

Love's Labor's Lost abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 2.1

Contrition

Situation: The king and his lords mutually agree that it is best if they confess their ruse “and turn it into jest,” realizing as they listen to the comments from the ladies that they are onto their Muscovite trick. But Rosaline in particular doesn't easily let Berowne get away with it, teasing him with little mercy.

ROSALINE: This proves you wise and rich, for in my eye-----

BEROWNE: I am a fool, and full of poverty.

ROSALINE: It were a fault to snatch words from my tongue. Which of the masks was it that you wore?

BEROWNE: Where? When? What masks? Why demand you this?

KING ASIDE TO DUMAINE: We were descried. They'll mock us now downright.

DUMAINE ASIDE TO THE KING: Let us confess and turn it to a jest.

ROSALINE: Why look you pale? Seasick, I think, coming from Muscovy.

Berowne to Rosaline

As stars pour down their plagues for perjury,
No longer can I withhold shame. Lady,
With all your skills, bruise me with deserved scorn,
Show contempt with jeers, and thrust thy sharp wits
Quite through my ignorance, foolishly worn.
Scoff at my charade, cutting me to bits.
Nevermore will I Russian habit wear,
Nor hide behind a mask to greet my fair
Friend, nor trust to speeches penned, nor woo in
Rhyme to the crude motion of a schoolboy's
Tongue. I do forswear past ostentation.
So, henceforth, I protest with little noise
To woo in simple yeas and honest noes,
For my love to thee is flawless, God knows.

BEROWNE TO THE KING AND OTHER LORDS: Speak for yourselves. My wit is at an end.

KING TO PRINCESS: Teach us, sweet madam, for our rude transgression some fair excuse.

PRINCESS: The fairest is confession. Were not you here but even now, disguised?

KING: Madam, I was.

PRINCESS: When you then were here, what did you whisper in your lady's ear?

KING: That more than all the world I did respect her.