

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Audition Monologues for St. Dunstan's

Written by: William Shakespeare

Directed by: Duncan Mein Asst. Director: Pam Huegli

Rehearsal Times: M-W-F 6:30-9:30 p.m. Sundays 2-5 p.m.

Performance Dates: September 12, 13, 14 (Fri. Sat. Sun.) September 18, 19, 20 (Thur. Fri. Saturday). We ask that you reserve Sun. Sept. 21 for a matinee performance rain date, just in case.

Curtain 7:30-10:30 on Th., F. and Sat. Sunday matinees 2 to 5.

READ THE PLAY!

Auditions will take place on Sunday, May 11, 6-9 p.m. and Tuesday, May 13, 6-9 p.m., with callbacks by appointment, if needed.

DON JOHN

I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any. In this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking. In the meantime, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

BENEDICK

O, she misused me past the endurance of a block! An oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her. My very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the Prince's jester, that I was duller than a great thaw, huddling jest upon jest with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards, and every word stabs. If her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her; she would infect to the North Star. I would not marry her though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed. She would have made Hercules have turned spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire, too. Come, talk not of her. I would to God some scholar would conjure her, for certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary, and people sin upon purpose because they would go thither. So, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her.

BENEDICK

I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviors to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love—and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife, and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe; I have known when he would have walked ten mile afoot to see a good armor, and now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier, and now is he turned orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster, but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what color it please God. Ha! The Prince and Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbor.

BENEDICK

You are a villain. I jest not. I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare. Do me right, or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you. Fare you well, boy. You know my mind. I will leave you now to your gossip-like humor. You break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not.— My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you. I must discontinue your company. Your brother the Bastard is fled from Messina. You have among you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet, and till then peace be with him.

HERO

Good Margaret, run thee to the parlor. There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice proposing with the Prince and Claudio. Whisper her ear and tell her I and Ursula walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse is all of her. Say that thou overheardst us, And bid her steal into the pleached bower Where honeysuckles ripened by the sun Forbid the sun to enter, like favorites, Made proud by princes, that advance their pride Against that power that bred it. There will she hide her To listen our propose. This is thy office. Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

HERO

They know that do accuse me. I know none. If I know more of any man alive than that which maiden modesty doth warrant, Let all my sins lack mercy!— O my father, Prove you that any man with me conversed. At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight Maintained the change of words with any creature, Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!

BEATRICE

What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true? Stand I condemned for pride and scorn so much? Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adieu! No glory lives behind the back of such. And Benedick, love on; I will requite thee, Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand. If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee To bind our loves up in a holy band. For others say thou dost deserve, and I Believe it better than reportingly.

BEATRICE

Is he not approved in the height a villain that hath slandered, scorned, dishonored my kinswoman? O, that I were a man! What, bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancor— O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the marketplace. Talk with a man out at a window! A proper saying. Sweet Hero, she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone. Princes and counties! Surely a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect, a sweet gallant, surely! O, that I were a man for his sake! Or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into curtsies, valor into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones, too. He is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing; therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

BORACHIO

Not so, neither; But know that I have tonight wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero. She leans me out at her mistress' chamber window, bids me a thousand times goodnight. 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. The devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged, swore he would meet her as he was appointed next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'ernight and send her home again without a husband.

PRINCE DON PEDRO

What need the bridge much broader than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity.
Look, what will serve is fit: 'tis once, thou lovest,
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know we shall have revelling to-night;
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio;
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then after to her father will I break;
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.
In practice, let us put it presently.

PRINCE DON PEDRO

Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing, but I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. 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. I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him: he is of a noble strain, of approved valor, and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humor your cousin that she shall fall in love with Benedick.— And I, with your two helps, will so practice on Benedick that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift.

LEONATO

Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny The story that is printed in her blood?— Do not live, Hero, do not ope thine eyes, For, did I think thou wouldst not quickly die, Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames, Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches, Strike at thy life. Grieved I had but one? Chid I for that at frugal Nature's frame? O, one too much by thee! Why had I one? Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes? But mine, and mine I loved, and mine I praised, And mine that I was proud on, mine so much That I myself was to myself not mine, Valuing of her— why she, O she, is fall'n Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea Hath drops too few to wash her clean again, And salt too little which may season give To her foul tainted flesh!

LEONATO

O, she tore the letter into a thousand
halfpence, railed at herself, that she should be
so immodest to write to one that she knew
would flout her; 'I measure him,' says she, 'by
my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he
write to me; yea, though I love him, I should.'

DOGBERRY

Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years? 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.— No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee
by good witness. I am a wise fellow and, which is more, an officer and, which is more, a
householder and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina, and one that
knows the law, go to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and one
that hath two gowns and everything handsome about him. Bring him away.— O, that I had been
writ down an ass!

FRIAR

Hear me a little;
For I have only been silent so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions
To start into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness beat away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,
To burn the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool;
Trust not my reading nor my observations,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenour of my book; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some biting error.