

Love's Labor's Lost abbreviated

Act 4, Scene 3

Persuasion

Situation: Berowne diplomatically draws the men together, all of them “resolving to woo these girls of France,” each having admitted that he has broken his pledge, each (except for Berowne) having been overheard by another as he was walking through the woods reading his love poem, each having inadvertently and separately revealed his love for his lady.

KING: O, paradox! The hue of night, and beauty's crest becomes the heavens well. But what of this. Are we not all in love?

BEROWNE: 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.

Berowne to King and other Lords, No. 1

O, we have made a vow to study, lords,
To but break that vow for what love affords.
When would we in leaden contemplation
Have found such fiery poems, had not the eyes
Of these tutors in feminine fashion
Enriched us? Slow art we learn nearly dies
In the brain, showing but a scarce harvest.
But love, learned in ladies eyes, does not rest
Here alone, locked in the brain, but doubles
Every power of all our faculties.
To each inconsistent man, Cupid doles
Out more than his ear hears or eye sees.
Love's feeling is more soft and sensible
Than is the tender touch of new lamb's wool.

Berowne to King and other Lords, No. 2

A poet durst not touch a pen to write
Until his ink is tempered with love's slight
Sighs, planting humility in tyrants'
Rude ears, deriving this doctrine I from
Women's eyes that sparkle with pleasant sense
And show all the world how they offer some
Civility. We were such fools, thinking
We could these women forswear; now keeping
What is sworn will prove us fools if we take
Not back what has been sworn. In wisdom's wake,
A place that all men love, or for love's sake,

**A word for all men, or for women's sake,
By whom men are men, let us fail these troths
Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.**

BEROWNE: 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!

BEROWNE: Advance your standards, and upon them, lords.

LONGAVILLE: Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France?

KING: And win them, too.