

Love's Labor's Lost abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 2.1

Counsel

Situation: Having earlier been taken back by the princess' reaction to the clumsy way they tried to win the ladies' favor, the Muscovite misadventure, the men listen attentively to the terms of probation offered by the princess.

KING: Now, at the latest minute of the hour, grant us your loves.

Princess to the King

No, my lord, a time methinks too short to
Make a world-without-end bargain in. You
And your lords are perjured much, full of dear
Guiltiness, and therefore this: I shall shut
Myself in a mourning house for one year
Lamenting my father's death. King, do but
This for my love, not trusting your oath: stay
For one year in a forlorn place, away
From all the pleasures of the world. If my
Lord, you, accepting this harsh offer mine,
Doth bear this trial, come challenge me, and by
This palm now kissing thine, I will be thine.
If this thou do deny, let our hands part,
Neither entitled in the other's heart.

KING: If this, or more than this, I would deny, the sudden hand of death close up mine eye.
They step aside.

DUMAINE TO KATHERINE: But what to me, my love? But what to me? A wife?

KATHERINE: A beard, fair health, and honesty. With threefold love I wish you all these three.

DUMAINE: O, shall I say "I thank you, gentle wife"?

KATHERINE: Not so, my lord. A twelvemonth and a day I'll mark no words that smooth-faced woovers say. Come when the King doth to my lady come; then, if I have much love, I'll give you some.