

# **Much Ado about Nothing Book Notes**

## **Much Ado about Nothing by William Shakespeare**

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## Author/Context

William Shakespeare was born on either the 22<sup>nd</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon, a small British town outside of London, to parents Mary Arden and John Shakespeare. He was educated at the King's Free School of Stratford, where he studied the Bible and Latin. He married Anne Hathaway at age 18. After his marriage to this older woman, writing poetry became his profession to support his family. William and Anne had a daughter named Susanna and twins named Judith and Hamnet. Shakespeare began writing and finding different groups to perform his work, including the Admiral's Men, The Queen's Men, Pembroke's Men, and Lord Strange's Men. However, the Chamberlain's Men was the group of players in which he composed, produced, and performed many of his plays in the now-famous Globe Theater. He was compared to contemporary "scholars" such as Ben Jonson and Christopher Marlowe, the former would become one of his greatest actors, and the latter, one of his greatest playwriting rivals.

Shakespeare is argued to have produced an incredibly large library of work, including 38 plays and countless sonnets. His plays are divided into four main sections: the Histories, the Tragedies, the Comedies, and the Romances. *Much Ado About Nothing* falls under the category of Comedy. His work has also been consistently revisited countless times by the same artistic medium because it is said to be timeless. Shakespeare's topics are about love, murder, jealousy, miscommunication, chastity, history, and even magic. *Much Ado About Nothing* encompasses the classic elements of Shakespeare's comedies. It begins with the idea of marriage, encompasses miscommunication between the characters, contains a single villain, concludes with happy, resolved marriages, and proudly displays a comic relief character. Most of Shakespeare's plays use this character of the clown, jester, or commoner to spark slapstick laughter. Dogberry, his sidekick Verges, and the night watchmen qualify as this "character" in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Also, these lower-class characters speak in prose, not in poetry (iambic pentameter), like the rest of Shakespeare's characters.

This play is a combination of Shakespeare's originality in comedy and his research of other literature. The plot between the witty Beatrice and Benedick is unique to Shakespeare and is sometimes seen as a study of contemporary English character. The character of Dogberry, in all his senselessness and absurdity, is another concoction of the Bard. However, his melodramatic love story between Hero and Claudio almost destroyed by an evil villain, is common in the literature of many countries during his day. Like these two lovers' story, many critics believe that Shakespeare used other authors' plots in his own work. While the plot between the lovers, Claudio and Hero, is supposed to take center stage, it is Shakespeare's original duo of Beatrice and Benedick that wins the hearts in the audience. "Scoffers at love, yet magnetized to each other, sparring at every turn, Benedick and Beatrice are the readiest victims for the Nemesis of Comedy. They are Biron and Rosaline of *Love's Labour's Lost* freed and perfected on a higher plane. Beatrice, though less warm and radiant than some of Shakespeare's women, is one of the most real and lovable of them all."

*Much Ado About Nothing* is assumed to have been written in 1599, a time in which Shakespeare was extremely busy and productive in terms of playwriting. It remains one of the most enjoyed Shakespearean comedies today and aside from being staged throughout the centuries, has been made a film by Kenneth Branagh and an opera by Hector Berlioz called *Beatrice and Benedick*.

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# Plot Summary

Don Pedro of Arragon comes to Messina with his comrades, Claudio of Florence and Benedick of Padua after successful battles, to visit with his friend Leonato. Leonato is the governor of Messina and a kind gentleman to all the men who visit. Claudio is enamored with Leonato's only child and daughter, Hero. Benedick, a sworn bachelor who thinks poorly of all women, cannot understand how Claudio is so love-struck. Despite his misogynistic attitude, Benedick does find time to exchange witty insults with Beatrice, Leonato's niece. Beatrice and Benedick are two strong-willed and witty confirmed bachelors who enjoy taunting one another.

Don Pedro plans to help Claudio indirectly by wooing Hero and asking for her hand to give to Leonato at the party that evening. Borachio overhears this news and tells his confidant Don John the Bastard, the brother of Don Pedro, who has also come to Messina. Don John plans to cause mischief by destroying this intended marriage.

At the party that evening, Ursula flirts with a masked Antonio, Margaret flirts with a masked Borachio, Beatrice wittily flirts with and insults a masked Benedick, and the masked prince Don Pedro woos Hero for Claudio. Don John approaches the masked Claudio, pretending to be Benedick, and tells him that Don Pedro has wooed Hero for himself. Claudio becomes jealous and leaves the party. Don Pedro returns with Hero and everything works out. Hero and Claudio are to be married. After being turned down by Beatrice, Don Pedro proposes that everyone help him trick Beatrice and Benedick into falling in love with one another, since they obviously are fit for none else than each another. The next day, Claudio, Don Pedro, and Leonato trick Benedick into falling in love with Beatrice. He believes their word because Leonato reveals that Hero told him that Beatrice loves Benedick. Ursula, Hero, and Margaret do the same with Beatrice. They say how wonderful a man Benedick is in Italy and that he is in love with her. The two are still so stubborn that they have trouble revealing their real emotions.

Dogberry and Verges, two comic officers for the prince, establish a night watch for the evening before Hero and Claudio's wedding.

John the Bastard pays Borachio one thousand ducats to seduce Margaret outside Hero's window so that Claudio and Don Pedro will witness the affair and think Margaret is Hero. He does so and speaks with Margaret (as Hero) outside her window, as John brings Pedro and Claudio to watch. They are so angered that Claudio plans to disgrace Hero at their wedding in the morning.

A drunk Borachio tells Conrade of John's plot and brags of his manly conquest. The night watchmen overhear his story and place the two men under arrest. Dogberry plans to examine them, but first asks Leonato what to do. Leonato tells him to go away and examine the men.

At Hero and Claudio's wedding, Claudio shames Hero, Don Pedro defends Claudio, and the men leave irate. Hero faints and Beatrice defends her innocence. Friar Francis

devises a plan to save her name. She will feign death from slander, whereupon her name will be saved.

Beatrice and Benedick proclaim their love for one another and Beatrice makes Benedick challenge Claudio for his wrongdoings. He does so. Dogberry tells Leonato, Antonio, Claudio, and Don Pedro of John the Bastard's crime and Hero's innocence. Claudio places an epitaph on Hero's supposed grave and promises to marry Antonio's daughter the next morning.

The four women arrive masked at the wedding. Hero unmask herself after Claudio promises to take her without seeing her face. Benedick plans to marry Beatrice. The double marriage is celebrated as a messenger arrives saying that Don John the Bastard has been captured.

# Major Characters

**Don Pedro (the Prince of Arragon):** Don Pedro is the kind prince of Arragon who arrives in Messina after battle to stay with his friend, Leonato, for a month. He is single and assists in matching-up both Claudio and Hero and Beatrice and Benedick. He proposes to Beatrice, only to be turned down. He also witnesses Hero's supposed unmaiden-like behavior and defends Claudio in his disgracing of Hero. He is found innocent at the end of the play and is one of the only single men remaining. His brother is Don John the Bastard.

**Leonato:** Leonato is the governor of Messina and the father of Hero. He is a kind man and old friend of Don Pedro. He happily gives his daughter Hero to Claudio in marriage, and is so angry at her disgrace that he wishes her dead. He plans to avenge her disgrace and sets Claudio up to marry her again at the end of the play.

**Don John (the Bastard):** Don John the Bastard is the brother of Don Pedro and villain of this comedy. He craves mischief and plans to destroy the lives of the people in Messina. He employs his comrade, Borachio, to pretend to be with Hero, when he is actually with Margaret, so that the prince and Claudio can see. He flees Messina after Claudio disgraces Hero and is later caught by the sexton.

**Claudio:** Claudio is a young man in the prince's command who falls in love with Hero. He is very jealous and allows the prince to woo her and get her father's blessing for him. When he thinks he sees Hero with Borachio, he erupts and disgraces Hero at their wedding. When he believes Hero is dead, he mourns her and when he realizes that she was wronged, he places an epitaph on her grave and promises to marry her cousin. He and Hero marry in the final scene of the play.

**Benedick:** Benedick is a witty, confirmed bachelor in Don Pedro's company. He is friends with Claudio and Pedro and cannot understand why anyone would want to marry. He carries on a witty and insulting relationship with Beatrice, who he eventually falls in love with. He promises Beatrice that he will challenge Claudio to fight in Hero's honor and eventually declares his love for Beatrice. By the end of the play, he cannot understand why one would not want to marry.

**Beatrice:** Beatrice is the witty, strong-willed niece of Leonato and cousin of Hero. She carries on an insulting witty tournament of words with Benedick, with whom she later falls in love. She is hurt when Hero is wronged in public and makes Benedick challenge Claudio. Although she is also a confirmed bachelor, she plans to marry Benedick by the end of the play.

**Hero:** Although she speaks little in the play, Hero is the source of much commotion. She is in love with Claudio and framed by Don John. At her wedding, Claudio shames her by saying she is unfaithful. She feigns her death and watches as Messina mourns. When her name is cleared she marries Claudio.





**Dogberry:** Dogberry is one of the prince's officers and the comic relief of this play. He humorously puts his guards on watch and examines Borachio and Conrade. He tells Leonato of the crimes of these men and is rewarded generously for his service.

### Minor Characters

**Antonio:** Antonio is Leonato's older brother and the uncle to Hero. He is generally seen as a jolly old man. However, when Hero is shamed and disgraced, it is Antonio who vents his anger very loudly. He pretends to have a carbon copy daughter of Hero, to whom Claudio will marry in the final scene of the play.

**Borachio:** Borachio is one of John the Bastard's comrades. He is the man who pretends to be "speaking" with Hero at her window, when instead he is with Margaret. John pays him one thousand ducats to do the dirty deed. Borachio later confesses to Dogberry and the sexton of his crimes.

**Conrade:** Conrade is Borachio's friend who is also captured by the night watchmen. He insists on being treated as a gentleman and calls Dogberry an ass.

**Verges:** Verges is Dogberry's headborough. He is always at his side and assists in examining the criminals. Dogberry constantly puts him down, for he feels that Verges is inferior to him. He is also an officer of the prince.

**Ursula:** Ursula is one of Hero's waiting gentlewomen. She assists Hero in setting Beatrice up with Benedick. She also flirts with Antonio at the party in the beginning of the play. Ursula is the messenger who breaks the good news to Beatrice and Benedick that Hero's name is cleared and that John the Bastard is the culprit behind all the villainy.

**Margaret:** Margaret is another one of Hero's waiting gentlewomen. She is young and quick-witted. Unknowingly, she helps in Don John's plot against everyone in Messina by speaking with Borachio outside Hero's window. When Hero is accused of infidelity, it is really Margaret who has been unmaiden-like.

**Friar Francis:** Friar Francis is the man who is supposed to reside over the wedding ceremony between Hero and Claudio. When Claudio disgraces her, he believes Hero to be innocent and tries to convince everyone that she is belied. He comes up with the plan to feign Hero's death until all matters have been cleared, and proceed with a new wedding in the near future.

**Balthazar:** Balthazar is the play's musician. He lends music to the prince's company and gives a serene atmosphere to Messina.

**Sexton:** The sexton helps in examining Borachio and Conrade in jail. He shows Dogberry how to take care of the criminals and also brings word of the occurrences at the infamous wedding ceremony. He looks down upon Dogberry and eventually captures Don John.

**Messengers:** Throughout the play, several messengers come onstage and off to report important events to the characters, from the arrival of Don Pedro and his men, to the capture of Don John.

**Innogen:** Innogen is Hero's mother and Leonato's wife. She never speaks during the play and is only present at large gatherings such as the first scene and the weddings. She is often left out of staged productions.

**Watchmen:** Dogberry employs a few night watchmen to keep an eye on the happenings of Messina during this very joyous wedding time. They capture Borachio and Conrade on word of Borachio's affair with Margaret and the framing of Hero.

## Objects/Places

**Messina:** Messina is a city in Sicily, Italy where the play takes place. It is very serene, joyous, and friendly. Don Pedro comes from Arragon while Claudio comes from Florence and Benedick from Padua. There are no battles or wars and the soldiers relax with their friends in Messina.

**Antonio and Leonato's orchard:** Many of the events of the play occur in Antonio and Leonato's orchard. Beatrice and Benedick are tricked into falling in love with one another in the orchard and many great conversations occur there, as well.

**Leonato's House:** Everyone stays in Leonato's house during the visit. Since Leonato is the governor of Messina, the house must be large and wealthy.

**The gaol:** Borachio and Conrade are taken to the gaol (jail) to be examined by Dogberry and the sexton. They admit to their crime in the gaol.

**masks:** Masks are worn by many characters during the course of the play. The men are masked at the party in the beginning of the play so that the women will not know who they are, while the women are masked at the final wedding ceremony so that they men cannot see their faces. These masks illustrate the idea of how things and people can be deceiving and are not always as they appear to be.

# Quotes

Quote 1: "You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them." Act 1, Scene 1, lines 62-65.

Quote 2: "I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me." Act 1, Scene 1, line 188

Quote 3: "That a woman conceived me, I thank her: that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none: and the fine is, for the which I may go the finer, I will live a bachelor." Act 1, Scene 1, lines 247-256

Quote 4: "This may prove food to my displeasure...If I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way." Act 1, Scene 3, lines 67-70

Quote 5: "Friendship is constant in all other things  
Save in the office and affairs of love:  
Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;  
Let every eye negotiate for itself,  
And trust no agent; for beauty is a witch  
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.  
This is an accident of hourly proof,  
Which I mistrusted not." Act 2, Scene 1, lines 184-191

Quote 6: "There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord; she is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say she hath often dreamt of unhappiness and waked herself with laughing." Act 2, Scene 1, lines 359-362

Quote 7: "I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules' labors, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection th'one with th'other." Act 2, Scene 1, lines 382-385

Quote 8: "When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married." Act 2, Scene 3, lines 263-264

Quote 9: "Our talk must only be of Benedick.  
When I do name him, let it by 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." Act 3, Scene 1, lines 17-23



Quote 10: "Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps." Act 3, Scene 1, line 106

Quote 11: "If I see any thing tonight why I should not marry her tomorrow, in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her." Act 3, Scene 2, lines 128-130

Quote 12: "I tell this tale vilely - I should first tell thee how the Prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter." Act 3, Scene 3, lines 156-160

Quote 13: "There, Leonato, take her back again: / Give not this rotten orange to your friend; / She's but the sign and semblance of her honor." Act 4, Scene 1, lines 31-33

Quote 14: "Your daughter here the princes left for dead,  
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,  
And publish it that she is dead indeed;...  
Change slander to remorse...  
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,  
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,  
Shall be lamented, pitied, and excus'd  
Of every hearer" Act 4, Scene 1, lines 204-219

Quote 15: "I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest." Act 4, Scene 1, lines 291-292

Quote 16: "O that he were here to write me down an ass! But masters, remember that I am an ass: though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass." Act 4, Scene 2, lines 80-83

Quote 17: "I say thou has 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, fram'd by thy villainy!" Act 5, Scene 1, lines 67-71

Quote 18: "I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light, who in the night overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero." Act 5, Scene 1, lines 243-248

Quote 19: "I have drunk poison while he utter'd it." Act 5, Scene 1, line 258

Quote 20: "Though and I are too wise to woo peaceably." Act 5, Scene 2, line 76

Quote 21: "And when I liv'd I was your other wife; / And when you lov'd, you were my other husband...One Hero died defil'd, but I do live, / And surely as I live, I am a maid." Act 5, Scene 4, lines 60-64

Quote 22: "In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion." Act 5, Scene 4, lines 106-110

# Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes

## Act 1, Scenes 1-3

Battle of the Sexes 1: Leonato explains the relationship between Beatrice and Benedick to the messenger. It is a camaraderie of wit and exchange of insults that represent the modern battle of the sexes. They repeatedly put one another down because of each other's sex, and the advantages and disadvantages they each possess because of it. This relationship prevails throughout the play.

Battle of the Sexes 2: Beatrice exclaims that she plans to be a bachelor for all time. She cannot stand to hear a man declare his love for her. Beatrice's independent nature is unique to Shakespeare's work. By putting down the love a woman receives from a man, Beatrice is illustrating how she believes women to be the better sex.

Battle of the Sexes 3: Benedick declares the same concept as Beatrice to his male comrades. He is a sworn bachelor, as well. He puts women down for their frivolity and mistrust. He is grateful for his mother, but plans to have no other women in his life. Like Beatrice, by insulting the female gender, he is proclaiming the male gender as supreme.

## Act 2, Scenes 1-3

Battle of the Sexes 4: Beatrice entertains her family, once again, with humorous tales of men and their problems. She does understand, however, that many women are not as happy as she is to be a bachelor. Therefore, she tries to convince her cousin, Hero, to select a good man, if she must select a man. Her strength and femininity are unique and she does not try to force others to practice the same lifestyle.

Battle of the Sexes 5: In soliloquy, Benedick gives an enormous list of the requirements that his intended woman must possess. He realizes that women cannot possibly contain all such qualities and therefore he must remain a bachelor. Benedick overhears Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato's plotted conversation about Beatrice. It seems that part of the battle of the sexes may cease to exist as Benedick falls hopelessly in love with Beatrice. However, he believes her to be in love with him, and this significant element in the plot allows him to fall for her.

## Act 3, Scenes 1-5

Battle of the Sexes 6: Hero, Ursula, and Margaret force Beatrice to fall in love with Benedick by telling tales "behind her back" of the glorious Italian man, Benedick. They use traps in order to establish this love affair between these two soldiers in the battle of the sexes. Beatrice has fallen for Benedick during the conversation, but still will not reveal her feelings.

## Act 4, Scenes 1-2

Battle of the Sexes 7: Beatrice and Benedick proclaim their love for one another after evading the issue. They have trouble showing their feelings, for fear of being shown up by the other. Benedick is the first to declare his love and Beatrice soon follows. However, soon after they express their feelings, their battle of wit returns. Beatrice asks Benedick to kill Claudio and their friendly battle turns into something more than just a battle of words and wit.

#### **Act 5, Scenes 1-4**

Battle of the Sexes 8: Beatrice and Benedick meet again in Leonato's orchard. Benedick is still love-struck, but Beatrice begins the conversation with her insulting wit. She never ceases to battle Benedick in tongue. Their conversations are always about the differences between the sexes. So, although the two proclaimed bachelors are in love, they still insult one another through this verbal battalion.

Battle of the Sexes 9: Benedick swallows his pride and asks which masked woman is Beatrice. He does not admit that he loves her. Instead he declares that she loves him. Beatrice will not allow such humiliation, so she declares that he loves her and that she does not love him. They argue until Hero and Claudio steal their letters that confirm the love Beatrice and Benedick share. Until the end, neither Beatrice nor Benedick will admit to "defeat" in love.

Battle of the Sexes 10: The play concludes as Benedick welcomes marriage and love. He is happy and fulfilled and advises the prince to marry also. The battle of the sexes has come to a blissful conclusion.





# Topic Tracking: Faithfulness

## Act 1, Scenes 1-3

Faithfulness 1: John the Bastard has no faithfulness to his brother, his country, or his family. He revels in causing villainy and trouble with others. His companions, Borachio and Conrade, do have faithfulness to him, however. They are faithful to this evil brother and follow him in his pursuits to cause mischief in Messina.

## Act 2, Scenes 1-3

Faithfulness 2: Benedick does not understand the problem between Claudio and Don Pedro. Claudio believes Don Pedro to be unfaithful to his word and to have wooed Hero for himself. Claudio is enraged because of this supposed unfaithfulness between two friends.

Faithfulness 3: Everyone in Messina has faith in Don Pedro and agrees to help him with his task of matchmaking Beatrice with Benedick. Without question, their faith lies in his ability and strength to accomplish any and all tasks. As yet, there is no reason to lose faith in any character, for honor is such an important quality in this time. It is earned and when lost, it is hard to regain.

Faithfulness 4: Don John's master plan of deception involves the most precious virtue, faithfulness. He plans to establish unfaithfulness between Claudio and Hero. He orchestrates the plot of Borachio and Margaret outside Hero's window so that Claudio and the prince will see Borachio and Margaret (as Hero). Claudio will see Hero's supposed unfaithfulness and call off the wedding.

## Act 3, Scenes 1-5

Faithfulness 5: Faithfulness 5: Claudio and Don Pedro witness the disloyalty of Hero. They believe her to be unfaithful and Claudio plans to disgrace her at the public wedding in the morning. Unfaithfulness and disloyalty seem to be the worst possible virtues to a person at this time.

Faithfulness 6: Dogberry and Verges are the prince's officers and swear allegiance to his command. They faithfully control the night watch and report to Leonato if problems arise. Although at times inept, they value faith to one another and to the prince.

Faithfulness 7: Dogberry is still faithful to his position and knocks on the door of Leonato to follow instructions on what to do since he has captured some villains. He is faithful, once again, to his position and to those in higher power than himself.

## Act 4, Scenes 1-2

Faithfulness 8: Friar Francis, Beatrice, and Benedick never lose faith that Hero is innocent of the accusations brought against her. Friar Francis comes up with the plan to

feign Hero's death to prove her innocence and faithfulness to Claudio. At first, Leonato believes that Hero is guilty and wants her dead. This immediate reaction proves that faithfulness is vitally important to reputation. If Hero is guilty, she is therefore unfaithful. That type of unfaithfulness is so disgraceful that even a father cannot live with the shame.

### **Act 5, Scenes 1-4**

Faithfulness 9: Borachio admits to his folly and his companion, John the Bastard's guilt. Although his actions were unfaithful to humanity, they were faithful to Don John. When Borachio tells the truth, he is faithful to himself for telling the truth and unfaithful to John the Bastard by turning him in.

Faithfulness 10: When Ursula tells Beatrice and Benedick of the good news that Hero, Claudio, and Don Pedro have been proven innocent, they revel in their glory. They never doubted Hero's innocence and always held faith in her.

Faithfulness 11: Claudio must promise to marry and be faithful to the supposed Hero before he sees her face. He says he will marry her and be faithful. Hero removes her mask to reveal her true living body. Hero never let her faith die in Claudio and wins her man through her undying faith in his love.



# Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity

## Act 1, Scenes 1-3

Mistaken Identity 1: Benedick teases Leonato about Hero's true parentage. Leonato makes a friendly joke about Hero, his daughter, saying that he knows Hero is his daughter because her mother has told him many times that it is so. Although Don Pedro and Leonato are speaking friendly and in jest, Benedick's remarks about the identity of Hero's father could cause a mistaken identity to ensue. This instance of possible mistaken identity causes no further plot movement in the play, but is a light example of the problems to come. In addition, parentage could never be truly identified at this time, so the identity of a child's father was often called in to question.

Mistaken Identity 2: Don Pedro tells Claudio that he will dress in a costume and pretend to be Claudio, so to speak. He will woo Hero for himself and then turn her over to Claudio. This confusion of identity will cause slight problems for the friends during the party.

Mistaken Identity 3: Leonato and Antonio believe to have overheard the prince's conversation with Claudio. They think that the prince is in love with Hero and plans to woo her for himself, not for Claudio. They instruct Hero to accept the proposition of the prince and do not know that Claudio is the man in love with Hero.

## Act 2, Scenes 1-3

Mistaken Identity 4: Claudio temporarily assumes the role of Benedick. He is in costume, as is everyone else at the party, and therefore can pretend to be any man he chooses. Don John and Borachio tell Claudio (mistakenly represented as Benedick) that the prince woos Hero for himself. Not only is Claudio supposedly mistaken for Benedick, but he also mistakes the prince's purpose in wooing Hero. This confusion and mistaking of identity causes Claudio to become enraged and jealous.

Mistaken Identity 5: Don John tells Borachio of his plan to cause mischief. The root of his evil scheme lies in the mistaking of identities by the principle players in the plot. He intends to instruct Borachio to show affection towards one another in plain view at Hero's window and call Margaret by the name of Hero. This intended mistaking of identity is designed to provoke anger and destroy a marriage.

## Act 3, Scenes 1-5

Mistaken Identity 6: A drunk Borachio proudly tells Conrade of his affair of the evening. He mistook Margaret for Hero on purpose so that the prince and Claudio would see the encounter from a window. He also explains how the two honest men believed what they saw and completely mistook Margaret for Hero.

## Act 4, Scenes 1-2



Mistaken Identity 7: Friar Francis tells Leonato, Benedick, Beatrice, Antonio, and Hero his plan to ensure the honor of Hero's name. Everyone in Messina will believe Hero to be dead because of the slander she endured at her wedding; her name and her blessed life will be remembered well. Although different people are not confused in this scenario, one person's life is mistaken for death.

#### **Act 5, Scenes 1-4**

Mistaken Identity 8: When Antonio and Leonato confront Claudio and Don Pedro for the death of Hero, the two young soldiers again hold firm to their belief that they witnessed Hero with another man. The mistaken identity of Hero has not changed over time because they return to the fact that they witnessed the disloyalty with their own eyes. They believe their sight would not fail them to identify the true culprits.

Mistaken Identity 9: Leonato tells Claudio that he will be exonerated if he marries his niece, Antonio's daughter, who is supposedly a carbon copy of Hero. Claudio promises to do so in the morning. Hero's identity, once again, will be mistaken for a false identical cousin. Claudio is also mistaken in his belief that Hero is dead and that this niece is truly another person.

Mistaken Identity 10: As Claudio places the epitaph on Hero's monument, he is in mourning. He believes Hero to be dead. This mistaken identity is again, not of distinct people, but of the life and death of one person.

Mistaken Identity 11: When Hero unmask herself at the new wedding, everyone in Messina is shocked. At first Claudio believes Hero to be Antonio's daughter, mistaking her identity by believing the rumors. However, he realizes that she is alive and that Hero's identity is true. She is innocent and very much alive. This wedding proves all mistaken identities to be transformed to truth. All confusion that led up to this point is now history and Hero and Claudio plan to marry.

# Act 1, Scene 1: "Before Antonio's Orchard"

Leonato, the Governor of Messina, Innogen, his wife, Hero, his daughter, and Beatrice, his niece, sit in front of Leonato's orchard. A messenger comes onstage to tell them that Don Pedro of Arragon is coming to Messina. They are all very excited, for they have not seen Don Pedro and his soldiers in a long time. The messenger tells him that only a few men have died in battle, but none of importance. He says that the young Claudio of Florence is the new hero of the battle. Beatrice asks about Signor Benedick of Padua with cynicism and harsh wit. The messenger proclaims that Benedick is doing well and is doting upon a new companion named Claudio. Beatrice speaks out against him, illustrating his friendship as a disease. Leonato explains to the messenger about the relationship between Beatrice and Benedick:

*"You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them."* Act 1, Scene 1, lines 62-65

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 1

Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Balthazar, and John the Bastard enter Antonio's orchard. They have arrived from battle and are welcomed warmly by Leonato. He and Don Pedro are old friends and embrace one another's company. Don Pedro recognizes Hero as his beautiful daughter, to which Benedick immediately responds with sarcasm. He begins a marathon of jokes and cynicism about the identity of Hero's parentage. Everyone listens to Beatrice and Benedick as they begin a witty exchange of insults. Beatrice swears to be single: "I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me" Act 1, Scene 1, line 188. Don Pedro and his men decide to stay in Messina for at least a month.

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 2

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 1

Everyone exits the stage except Claudio and Benedick. Claudio is love-struck by Hero's beauty and asks Benedick his opinion of her. Benedick, a sworn bachelor, is shocked at Claudio's words and tells him that he does not think Hero is that beautiful. Claudio values his opinion, but also wants to marry Hero. Benedick tells him that he is crazy to think such things. He also mentions that Hero's cousin, Beatrice, is beautiful but has too strong a fury for any man in marriage. Don Pedro returns to the stage to get Claudio and Benedick to come inside to eat with the rest of the family. Benedick tells him that Claudio is in love with Hero and wants to marry her. Don Pedro is thrilled for the two. Benedick, however, feels differently about love.

*"That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my*

*bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine is, - for the which I may go the finger, I will live a bachelor."* Act 1, Scene 1, lines 247-256

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 3

Don Pedro tells Benedick that he plans to see him in love one day. Benedick responds by telling him that he will never be in love, no matter the circumstances. Benedick leaves and Don Pedro tells Claudio that he will help him win Hero's heart. Later in the same evening at a party in Messina, he will dress in a costume and assume Claudio's identity. He will woo Hero and ask for her hand from her father *for* Claudio.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 2

## Act 1, Scene 2: "Leonato's House"

Leonato and his older brother, Antonio, speak about the afternoon's events in Leonato's house. Antonio tells Leonato that one of his men overheard the prince telling Claudio that he wants to ask for Hero's hand in marriage. The two men are excited and prepare to forewarn Hero. They think that the prince is in love with Hero instead of Claudio.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 3

## Act 1, Scene 3: "The same"

John the Bastard speaks of his sad disposition with his companion, Conrade. He admits that he hates all people and is a true villain. He wants to cause mischief and feels out of place in Messina with his brother, Don Pedro. Borachio, another companion of John the Bastard, enters to tell him that he overheard the news that Don Pedro plans to woo Hero for Claudio at the party that evening. John the Bastard is excited because he knows he can cause problems with this intended marriage. "This may prove food to my displeasure...If I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way" Act 1, Scene 3, lines 67-70. Conrade and Borachio plan to assist John the Bastard in spoiling the joyous events that are to come in Messina.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 1



## Act 2, Scene 1: "A Hall in Leonato's House"

Leonato, Antonio, Hero, and Beatrice discuss their dinner and the attendees. Leonato thinks that Count John (the Bastard) was at dinner, but was unseen. Beatrice remarks that he gives her a bad feeling and never speaks. She says that if Benedick possessed half the melancholy of Count John and Count John half the tongue of Benedick, a good man would be made. She further states how she is happy single. She also explains how she would never dote on a man with a beard. Beatrice entertains her family with tales of her fate and funny stories about men. She warns Hero to pick a good man, since she is not a happy single. Leonato reminds Hero about her positive answer if the prince is to woo her that evening.

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 4

Prince Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Bathazar, Don John, Borachio, Margaret and Ursula (waiting ladies on Hero), enter the hall in masks. Everyone is at a grand party in Messina. Don Pedro takes Hero aside and begins to woo her, while Borachio and Margaret speak of lust with one another, and Ursula and Antonio lightly flirt. Beatrice and Benedick begin to flirt as well, however, their usual conversation results in insults and quick wit. Beatrice puts down the masked Benedick by calling him a court jester. Benedick is hurt by Beatrice's words and wants revenge. The music starts up again and everyone leaves the stage to dance except Don John, Borachio, and Claudio. Don John and Borachio approach Claudio and ask if he is Benedick. Claudio assumes the role of Benedick for the moment and answers that yes he is Benedick. Don John and Borachio tell Claudio that Don Pedro wooed Hero for himself. Claudio is enraged.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 4

*"Friendship is constant in all other things  
Save in the office and affairs of love:  
Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues;  
Let every eye negotiate for itself  
And trust no agents; for beauty is a witch  
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.  
This is an accident of hourly proof,  
Which I mistrusted not."* Act 2, Scene 1, lines 184-191

Don Pedro comes to find Claudio and asks Benedick where he is. Benedick doesn't understand why Claudio suddenly left the party when he told him that Don Pedro wooed Hero for him. Don Pedro tells Benedick that Beatrice has a bone to pick with him. Benedick goes on a tirade of how Beatrice is the one who insulted him, not him her.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 2



Claudio, Beatrice, Hero, and Leonato come to speak with Don Pedro. Benedick is so outraged at seeing Beatrice that he asks Don Pedro for a transfer out of his command. When he is turned down, he leaves the scene. Beatrice brings Claudio to Don Pedro and hints at jealousy as the root of Claudio's anger. Don Pedro explains that he wooed Hero in Claudio's name and that all marriage arrangements are made. Hero and Claudio kiss and become a happy couple. Everyone wonders why Beatrice will not marry because she is such a wonderful person. "There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then, for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness and waked herself with laughing" Act 2, Scene 1, lines 359-362. Don Pedro asks her to marry him, but she turns him down by saying that his position in life is too great for her. She does not want to marry a prince. She wishes her cousins happiness and leaves. Don Pedro decides that Beatrice and Benedick are a perfect match for one another, for they are both stuffed with a large tongue and quick wit. "I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labors, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other" Act 2, Scene 1, lines 382-385. Everyone decides to help Don Pedro with this matchmaking task.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 3

## Act 2, Scene 2: "The same"

Borachio tells Don John about Claudio's intended marriage with Hero. Don John is so enraged with his brother's friends' happiness that he wants to make trouble. Borachio has a plan. He is in love with Margaret, Hero's waiting gentlewoman. They plan to show their affections towards one another in obvious view from Hero's window. Borachio plans to call Margaret by the name of Hero so that people will think Hero is unfaithful. Don John must bring Claudio and Don Pedro outside the window to see this disloyal act so that Claudio will be so angry and hurt that he will call off the wedding. Don John loves the plan and will follow it.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 5

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 4

## Act 2, Scene 3: "Leonato's Orchard"

Benedick enters Leonato's orchard alone ranting about the horrors of marriage. Again, he self proclaims that no woman has all virtues of importance, beauty, intelligence, humor, virtue, and wealth in one package. He sees Don Pedro, Claudio, Balthazar, and Leonato enter the orchard and hides so they won't see him. Don Pedro tells Balthazar to play music. As the music plays, Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato begin to discuss Beatrice's love for Benedick. Hiding aside, Benedick is shocked to learn of such news. Leonato certifies the information by saying that his daughter tells him that this news is true. Beatrice supposedly lies awake at nights yearning for Benedick, but will not tell a soul of her feelings. She would rather die than tell him how she feels and she will die if he knows how she feels. Don Pedro and Claudio feel sorry for her. Benedick would think Don Pedro and Claudio were playing a trick on him, except for the fact that he believes the white-bearded man, Leonato. Once the men have done their damage to Benedick's heart, they leave for dinner. Benedick is left alone pondering his feelings for Beatrice. He realizes that she is everything that he wants and will fall in love with her. "When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married" Act 2, Scene 3, lines 263-264. The men send Beatrice to get Benedick for dinner. He is love-struck and analyzes every word that comes from her mouth. She is still unscathed and dislikes Benedick.

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 5

## Act 3, Scene 1: "Leonato's Orchard"

Hero, Margaret, and Ursula plan to begin their manipulative work on Beatrice in Leonato's orchard. Hero tells Margaret to run and get Beatrice to come to the orchard so that she will overhear her conversation with Ursula. Their plan is perfect:

*"Our talk must only be of Benedick:  
When I do name him, let it by 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."* Act 3, Scene 1, lines 17-23

Hero and Ursula begin to speak of Benedick's great name and excellent virtues. Hero says that she can never tell Beatrice of his love for her because she is unable to love. Hero says that she will try to convince Benedick not to love Beatrice because Beatrice is too witty and strong to love another. After their set-up, Ursula and Hero leave saying, "Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps" Act 3, Scene 1, line 106. Beatrice is enraptured and decides that she will be in love with Benedick. She is love-struck and will requite the strong love that she thinks Benedick feels for her.

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 6

## Act 3, Scene 2: "Leonato's House?"

The Prince, Claudio, Benedick, and Leonato discuss the prince's visit in Leonato's house. Don Pedro tells them that he will remain in Messina until Claudio's wedding, after which he will return to Arragon. Benedick tells the men that he is changed. Don Pedro and Claudio tease him and question him until they realize that he is in love. They mockingly express shock at this sworn bachelor's new passion for a woman. Benedick leaves with Leonato to discuss Beatrice's betrothal.

Don John the Bastard comes onstage to tell Pedro and Claudio about Hero's supposed disloyalty. He tells them about Hero's affair with Borachio (which is all lies) and pretends to show feelings. They decide if John is correct about Hero's disloyalty, then Claudio and Don Pedro plan to disgrace her in public at the wedding the next morning. "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" Act 3, Scene 2, lines 128-130.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 5

## Act 3, Scene 3: "A Street"

Dogberry, the comic relief of this comedy, with his second-hand man Verges, and the night watchmen, walk in the streets of Messina and discuss the duties of the watchmen. Dogberry is in charge and humorously explains the intricacies of the job. He allows sleep if needed and tells the watchmen to be on guard for the prince. He also warns them that there may be extra special trouble this night because of Hero's wedding the next morning.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 6

A drunk Borachio walks onstage looking for Conrade. They are still in the street, so the night watchmen look and listen to Borachio speaking with Conrade. Borachio proudly explains his villainy to his friend and of how he earned a thousand ducats from Don John the Bastard by bringing Margaret to Hero's window during a moment of passion, while the prince and Claudio looked on. "I tell this tale vilely: - I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio, and my master, planted and placed and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter" Act 3, Scene 3, lines 156-160. After Borachio admits to his crime with pride, the night watchmen capture Borachio and Conrade in the name of the prince and place them under arrest.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 6

## Act 3, Scene 4: "Hero's Apartment"

Hero, Margaret, and Ursula discuss Hero's attire for her wedding. Hero is satisfied with her gown, while Margaret thinks she can have a nicer one. Beatrice enters the room glowing with love. The women realize that she wants Benedick, but does not know what to do about her feelings. They get ready to leave for the wedding.



## **Act 3, Scene 5: "Another Room in Leonato's House"**

Dogberry comes to see Leonato before the wedding. Dogberry brings Verges with him and bestows many honors on Leonato, who is frustrated with the two men before him. Dogberry tells Leonato of the two men that his night watchmen caught. Leonato tells him to examine them himself and to give him privacy before the wedding. Dogberry and Verges exit to examine Borachio and Conrade as the wedding is about to begin.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 7

## Act 4, Scene 1: "Within a Church"

Prince Don Pedro, John the Bastard, Leonato, Friar Francis, Claudio, Benedick, Hero, and Beatrice enter the church for the wedding of Hero and Claudio. As it begins, the friar asks if anyone present wishes to bring reason as to why the two should not be married. Claudio steps forward to everyone's shock and confusion. He pushes Hero away, disgracing her and her family. "There, Leonato, take her back again: / Give not this rotten orange to your friend; / She's but the sign and semblance of her honor" Act 4, Scene 1, lines 31-33. Everyone is confused and hurt because of Claudio's rage except Don Pedro and John the Bastard. Don Pedro defends Claudio because he, too, saw "Hero" with another man at her window the night before. John revels in his villainy. Claudio, Don Pedro, and John leave the church in anger. Hero faints and Beatrice rushes to her side. Leonato is so furious with his daughter's supposed actions that he wants her to die. Her shame is too great for him to handle. Benedick and Beatrice try to help Hero by defending her innocence. Benedick asks Beatrice if she was with Hero last night. She responds that she has been her roommate every night for the past year except for last night. Leonato sees this information as proof of Hero's infidelity and again wants her to die. The friar comes up with a plan, for he too believes Hero to be innocent.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 8

*"Your daughter here the princes left for dead;  
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,  
And publish it that she is dead indeed:  
...Change slander to remorse...  
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,  
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,  
Shall be lamented, pitied and excus'd  
Of every hearer"* Act 4, Scene 1, lines 204-219

Benedick persuades Leonato to go along with the plan of feigning Hero's death and funeral to save her name and bring forth the truth. The friar, Hero, and Leonato leave the church with possible hopes of a future second wedding.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 7

Beatrice and Benedick are left alone in the church to sob for Hero. Beatrice is hurt and angry for her cousin, Hero, while Benedick simply wants to help. They fumble with their words until Benedick reveals his love for Beatrice. She returns the affection. "I love you with so much of my heart that none is left to protest" Act 4, Scene 1, lines 291-292. Beatrice tells him to kill Claudio to avenge Hero. He will not do so. Beatrice says that if he loves her, he will do this for her. She erupts into a tirade of words and bitterness for her wronged cousin until Benedick says that he will challenge Claudio. The two are engaged.

## Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 7

## Act 4, Scene 2: "A Prison"

Dogberry and Verges plan to examine Borachio and Conrade in gaol (jail) with the help of the town clerk, the Sexton and the night watchmen who accused them. The sexton cannot believe how dimwitted Dogberry is and gives him help in his examination of the accused criminals. The night watchmen tell Dogberry of what the two men are accused. The sexton tells them that everything to which they admitted did come to pass: Don John left town, Hero was accused, disgraced, and died immediately upon the slander to her name. Conrade and Borachio are taken away. Conrade calls Dogberry an ass, to which Dogberry replies: "Oh that he were here to write me down an ass! But, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass" Act 4, Scene 2, lines 80-83.

## Act 5, Scene 1: "Before Leonato's House"

Leonato and his brother Antonio speak of Hero's tragic wedding. Leonato is miserable because of what happened to his only daughter. He believes that she is wronged and plans to make Claudio and the prince see their error.

Claudio and the prince enter Leonato's house. Leonato tells them how angry he is that they killed his daughter. "I say thou has 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, fram'd by thy villainy!" Act 5, Scene 1, lines 67-71. Antonio cannot control his temper with the two men either and says that he will kill Claudio for what he has done. Don Pedro vows for Claudio again by saying that they witnessed Hero's actions with their own eyes.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 8

Leonato and Antonio leave the stage as Benedick enters. For the first time in the play, Benedick is serious. He challenges Claudio to a fight and tells Don Pedro of his wrongs. He tells them also that Hero is dead and that John the Bastard has fled Messina. At first, Claudio and Pedro are happy to see Benedick, for they have been looking for him. They tease him about Beatrice, and eventually realize how serious he is about fighting Claudio. They know that he is changed because of his love for Beatrice, but prefer him with his strong wit.

Dogberry, Verges, and the watchmen enter the stage with Borachio and Conrade imprisoned. Leonato asks who the prisoners are and what is their crime. Dogberry humorously tries to explain their follies, but Borachio illustrates his ill deeds fully. "I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who, in the night overheard me confessing to this man how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero" Act 5, Scene 1, lines 243-248. He assumes full responsibility for Hero's death. Don Pedro knows that Don John is the responsible party and thanks Dogberry for his help in discovering this news.

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 9

Claudio is in shock, pain, and misery that he destroyed his love. "I have drunk poison while he utter'd it" Act 5, Scene 1, line 258. Leonato tells Claudio that he can right his wrong by placing an epitaph on Hero's grave that evening and by marrying his niece, Antonio's daughter, the next morning. Claudio agrees to everything, yet is still in mourning for his beloved Hero. Leonato and Dogberry plan to talk with Margaret about the crime.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 9

## Act 5, Scene 2: "Leonato's Orchard"

Benedick speaks with Margaret about her strong wit and about Beatrice. He wishes to speak with her. As Margaret gets Beatrice, Benedick tries to create a song/poem about love, but finds difficulty with rhyming. Beatrice comes into the orchard and the two lovers tease each other mercilessly about their love for one another. Benedick says, "Though and I are too wise to woo peaceably" Act 5, Scene 2, line 76. Beatrice asks if he challenged Claudio, to which he responds positively. Ursula runs into the orchard to tell Beatrice and Benedick of the recent news that Hero was falsely accused, Claudio and the prince abused, and Don John orchestrated the evil plot. Beatrice and Benedick run off to Leonato's house in joy to celebrate the news.

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 8

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 10

## Act 5, Scene 3: "Within the Church"

Claudio, the prince, and several men place the epitaph on Hero's monument. They sing a song to her name and mourn. Claudio vows to return to this site each year to honor Hero's memory.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 10

## Act 5, Scene 4: "Leonato's House"

Leonato, Antonio, Benedick, Beatrice, Margaret, Ursula, the friar, and Hero enter the stage prepared for the second wedding. Everyone is thrilled that Hero is innocent and that the prince and Claudio were also proved to be innocent bystanders of John the Bastard's villainy. Leonato tells the four women to leave, mask themselves so that their faces cannot be seen, and prepare themselves for Claudio and the prince's arrival. When they leave, Benedick asks Leonato if he can marry Beatrice. The prince and Claudio arrive prepared to follow Leonato's orders to marry Antonio's supposed daughter. Antonio brings the four masked women onstage and gives Hero to Claudio. Claudio wants to see her face, but Antonio will not allow it until they are properly married. After he vows to marry her, she takes off her mask to reveal her true identity. "And when I liv'd I was your other wife: / And when you lov'd, you were my other husband...One Hero died defil'd, but I do live, / And surely as I live, I am a maid" Act 5, Scene 4, lines 60-64. Claudio and Don Pedro are in shock, elated.

Topic Tracking: Mistaken Identity 11

Benedick stops the celebration by asking which masked woman is Beatrice. Beatrice comes forth trying not to seem interested in Benedick. They insult one another by saying that the other loves them because they heard others say so. Hero steals a letter from Beatrice's pocket declaring her love for Benedick and Claudio steals a letter from Benedick pouring his heart out for Beatrice. Beatrice and Benedick wittily quarrel until Benedick kisses her. They are in love. Benedick gives up his renowned single life for the happy married life with Beatrice:

Topic Tracking: Faithfulness 11

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 9

*"In brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefor never flout at me for what I have said against it, for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion."* Act 5, Scene 4, lines 106-110

Benedick tells Don Pedro to find a wife, as well, for he believes that the prince's sadness will disappear if he does so. A messenger enters to tell everyone that John the Bastard has been captured. Benedick tells the masses to worry about what to do with him *tomorrow* and to revel in their new joy of marriage *today*.

Topic Tracking: Battle of the Sexes 10