MARIA SIDES

PRINCESS

Who are the votaries, my loving lords,

That are vow-fellows with this virtuous duke?

MARIA

Lord Longaville is one.

PRINCESS Know you the man? 40

MARIA

I know him, madam. At a marriage feast

Between Lord Perigort and the beauteous heir

Of Jaques Falconbridge, solemnizèd

In Normandy, saw I this Longaville.

A man of sovereign parts he is esteemed, 45

Well fitted in arts, glorious in arms.

Nothing becomes him ill that he would well.

The only soil of his fair virtue’s gloss,

If virtue’s gloss will stain with any soil,

Is a sharp wit matched with too blunt a will, 50

Whose edge hath power to cut, whose will still wills

It should none spare that come within his power.

PRINCESS

Some merry mocking lord, belike. Is ’t so?

MARIA

They say so most that most his humors know.

PRINCESS

Such short-lived wits do wither as they grow. 55

Who are the rest?

KATHERINE

The young Dumaine, a well-accomplished youth,

Of all that virtue love for virtue loved.

Most power to do most harm, least knowing ill;

For he hath wit to make an ill shape good, 60

And shape to win grace though he had no wit.

I saw him at the Duke Alanson’s once,

And much too little of that good I saw

Is my report to his great worthiness.

ROSALINE

Another of these students at that time 65

Was there with him, if I have heard a truth.

Berowne they call him, but a merrier man,

Within the limit of becoming mirth,

I never spent an hour’s talk withal.

His eye begets occasion for his wit, 70

For every object that the one doth catch

The other turns to a mirth-moving jest,

Which his fair tongue, conceit’s expositor,

Delivers in such apt and gracious words

That agèd ears play truant at his tales, 75

And younger hearings are quite ravishèd,

So sweet and voluble is his discourse.

PRINCESS

God bless my ladies, are they all in love,

That every one her own hath garnishèd

With such bedecking ornaments of praise? 80

SPRING

 *When daisies pied and violets blue,*

 *And lady-smocks all silver-white,*

 *And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue* 970

 *Do paint the meadows with delight,*

 *The cuckoo then on every tree*

 *Mocks married men; for thus sings he:*

 *“Cuckoo!*

 *Cuckoo, cuckoo!” O word of fear,* 975

 *Unpleasing to a married ear.*

 *When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,*

 *And merry larks are plowmen’s clocks;*

 *When turtles tread, and rooks and daws,*

 *And maidens bleach their summer smocks;* 980

 *The cuckoo then on every tree*

 *Mocks married men, for thus sings he:*

 *“Cuckoo!*

 *Cuckoo, cuckoo!” O word of fear,*

 *Unpleasing to a married ear.* 985