

LEONATO

Tush, tush, man ! never fleer and jest at me.  
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,  
As under privilege of age to brag  
What I have done being young, or what would do,  
Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,  
Thou hast so wronged mine innocent child and me  
That I am forced to lay my reverence by  
And, with grey hairs and bruise of many days,  
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.  
I say thou hast belied mine innocent child.  
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,  
And she lies buried with her ancestors –  
O, in a tomb where never scandal slept,  
Save this of hers, framed by thy villainy !

CLAUDIO

My villainy ?

LEONATO Thine, Claudio ; thine I say.

PEDRO

You say not right, old man.

LEONATO

My lord, my lord,

I'll prove it on his body if he dare,  
Despite his nice fence and his active practice,  
His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.

CLAUDIO

Away ! I will not have to do with you.

(V i : 58 - 77)

ANTONIO

He shall kill two of us, and men indeed.  
But that's no matter ; let him kill one first.  
Win me and wear me ! Let him answer me.  
Come, follow me, boy. Come, sir boy, come follow me.  
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence !  
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

LEONATO

Brother –

ANTONIO

Content yourself. God knows I loved my niece,  
And she is dead, slandered to death by villains,  
That dare as well answer a man indeed  
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue.  
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops !

LEONATO

Brother Anthony

ANTONIO

Hold you content. What, man ! I know them, yea,  
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,  
Scambling, outfacing, fashion-monging boys,  
That lie and cog and flout, deprave and slander,  
Go anticly, show outward hideousness,  
And speak off half a dozen dang'rous words,  
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst ;  
And this is all.

(V i : 80 - 98)

PEDRO Welcome, signior. You are almost come to part  
almost a fray.

CLAUDIO We had liked to have had our two noses  
snapped off with two old men without teeth.

PEDRO Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou ?  
Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young  
for them.

BENEDICK In a false quarrel there is no true valor. I came  
to seek you both.

CLAUDIO We have been up and down to seek thee ; for  
we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it  
beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit ?

BENEDICK It is in my scabbard. Shall I draw it ?

PEDRO Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side ?

CLAUDIO Never any did so, though very many have been  
beside their wit. I will bid thee draw, as we do the min-  
strels – draw to pleasure us.

PEDRO As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou  
sick, or angry ?

CLAUDIO What, courage, man ! What though care killed  
a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

(V i : 113 - 133)