BEROWNE SIDES

BEROWNE*, to Rosaline*

Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?

ROSALINE

Did not I dance with you in Brabant once?

BEROWNE

I know you did.

ROSALINE How needless was it then

To ask the question. 120

BEROWNE You must not be so quick.

ROSALINE

’Tis long of you that spur me with such questions.

BEROWNE

Your wit’s too hot, it speeds too fast; ’twill tire.

ROSALINE

Not till it leave the rider in the mire.

BEROWNE

What time o’ day? 125

ROSALINE The hour that fools should ask.

BEROWNE Now fair befall your mask.

ROSALINE Fair fall the face it covers.

BEROWNE And send you many lovers.

ROSALINE Amen, so you be none. 130

BEROWNE Nay, then, will I be gone

BEROWNE*, to Rosaline* Lady, I will commend you to 185

my own heart.

ROSALINE Pray you, do my commendations. I would

be glad to see it.

BEROWNE I would you heard it groan.

ROSALINE Is the fool sick? 190

BEROWNE Sick at the heart.

ROSALINE Alack, let it blood.

BEROWNE Would that do it good?

ROSALINE My physic says “ay.”

BEROWNE Will you prick ’t with your eye? 195

ROSALINE No point, with my knife.

BEROWNE Now God save thy life.

ROSALINE And yours from long living.

BEROWNE I cannot stay thanksgiving.

BEROWNE My good knave Costard, exceedingly well

met.

COSTARD Pray you, sir, how much carnation ribbon

may a man buy for a remuneration?

BEROWNE What is a remuneration? 155

COSTARD Marry, sir, halfpenny farthing.

BEROWNE Why then, three farthing worth of silk.

COSTARD I thank your Worship. God be wi’ you.

*He begins to exit.*

BEROWNE Stay, slave, I must employ thee.

As thou wilt win my favor, good my knave, 160

Do one thing for me that I shall entreat.

COSTARD When would you have it done, sir?

BEROWNE This afternoon.

COSTARD Well, I will do it, sir. Fare you well.

BEROWNE Thou knowest not what it is. 165

COSTARD I shall know, sir, when I have done it.

BEROWNE Why, villain, thou must know first.

COSTARD I will come to your Worship tomorrow

morning.

BEROWNE It must be done this afternoon. Hark, slave, 170

it is but this:

The Princess comes to hunt here in the park,

And in her train there is a gentle lady.

When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her

name, 175

And Rosaline they call her. Ask for her,

And to her white hand see thou do commend

This sealed-up counsel. There’s thy guerdon. *He*

*gives him money.* Go.

COSTARD Gardon. *He looks at the money.* O sweet 180

gardon! Better than remuneration, a ’levenpence

farthing better! Most sweet gardon. I will do it, sir,

in print. Gardon! Remuneration! *He exits.*

BEROWNE

And I forsooth in love! I that have been love’s whip,

A very beadle to a humorous sigh, 185

A critic, nay, a nightwatch constable,

A domineering pedant o’er the boy,

Than whom no mortal so magnificent.

This wimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy,

This Signior Junior, giant dwarf, Dan Cupid, 190

Regent of love rhymes, lord of folded arms,

Th’ anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,

Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,

Dread prince of plackets, king of codpieces,

Sole imperator and great general 195

Of trotting paritors—O my little heart!

And I to be a corporal of his field

And wear his colors like a tumbler’s hoop!

What? I love, I sue, I seek a wife?

A woman, that is like a German clock, 200

Still a-repairing, ever out of frame,

And never going aright, being a watch,

But being watched that it may still go right.

Nay, to be perjured, which is worst of all.

And, among three, to love the worst of all, 205

A whitely wanton with a velvet brow,

With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes.

Ay, and by heaven, one that will do the deed

Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard.

And I to sigh for her, to watch for her, 210

To pray for her! Go to. It is a plague

That Cupid will impose for my neglect

Of his almighty dreadful little might.

Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue, groan.

Some men must love my lady, and some Joan. 215

BEROWNE The King, he is hunting the deer; I am

coursing myself. They have pitched a toil; I am

toiling in a pitch—pitch that defiles. Defile! A foul

word. Well, “set thee down, sorrow”; for so they

say the fool said, and so say I, and I the fool. Well 5

proved, wit. By the Lord, this love is as mad as Ajax.

It kills sheep, it kills me, I a sheep. Well proved

again, o’ my side. I will not love. If I do, hang me. I’

faith, I will not. O, but her eye! By this light, but for

her eye I would not love her; yes, for her two eyes. 10

Well, I do nothing in the world but lie, and lie in my

throat. By heaven, I do love, and it hath taught me to

rhyme, and to be melancholy. And here is part of my

rhyme, and here my melancholy. Well, she hath one

o’ my sonnets already. The clown bore it, the fool 15

sent it, and the lady hath it. Sweet clown, sweeter

fool, sweetest lady. By the world, I would not care a

pin, if the other three were in. Here comes one with

a paper. God give him grace to groan.

LONGAVILLE*, picking up the papers*

It is Berowne’s writing, and here is his name.

BEROWNE

Guilty, my lord, guilty. I confess, I confess. 220

KING What?

BEROWNE

That you three fools lacked me fool to make up

the mess.

He, he, and you—and you, my liege—and I

Are pickpurses in love, and we deserve to die. 225

DUMAINE

Now the number is even.

BEROWNE True, true, we are four.

Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O, let us embrace.

As true we are as flesh and blood can be.

The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face; 235

Young blood doth not obey an old decree.

We cannot cross the cause why we were born;

Therefore of all hands must we be forsworn.

DUMAINE

What, did these rent lines show some love of thine?

BEROWNE

Did they, quoth you? Who sees the heavenly 240

Rosaline

That, like a rude and savage man of Ind

At the first op’ning of the gorgeous East,

Bows not his vassal head and, strucken blind,

Kisses the base ground with obedient breast? 245

What peremptory eagle-sighted eye

Dares look upon the heaven of her brow

That is not blinded by her majesty?

KING

What zeal, what fury, hath inspired thee now?

My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon, 250

She an attending star scarce seen a light.

BEROWNE

My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Berowne.

O, but for my love, day would turn to night!

Of all complexions the culled sovereignty

Do meet as at a fair in her fair cheek. 255

Where several worthies make one dignity,

Where nothing wants that want itself doth seek.

Lend me the flourish of all gentle tongues—

Fie, painted rhetoric! O, she needs it not!

To things of sale a seller’s praise belongs. 260

She passes praise. Then praise too short doth blot.

A withered hermit, fivescore winters worn,

Might shake off fifty, looking in her eye.

Beauty doth varnish age, as if newborn,

And gives the crutch the cradle’s infancy. 265

O, ’tis the sun that maketh all things shine!

But what of this? Are we not all in love?

LONGAVILLE

Nothing so sure, and thereby all forsworn.

KING

Then leave this chat, and, good Berowne, now prove

Our loving lawful, and our faith not torn. 305

DUMAINE

Ay, marry, there, some flattery for this evil.

LONGAVILLE

O, some authority how to proceed,

Some tricks, some quillets, how to cheat the devil.

DUMAINE

Some salve for perjury.

BEROWNE O, ’tis more than need. 310

Have at you, then, affection’s men-at-arms!

O, we have made a vow to study, lords,

And in that vow we have forsworn our books.

For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,

In leaden contemplation have found out 315

Such fiery numbers as the prompting eyes

Of beauty’s tutors have enriched you with?

Other slow arts entirely keep the brain

And therefore, finding barren practicers,

Scarce show a harvest of their heavy toil. 320

But love, first learnèd in a lady’s eyes,

Lives not alone immurèd in the brain,

But with the motion of all elements

Courses as swift as thought in every power,

And gives to every power a double power, 325

Above their functions and their offices.

It adds a precious seeing to the eye.

A lover’s eyes will gaze an eagle blind.

A lover’s ear will hear the lowest sound,

When the suspicious head of theft is stopped. 330

Love’s feeling is more soft and sensible

Than are the tender horns of cockled snails.

Love’s tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste.

For valor, is not love a Hercules,

Still climbing trees in the Hesperides? 335

Subtle as Sphinx, as sweet and musical

As bright Apollo’s lute strung with his hair.

And when love speaks, the voice of all the gods

Make heaven drowsy with the harmony.

Never durst poet touch a pen to write 340

Until his ink were tempered with love’s sighs.

O, then his lines would ravish savage ears

And plant in tyrants mild humility.

From women’s eyes this doctrine I derive.

They sparkle still the right Promethean fire. 345

They are the books, the arts, the academes

That show, contain, and nourish all the world.

Else none at all in ought proves excellent.

Then fools you were these women to forswear,

Or, keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools. 350

For wisdom’s sake, a word that all men love,

Or for love’s sake, a word that loves all men,

Or for men’s sake, the authors of these women,

Or women’s sake, by whom we men are men,

Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves, 355

Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.

It is religion to be thus forsworn,

For charity itself fulfills the law,

And who can sever love from charity?

KING

Saint Cupid, then, and, soldiers, to the field! 360

BEROWNE

Advance your standards, and upon them, lords.

Pell-mell, down with them. But be first advised

In conflict that you get the sun of them.

LONGAVILLE

Now to plain dealing. Lay these glozes by.

Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France? 365

KING

And win them, too. Therefore let us devise

Some entertainment for them in their tents.

BEROWNE

First, from the park let us conduct them thither.

Then homeward every man attach the hand

Of his fair mistress. In the afternoon 370

We will with some strange pastime solace them,

Such as the shortness of the time can shape;

For revels, dances, masques, and merry hours

Forerun fair love, strewing her way with flowers.

KING

Away, away! No time shall be omitted 375

That will betime and may by us be fitted.

BEROWNE

*Allons! Allons!* Sowed cockle reaped no corn,

And justice always whirls in equal measure.

Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn;

If so, our copper buys no better treasure.