

HERO/URSULA SIDE, 3.1

HERO

Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick.
When I do name him, let it be thy part
To praise him more than ever man did merit.
My talk to thee must be how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice. Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay.

15

BEGIN HERE:

Now begin, 20
For look where Beatrice like a lapwing runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.

Enter Beatrice, who hides in the bower.

URSULA, *aside to Hero*

~~The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream
And greedily devour the treacherous bait.
So angle we for Beatrice, who even now
Is couchèd in the woodbine coverture.
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.~~

~~HERO, *aside to Ursula*~~

~~Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.—~~

They walk near the bower.

No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful.
I know her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock.

URSULA 25
But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

HERO

So says the Prince and my new-trothèd lord.

URSULA

And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

HERO

They did entreat me to acquaint her of it,
But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick, 30
To wish him wrestle with affection
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

URSULA

Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full as fortunate a bed
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon? 35

HERO

O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man,
But Nature never framed a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice.
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes, 40
Misprizing what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly that to her
All matter else seems weak. She cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endear'd.

URSULA

Sure, I think so, 45
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she'll make sport at it.

HERO

Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would spell him backward. If fair-faced, 50
She would swear the gentleman should be her
sister;
~~If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,~~
~~Made a foul blot;~~ if tall, a lance ill-headed;
~~If low, an agate very vilely cut;~~
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds;
If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out, 55

And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

URSULA

Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

HERO

~~No, not to be so odd and from all fashions
As Beatrice is cannot be commendable.~~

But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air. O, she would laugh
me

60

Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like covered fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly.
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

65

URSULA

Yet tell her of it. Hear what she will say.

HERO

No, rather I will go to Benedick
And counsel him to fight against his passion;
And truly I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with. One doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

70

URSULA

O, do not do your cousin such a wrong!
She cannot be so much without true judgment,
Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is prized to have, as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

75

HERO

He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

~~URSULA-~~

~~I pray you be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedick,~~

~~For shape, for bearing, argument, and valor,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.~~

~~HERO~~

~~Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.~~

URSULA

~~His excellence did earn it ere he had it.~~
When are you married, madam?

HERO

Why, every day, tomorrow. Come, go in.
I'll show thee some attires and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me tomorrow.

80

They move away from the bower.

URSULA, *aside to Hero*

She's limed, I warrant you. We have caught her,
madam.

HERO, *aside to Ursula*

If it prove so, then loving goes by haps;
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

85

Hero and Ursula exit.