



## **MAYHEM THEATRE COMPANY**

### **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING - AUDITION NOTICE**

**Performance Dates:** Wednesday 24 July – Saturday 27 July 2024

**Performance Venue:** Cannizaro Park (Wimbledon)

**First Auditions:** Sunday 14 April 2024 from 2:30pm and Monday 15 April 2024 from 7.30pm

**Recall Auditions:** Monday 22 April 2024 from 7.30pm

*PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ THIS AUDITION PACK THOROUGHLY.  
IT CONTAINS A LOT OF DETAIL AND WILL ANSWER MOST OF YOUR QUESTIONS.*

*However, if you do want to ask anything, please feel free to reach out to us at  
[shakespeare@mayhemtheatre.co.uk](mailto:shakespeare@mayhemtheatre.co.uk)*

Much Ado About Nothing by William Shakespeare, written around 1598-1599, is a delightful romantic comedy that deals with love, deception, and the wit of verbal sparring. Set in the Sicilian town of Messina, the play follows the romantic entanglements of two couples: the sharp-witted Beatrice and the witty Benedick, and the more naively romantic Hero and Claudio. The plot is set in motion by the villainous Don John, who seeks to disrupt the marriages through deceit and false accusations.

The play is celebrated for its clever dialogue, humorous characters, and the interplay of romantic and comedic elements. It is also much closer to modern English than some of Shakespeare's other works, making it a great jumping-off point for those new to Shakespeare as well as being well-loved by existing Shakespeare fans.

The beautiful setting of Cannizaro Park will once again provide us with a stunning backdrop for this year's open-air performances (performed in the round with amplified sound). Much Ado About Nothing will mark the 13<sup>th</sup> year of Mayhem's popular summer tradition of bringing the Bard to South London.

#### **PERFORMANCES**

**The performance dates are** Wednesday 24, Thursday 25, Friday 26 and Saturday 27 July 2024 at Cannizaro Park, Wimbledon. All evening performances will start at 7:45pm and cast will be expected to be at the venue by 6:30pm each evening. There will also be a matinee performance at 2:00pm on the Saturday. The performances will be open-air and we only cancel performances in the event of bad weather if absolutely necessary for health & safety reasons.

## CREATIVE TEAM

### **Director: Matt Bentley**



Matt has been directing theatre since he was a pretentious teenager, and has continued to do so into his pretentious adulthood. He has been bossing actors around in London since moving from New Zealand 10 years ago, and this will be the fourth Shakespeare he has directed in Cannizaro Park for Mayhem, following *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. He has also performed in Mayhem's *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*, and produced the Covid-friendly *Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Other directorial efforts in London include *Plaza Suite*, *Big Fish*, *On the Twentieth Century*, *Reefer Madness*, *Ophelia Thinks Harder*, *American Idiot* and *Curtains*. By day Matt works as a Business Manager in the rail industry.

### **Choreographer: Vicki Smith**



Vicki has been involved in SWAmDram since she moved from Lancashire in 2013. She has performed in numerous shows, and has previously choreographed *Let's Do It!*, *Kiss Me, Kate* and most recently *Young Frankenstein* for Cygnet Players, as well as choreographing *The Wizard of Oz* at The New Wimbledon Theatre for WLOS. Vicki is a trained dance teacher and has worked professionally as an entertainer, singer, dancer & choreographer. She currently works as Qualification Manager for Dance Awarding Organization, BBO.

## OUR VISION

Much Ado is a big, fun comedy that has endured as a longstanding favourite for many people. It has some cracking characters and some very witty dialogue. We want to preserve this sense of fun as we drag the play into the present day. We have removed the misogynistic dialogue around Hero's purity, removed the character of Antonio, and given Hero and Dogberry a bit more to do.

We will be setting this production in the Sicilian city of Messina (as per the script) at Leonato's beachfront villa, in the present day. It's fairly remote and has no cellphone reception (making the plot possible). Leonato's guests spend their days relaxing and partying on the beach, and Leonato is never without a cocktail in his hand. The aim is to be as bright and fun as possible, in keeping with our summery performance setting.

One of the biggest elements of the play is its music, with two wedding marches, a ball scene, a romantic serenade, and several scripted dances. We're going to take full advantage of this by including a dance ensemble. This group won't have to speak a word of Shakespearean dialogue (unless they want to) and will be an integral part of the production. The dance ensemble will take centre stage for 7 major dance numbers and feature heavily in all ensemble scenes. There will be plenty to do, and we want to make sure this is a dance show as much as a Shakespearean play.

### **Wait, a dance ensemble?**

Yes! We're really excited to give an opportunity to dancers who just want to dance, without learning any singing or dialogue. There will be some reacting to what's going on, and the opportunity to have some dialogue if you really want to, but this ensemble will be all about showing off some awesome dance routines, as choreographed by the wonderful Vicki. We're currently putting together a great playlist, which already includes tracks by Dua Lipa, Calvin Harris and Taylor Swift.

### **So do I have to dance?**

Not if you don't want to. We plan to cast all the speaking roles based on acting ability and suitability for the role ONLY – your willingness or unwillingness to dance will have NO impact on your casting AT ALL. We won't even make you do a dance audition. But if you do want to dance, we'll look at ways of adding your character to some of the dance routines.

### **This is getting complicated. All I want to do is:**

***Act. I'd like to play a named role without any dancing.*** That's great! Book a slot that says "Acting Audition Only", prepare the audition dialogue (see below), and come along to your scheduled acting audition. Importantly, the fact you don't want to dance will have no impact on whether or not you are cast (note that every character will need to do a tiny bit of dancing in the ball scene and the end dance because the script says so, but there's no audition for this and it won't be even remotely scary).

***Act, but I'm also keen to do a bit of dancing in character.*** Excellent! Book a slot that says "Dance + Acting Audition". Prepare both the audition dance and the audition dialogue (see below), and come along to your scheduled dance and acting auditions (we'll do both on the same day). If you are cast, we will do our best to fit you into some dance numbers, but can't make any guarantees. Your dance audition is just to tell us what you might be able to do if we can figure that out. It won't have any impact on you being cast in any particular role.

***Dance, and don't make me read Shakespeare – I'm allergic.*** This is brilliant! We need a team of dancers and won't have enough dialogue to go around everyone. Book a slot that says "Dance Audition Only", prepare the audition dance (see below), and come along to your scheduled dance audition. It's that easy. Choosing not to act will have no bearing on whether we cast you in the dance ensemble.

***Dance, but I'm keen to play a small character as well.*** Wonderful! There are a few featured speaking roles that we'll need to fill and we will ABSOLUTELY give you all the support and help you need to tackle that Shakespeare with ease! Book a slot that says "Dance Audition Only" and, when you complete your audition form, tick the box saying you also want to be considered for a featured role. Prepare the Ensemble audition piece and come along to your scheduled dance audition. We'll then ask you to read the audition piece after you've danced (and cooled down). The acting audition won't have any impact on being cast in the dance ensemble, but it will give us an idea of any characters we may want to cast from the ensemble.

***Dance, but I'd also like to be considered for a named role.*** Yes – why not do both? Book a slot that says "Dance + Acting Audition". Prepare both the audition dance and the audition dialogue (see below), and come along to your scheduled dance and acting

auditions (we'll do both on the same day). We'll consider your dance and acting auditions separately – you might be cast in both, but we also might need to cast you in one or the other to give opportunities to others. If you are cast in a named role we will do our best to fit you into some dance numbers, but can't make any guarantees.

***Either, I just want to have an awesome summer and perform in that beautiful garden.***

OK, you double-threat – respect! Book a slot that says “Dance + Acting Audition”.

Prepare both the audition dance and the audition dialogue (see below), and come along to your scheduled dance and acting auditions (we'll do both on the same day). Your acting audition won't affect your dance casting and vice-versa, but we'll look for the best place to fit you in that shows off as much of your talent as we can.

**Sing.** There is one singing role, but there is no audition for this and we will be selecting someone to play that role from our acting or dancing casts. If you don't fancy either of those, have you considered auditioning for *Songs Under the Summer Sun* or *Rock of Ages*?

## **DANCE WORKSHOP**

*Monday 8 April at 7:30pm at South Wimbledon Community Centre, 78 Victory Road, SW19 1HN*

We will be teaching the audition dance in a workshop session a week before the auditions. We would prefer it if as many dance auditionees attended this session as possible so we can give you the greatest opportunity to prepare ahead of your audition. However, we will also upload a video teaching the audition dance following the workshop for those unable to attend in person.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions about the show and the process at this session. Those not intending to attend a dance audition are welcome to come along to chat to the creative team and ask questions, but please note that the majority of this session will be dedicated to teaching the audition dance.

## **FIRST AUDITIONS**

*Sunday 14 April from 2:30pm at All Saints Church Hall, 92 Norman Road, SW19 1BT*

*Monday 15 April from 7.30pm at South Wimbledon Community Centre, 78 Victory Road, SW19 1HN*

We know how stressful auditioning can be, and we want you to know that we're here to help and be as supportive as we can. We want you to shine and so we may ask you to do something again, or in a different way, and this is to ensure that we get to see everything you have to offer and give the best chance of success.

When you complete your audition form (see above for which form to fill out) we will get in touch with a time slot. Please arrive 10 minutes in advance of your allocated time slot for registration where your photo will be taken (used solely for the purposes of the auditions and subsequently destroyed). Those doing a dance audition will be called in as a group. Acting auditionees will be called into the audition room individually.

### **Dance Audition**

Please prepare the dance audition as taught at either the workshop or via video clip. We will give you some time to recap the dance as a group at the beginning of the session, and then ask you to perform. We may give you more than one opportunity, but this isn't guaranteed.

### **Acting Audition**

Please prepare the audition monologues for EACH of the characters that you would like to audition for (up to MAXIMUM OF 3 CHARACTERS). Where there are two monologues given, please read both. We have not included extracts for every character – if this is the case for all the characters you want to audition for, please select any extract.

You don't need to be off book for these – in fact we'd prefer you to read from the script, as trying to remember the lines at this stage can sometimes detract from your performance. Some pieces feature more than one character – if you chose one of these extracts, don't worry, there'll be someone to read with in the audition.

We will notify everyone as soon as possible after the first round auditions to let you know if we would like to see you again for the recall auditions.

### **RECALL AUDITIONS**

*Monday 22 April from 7.30pm at South Wimbledon Community Centre, 78 Victory Road, SW19 1HN*

If you're invited to an acting recall session, we will work with you on some additional scenes and possibly ask you to read with another auditionee to see how you work opposite another character. Any additional material will be sent out immediately following the first round auditions.

Dance recall sessions are unlikely, but we will provide plenty of information in advance if they are needed.

### **REHEARSALS**

Rehearsals will be held at the South Wimbledon Community Centre and All Saints Church Hall on Monday and Thursday evenings, and Sunday afternoons, beginning on Sunday 12 May with a full cast read through.

Some rehearsals may be held outdoors, to best prepare for the Cannizaro Park experience. We will rehearse indoors when the weather is bad, or we have costumes or musical accompaniment.

We will not require everyone at every rehearsal for the first few weeks and we will ask people on their audition form to give us their availability, so we can try and match that to our rehearsal schedule. However, we will expect the cast to be as committed to the process as physically possible. As we get closer to show week, rehearsals will increase and it is very likely that everyone will be required for all rehearsals in the last two weeks running up to the show.

All cast members will also be expected to attend at least one publicity day in the run up to the show. These will be held on 22 and 29 June (please indicate availability on your form). If you are unable to attend either of these sessions, we will arrange an alternative session on a Sunday before rehearsal. We have included these potential dates on the form also to help us plan.

## **CANNIZARO PARK**

We are delighted to return to the beautiful Italian Gardens in Cannizaro Park. The park is located near to Wimbledon Village and Common, in the grounds of Cannizaro House. Our audiences are encouraged to bring blankets, chairs and picnics, and the play is part of a larger experience for them. We have lighting and amplified sound so that the audience can still see and hear everything as the sun sets.

Performing outdoors is different to an indoor performance. Your characterisation needs to be larger and you will need to project, even with a microphone. You will be competing against the noise of picnics, birds singing and planes overhead! We are also planning to perform in the round, as we have done for 4 of our previous 5 shows. Performing to a 360 degree audience is also different to an end-on stage, and requires greater awareness of personal space.

All cast members will need to be prepared to help out with the setup and take-down of each show, as we are in a public park and can't leave too much out overnight. The weather is not always on our side, so you may also need to be prepared to rehearse or perform in inclement weather. We do have a cast tent, but this can get full (and muddy) quite quickly.

## **BOOKING YOUR AUDITION**

To book your audition, please visit the booking page at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/mayhem/> and book either an Acting Audition or a Dance Audition. For guidance on which audition to book, see the explanation on pages 3-4 of this pack. Please do not book more than one audition. Once your audition is booked, we will email you an audition form to complete. If you have booked an Acting Audition but would also like to attend a Dance Audition, we will confirm the time of your Dance Audition when we have received your form.

## **FEES**

In order to audition, anyone who is not a member of MTC will be asked to pay a fee of £5 to contribute to the associated costs of running auditions. This is non-refundable, but if you do then become a member of the cast, £5 will be subtracted from your show fee.

MTC membership is now just £15 for an entire year, which provides access to early booking for events, reduced ticket prices and much more, including waiving of audition fees. You can become a member using our [simple online form](#).

All cast members must be members of MTC and in addition, we ask for a show fee of £50 towards production costs and rehearsal venues.

Mayhem is committed to ensuring that our auditions and productions are accessible to everyone. If for any reason you are unable to pay the requested fees, please don't hesitate to contact [info@mayhemtheatre.co.uk](mailto:info@mayhemtheatre.co.uk) and our membership team will be able to offer alternative solutions.

## **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

Mayhem is dedicated to producing dramatic and operatic productions within the local community and works to create an inclusive theatrical environment for all of its members and audiences.

Please [click here](#) to read Mayhem's full Inclusion policy outlining our commitment to inclusion and diversity. Please do contact us if you have any questions about this prior to your audition. We also welcome any feedback on your experiences within the society and what else we can do going forward.

## **CHARACTER BREAKDOWN**

Please note that these character descriptions are given as a guide only, according to traditional interpretations, and may change during rehearsals. Doubling and cross-gender casting will be at the discretion of the production team. There are many parts traditionally played as male that we are open to casting as female or non-binary, and we welcome all applications for these roles. We also welcome auditionees of any ethnic background, sexuality and disability.

Age ranges are not proscribed and will depend on casting. The major restriction is that Leonato should be believable as Hero's father.

All audition pieces can be found at the end of this pack.

### **Beatrice**

Leonato's niece and Hero's cousin. Beatrice is "a pleasant-spirited lady" with a very sharp tongue. She is generous and loving, but, like Benedick, continually mocks other people with elaborately tooled jokes and puns. She wages a war of wits against Benedick and often wins the battles. At the outset of the play, she appears content never to marry.

### **Benedick**

An aristocratic soldier who has recently been fighting under Don Pedro, and a friend of Don Pedro and Claudio. Benedick is very witty, always making jokes and puns. He carries on a "merry war" of wits with Beatrice, but at the beginning of the play he swears he will never fall in love or marry.

### **Claudio**

A young soldier who has won great acclaim fighting under Don Pedro during the recent wars. Claudio falls in love with Hero upon his return to Messina. His unfortunately suspicious nature makes him quick to believe evil rumours and hasty to despair and take revenge.

**Hero**

The beautiful young daughter of Leonato and the cousin of Beatrice. Hero is lovely, gentle, and kind. She falls in love with Claudio when he falls for her, but when Don John slanders her and Claudio rashly takes revenge, she suffers terribly.

**Don Pedro**

An important nobleman from Aragon, sometimes referred to as “Prince.” Don Pedro is a longtime friend of Leonato, Hero’s father, and is also close to the soldiers who have been fighting under him—the younger Benedick and the very young Claudio. Don Pedro is generous, courteous, intelligent, and loving to his friends, but he is also quick to believe evil of others and hasty to take revenge. He is the most politically and socially powerful character in the play.

**Leonato**

A respected, well-to-do, elderly noble at whose home, in Messina, Italy, the action is set. Leonato is the father of Hero and the uncle of Beatrice. As governor of Messina, he is second in social power only to Don Pedro.

**Don John**

The illegitimate brother of Don Pedro; sometimes called “the Bastard.” Don John is melancholy and sullen by nature, and he creates a dark scheme to ruin the happiness of Hero and Claudio. He is the villain of the play; his evil actions are motivated by his envy of his brother’s social authority.

**Margaret**

Hero’s serving woman, who unwittingly helps Borachio and Don John deceive Claudio into thinking that Hero is unfaithful. Unlike Ursula, Hero’s other lady-in-waiting, Margaret is lower class. Though she is honest, she does have some dealings with the villainous world of Don John: her lover is the mistrustful and easily bribed Borachio. Also unlike Ursula, Margaret loves to break decorum, especially with bawdy jokes and teases.

**Borachio**

An associate of Don John. Borachio is the lover of Margaret, Hero’s serving woman. He conspires with Don John to trick Claudio and Don Pedro into thinking that Hero is unfaithful to Claudio. His name means “drunkard” in Italian, which might serve as a subtle direction to the actor playing him.

**Conrade**

One of Don John’s more intimate associates, entirely devoted to Don John. Several recent productions have staged Conrad as Don John’s potential male lover, possibly to intensify Don John’s feelings of being a social outcast and therefore motivate his desire for revenge.

**Dogberry**

The constable in charge of the Watch, or chief policeman, of Messina. Dogberry is very sincere and takes his job seriously, but he has a habit of using exactly the wrong word to convey his meaning. Dogberry is one of the few “middling sort,” or middle-class



characters, in the play, though his desire to speak formally and elaborately like the noblemen becomes an occasion for parody.

**Verges**

The deputy to Dogberry, chief policeman of Messina.

**Ursula**

One of Hero's waiting women.

The roles of the Friar, Sexton, Balthasar and the Watchmen will be cast from the Ensemble.

## AUDITION MATERIAL

### BEATRICE

Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool;  
only his gift is in devising impossible slanders:  
none but libertines delight in him; and the  
commendation is not in his wit, but in his villany;  
for he both pleases men and angers them, and then  
they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in  
the fleet: I would he had boarded me.

When you know the gentleman, tell him what I say.  
He'll but break a comparison or two on me;  
which, peradventure not marked or not laughed at,  
strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a  
partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no  
supper that night.

What fire is in mine ears? Can this be true?  
Stand I condemn'd 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.

## **BENEDICK**

This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I did never think to marry: I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me; by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day! she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

**CLAUDIO**

O, my lord,  
When you went onward on this ended action,  
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,  
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand  
Than to drive liking to the name of love:  
But now I am return'd and that war-thoughts  
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms  
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,  
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,  
Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars.

Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.  
There, Leonato, take her back again:  
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;  
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.  
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!  
O, what authority and show of truth  
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!  
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;  
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

## 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 overheard'st us;  
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,  
Where honeysuckles, ripen'd by the sun,  
Forbid the sun to enter, like favourites,  
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride  
Against that power that bred it: there will she hide her,  
To listen our purpose. This is thy office;  
Bear thee well in it and leave us alone.  
Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,  
As we do trace this alley up and down,  
Our talk must only be of Benedick.  
When I do name him, let it be 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.

## **DON PEDRO**

And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain, of approved valour and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick; and I, with your two helps, will so practise 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.

I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy wit the other day. I said, thou hadst a fine wit: 'True,' said she, 'a fine little one.' 'No,' said I, 'a great wit:' 'Right,' says she, 'a great gross one.' 'Nay,' said I, 'a good wit:' 'Just,' said she, 'it hurts nobody.' 'Nay,' said I, 'the gentleman is wise:' 'Certain,' said she, 'a wise gentleman.' 'Nay,' said I, 'he hath the tongues:' 'That I believe,' said she, 'for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue; there's two tongues.' Thus did she, an hour together, transshape thy particular virtues: yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

## LEONATO

Tush, tush, man; never fleer and jest at me:  
I speak not like a dotard nor a fool.  
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 villany!

I cannot bid you bid my daughter live;  
That were impossible: but, I pray you both,  
Possess the people in Messina here  
How innocent she died; and if your love  
Can labour ought in sad invention,  
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb  
And sing it to her bones, sing it to-night:  
To-morrow morning come you to my house,  
And since you could not be my son-in-law,  
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,  
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,  
And she alone is heir to both of us:  
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,  
And so dies my revenge.

## **DON JOHN**

I wonder that thou, being, as thou sayest thou art,  
born under Saturn, goest about to apply a moral  
medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide  
what I am: I must be sad when I have cause and smile  
at no man's jests, eat when I have stomach and wait  
for no man's leisure, sleep when I am drowsy and  
tend on no man's business, laugh when I am merry and  
claw no man in his humour.

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.



**MARGARET/URSULA**

Moral! no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think perchance that I think you are in love: nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list, nor I list not to think what I can, nor indeed I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love or that you will be in love or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry, and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted I know not, but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

**BORACHIO/CONRADE**

Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine answer:  
do you hear me, and let this count kill me. 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, how you were brought into  
the orchard and saw me court Margaret in Hero's  
garments, how you disgraced her, when you should  
marry her: my villany they have upon record; which  
I had rather seal with my death than repeat over  
to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my  
master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire  
nothing but the reward of a villain.

## **DOGBERRY/VERGES**

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 every thing handsome about him. Bring him away. O that I had been writ down an ass!

**ENSEMBLE**

And this is more, masters, than you can deny.

Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away;

Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner  
refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died.

Master constable, let these men be bound, and  
brought to Leonato's: I will go before and show  
him their examination.