

Much Ado About Nothing abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 1

Courtesy

Situation: Having been told my Benedick that “Count Claudio is in love,” the well-meaning Prince offers to disclose to Hero and her father Claudio’s interest in her during Leonato’s masquerade dinner party, to be held that evening. Shakespeare is setting us up for some mischief making.

CLAUDIO: My liege, your Highness now may do me good.

PRINCE: My love is thine to teach.

CLAUDIO: Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

PRINCE: No child but Hero.

CLAUDIO: O, my lord, now I am returned from war with thronging soft and delicate desires, all prompting me how fair young Hero is.

Prince to Claudio

If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it.

I will reveal it tonight when I sit

With them at supper, and thou shalt have her.

‘Twas not this the end to your story? The

Bridge need be just broader than the river.

My best gift answers the necessity.

However I serve thee is fit and I

Will fit thee with the right remedy. Thy

Part I will take in some disguise and tell

Fair Hero I am you, and privately

I’ll unclasp my heart, telling her I fell

First noting her. My prisoner she’ll be

Through the force of my amorous tale. Mine

Plan is to her father speak; then she thine.

CLAUDIO: How sweetly you do minister to love, that know love’s grief by his complexion!