULIA

I thank you, madam, that you consider her feelings. Poor

gentlewoman! My master mistreats her very much.

SYLVIA

Do you know her?

JULIA

Almost as well as I know myself. I swear I've wept several

hundred times thinking about her sorrows.

That I have wept a hundred several times.

SYLVIA

Belike she thinks that Proteus hath forsook her.

JULIA

105 I think she doth, and that's her cause of sorrow.

SYLVIA

Is she not passing fair?

JULIA

She hath been fairer, madam, than she is.

When she did think my master loved her well,

She, in my judgment, was as fair as you;

110 But since she did neglect her looking-glass

And threw her sun-expelling mask away,

The air hath starved the roses in her cheeks

And pinched the lily tincture of her face,

That now she is become as black as I.

SYLVIA

115 How tall was she?

JULIA

About my stature; for at Pentecost,

When all our pageants of delight were played,

Our youth got me to play the woman's part,

SYLVIA

She probably thinks that Proteus has rejected her.

JULIA

I think she does, and that's the cause of her sorrow.

SYLVIA

Isn't she very beautiful?

JULIA

She has been more beautiful, madam, than she is now. When she thought my master loved her deeply, she was as beautiful as you, in my opinion. But since she no longer takes care of her appearance and has thrown her [sunblocking mask](#) away, the air has taken the rosiness from her cheeks and stolen the whiteness from her face, so that now she is as ugly as I am.

SYLVIA

How tall was she?

JULIA

About my height. When we put on a pageant at [Pentecost](#), the young men got me to play the part of a woman, and I was dressed in Madam Julia's gown, which everyone said fit me

And I was trimmed in Madam Julia's gown,
120 Which servèd 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.
And at that time I made her weep agoon,
For I did play a lamentable part:
125 Madam, 'twas Ariadne passioning
For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight;
Which I so lively acted with my tears
That my poor mistress, movèd therewithal,
Wept bitterly; and would I might be dead
130 If I in thought felt not her very sorrow!

SYLVIA

She is beholding to thee, gentle youth.
Alas, poor lady, desolate and left!
I weep myself, to think upon thy words.
Here, youth, there is my purse.

She gives money.

135 I give thee this
For thy sweet mistress' sake, because thou lov'st her.
Farewell.

Exit SYLVIA, with attendants

JULIA

very well, as if the garment had been made for me. Therefore, I know she is about my height. And at the time I made her cry a lot, because I played a really sad part—I was [Ariadne](#), Madame, suffering from Theseus' lies and unfair departure. I acted the part so convincingly with my tears that poor Julia, moved with the performance, wept bitterly. I would wish I were dead if I didn't feel her very sorrow!

SYLVIA

She is indebted to you, young man. Such a shame—the poor lady, desolate and abandoned! I weep myself just hearing your story. Here, young man, there is my purse.

She gives him some money.

I give this to you for your sweet mistresses' sake, because you love her. Farewell.

SYLVIA exits with servants.

JULIA

And she shall thank you for 't, if e'er you know her.—

A virtuous gentlewoman, mild and beautiful!

140 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.

She looks at the picture.

Let me see, I think

145 If I had such a tire, this face of mine

Were full as lovely as is this of hers;

And yet the painter flattered her a little,

Unless I flatter with myself too much.

Her hair is auburn, mine is perfect yellow;

150 If that be all the difference in his love,

I'll get me such a colored 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

155 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.

She picks up the picture.

And she will thank you for it, if you ever meet her. A virtuous gentlewoman, kind and beautiful! I hope my master's endeavors to win her love will fail since she respects the love I feel for him so much. It's too bad how love can fool itself! Here is her picture.

She looks at the picture.

Let me see, I think if I had a similar headdress my face would be as lovely as hers. And yet the painter made her prettier than she is, unless I flatter myself too much in thinking I'm as pretty. Her hair is auburn, while mine is perfect yellow. If that's the only thing he likes better about her, then I'll get myself a blond wig. Her eyes are as gray as glass, and so are mine. Yes, but her forehead's low, and mine is as high as hers is low. If Love is really blind, what does he value in her that I can't make him value in myself? Let's go, Sebastian. Let's go and get rid of this picture, since it's your rival.

She picks up the picture.

O thou senseless form,
160 Thou shalt be worshiped, kissed, loved, and adored!
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,
165 I should have scratched out your unseeing eyes
To make my master out of love with thee!

Exit

Enter Sir EGLAMOUR

EGLAMOUR

The sun begins to gild the western sky,
And now it is about the very hour
That Sylvia 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.

Enter SYLVIA

See, where she comes.—Lady, a happy evening!

SYLVIA

Amen, amen! Go on, good Eglamour,

Oh you unfeeling image, you'll be worshipped, kissed, loved,
and adored! Were there any sense in his worship, it would be
the real me he worships instead. I'll treat this picture kindly for
the sake of its mistress, who treated me so well. Otherwise, by
Jove, I would have scratched out your unseeing eyes to make
my master fall out of love with you!

Exit.

Act 5 Scene 1

Sir EGLAMOUR enters.

EGLAMOUR

The setting sun begins to color the western sky, and now it's
almost the time that Sylvia is supposed to meet me at Friar
Patrick's chamber. She will not fail, because those who are in
love are always on time, unless they arrive early to speed up
their progress.

SYLVIA enters.

See, here she comes now. Good evening, my lady!

SYLVIA

Out at the postern by the abbey wall.
10 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.

Exeunt

Thank God, thank God! Go on, my good Eglamour. Go out to the back door by the abbey wall. I'm afraid some spies have followed me.

EGLAMOUR

Don't worry. The forest is less than nine miles away. If we make it there, we are safe.

They exit.

Act 5 Scene 2

Enter THURIO, PROTEUS, and JULIA disguised in page's attire

THURIO

Sir Proteus, what says Sylvia to my suit?

PROTEUS

O, sir, I find her milder than she was,
And yet she takes exceptions at your person.

THURIO

What, that my leg is too long?

PROTEUS

5 No, that it is too little.

THURIO

THURIO, PROTEUS, and JULIA enter. JULIA is disguised in the clothing of a male servant.

THURIO

Sir Proteus, what does Sylvia have to say about my declarations of love for her?

PROTEUS

Oh, sir, she's not as cold as she used to be, though she still objects to you.

THURIO

What, because my leg is too long?

PROTEUS

No, because it's too skinny.

THURIO

I'll wear a boot, to make it somewhat rounder.

JULIA

[Aside] But love will not be spurred to what it loathes.

THURIO

What says she to my face?

PROTEUS

She says it is a fair one.

THURIO

10 Nay, then, the wanton lies; my face is black.

PROTEUS

But pearls are fair, and the old saying is,
Black men are pearls in beauteous ladies' eyes.

JULIA

[Aside] 'Tis true, such pearls as put out ladies' eyes,
For I had rather wink than look on them.

THURIO

15 How likes she my discourse?

PROTEUS

Ill, when you talk of war.

THURIO

I'll wear a boot with spurs, then, to make it look thicker.

JULIA

(aside) But love can't be spurred to like what it hates.

THURIO

What does she have to say about my face?

PROTEUS

She says it is an attractive one.

THURIO

No, then, she's lying—my face is ugly.

PROTEUS

But pearls are beautiful, and the old saying is that ugly men
are pearls in beautiful women's eyes.

JULIA

(aside) It's true—the kind of [pearls that make ladies go blind](#) .
I'd rather shut my eyes than look at them.

THURIO

How does she like my conversation?

PROTEUS

Not much, when you talk about war.

THURIO

But well when I discourse of love and peace?

JULIA

[Aside] But better, indeed, when you hold your peace.

THURIO

What says she to my valor?

PROTEUS

20 O, sir, she makes no doubt of that.

JULIA

[Aside] She needs not, when she knows it cowardice.

THURIO

What says she to my birth?

PROTEUS

That you are well derived.

JULIA

[Aside] True; from a gentleman to a fool.

THURIO

25 Considers she my possessions?

PROTEUS

O, ay, and pities them.

But she likes it when I talk about love and peace?

JULIA

(aside) But even better when you hold your peace and don't talk at all.

THURIO

What does she have to say about my bravery?

PROTEUS

Oh, sir, she doesn't question it at all.

JULIA

(aside) She doesn't need to, since she knows he's a coward.

THURIO

What does she have to say about my lineage?

PROTEUS

That you are of good descent.

JULIA

(aside) True—he's descended from a gentleman to a fool.

THURIO

Has she thought about all the lands that I own?

PROTEUS

Oh, yes, and she pities them.

THURIO

Wherefore?

JULIA

[Aside] That such an ass should owe them.

PROTEUS

That they are out by lease.

*Enter **DUKE***

JULIA

³⁰ Here comes the Duke.

DUKE

How now, Sir Proteus? how now, Thurio?

Which of you saw Sir Eglamour of late?

THURIO

Not I.

PROTEUS

Nor I.

DUKE

³⁵ Saw you my daughter?

PROTEUS

Neither.

THURIO

Why?

JULIA

(aside) Because an ass like him owns them.

PROTEUS

Because you've leased them to others.

*The **DUKE** enters.*

JULIA

Here comes the duke.

DUKE

How are you, Sir Proteus? How are you, Thurio? Has either of you seen Eglamour lately?

THURIO

I haven't.

PROTEUS

Nor have I.

DUKE

Have you seen my daughter?

PROTEUS

I haven't seen her either.

DUKE

Why then,
She's fled unto that peasant Valentine,
And Eglamour is in her company.

40 'Tis true, for Friar Lawrence met them both
As he in penance wandered through the forest.
Him he knew well, and guessed that it was she,
But, being masked, he was not sure of it.
Besides, she did intend confession
45 At Patrick's cell this even, and there she was not.
These likelihoods confirm her flight from hence.
Therefore, I pray you, stand not to discourse,
But mount you presently, and meet with me
Upon the rising of the mountain foot
50 That leads toward Mantua, whither they are fled.
Dispatch, sweet gentlemen, and follow me.

Exit DUKE

THURIO

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
55 Than for the love of reckless Sylvia.

Exit THURIO

DUKE

That means she's run off to that rascal Valentine, and Eglamour is with her. I know it's true, because Friar Lawrence met them both as he wandered through the forest in penance. He knew Eglamour well and guessed that the girl was Sylvia, but he wasn't sure since she had a mask on. Besides, she'd planned to take confession at Friar Patrick's chamber tonight, but she didn't show up. These coincidences confirm that she's run away. Therefore, I beg you, stop talking and mount your horses immediately. Meet me on the rise at the foot of the mountain that leads toward Mantua, where they fled to. Hurry, kind gentlemen, and follow me.

The DUKE exits.

THURIO

Why, what a silly girl she is to throw away everything good that was coming to her. I'll follow them, more to get revenge on Eglamour than out of love for reckless Sylvia.

THURIO exits.

PROTEUS

And I will follow, more for Sylvia's love
Than hate of Eglamour that goes with her.

Exit **PROTEUS**

JULIA

And I will follow, more to cross that love
Than hate for Sylvia, that is gone for love.

Exit

Enter **SYLVIA, OUTLAWS**

FIRST OUTLAW

Come, come,
Be patient. We must bring you to our captain.

SYLVIA

A thousand more mischances than this one
Have learned me how to brook this patiently.

SECOND OUTLAW

5 Come, bring her away.

FIRST OUTLAW

Where is the gentleman that was with her?

PROTEUS

And I'll follow, too, more out of love for Sylvia than hatred of
Elgamour, who goes with her.

PROTEUS *exits.*

JULIA

And I will follow as well, more to thwart Proteus's love for
Sylvia than out of any hatred of Sylvia, who flees because of
love.

Exit.

Act 5 Scene 3

SYLVIA *enters, led by Outlaws.*

FIRST OUTLAW

Come on, come on. Be patient. We must bring you to our
captain.

SYLVIA

A thousand misfortunes worse than this one have taught me
how to endure this patiently.

SECOND OUTLAW

Go on, take her away.

FIRST OUTLAW

Where is [the gentleman that was with her](#) ?

SECOND OUTLAW

Being nimble-footed, he hath outrun us,
But Moses 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.

Exeunt all but FIRST OUTLAW and SYLVIA

FIRST OUTLAW

Come, I must bring you to our captain's cave.

Fear not; he bears an honorable mind

And will not use a woman lawlessly.

SYLVIA

15 O Valentine, this I endure for thee!

Exeunt

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

SECOND OUTLAW

He was fast so he outran us, but Moses and Valerius are following him. Go with her to the west end of the woods. Our captain is there. We'll follow the guy who fled. The woods are surrounded by our men—he cannot escape.

They all exit, except the First Outlaw and Sylvia.

FIRST OUTLAW

Come on, I must take you to our captain's cave. Don't be afraid.

He is an honorable man and will not rape you.

SYLVIA

Oh, Valentine, I endure all this for you!

They exit.

Act 5 Scene 4

VALENTINE enters.

VALENTINE

Repetition can make a man accustomed to anything! This shadowy deserted place, these woods that are rarely visited—I can take them better than bustling towns with lots of people. Here I can sit alone without anyone seeing me, and accompanied by the nightingale's sad song I can sing about

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, Sylvia;
Thou gentle nymph, cherish thy forlorn swain!

Shouting within.

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?

He stands aside.

*Enter **PROTEUS**, **SYLVIA**, and **JULIA** disguised as Sebastian*

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 honor and your love.

my worries and list all my troubles. Oh you, Sylvia, who lives in
my heart, don't leave your home empty for long, or rotting
from within, the entire building falls and leaves no trace of
what it was! Heal me with your presence, Sylvia. Gentle nymph,
cherish your sad lover!

Shouting is heard inside.

What's all this shouting and commotion I hear? Those are my
friends, the outlaws who do whatever they like, who are
chasing some unfortunate traveler. They like me enough, but I
have to work hard to keep them from violent crimes. Hide
yourself, Valentine. Who is this that comes here?

He stands off to the side.

***PROTEUS**, **SYLVIA**, and **JULIA**, who is disguised as Sebastian, all
enter*

PROTEUS

Madame, I've helped you—even though you don't value what I
do—and risked my life to rescue you from that man who would
have raped you. For my reward, give me just one kind look. I

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.

SYLVIA

O miserable, unhappy that I am!

PROTEUS

Unhappy were you, madam, ere I came;
30 But by my coming I have made you happy.

SYLVIA

By thy approach thou mak'st me most unhappy.

JULIA

[Aside] And me, when he approacheth to your presence.

SYLVIA

Had I been seizèd by a hungry lion,
I would have been a breakfast to the beast
35 Rather than have false Proteus rescue me.
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—

can't beg for a smaller favor than this, and I'm sure that you
can't give anything less than this.

VALENTINE

(aside) What I see and hear is like a dream! Love, give me
strength to be patient just a little while longer.

SYLVIA

Oh, what a miserable, unhappy woman I am!

PROTEUS

You were unhappy, madam, before I came. But in coming I've
made you happy.

SYLVIA

Your advances make me very unhappy.

JULIA

(aside) And makes me unhappy when he flirts with you.

SYLVIA

If a hungry lion had seized me, I would rather have been eaten
by the beast than have treacherous Proteus rescue me. Oh,
heaven knows how I love Valentine, whose life is as precious to
me as my own soul! And with just as much feeling—for I
couldn't feel any more strongly—I hate the lying, deceitful
Proteus. So get out of here, and stop trying to win me.

I do detest false, perjured Proteus.

40 Therefore begone, 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!

SYLVIA

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?

SYLVIA

All men but Proteus.

PROTEUS

PROTEUS

What dangerous action, even if it put me at risk of death,

would I not undertake for just one gentle look from you? Oh, it

is the curse of love, and it is always the case that women never

love those who love them!

SYLVIA

You mean Proteus never loves those who love him. Think of

Julia's feelings for you. She was your first, best love, and for her

sake you swore your fidelity a thousand times. Now those

oaths of faithfulness have sunk into lies, so that you can love

me. You have no loyalty left now, unless you were to love two

women, and that's far worse than loving no one. Better not love

at all than love two women, which is too many by one. You

deceiver of your true friend!

PROTEUS

Who honors their friendships when it comes to love?

SYLVIA

All men but you, 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.

SYLVIA

O heaven!

PROTEUS

[Assailing her] I'll force thee yield to my desire.

VALENTINE

[Coming forward] 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. Naught 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 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.

No, if the gentle spirit of heartfelt words can't persuade you to
think kindly of me, then I'll woo you at knifepoint like a soldier
and make love to you in a manner contrary to the nature of
love—by raping you.

SYLVIA

Oh, heaven!

PROTEUS

(Proteus assaults her.) I'll force you to yield to my desire.

VALENTINE

(Valentine comes out of hiding.) Scoundrel, keep your savage
hands off her, you foul friend!

PROTEUS

Valentine!

VALENTINE

You lying friend, without loyalty or love! That's what you are
now. Treacherous man, you tricked me with my hopes. Nothing
could have persuaded me of what you really are but seeing it
with my eyes. Now I won't even say I have one friend alive—if I
did, you'd prove me wrong. Who can you trust when your
closest friend is false down to his core? Proteus, I'm sorry I
must never trust you again, and because of you I'll never think
again that I know the world. Personal treachery makes the

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 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 Sylvia I give thee.

JULIA

O me unhappy!

Swoons

PROTEUS

90 Look to the boy.

VALENTINE

deepest wounds. Curse the day when a friend is the worst of
all your enemies!

PROTEUS

Shame and guilt overwhelm me. Forgive me, Valentine. If
heartfelt sadness is enough punishment for what I've done,
then I offer it to you here. I feel truly miserable for everything
I've done.

VALENTINE

Then you've paid your debt to me, and I consider you to be
honest once again. Whoever isn't satisfied by such heartfelt
repentance is neither from heaven nor earth, for repentance is
enough to please both. God's wrath comes in the form of
penitence. And, so that you know my love for you is honest and
free, I give you any claim I had to Sylvia.

JULIA

Oh, unhappy me!

She faints.

PROTEUS

Look at the boy!

VALENTINE

Why, boy! Why, wag! How now? What's the matter? Look up.
Speak.

JULIA

[Recovering] O good sir, my master charged me to deliver a ring to Madam Sylvia, which, out of my neglect, was never done.

PROTEUS

Where is that ring, boy?

JULIA

[Giving her own ring] Here 'tis. This is it.

PROTEUS

⁹⁵ 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 Sylvia.

She offers another ring.

PROTEUS

But how cam'st thou by this ring?

¹⁰⁰ At my depart I gave this unto Julia.

JULIA

Hey, boy! Hey, kid! Are you okay? What's the matter? Open your eyes. Say something.

JULIA

(recovering) Oh, good sir, my master ordered me to deliver a ring to Madam Sylvia, which, out of neglect on my part, I never did.

PROTEUS

Where is that ring, boy?

JULIA

(giving her own ring) Here it is. This is it.

PROTEUS

How? Let me see that. Why, this is the ring I gave to Julia.

JULIA

Oh, please forgive me, sir, I've made a mistake. This is the ring you sent to Sylvia.

She hands him another ring.

PROTEUS

But how did you get this ring? I gave it to Julia when I departed from Verona.

JULIA

And Julia herself did give it me;
And Julia herself have brought it hither.

She reveals her identity.

PROTEUS

How? Julia?

JULIA

Behold her that gave aim to all thy oaths
105 And entertained 'em deeply in her heart.
How oft hast thou with perjury cleft the root!
O Proteus, let this habit make thee blush!
Be thou ashamed that I have took upon me
Such an immodest raiment, if shame live
110 In a disguise of love.
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
115 Fills him with faults, makes him run through all th' sins;
Inconstancy falls off ere it begins.
What is in Sylvia's face but I may spy
More fresh in Julia's with a constant eye?

VALENTINE

And Julia herself gave it to me. And Julia herself has brought it
here.

She reveals her identity.

PROTEUS

What? Julia?

JULIA

It's me, the woman who was the object of all your oaths and
believed them deeply in her heart. Your lies have often cut me
to the core! Oh, Proteus, I hope my appearance makes you
blush! You should be ashamed that I have put on such an
immodest outfit, if shame can live in someone who fakes love.
Modesty says it's better for women to transform their
appearances than for men to change their minds.

PROTEUS

Than for men to change their minds! It's true. Oh, God! Were
men more constant and less fickle, he would be perfect. That
one error leads to numerous faults and makes him commit all
the deadly sins. The fickle man begins deceiving before he
even tries to be constant. What does Sylvia have that I
wouldn't see to be even better in Julia if I were faithful?

VALENTINE

Come, come, a hand from either.

120 Let me be blest to make this happy close;
'Twere pity two such friends should be long foes.

PROTEUS and **JULIA** join hands.

PROTEUS

Bear witness, heaven, I have my wish forever.

JULIA

And I mine.

*Enter **DUKE** and **THURIO**, led by Outlaws*

A prize, a prize, a prize!

VALENTINE

125 Forbear, forbear, I say! it is my lord the Duke.

Your Grace is welcome to a man disgraced,
Banishèd Valentine.

DUKE

Sir Valentine!

THURIO

[Advancing] Yonder is Sylvia, and Sylvia's mine.

Come, come on, each of you give me a hand. Let me be
blessed to bring this to a happy end. It would be a pity if two
such good friends as you were enemies forever.

Proteus and Julia join hands.

PROTEUS

As God as my witness, I have what I want forever.

JULIA

And I as well.

*The **DUKE** and **THURIO** enter, led by outlaws.*

A prize! A prize! A prize!

VALENTINE

Stop, stop, I say! This is my lord, the duke.

They release the Duke and Thurio.

I welcome you, Your Grace, as a disgraced man, banished
Valentine.

DUKE

Sir Valentine!

THURIO

(advancing) Sylvia is over there, and she's mine.

VALENTINE

130 [Drawing his sword] Thurio, give back, or else embrace thy death.

Come not within the measure of my wrath.
Do not name Sylvia thine; if once again,
Verona shall not hold thee. Here she stands.
Take but possession of her with a touch;

135 I dare thee but to breathe upon my love.

THURIO

Sir Valentine, I care not for her, I.
I hold him but a fool that will endanger
His body for a girl that loves him not.
I claim her not, and therefore she is thine.

DUKE

140 The more degenerate and base art thou,
To make such means for her as thou hast done
And leave her on such slight conditions.
Now, by the honor of my ancestry,
I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,
145 And think thee worthy of an empress' love.
Know then, I here forget all former griefs,
Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again,
Plead a new state in thy unrivalled merit,
To which I thus subscribe: Sir Valentine,
150 Thou art a gentleman, and well derived.

VALENTINE

(drawing his sword) Thurio, move back, or else be prepared to die. Don't come within a step of my anger. Do not call Sylvia yours. If you do it again, you'll never be welcome in Verona. Go ahead, try to even touch her. I dare you to even breathe upon my love.

THURIO

Sir Valentine, I don't care about her. I consider anyone a fool who will endanger his life for a girl who doesn't love him. I don't claim her, and therefore she is yours.

DUKE

Then you are even more degenerate and awful, having made such great efforts to win her as you have and now leaving her for such minor reasons. Now, by the honor of my ancestors, I applaud your spirit, Valentine, and think you worthy of an empress' love. I disregard all my former grievances with you, cancel all grudges, welcome you home again, and give you a clean record because of your unrivaled excellence, which I bear witness to. Sir Valentine, you are a gentleman and well-born. Take your Sylvia, for you have earned her.

Take thou thy Sylvia, for thou hast deserved her.

VALENTINE

I thank Your Grace. The gift hath made me happy.
I now beseech you, for your daughter's sake,
To grant one boon that I shall ask of you.

DUKE

155 I grant it for thine own, whate'er it be.

VALENTINE

These banished men, that I have kept withal,
Are men endued with worthy qualities.
Forgive them what they have committed here,
And let them be recalled from their exile.
160 They are reformed, civil, full of good,
And fit for great employment, worthy lord.

DUKE

Thou hast prevailed; I pardon them and thee.
Dispose of them as thou know'st their deserts.
Come, let us go. We will include all jars
165 With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity.

VALENTINE

And, as we walk along, I dare be bold
With our discourse to make Your Grace to smile.
What think you of this page, my lord?

VALENTINE

I thank Your Grace. Your gift has made me happy. Now I beg
you, for your daughter's sake, to grant one favor that I'll ask of
you.

DUKE

I grant it for your own sake, whatever it may be.

VALENTINE

These banished men, whom I have lived with, are men with
good qualities. Forgive the crimes they've committed here, and
declare an end to their exile. They are reformed, peaceful,
goodhearted, and fit for great work, worthy lord.

DUKE

You win: I pardon them and you. I'll leave you in charge of
them, since you know what they deserve. Come, let's go. We'll
put all quarrels behind us with pageants, happiness, and
festivities.

VALENTINE

And, as we walk along, I'd like to be so bold as to tell you
something to make Your Grace smile. What do you think of this
young servant boy, my lord?

DUKE

I think the boy hath grace in him. He blushes.

VALENTINE

170 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 fortunèd.—

Come, Proteus, 'tis your penance but to hear

175 The story of your loves discoverèd.

That done, our day of marriage shall be yours:

One feast, one house, one mutual happiness.

Exeunt

DUKE

I think the boy has a feminine charm. Look, he's blushing.

VALENTINE

I tell you, my lord, there's more feminine charm in him than boy.

DUKE

What do you mean by that?

VALENTINE

If it please you, I'll tell you on the way, and you'll be amazed at what's been going on. Come, Proteus, it's your punishment to hear the story of your two loves revealed. When that's done, our wedding day will also be yours: one feast, one house, and one mutual happiness.

They exit.