

Much Ado About Nothing By William Shakespeare Adapted by Amanda Giguere Spanish translations by Josue Miranda Directed by Kevin Rich

Produced by the Colorado Shakespeare Festival Shakespeare & Violence Prevention ©2024-2025 Recommended for grades 6-12

In partnership with the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence and the Department of Theatre and Dance at CU Boulder Funded in part by Shakespeare in American Communities and the Boulder Arts Commission

Distribution of Roles

ACTOR 1: Hero, Verges ACTOR 2: Beatrice, Don John ACTOR 3: Benedick, Dogberry, Claudio

Bilingual role: Verges

Note: If you plan to use this script in any way, please include the following statement in your materials:

"This program was developed by the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, and the Department of Theatre & Dance, departments at the University of Colorado Boulder."

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INTRODUCTION: Actors enter, singing ("Head Over Feet" by Alanis Morissette)

ACTOR 2

Hello **SCHOOL NAME**! We're actors from the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and we are here to perform Shakespeare's comedy, *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*.

ACTOR 3

The full version of the play has more than 20 characters and runs about two and a half hours. We have three actors, and about 45 minutes to tell you this story. So here's a quick crash course in who plays who. *(to fellow actors)* Ready?

ACTOR 1 A war has just ended, and two soldiers, Benedick

ACTOR 3 holds up the Benedick jacket

and Claudio,

ACTOR 3 holds up the Claudio jacket

are reentering civilian life. They visit the home of two cousins, Beatrice and Hero.

ACTOR 2 holds up the Beatrice costume piece. ACTOR 1 holds up Hero costume piece

Claudio and Hero love each other.

Actors mime affection between costume pieces 🌝

ACTOR 3

Beatrice and Benedick, however, are more like frenemies.

ACTOR 1

But that doesn't stop Claudio and Hero from trying to set them up.

ACTOR 3

Don John, another soldier who's just returned from war,

ACTOR 2 holds up DON JOHN costume piece

Stirs up a lot of trouble by making up some nasty rumors about Hero and -

ACTOR 2



Wait...why does he do that?

ACTOR 1

Does it matter? He's the villain.

ACTOR 2

But no one's born a villain. Why does he lie about Hero? And why does Claudio believe him?

ACTOR 3

Let's let them (the audience) decide.

ACTOR 1

We also have Verges, a nightwatchman, un guachimán...

ACTOR 3

And **Dogberry**, Verges' partner in crime...fighting!

ACTOR 2

And a real pain in the a-

ACTOR 1

AS you might have noticed, this play deals with misinformation - a lot of characters make choices based on unreliable information. So how do you know what's true? What's real?

ACTOR 2

As you're watching the play, look for moments when you see or hear information that might not be reliable.

ACTOR 3

So without further ADO...

Holds for a laugh.

ACTOR 2

I don't think that's as funny as you think it is...

ACTOR 3 (undeterred) We proudly present

ALL

Much ADO About Nothing!



Scene 1

HERO is trying to solve a Rubix cube. BEATRICE tries to get HERO's attention.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Hero!

(ACTOR 1) HERO Beatrice!

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Is Signior Benedick returned from the wars or no?

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Sí, he's returned; y simpático as ever he was. And a good soldier too, lady.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE And a good soldier to a lady: but what is he to a lord?

(ACTOR 1) HERO A lord to a lord, un hombre a un hombre; stuffed with all honorable virtues.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuffed man.

(ACTOR 1) HERO (aside)

There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE (bragging to audience, maybe high-fiving some students in the front row) In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off. (to Hero) Who is his compañero now? He hath every month a new sworn brother.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease. God help the noble Claudio! If he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cured.

ACTOR 3 enters, holding both Claudio and Benedick costume pieces on hangers

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK



Now are we in Messina! Costume switch, actor holds different coat (on hanger) in front of body

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO I like this place and willingly could waste my time in it.

(ACTOR 1) HERO Claudio and Benedick are approached.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Good Lady Beatrice, I think this is your cousin.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE (guiding the Claudio costume to Hero) She hath many times told me so.

Actor 3 puts on Benedick jacket, while Hero and "Claudio" (on hanger) converse.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Were you in doubt, Claudio, that you asked her?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Then is courtesy a turncoat. But it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

A dear happiness to women: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

God keep your ladyship still in that mind! So some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.



(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

I would my horse had the speed of your tongue. But keep your way, i' God's name; I have done.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

ACTOR 3 collects Claudio costume from Hero.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Please it you, Beatrice, lead on?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Your hand, Hero; we will go together.

Hero and Beatrice Exit

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO (to audience)

Didst thou note the cousin of Lady Beatrice? In mine eye she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on. O, Hero! (throws Claudio coat offstage, caught by ACTOR 1)

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK (to audience)

Is't come to this? He is in love. With Hero. All women shall pardon me. I will live a bachelor. I shall never look pale with love. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my friends, not with love.

Exit



Scene 2

Enter DON JOHN, wearing headphones and singing "Come As You Are" by Nirvana ("come as you are, as you were, as I want you to be")—catches sight of audience and stops singing.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

(to audience) Why am I thus out of measure sad?

There is no measure in the occasion that breeds, therefore the sadness is without limit. I cannot hide what I am. Don John. I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure.

Claudio and Hero walk through together

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Oh, hey, Don John.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN (bitterly)

Claudio.

Hero waves. Claudio and Hero whisper, laugh together - maybe at Don John's expense? Or maybe it has nothing to do with him?

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in their graces, and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all. If I had the chance I would bite. In the meantime, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

The most exquisite Claudio looks on Hero. This may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up, Claudio, hath all the glory: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. Let us to the great party.

(peal of laughter/celebration from offstage).

Don John groans. Exits



Scene 3

(ACTOR 1) HERO (to audience, watching Don John exit)

How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

HERO puts on her mask (teenage mutant ninja turtle mask) and BEATRICE enters

Hola Beatrice! (Handing Beatrice a mask) The revellers are entering: make good room.

CLAUDIO enters. All put on their masks and do a quick "Cotton Eyed Joe" dance. CLAUDIO approaches HERO, while BEATRICE holds BENEDICK's costume piece, as if dancing.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Comadre (Lady), will you walk a bout with your friend?

(ACTOR 1) HERO So you walk softly and look sweetly and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and especially when I walk away.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO With me in your company?

(ACTOR 1) HERO I may say so, when I please.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO And when please you to say so?

(ACTOR 1) HERO When I like your favour. (Peeks under his mask)

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Speak low, if you speak love.

CLAUDIO and HERO cross upstage, Actor 3 transitions to BENEDICK

BEATRICE

Wanna dance? (Together, they do a slow macarena)



BENEDICK I hear you are disdainful?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Will you not tell me who told you so?

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK No, you shall pardon me.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Nor will you not tell me who you are?

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Not now.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE That I was disdainful --well this was Signior Benedick that said so.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK What's he?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Why, he is the Prince's jester, a very dull fool. Only his gift is in devising impossible slanders. None but libertines delight in him.

(This hurts)

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Do, do.

(BENEDICK moves away. CLAUDIO has overheard the exchange, returns from upstage) ACTOR 3 transitions to CLAUDIO

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

It seems I've lost the heart of Signior Benedick. Indeed, he lent it me awhile; and I gave him use for it: a double heart for his single one

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

But here, Claudio, fair Hero is won:



(ACTOR 1) HERO Name the day of marriage, and God give us joy! (Claudio is speechless.)

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. (to audience) Mi Prima tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

And so she doth, cousin.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Thus goes every one to the world but I; I may sit in a corner and cry heigh-ho for a husband! Cousins, God give you joy. *Exit*

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

She is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

She were an excellent match for Benedick.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

O Señor, my lord, if they were but a week together, they would talk themselves mad. County Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

To-morrow, Hero. Time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.



(ACTOR 1) HERO

Next week. I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. We will in the interim undertake to bring Benedick and Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other. I would fain have it a match, if you will but minister assistance.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Hero, I am for you.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. I will teach you how to humour my cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, with your help, will so practice on Benedick that he shall fall in love with Beatrice. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift.

Exeunt CLAUDIO and HERO; DON JOHN enters, watching them go.



Scene 4

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

The Count Claudio shall marry Hero; but I can cross it. Not honestly; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me. I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

I can, at any instant of the night, appoint her to look out of Hero's bedroom window. This shall be proof enough to vex Claudio, and to undo Hero. I'll call Margaret "Hero", and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty that jealousy shall be called assurance.

Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing.



Scene 5

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviors to love, will become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier; and now his words are a very fantastical banquet. May I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn.

(ACTOR 1) HERO (on the phone) Claudio!

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Ha! The lady Hero! I will hide me in the arbour. *Withdraws*

(Enter HERO. BENEDICK hides behind a small potted plant...poorly)

(ACTOR 1) HERO (to audience) See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

Picks up a phone (with a really long cord) and calls Claudio

Hola, Claudio, mi Bombón! Did I tell thee that Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

(BENEDICK pops up in surprise, with a gasp. Then slinks back into the hiding spot.)

O, ay: I did never think that lady would have loved any man. But most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviors seemed ever to abhor.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Hath she made her affection known to Benedick? Lord, no; and swears she never will: that's her torment. If Benedick knew of it, he would make but a sport of it and torment the poor lady worse.

Benedick is losing his mind here. Lots of lazzi in which he almost gets caught by Hero.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

She's an excellent sweet lady; and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous...and she is exceeding wise...In every thing but in loving Benedick.

I think surely she will die; for she says she will die, if he love her not, and she will die, ere she make her love known.

Well I am sorry for Beatrice. I wish Benedick would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady.



Okay, Bye-eeee / Besitos! (hangs up phone)

(*To audience*) If he do not dote on her upon this.... I will send her to call him in to dinner. *Exit HERO*

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

(to audience)

This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne. Hero seems to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day! she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter BEATRICE

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

You take pleasure then in the message?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point: You have no stomach, señor? Fare you well.

Exit

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Ha! 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner;' there's a double meaning in that. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a fool.

Benedick exits singing ("Love me, love me / Say that you love me...")



Scene 6

Hero enters singing "Fool me, fool me, go on and fool me." Claudio enters.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Now, Claudio, when Beatrice doth come, Your talk to me 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.

(Enter BEATRICE, behind)

No, truly, Claudio, she is too disdainful. But are you sure That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO So I hear.

And will you tell her of it, madam?

(ACTOR 1) HERO I never will let Beatrice know of it.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Why say you so?

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Nature never framed a woman's heart Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice; she cannot love.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

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

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man, But she would spell him backward. So turns she every man the wrong side out.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.



(ACTOR 1) HERO

But who dare tell her so? If I should speak, She would mock me into air; Therefore let Benedick waste inwardly.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Yet tell her of it: hear what she will say. She cannot be so much without true judgment-as to refuse so rare a gentleman.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

He is the only man of Italy. Always excepted my dear Claudio. Ven/Come, go in.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

She's limed, I warrant you: we have caught her, Hero.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

If it proves so, then loving goes by haps: Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps. (*Exit HERO and CLAUDIO*)

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Coming forward What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true? Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much? Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu! And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee, For others say thou dost deserve, and I Believe it better than reportingly.

> Exit, singing a love song. "I love you always forever / Near and far closer together / Everywhere I will be with you / Everything I will do for you" or "Say you'll love, love me forever / never stop, never whatever / Near and far and always and everywhere and everything"



Scene 7 Enter CLAUDIO (picking up the song where Beatrice left off)

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

(to audience) Benedick is not as he has been. I hope he be in love! Hero and I have played our parts with Beatrice, and now the two bears will not bite one another when they meet.

(Enter DON JOHN)

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN My lord, God save you!

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Good den, Don John.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO What's the matter?

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO You know I do.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN I know not that, when you know what I know.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN I came hither to tell you; the lady is disloyal.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Who, Hero?

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN Even she; your Hero, every man's Hero.



(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Disloyal?

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say she were worse: think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her bedroom-window entered, even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

May this be so?

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

If you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more and heard more, proceed accordingly.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

I will disparage her no farther till you are my witness: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

Exeunt

Quick transition for Actor 3 from Claudio to Dogberry.



Scene 8

VERGES enters, singing "Bad Boys Bad Boys, Whatcha Gonna Do?" Dogberry sneaks up behind him and scares him. Lazzi, ending with Dogberry smacking his own face with his own baton.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Are you a good man and true, Verges?

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

Si soy, give me my charge, neighbor Dogberry.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

En verdad asi soy (This is true)

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Therefore this is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name. (commanding) Parensen en el nombre del príncipe! (softening a bit) Por favor. (pronounces all the Spanish poorly, and Verges corrects.)

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

How if a' will not stand?

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go; and thank God you are rid of a knave.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Tu ingenio me granada. (*I like thy wit well—Verges corrects his pronunciation*). True, and you are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects. You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

I will rather sleep than talk.



(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only, have a care that your bill be not stolen.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

You have been always called a merciful man, partner. (kindly) Un hombre clemente. (A merciful man)

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

(gracious) Gracias, mi amigo (proud of himself for his pronunciation)

This is the end of the charge:-- (*leaving*) One word more, honest neighbour. I pray you watch about Hero's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Auf Wiedersehen.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES Que?

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY Means adios.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES Oh.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY Be vigitant, I beseech you.

DOGBERRY exits. Enter DON JOHN

(ACTOR 1) VERGES [Aside] Alguien viene, silencio! (Peace! stir not.)

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN (to audience) Stand thee close, then, and I will utter all to thee.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES [Aside] ¿Alguna traición? Vamos a ver (Some treason: yet stand close.)

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

(to audience) Didst thou not hear somebody? But know that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero: she leans me out at her mistress' window, bids me a thousand times good night -- I tell this tale vilely: -- I should first tell thee how Claudio, planted and placed, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter. He thought Margaret was Hero and away went Claudio



enraged; swore he would meet her next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er night and send her home again without a husband.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

Te arresto en el nombre del príncipe...

I charge you, in the prince's name, stand! I have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Officer--

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

Mejor no hables (Never speak): I charge you let me obey you to go with me.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Come, I'll obey you. *Exeunt*



Scene 9

Enter CLAUDIO, as the rest of the cast sings a wedding song. He is uneasy. Enter BEATRICE and HERO to begin the ceremony, singing "Going to the chapel"

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Vienes aquí, Claudio, para casarte con esta dama./ You come hither, Claudio, to marry this lady.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

No.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

To be married **to** me. You come to marry us.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

(relieved) Hero, you come hither to be married to this count.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

I do.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Know you any, Hero?

(ACTOR 1) HERO

None, my lord.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Know you any, count? (*awkward silence*)

(ACTOR 1) HERO I dare make his answer, none.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Stand thee by, Beatrice. Hero, by your leave Will you with free and unconstrained soul Give me your hand?

(ACTOR 1) HERO

As freely as God did give it me.



(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO And what have I to give you back, whose worth May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

(ACTOR 1) HERO Nothing, unless you render me again.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Sweet lady, you learn me noble thankfulness.

Pushes Hero away.

Give not this rotten orange to your friend.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE What do you mean, my lord?

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Not to be married,

Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Madam, they are spoken, and these things are true.¹

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

This looks not like a nuptial.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Let me but move one question to Hero. What man was he talk'd with you yesternight Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?

(ACTOR 1) HERO

I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

(to Beatrice and to audience as wedding guests)

¹ This lines says a lot about truth and language. Do we believe something simply because someone says it's true? Do we believe everything we read? What happens when language is disconnected from truth?



I'm sorry you must hear: I, upon mine honour, Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night Talk with a ruffian at her bedroom-window.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Fie, fie!

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been, If half thy outward graces had been placed About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart! For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love, To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm, And never shall it more be gracious.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

¿No hay ninguna daga aquí con una punta para mí? (Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?) (HERO swoons)

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Qué rayos está pasando?!

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

These things, come thus to light, Smother her spirits up. Exit CLAUDIO. BEATRICE tries to revive HERO. Quick change to BENEDICK, who enters the scene, as if he's pushed his way through the wedding crowd to get to the front.

BEATRICE

On my soul, my cousin is belied! Ayudame! Help, help!

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

How doth the lady?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Dead, I think. Help, Benedick!

HERO revives.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Hear me a little; Call me a fool If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here Under some biting error.



Hero, what man is he you are accused of?

(ACTOR 1) HERO

He knows that does accuse me; I know none: O sweet Beatrice, Prove you that any man with me conversed At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight Maintain'd the change of words with any creature, Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Claudio has the very bent of honour; And if his wisdom be misled in this, The practise of it lives in Don John.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

I know not. If they wrong her honour, The proudest of them shall well hear of it.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Pause awhile, And let my counsel sway you in this case. Your cousin here has Claudio left for dead. Let her awhile be secretly kept in And publish it that she is dead indeed.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

What shall become of this? what will this do?

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

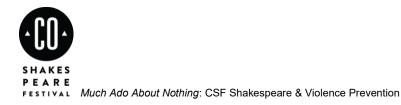
Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf Change slander to remorse;

(ACTOR 1) HERO

That is some good.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

For it so falls out That what we have we prize not to the worth Whiles we enjoy it, but being lacked and lost, Why then we rack the value, then we find The virtue that possession would not show us Whiles it was ours.



(ACTOR 1) HERO

So will it fare with Claudio. When he shall hear I died upon his words, Then shall he mourn, And wish he had not so accused me. Being that I flow in grief, The smallest twine may lead me.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Go, Hero, die to live: this wedding-day Perhaps is but prolong'd: have patience and endure. *Exit HERO*

BEATRICE kneels, weeps.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Lady Beatrice, have you mourned all this while?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Yea, and I will mourn a while longer.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

I will not desire that.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE You have no reason; I do it freely.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wronged.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Ah, how much might the man deserve of me that would right her!

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Is there any way to show such friendship?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE A very even way, but no such friend.

(beat)

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK No amo nada en el mundo tanto como a ti/I do love nothing in the world so well as you: is not



that strange?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

As strange as the thing I know not. It were as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me. I protest I love thee.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

I was about to protest I loved you.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK And do it with all thy heart.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest. /Te amo con tanto de mi corazón que no queda nada para protestar

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Kill Claudio.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Ha! not for the wide world.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE You kill me to deny it. Farewell.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE I am gone, though I am here: there is no love in you: nay, I pray you, let me go.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK We'll be friends first.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.



(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Is Claudio thine enemy?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Is he not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? Dios mio, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Tarry, good Beatrice. By this hand, I love thee.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Yea, as sure as I have a thought or a soul.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

Ya basta, I am engaged; I will challenge him. Go, comfort your cousin: and so, farewell. Exit BENEDICK (to quick change, aided by ACTOR 1)

BEATRICE remains. Wipes her eyes. Looks at the audience. Exits.



Scene 10

Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES (some comic bit). They're ready to put Don John on trial. But maybe they've misplaced him? ("Bad Boys, Bad Boys, Whatcha Gonna Do...")

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY (looking out at the audience) Is our whole dissembly appeared?

(ACTOR 1) VERGES (looking out at the audience) ¿Dónde está el malhechor? (Where be the malefactor?)

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Marry, that am I.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

But where is the offender that is to be examined? (Spanish: Que se presente ante el maestro Dogberry.)

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Yea, marry, let him come before me. (Shouts offstage, "Oh offender! Come out come out wherever you are!")

DON JOHN enters, reluctantly.

¿Cómo te llamas amigo? (What is your name, friend?)

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN What?

(ACTOR 1) VERGES What's your name.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN Don John.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY Pray, write down, Don Juan. (Don John.)

VERGES pulls out a fluffy pen and a sequined journal. Or something like that.

Neighbor, it is proved already that you are little better than a false knave; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourself?



(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Marry, sir, I say I am none.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Have you writ down, that he is none?

VERGES proudly presents his written work.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Mister Dogberry, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that is the accuser.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Yea, marry, that's the eftest way. (to everyone) Let the watch come forth. (to Verges) Neighbor, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse this man.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Mister Dogberry--

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look, I promise thee. (to Verges) What heard you him say?

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

That Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

O villain! Thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this. What else?

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

Eso es todo (This is all)

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

And this is more, neighbor, than you can deny. Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. Let this man be bound, and brought to justice.

DOGBERRY and VERGES seize DON JOHN



VERGES exits, dragging DON JOHN offstage

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN Off, coxcomb!

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY Thou naughty varlet!

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

(ACTOR 3) DOGBERRY

Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my years? O that Verges were here to write me down an ass! But, neighbors, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. Vámonos! (*to himself, leaving*) Away. O that I had been writ down an ass!

Exeunt

SCENE TRANSITION. HERO sings

HERO And I'm here To remind you Of the mess you left when you went away...

(Anger melts into sadness)

All by myself Don't wanna be All by myself

BEATRICE enters, comforts her, then shoos her away as CLAUDIO enters.



Scene 11 Enter CLAUDIO, BEATRICE

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Hear you, Claudio--

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO I have some haste, Beatrice.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Are you so hasty now?

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO Nay, do not quarrel with me, good woman.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Marry, thou dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou:--Thy slander hath gone through and through Hero's heart, And she lies buried, framed by thy villany!

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO My villany?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Thine, Claudio; thine, I say.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO You say not right. My heart is sorry for your cousin's death, But, on my honour, she was charged with nothing But what was true and very full of proof.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE My lord, --

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO I will not hear you.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE No? I will be heard. I have news from Benedick.

She tries to deliver a letter, or a note - he refuses it.



(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

I have been up and down to seek him; for I am high-proof melancholy and would fain have it beaten away. Will he use his wit?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

It is in his scabbard: shall he draw it?

She opens the letter and reads it to CLAUDIO

"You are a villain; I jest not: You have shamed a sweet and innocent lady. You and I shall meet."

BEATRICE exits.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO (to audience)

He is in earnest. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice. And hath challenged me. Most sincerely. What a pretty thing man is when he goes in his doublet and hose and leaves off his wit!

Enter VERGES with DON JOHN Quick transition for Actor 2.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

How now? Don John? Verges, what offence has this man done?

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

Marry, sir, he has committed false report; moreover (ademas), he has spoken untruths; secondarily (segundo), they are slanders; sixth and lastly (Sexto y lo ultimo), he has belied a lady; thirdly, (tercero,) he has verified unjust things; and, to conclude, (para concluir,) he is a lying knave.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

First, I ask thee what he has done; thirdly, I ask thee what's his offence; sixth and lastly, why he is committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to his charge.

(ACTOR 1) VERGES

Oh, and Neighbors, Officer Dogberry wished to specify, when time and place shall serve, that he is an ass.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

(confused, then to Don John) What's your offence?

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Claudio I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdom could not discover, this shallow



fool has brought to light: who in the night overheard me confessing how I slandered Hero, how you were brought into the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments, how you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villainy he has upon record; which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon my false accusation.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Art thou the knave that with thy breath hast shamed the innocent Hero?

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

Yea, even I alone.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

No, not so, villain; thou beliest thyself: *(To audience)* This naughty man Shall face to face be brought to Margaret, Who I believe was pack'd in all this wrong.

(ACTOR 2) DON JOHN

No, by my soul, she was not, Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me.

CLAUDIO

Take him away!

Exit DON JOHN Quick transition for Actor 2

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Sweet Hero! Now runs this speech like iron through my blood I have drunk poison whiles he uttered it.

Enter Beatrice.

Beatrice, choose your revenge yourself; Impose me to what penance your invention Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not But in mistaking.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

I cannot bid you bid my cousin live— That were impossible—but, I pray you now, Possess the people in Messina here How innocent she died. And if your love Can labor aught in sad invention



Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb (hands him a paper) And sing it to her bones. And so dies my revenge.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO (after reviewing the paper) O noble lady, Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me! I do embrace your offer.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

Come forth.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO (reads the speech to the audience, as if making a public apology. HERO enters quietly, out of CLAUDIO's line of vision, and listens.)

Done to death by slanderous tongues Was the Hero that here lies. She died because Don John lied I believed him and humiliated her in front of all of you. I was wrong and I'm sorry. I hope you all remember her for who she was –a good, kind person. Lo siento, mi amor.

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Give me your hand.

(ACTOR 3) CLAUDIO

Another Hero!

(ACTOR 1) HERO

Nothing certainer: One Hero was defiled, but I do live.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE

She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived. All this amazement can I qualify: Meantime let wonder seem familiar,

CLAUDIO

And to the chapel let us presently.

HERO

First, let us have more talk of these hard things.

Moment of reconciliation or "what's next" between Claudio and Hero, during which, BEATRICE and BENEDICK look on.



(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Well, I am glad that all things sorts so well.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Beatrice?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE What is your will?

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Do not you love me?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Why, no; no more than reason.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Why, then your cousin and Claudio Have been deceived; they swore you did.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Do not you love me?

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Troth, no; no more than reason.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE Why, then my cousin Hero and Claudio Are much deceived; for they did swear you did.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK They swore that you were almost sick for me.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK 'Tis no such matter. Then you do not love me?

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

(ACTOR 1) HERO Come, Beatrice, I am sure you love the gentleman.



And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her; For here's a paper written in his hand, A halting sonnet of his own pure brain, Fashion'd to Beatrice.

Benedick tries to steal it Beatrice gets it first

And here's another Writ in Beatrice's hand, stolen from her pocket, Containing her affection unto Benedick.

Beatrice tries to get it, but Benedick gets it first

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts. Come, I will have thee.

(ACTOR 2) BEATRICE I would not deny you; but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion.

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK Paz!/Peace! I will stop your mouth.

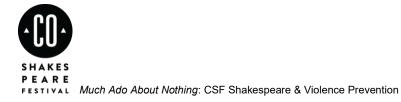
(ACTOR 1) HERO

Cómo estás, Benedick, the married man?

(ACTOR 3) BENEDICK

I'll tell thee what, Hero; a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour. Vamos, vamos, somos amigos:/Come, come, we are friends: let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels. Strike up, pipers.

Song: Head over Feet, Alanis Morisette.



TALKBACK QUESTIONS: MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACTOR 1

- Thanks for being a great audience!
- I'd like to invite _____ (your counselor/principal, etc) up to join us for this conversation--. Let's give _____ a round of applause!
- This project is a way to think about some of the patterns of violence, and mistreatment we see in our own world, using Shakespeare's plays.
- Now, let's get a show of hands: How many of you have seen a Shakespeare play before this one?

ACTOR 2

- Great! You can put your hands down.
- We have some questions about what you saw in the play. If you would like to share an answer, please raise your hand and speak up nice and loud, so everyone can hear you. If you don't remember a character's name, don't worry just do your best to describe them.
- What examples of mistreatment did you notice in the play? (Take examples). Thank you.
- At the start of the play, we asked you to watch for unreliable information (or misinformation). What examples did you observe? (Take examples). Thank you.
- We use the term "upstander" for someone who steps in to prevent harm. Who in the play could have been an upstander? And how might the story have turned out differently if someone acted as an upstander? (Take examples) Thank you.

ACTOR 3

- In this play, we see many opportunities to intervene before people get hurt.
- Here in your school, how can one person make a difference in preventing harm?
- Please raise your hand if you'd like to share your idea.
- (If no responses) Sometimes you don't know what you're going to do until the moment, and that's okay too! Here are a few things that might work:
 - Trusted adult
 - Support the person being mistreated
 - Safe2Tell

ACTOR 1



- We saw some people in this play who were hurting, and we want to be sure you know about another resource. The 988 Lifeline if you or someone you care about is having a hard time, you can call or text 988. You'll be put in contact with a trained counselor, ready to text with you about anything. Remember: 988
- By show of hands, how many of you have heard of Safe2Tell?
- Safe2Tell is an anonymous reporting tool to report dangerous behavior. There are lots of ways to help when we're aware of mistreatment. You can report through the Safe2Tell mobile app, online at Safe-2-(the number 2) Tell Dot Org, or there's a number you can call. If you know of a situation that is unsafe, we hope you know that it's no less courageous to help anonymously.
- Of course, you have adults here at your school who are here for you, and who care about your safety. If possible, we hope you will approach a trusted adult first. But if that's not possible, Safe2Tell is a safety net for you.
- (To school representative) Anything else you would like to add?

ACTOR 2

• Thank you for being part of the audience today. We are going to do workshops with some of you in classrooms. But if we aren't doing workshops with you, we encourage you to keep this conversation going. Now, I'd like you to stay seated and quietly look to your teachers and they will tell you where to go. Thank you!