

Love's Labor's Lost abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 1

Pleading

Situation: Berowne, one of the king's friends (one of the lords) at the king's academy, questions the king when asked to sign the oath; an oath requiring him to comply with the academy's high expectations, saying that he "swore to them in jest."

LONGAVILLE: I am resolved. 'Tis but a three years' fast. The mind shall banquet though the body pine.

He signs his name.

DUMAINE: My loving lord, Dumaine is mortified.

He signs his name.

BEROWNE: Dear liege, I have already sworn to live and study three years.

Berowne to the King

But there are other strict rules, as not to
See women in that term, which I hope you
Do not include in the plans. And one day
Each week to touch no food and then besides
To have but one meal the other days! Say
Not but three hours sleep each night! Confides
My tongue, I'm accustomed to sleep all night
And as well during half of each day's light.
These are tasks too hard to keep, not to see
Ladies, fast, not sleep. What is to be sought
In this school I swore to in jest? Let me
Know. Is it what otherwise we would not
Know? Do you mean things hid from common sense?
Ay, will that be our godlike recompense?

LONGAVILLE: You swore to that, Berowne, and to the rest.

BEROWNE: Then I swore in jest. What is the end of study, let me know?

KING: Why, that to know which else we should not know.