

ARMADO

I do affect the very ground, which is base, where her shoe, which is baser, guided by her foot, which is basest, doth tread. I shall be forsworn, which is a great argument of falsehood, if I love. And how can that be true love which is falsely attempted? Love is a familiar; Love is a devil. There is no evil angel but Love. Yet was Samson so tempted, and he had an excellent strength. Yet was Solomon so seduced, and he had a very good wit. Cupid's butt-shaft is too hard for Hercules' club, and therefore too much odds for a Spaniard's rapier. The first and second cause will not serve my turn. The *passado* he respects not; the *duello* he regards not. His disgrace is to be called boy, but his glory is to subdue men. Adieu, valor! Rust rapier! Be still, drum! For your manager is in love. Yea, he loveth. Assist me, some extemporal god of rhyme, for I am sure I shall turn sonnet. Devise, wit; write, pen; for I am for whole volumes in folio. *Exit.*

[1.2]            *Enter ARMADO and MOTH, his Page.*

ARMADO

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

MOTH

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

ARMADO

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

MOTH

No, no, O Lord, sir, no.

ARMADO

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

MOTH

By a familiar demonstration of the working, my tough señor.

ARMADO

Why tough señor? Why tough señor?

MOTH

Why tender juvenal? Why tender juvenal?

ARMADO

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

MOTH

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

ARMADO

I do say thou art quick in answers. Thou heatest my blood.

MOTH

I am answered sir.

ARMADO

I will hereupon confess I am in love. And as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love with a base wench. Comfort, me, boy: what great men have been in love?

MOTH

Hercules, master.

ARMADO

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

MOTH

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

ARMADO

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

MOTH

A woman, master.

ARMADO

Boy, I do love that country girl that I took in the park with the rational hind Costard. She deserves well.

MOTH [*aside*]

To be whipped: and yet a better love than my master.

ARMADO

Sing, boy. My spirit grows heavy in love.

MOTH [*aside*]

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

ARMADO

I say, sing.

MOTH

Forbear till this company be passed.

3.[1] *Enter [ARMADO, the] Braggart, and [MOTH,] his Boy.*

ARMADO

Warble, child, make passionate my sense of hearing.

MOTH [*Sings.*]

Concolinel.

ARMADO

Sweet air! Go, tenderness of years, take this key, give enlargement to the swain, bring him festinately hither. I must employ him in a letter to my love.

MOTH

Master, will you win your love with a French brawl?

ARMADO

How meanest thou? Brawling in French?

MOTH

No, my complete master; but to jig off a tune at the tongue's end, canary to it with your feet, humor it with turning up your eyelids, sigh a note and sing a note, sometime through the throat, as if you swallowed love with singing love, sometime through the nose, as if you snuffed up love by smelling love. These are compliments, these are humors, these betray nice wenches that would be betrayed without these; and make them men of note – do you note me? – that most are affected to these.

ARMADO

How hast thou purchased this experience?

MOTH

By my penny of observation. But have you forgot your love?

ARMADO

Almost I had.

MOTH

Negligent student! Learn her by heart.

ARMADO

By heart and in heart, boy.

MOTH

And out of heart, master. All those three I will prove.

ARMADO

What wilt thou prove?

MOTH

A man, if I live; and this, 'by', 'in' and 'without' upon the instant. 'By' heart you love her, because your heart cannot come by her; 'in' heart you love her, because your heart is in love with her; and 'out' of heart you love her, being out of heart that you cannot enjoy her.

ARMADO

I am all these three.

MOTH

And three times as much more, and yet nothing at all.

ARMADO

Fetch hither the swain. He must carry me a letter.

MOTH

A message well sympathized: a horse to be ambassador for an ass.

ARMADO

Ha, ha, what sayest thou? Away!

MOTH

As swift as lead, sir.

ARMADO

The meaning, pretty ingenious?  
Is not lead a metal heavy, dull, and slow?

MOTH

*Minime*, honest master; or rather, master, no.

ARMADO

I say lead is slow.

MOTH

You are too swift, sir, to say so.  
Is that lead slow which is fired from a gun?

ARMADO

Sweet smoke of rhetoric!  
He reposes me a cannon; and the bullet, that's he.  
I shoot thee at the swain.

MOTH

Thump then, and I flee. [Exit.]

[4.3] *Enter BIRON with a paper in his hand, alone.*

BIRON

The king he is hunting the deer; I am coursing myself. They have pitched a toil; I am toiling in a pitch – pitch that defiles – defile! a foul word. Well, set thee down, sorrow; for so they say the fool said, and so say I, and I the fool. Well proved, wit! By the Lord, this love is as mad as Ajax. It kills sheep, it kills me – I a sheep. Well proved again o' my side! I will not love. If I do, hang me. I'faith, I will not. O, but her eye! By this light, but for her eye, I would not love her. Yes, for her two eyes. Well, I do nothing in the world but lie, and lie in my throat. By heaven, I do love, and it hath taught me to rhyme and to be melancholy; and here is part of my rhyme, and here my melancholy. Well, she hath one o' my sonnets already. The clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady hath it. Sweet clown, sweeter fool, sweetest lady! By the world, I would not care a pin if the other three were in. Here comes one with a paper. God give him grace to groan!

*(He stands aside.)*

BIRON

Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O, let us embrace!  
As true we are as flesh and blood can be,  
The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face;  
Young blood doth not obey an old decree.  
We cannot cross the cause why we were born;  
Therefore of all hands must we be forsworn.

KING

What, did these rent lines show some love of thine?

BIRON

“Did they?” quoth you! Who sees the gorgeous Roseline –  
What peremptory eagle-sighted eye  
Dares look upon the heaven of her brow  
That is not blinded by her majesty?

KING

What zeal, what fury hath inspired thee now?  
My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon;  
She an attending star, scarce seen a light.

BIRON

My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Biron.  
O, but for my love, day would turn to night!  
Lend me the flourish of all gentle tongues –  
Fie, painted rhetoric! O, she needs it not.  
To things of sale a seller’s praise belongs:  
She passes praise; then praise too short doth blot.

KING

But what of this? Are we not all in love?

BIRON

Nothing so sure, and thereby all forsworn.

KING

Then leave this chat; and, good Biron, now prove  
Our loving lawful, and our faith not torn.

*[Enter DUMAINE.]*

DUMAINE

Sir, I pray you a word. What lady is that same?

BOYET

The heir of Alençon, Katherine her name.

DUMAINE

A gallant lady. Monsieur, fare you well.

*Exit.*

*[Enter LONGUEVILLE.]*

LONGUEVILLE

I beseech you a word. What is she in the white?

BOYET

A woman sometimes, if you saw her in the light.

LONGUEVILLE

Pray you, sir, whose daughter?

BOYET

Her mother's, I have heard.

LONGUEVILLE

God's blessing on your beard!

BOYET

Good sir, be not offended.

She is an heir of Falconbridge.

LONGUEVILLE

Nay, my choler is ended.

She is a most sweet lady.

BOYET

Not unlike, sir, that may be.

*Exit LONGUEVILLE.*

*Enter BIRON.*

BIRON

What's her name in the cap?

BOYET

Rosaline, by good hap.

BIRON

Is she wedded or no?

BOYET

To her will, sir, or so.

BIRON

You are welcome, sir. Adieu.

BOYET

Farewell to me, sir, and welcome to you.

*Exit BIRON.*



KING

A letter from the magnificent Armado.

BIRON

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

COSTARD

The matter is to me, sir, as concerning Jaquenetta. The manner of it is, I was taken with the manner.

BIRON

In what manner?

COSTARD

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

BIRON

For the 'following', sir?

COSTARD

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

KING

Will you hear this letter with attention?

BIRON

As we would hear an oracle.

COSTARD

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

KING [*Reads*]

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

—

COSTARD

Not a word of Costard yet.

KING [*Reads.*]

"So it is" —

COSTARD

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

KING

Peace!

COSTARD

Be to me and every man that dares not fight.

KING

No words!

COSTARD

Of other men's secrets, I beseech you.

KING [*Reads.*]

“About the sixth hour, I walked upon thy park north-north-east and by east from the west corner of thy curious-knotted garden. There did I see that low-spirited swain, that base minnow of thy mirth” –

COSTARD

Me?

KING

“That unlettered small-knowing soul” –

COSTARD

Me?

KING

“That shallow vassal” –

COSTARD

Still me?

KING

“Which, as I remember, is called Costard” –

COSTARD

O, me!

KING

“Sorted and consorted, contrary to thy established proclaimed edict and continent canon, which with, O, with – but with this I passion to say wherewith” –

COSTARD

With a wench.

KING

“With a child of our grandmother Eve, a female, or, for thy more sweet understanding, a woman. Him I have sent to thee, to receive the meed of punishment. For Jaquenetta, I keep her as a vessel of the law’s fury, and shall, at the least of thy sweet notice, bring her to trial. Thine, in all compliments of devoted and heartburning heat of duty,  
Don Adriano de Armado.”

KING

Sirrah, what say you to this?

COSTARD

Sir, I confess the wench.

KING

Did you hear the proclamation?

COSTARD

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

KING

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

COSTARD

I was taken with none, sir; I was taken with a damsel.

KING

Well, it was proclaimed damsel.

COSTARD

This was no damsel neither, sir; she was a virgin.

KING

It is so varied too, for it was proclaimed virgin.

COSTARD

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

KING

This maid will not serve your turn, sir.

COSTARD

This maid will serve my turn, sir.

KING

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

COSTARD

I had rather pray a month with mutton and porridge.

KING

And Don Armado shall be your keeper.

COSTARD

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

*Exeunt.*

*Enter [MOTH, the] Page, and [COSTARD, the] Clown.*

MOTH

A wonder, master! Here's a costard broken in a shin.

ARMADO

Sirrah Costard, I will enfranchise thee.

COSTARD

O, marry me to one Frances! I smell some goose in this.

ARMADO

By my sweet soul, I mean setting thee at liberty, enfreedoming thy person. Thou wert immured, restrained, captivated, bound.

COSTARD

True, true; and now you will be my purgation and let me loose.

ARMADO

I give thee thy liberty, set thee from durance, and in lieu thereof impose on thee nothing but this: [*giving Costard a letter*] bear this significant to the country maid Jaquenetta. There is remuneration [*giving Costard a coin*], for the best ward of mine honor is rewarding my dependents. Moth, follow. [*Exit.*]

MOTH

Like the sequel, I, Signeur Costard, adieu. *Exit.*

COSTARD

Now will I look to his remuneration. 'Remuneration'! O, that's the Latin word for three farthings. Three farthings – remuneration. 'What's the price of this inkle?' 'One penny.' 'No, I'll give you a remuneration.' Why, it carries it! 'Remuneration'! Why, it is a fairer name than a French crown. I will never buy and sell out of this word.

*Enter BIRON.*

BIRON

My good knave, Costard, exceedingly well met.

COSTARD

Pray you, sir, how much carnation ribbon may a man buy for a remuneration?

BIRON

What is a remuneration?

COSTARD

Marry, sir, halfpenny farthing.

BIRON

Why, then, three-farthing worth of silk.

COSTARD

I thank your worship. God be wi' you.

BIRON

Stay, slave. I must employ thee.

As thou wilt win my favor, good my knave,

Do one thing for me that I shall entreat.

COSTARD

When would you have it done, sir?

BIRON

This afternoon.

COSTARD

Well, I will do it, sir. Fare you well.

BIRON

Thou knowest not what it is.

COSTARD

I shall know, sir, when I have done it.

BIRON

Why, villain, thou must know first.

COSTARD

I will come to your worship tomorrow morning.

BIRON

It must be done this afternoon. Hark, slave, it is but this:

The princess comes to hunt here in the park,

And in her train there is a gentle lady;

When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her name,

And Rosaline they call her. Ask for her

And to her white hand see thou do commend

This sealed-up counsel. [*Gives Costard a letter.*]

There's thy guerdon: go.

[*Gives Costard money.*]

COSTARD

Guerdon, O sweet gardon! Better than remuneration,

elevenpence-farthing better. Most sweet guerdon! I will do it

sir, in print. Guerdon! Remuneration!

*Exit.*

NATHANIEL

Very reverend sport, truly, and done in the testimony of a good conscience.

HOLOFERNES

The deer was, as you know, in blood, *sanguis*, ripe as the pomewater, who now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of *caelum*, the sky, the welkin, the heaven, and anon falleth like a crab on the face of *terra*, the soil, the land, the earth.

NATHANIEL

Truly, Master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied, like a scholar at the least. But, sir, I assure ye it was a buck of the first head.

HOLOFERNES

Sir Nathaniel, *haud credo*.

DULL

‘Twas not a ‘auld grey doe’, ‘twas a pricket.

HOLOFERNES

Most barbarous intimation! Yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, *in via*, in way, of explication, *facere*, as it were, replication, or rather, *ostentare*, to show, as it were, his inclination, after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or rather, unlettered, or ratherest, unconfirmed fashion, to insert again my *haud credo* for a deer.

DULL

I said the deer was not a ‘auld grey doe’, ‘twas a pricket.

HOLOFERNES

Twice-sod simplicity, *bis coctus*!

O thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

NATHANIEL

Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book. He hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink. His intellect is not replenished. He is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts.

And such barren plants are set before us that we thankful should be –

Which we of taste and feeling are – for those parts that do fructify in us more than he.

For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet or a fool, So were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school. But *omne bene*, say I, being of an old father’s mind: Many can brook the weather that love not the wind.

DULL

You two are book-men, can you tell me by your wit  
What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five weeks  
old as yet?

HOLOFERNES

*Dictynna*, Goodman Dull. *Dictynna*, Goodman Dull.

DULL

What is *Dictima*?

NATHANIEL

A title to Phoebe, to *Luna*, to the moon.

HOLOFERNES

The moon was a month old when Adam was no more,  
And raught not to five weeks when he came to fivescore.  
The allusion holds in the exchange.

DULL

'Tis true indeed; the collusion holds in the exchange.

HOLOFERNES

God comfort thy capacity! I say th'allusion holds in the  
exchange.

DULL

And I say, the pollution holds in the exchange, for the moon  
is never but a month old. And I say beside that, 'twas a  
pricket that the princess killed.

HOLOFERNES

A soul feminine saluteth us.

*Enter JAQUENETTA [with a letter] and [COSTARD,] the Clown.*

JAQUENETTA

God give you good morrow, Master Parson. Be so good as read me this letter. It was given me by Costard, and sent me from Don Armado. I beseech you, read it.

HOLOFERNES

Under pardon, sir, what are the contents? Or rather, as Horace says in his – What, my soul, verses?

NATHANIEL

Ay, sir, and very learned.

HOLOFERNES

Let me hear a staff, a stanza, a verse. *Lege, domine.*

NATHANIEL [*Reads*]

“If love make me forsworn, how shall I swear to love?

Ah, never faith could hold, if not to beauty vowed!

Though to myself forsworn, to thee I’ll faithful prove;

Those thoughts to me were oaks, to thee like osiers bowed.

Study his bias leaves, and makes his book thine eyes,

Where all those pleasures live that art would comprehend.

If knowledge be the mark, to know thee shall suffice;

Well learnèd is that tongue that well can thee commend,

All ignorant that soul that sees thee without wonder;

Which is to me some praise, that I thy parts admire.

Thy eye Jove’s lightning bears, thy voice his dreadful thunder,

Which, not to anger bent, is music and sweet fire.

Celestial as thou art, O, pardon love this wrong,

That sings heaven’s praise with such an earthly tongue.”

HOLOFERNES

You find not the apostrophus, and so miss the accent. Let me supervise the canzonet. Here are only numbers ratified, but,

for the elegancy, facility and golden cadence of poesy, *caret*.

But, *domicella*, virgin, was this directed to you?

JAQUENETTA

Ay, sir.

HOLOFERNES

I will overglance the superscript. [*Reads.*] “To the snow-white hand of the most beauteous Lady Rosaline.” I will look again on the intellect of the letter, for the nomination of the party writing to the person written unto: “Your ladyship’s in all desired employment, Biron.’ Sir Nathaniel, this Biron is one of the votaries with the King, and here he hath framed a letter to a sequent of the stranger Queen’s, which accidentally, or by the way of progression, hath miscarried.



[*To Jaquenetta*] Trip and go, my sweet, deliver this paper into the royal hand of the King. It may concern much. Stay not thy compliment. I forgive thy duty. Adieu.

JAQUENETTA

Good Costard, go with me. Sir, God save your life.

COSTARD

Have with thee, my girl.

[*Exeunt COSTARD and JAQUENETTA.*]

NATHANIEL

Sir, you have done this in the fear of God, very religiously; and, as a certain father saith –

HOLOFERNES

Sir tell me not of the father, I do fear colorable colors. But to return to the verses: did they please you, Sir Nathaniel?

SIR NATHANIEL

Marvelous well for the pen.

HOLOFERNES

I do dine today at the father's of a certain pupil of mine, where, if before repast it shall please you to gratify the table with a grace, I will, on my privilege I have with the parents of the foresaid child or pupil, undertake your *benvenuto*, where I will prove those verses to be very unlearned, neither savoring of poetry, wit, nor invention. I beseech your society.

NATHANIEL

And thank you too, for society, saith the text, is the happiness of life.

HOLOFERNES

And, certes, the text most infallibly concludes it. [*To DULL*] Sir, I do invite you too; you shall not say me nay. *Pauca verba*. Away, the gentles are at their game, and we will to our recreation. *Exeunt.*

KING

Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives,  
Live registered upon our brazen tombs  
And then grace us in the disgrace of death;  
When, spite of cormorant devouring time,  
Th' endeavor of this present breath may buy  
That honor which shall bate his scythe's keen edge  
And make us heirs of all eternity.  
Therefore, brave conquerors – for so you are,  
That war against your own affections  
And the huge army of the world's desires, –  
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force:  
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world,  
Our court shall be a little academe,  
Still and contemplative in living art.  
You three, Biron, DuMaine, and Longueville,  
Have sworn for three years' term to live with me,  
My fellow-scholars, and to keep those statutes  
That are recorded in this schedule here.  
Your oaths are passed, and now subscribe your names,  
That his own hand may strike his honor down  
That violates the smallest branch herein.  
If you are armed to do as sworn to do,  
Subscribe to your deep oaths, and keep it too.

KING

How fares your majesty?

PRINCESS

Boyet, prepare; I will away tonight.

KING

Madam, not so; I do beseech you, stay.

PRINCESS

Prepare, I say. I thank you, gracious lords,  
For all your fair endeavors; and entreat,  
Out of a new-sad soul, that you vouchsafe  
In your rich wisdom to excuse or hide  
The liberal opposition of our spirits,  
If over-boldly we have borne ourselves  
In the converse of breath: your gentleness  
Was guilty of it. Farewell worthy lord!  
A heavy heart bears not a nimble tongue:  
Excuse me so, coming too short of thanks  
For my great suit so easily obtained.

KING

The extreme parts of time extremely forms  
All causes to the purpose of his speed,  
And often at his very loose decides  
That which long process could not arbitrate:  
And though the mourning brow of progeny  
Forbid the smiling courtesy of love  
The holy suit which fain it would convince,  
Yet, since love's argument was first on foot,  
Let not the cloud of sorrow justle it  
From what it purposed; since, to wail friends lost  
Is not by much so wholesome-profitable  
As to rejoice at friends but newly found.

PRINCESS

I understand you not: my griefs are double.

ROSALINE

My face is but a moon, and clouded too.

KING

Blessed are clouds, to do as such clouds do!  
Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars, to shine,  
Those clouds removed, upon our watery eyne.

ROSALINE

O vain petitioner! beg a greater matter;  
Thou now request'st but moonshine in the water.

KING

Then, in our measure do but vouchsafe one change.  
Thou bid'st me beg: this begging is not strange.

ROSALINE

Play, music, then! Nay, you must do it soon.

*Music plays*

Not yet! no dance! Thus change I like the moon.

KING

Will you not dance? How come you thus estranged?

ROSALINE

You took the moon at full, but now she's changed.

KING

Yet still she is the moon, and I the man.  
The music plays; vouchsafe some motion to it.

ROSALINE

Our ears vouchsafe it.

KING

But your legs should do it.

ROSALINE

Since you are strangers and come here by chance,  
We'll not be nice: take hands. We will not dance.

KING

Why take we hands, then?

ROSALINE

Only to part friends:  
Curtsy, sweet hearts; and so the measure ends.

KING

More measure of this measure; be not nice.

ROSALINE

We can afford no more at such a price.

KING

Prize you yourselves: what buys your company?

ROSALINE

Your absence only.

KING

That can never be.

ROSALINE

Then cannot we be bought: and so, adieu;  
Twice to your visor, and half once to you.

KING

If you deny to dance, let's hold more chat.

ROSALINE

In private, then.

KING

I am best pleased with that.

*They converse apart*

**2[.1]** *Enter the PRINCESS of France, with three attending ladies [ROSALINE, MARIA and KATHERINE]and [BOYET].*

**BOYET**

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

**PRINCESS**

Good Lord Boyet, my beauty, though but mean,  
Needs not the painted flourish of your praise:  
Beauty is bought by judgement of the eye,  
Not uttered by base sale of chapmen's tongues.  
I am less proud to hear you tell my worth  
Than you much willing to be counted wise  
In spending your wit in the praise of mine.  
But now to task the tasker. Good Boyet,  
You are not ignorant all-telling fame  
Doth noise abroad Navarre hath made a vow,  
Till painful study shall outwear three years,  
No woman may approach his silent court.  
Therefore to's seemeth it a needful course,  
Before we enter his forbidden gates,  
To know his pleasure; and in that behalf,  
Bold of your worthiness, we single you  
As our best-moving fair solicitor.  
Tell him, the daughter of the King of France,  
On serious business, craving quick dispatch,  
Importunes personal conference with his grace.  
Haste, signify so much, while we attend,  
Like humble-visaged suitors, his high will.

**BOYET**

Proud of employment, willingly I go.

**PRINCESS**

All pride is willing pride, and yours is so. *Exit BOYET.*

4[.1] Enter the PRINCESS, a Forester, her ladies [ROSALINE, MARIA and KATHERINE] and her lords [BOYET and others].

PRINCESS

Was that the King, that spurred his horse so hard  
Against the steep uprising of the hill?

BOYET

I know not, but I think it was not he.

PRINCESS

Whoe'er he was, he showed a mounting mind.  
Well, lords, today we shall have our dispatch;  
On Saturday we will return to France.  
Then, forester, my friend, where is the bush  
That we must stand and play the murderer in?

Forester

Hereby, upon the edge of yonder coppice,  
A stand where you may make the fairest shoot.

PRINCESS

I thank my beauty, I am fair that shoot,  
And thereupon thou speak'st 'the fairest shoot'.

Forester

Pardon me, madam, for I meant not so.

PRINCESS

What, what? First praise me, and again say no?  
O short-lived pride! Not fair? Alack for woe!

Forester

Yes, madam, fair.

PRINCESS

Nay, never paint me now.  
Where fair is not, praise cannot mend the brow.  
Here, good my glass, take this for telling true:  
[*She gives him money.*]  
Fair payment for foul words is more than due.

Forester

Nothing but fair is that which you inherit.

PRINCESS

See, see, my beauty will be saved by merit!  
O heresy in fair, fit for these days!  
A giving hand, though foul, shall have fair praise.  
But come, the bow. Now mercy goes to kill,  
And shooting well is then accounted ill.  
Thus will I save my credit in the shoot:  
Not wounding, pity would not let me do't;  
If wounding, then it was to show my skill,

That more for praise than purpose meant to kill.  
And out of question so it is sometimes,  
Glory grows guilty of detested crimes,  
When, for fame's sake, for praise, an outward part,  
We bend to that the working of the heart;  
As I for praise alone now seek to spill  
The poor deer's blood, that my heart means no ill.

BOYET

Do not curst wives hold that self-sovereignty  
Only for praise' sake, when they strive to be  
Lords o'er their lords?

PRINCESS

Only for praise, and praise we may afford  
To any lady that subdues a lord.



ROSALINE

Another of these students at that time  
Was there with him, if I have heard a truth.  
Biron they call him, but a merrier man,  
Within the limit of becoming mirth,  
I never spent an hour's talk withal.  
His eye begets occasion for his wit,  
For every object that the one doth catch  
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest,  
Which his fair tongue, conceit's expositor,  
Delivers in such apt and gracious words  
That aged ears play truant at his tales  
And younger hearings are quite ravished,  
So sweet and voluble is his discourse.