



BOYET

To cheque their folly, passion's solemn tears.

PRINCESS

But what, but what, come they to visit us?

BOYET

They do, they do: and are apparell'd thus. 120

Like Muscovites or Russians, as I guess.

Their purpose is to parle, to court and dance;

And every one his love-feat will advance

Unto his several mistress, which they'll know

By favours several which they did bestow. 125

PRINCESS

And will they so? the gallants shall be task'd;

For, ladies, we shall every one be mask'd;

And not a man of them shall have the grace,

Despite of suit, to see a lady's face.

Hold, Rosaline, this favour thou shalt wear, 130

And then the king will court thee for his dear;

Hold, take thou this, my sweet, and give me thine,

So shall Biron take me for Rosaline.

And change your favours too; so shall your loves

Woo contrary, deceived by these removes. 135

ROSALINE

Come on, then; wear the favours most in sight.

KATHARINE

But in this changing what is your intent?

PRINCESS

The effect of my intent is to cross theirs:

They do it but in mocking merriment;

And mock for mock is only my intent. 140

Their several counsels they unbosom shall

To loves mistook, and so be mock'd withal

Upon the next occasion that we meet,

With visages displayed, to talk and greet.

ROSALINE

But shall we dance, if they desire to't? 145

PRINCESS

No, to the death, we will not move a foot;
Nor to their penn'd speech render we no grace,
But while 'tis spoke each turn away her face.

BOYET

Why, that contempt will kill the speaker's heart,
And quite divorce his memory from his part. 150

PRINCESS

Therefore I do it; and I make no doubt
The rest will ne'er come in, if he be out
There's no such sport as sport by sport o'erthrown,
To make theirs ours and ours none but our own:
So shall we stay, mocking intended game, 155
And they, well mock'd, depart away with shame.

Trumpets sound within

BOYET

The trumpet sounds: be mask'd; the maskers come.

The Ladies mask

Enter Blackamoors with music; MOTH; FERDINAND, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN, in Russian habits, and masked

MOTH

All hail, the richest beauties on the earth!--

BOYET

Beauties no richer than rich taffeta.

MOTH

A holy parcel of the fairest dames. 160

The Ladies turn their backs to him

That ever turn'd their--backs--to mortal views!

BIRON

[Aside to MOTH] Their eyes, villain, their eyes!

MOTH

That ever turn'd their eyes to mortal views!--Out--

BOYET

True; out indeed.

165

MOTH

Out of your favours, heavenly spirits, vouchsafe

Not to behold--

BIRON

[Aside to MOTH] Once to behold, rogue.

MOTH

Once to behold with your sun-beamed eyes,

--with your sun-beamed eyes--

170

BOYET

They will not answer to that epithet;

You were best call it 'daughter-beamed eyes.'

MOTH

They do not mark me, and that brings me out.

BIRON

Is this your perfectness? be gone, you rogue!

Exit MOTH

ROSALINE

What would these strangers? know their minds, Boyet:

175

If they do speak our language, 'tis our will:

That some plain man recount their purposes

Know what they would.

BOYET

What would you with the princess?

BIRON

Nothing but peace and gentle visitation.

ROSALINE

What would they, say they?

180

BOYET

Nothing but peace and gentle visitation.

ROSALINE

Why, that they have; and bid them so be gone.

BOYET

She says, you have it, and you may be gone.

FERDINAND

Say to her, we have measured many miles
To tread a measure with her on this grass. 185

BOYET

They say, that they have measured many a mile
To tread a measure with you on this grass.

ROSALINE

It is not so. Ask them how many inches
Is in one mile: if they have measured many,
The measure then of one is easily told. 190

BOYET

If to come hither you have measured miles,
And many miles, the princess bids you tell
How many inches doth fill up one mile.

BIRON

Tell her, we measure them by weary steps.

BOYET

She hears herself. 195

ROSALINE

How many weary steps,
Of many weary miles you have o'ergone,
Are number'd in the travel of one mile?

BIRON

We number nothing that we spend for you:
Our duty is so rich, so infinite,
That we may do it still without accompt. 200
Vouchsafe to show the sunshine of your face,
That we, like savages, may worship it.

ROSALINE

My face is but a moon, and clouded too.

FERDINAND

Blessed are clouds, to do as such clouds do!
Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars, to shine, 205
Those clouds removed, upon our watery eyne.

ROSALINE

O vain petitioner! beg a greater matter;
Thou now request'st but moonshine in the water.

FERDINAND

Then, in our measure do but vouchsafe one change.

Thou bid'st me beg: this begging is not strange.

210

ROSALINE

Play, music, then! Nay, you must do it soon.

Music plays

Not yet! no dance! Thus change I like the moon.

FERDINAND

Will you not dance? How come you thus estranged?

ROSALINE

You took the moon at full, but now she's changed.

FERDINAND

Yet still she is the moon, and I the man.

215

The music plays; vouchsafe some motion to it.

ROSALINE

Our ears vouchsafe it.

FERDINAND

But your legs should do it.

ROSALINE

Since you are strangers and come here by chance,

We'll not be nice: take hands. We will not dance.

FERDINAND

Why take we hands, then?

220

ROSALINE

Only to part friends:

Curtsy, sweet hearts; and so the measure ends.

FERDINAND

More measure of this measure; be not nice.

ROSALINE

We can afford no more at such a price.

FERDINAND

Prize you yourselves: what buys your company?

ROSALINE

Your absence only.

225

FERDINAND

That can never be.

ROSALINE

Then cannot we be bought: and so, adieu;
Twice to your visor, and half once to you.

FERDINAND

If you deny to dance, let's hold more chat.

ROSALINE

In private, then.

FERDINAND

I am best pleased with that.

They converse apart

BIRON

White-handed mistress, one sweet word with thee.

230

PRINCESS

Honey, and milk, and sugar; there is three.

BIRON

Nay then, two treys, and if you grow so nice,
Metheglin, wort, and malmsey: well run, dice!
There's half-a-dozen sweets.

PRINCESS

Seventh sweet, adieu:

Since you can cog, I'll play no more with you.

235

BIRON

One word in secret.

PRINCESS

Let it not be sweet.

BIRON

Thou grievest my gall.

PRINCESS

Gall! bitter.

BIRON

Therefore meet.

They converse apart

DUMAIN

Will you vouchsafe with me to change a word?

MARIA

Name it.

DUMAIN

Fair lady,--

MARIA

Say you so? Fair lord,--

Take that for your fair lady.

240

DUMAIN

Please it you,

As much in private, and I'll bid adieu.

They converse apart

KATHARINE

What, was your vizard made without a tongue?

LONGAVILLE

I know the reason, lady, why you ask.

KATHARINE

O for your reason! quickly, sir; I long.

LONGAVILLE

You have a double tongue within your mask,

And would afford my speechless vizard half.

245

KATHARINE

Veal, quoth the Dutchman. Is not 'veal' a calf?

LONGAVILLE

A calf, fair lady!

KATHARINE

No, a fair lord calf.

LONGAVILLE

Let's part the word.

KATHARINE

No, I'll not be your half

Take all, and wean it; it may prove an ox.

250

LONGAVILLE

Look, how you butt yourself in these sharp mocks!

Will you give horns, chaste lady? do not so.

KATHARINE

Then die a calf, before your horns do grow.

LONGAVILLE

One word in private with you, ere I die.

KATHARINE

Bleat softly then; the butcher hears you cry. 255

They converse apart

BOYET

The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen
As is the razor's edge invisible,
Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen,
Above the sense of sense; so sensible
Seemeth their conference; their conceits have wings 260
Fleeter than arrows, bullets, wind, thought, swifter things.

ROSALINE

Not one word more, my maids; break off, break off.

BIRON

By heaven, all dry-beaten with pure scoff!

FERDINAND

Farewell, mad wenches; you have simple wits.

PRINCESS

Twenty adieus, my frozen Muscovits. 265

Exeunt FERDINAND, Lords, and Blackamoors

Are these the breed of wits so wonder'd at?

BOYET

Tapers they are, with your sweet breaths puff'd out.

ROSALINE

Well-liking wits they have; gross, gross; fat, fat.

PRINCESS

O poverty in wit, kingly-poor flout!
Will they not, think you, hang themselves tonight? 270
Or ever, but in vizards, show their faces?
This pert Biron was out of countenance quite.

ROSALINE

O, they were all in lamentable cases!

The king was weeping-ripe for a good word.

PRINCESS

Biron did swear himself out of all suit.

275

MARIA

Dumain was at my service, and his sword:

No point, quoth I; my servant straight was mute.

KATHARINE

Lord Longaville said, I came o'er his heart;

And trow you what he called me?

PRINCESS

Qualm, perhaps.

KATHARINE

Yes, in good faith.

280

PRINCESS

Go, sickness as thou art!

ROSALINE

Well, better wits have worn plain statute-caps.

But will you hear? the king is my love sworn.

PRINCESS

And quick Biron hath plighted faith to me.

KATHARINE

And Longaville was for my service born.

MARIA

Dumain is mine, as sure as bark on tree.

285

BOYET

Madam, and pretty mistresses, give ear:

Immediately they will again be here

In their own shapes; for it can never be

They will digest this harsh indignity.

PRINCESS

Will they return?

290

BOYET

They will, they will, God knows,

And leap for joy, though they are lame with blows:

Therefore change favours; and, when they repair,

Blow like sweet roses in this summer air.

PRINCESS

How blow? how blow? speak to be understood.

BOYET

Fair ladies mask'd are roses in their bud; 295
Dismask'd, their damask sweet commixture shown,
Are angels vailing clouds, or roses blown.

PRINCESS

Avaunt, perplexity! What shall we do,
If they return in their own shapes to woo?

ROSALINE

Good madam, if by me you'll be advised, 300
Let's, mock them still, as well known as disguised:

Let us complain to them what fools were here,
Disguised like Muscovites, in shapeless gear;

And wonder what they were and to what end
Their shallow shows and prologue vilely penn'd 305
And their rough carriage so ridiculous,
Should be presented at our tent to us.

BOYET

Ladies, withdraw: the gallants are at hand.

PRINCESS

Whip to our tents, as roes run o'er land.