ACT III. Scene I (1–115).

**HERO**

Good Marget, run thou to the pastry; 
There shall thou find my cous iii Beatrix; 
Propping with the prince and Chaunce; 
Whisper her ear and tell her, I and Ursula 
With in the orchard and our whole discourse 
To all of thee, say that thou knowest all; 
And bid her steal into the plaited bowser, 
Where marmalade, snug, & by the sun, 
Forbid the sun to enter, like manners. 
Medi by peerless, that advance their pride 
Against that power that holds the three who shall hide her, 
To listen our purposes. Thin is thy office; 
Bear thee well in it and leave us alone. 

**MARGARET**

I'll make herKnown, I warrant you, presently.

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**HERO (foot.)**

Now listen; 
I saw where Beatrix, like a leap ing, runs 
Closely by the ground, to hear our conversation.

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**HERO**

Now, Ursula, when Beatrix doth move, 
As we do trace this alley up and down, 
Our talk must only be of Benedick. 
When I do name him, let it be the part 
To praise him more than ever man did worth. 
My talk to thee must be how Benedick 
Is sick in love with Beatrix. Of this matter 
To little Cupid's mercy arrow made, 
That only wounds by heaviness.
HERO
Then go we near her, that her ear be nothing Of this false sweet bait that we lay for it.

HERO (cont.)
Nay, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful! I know her spirits are as gay and wild As haggard of the rank.

Ursula
But are you sure That Benedick loves Beatrice so ardently?
HERO
So easy the joints and my new-fangled coat! Ursula
And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

HERO
They did entreat me to acquaint her of it; But I persuaded them, if they loved Benedick, To wish him success with attention, And never to let Beatrice know of it. Ursula
Why did you so? Dost not the gentleman Deserve as fate as fortunate a bed As ever Beatrice shall have upon? Hero
O god of love! I know he doth deserve As much as may be yielded to a man: But Nature never framed a woman's heart Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice; Ordain and seem ride sparkling in her eyes, Measuring what they look on, and her wit Values not so highly that to her All matter else seems weak; she cannot love, Nor take no shape nor project of affection, She is so self-undervalued.

Ursula
Sure, I think so; And therefore certainly it was not good She knew his love, lest she make sport at it. Hero
Whip, you speak truth. I never get a man, How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured, But she would pull him backwards; if fair-hued, She would wear the gentleman should be her sister; If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antique.

Made a fool bold; if fair, a face ill-favored; If low, an ugly, very silly girl; If speaking, why, a voice blown with all winds; If silent, why, a block made with none. So hare the man the wrong side out, And never glass to truth and virtue that Which abasement and most purchase.

Ursula
Sure, men, such courting is not commendable.

HERO
Nay, not to be so odd and from all fashions As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable: But who dare tell her so? If I should speak, She would mark me into any lying, and would laugh me Out of myself, and from me to death with wit. Therefore let Benedick, like coward fiddle, Compose away in right, waste inwardly: It were a better death than do with marks, Which in an odd so die with twisting.

Ursula
Yet here at its base what she will say.
HERO
No, neither I will go to Benedick And counsel him to fight against his passion; And, truly, I’ll desire none honest slander To stain my reason with one death not know. How much an ill art may empanel liking,
UPRSEULA
O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment—
Having no will and excellent it will
As she is pleased to have—or to refuse.
So rare a gentleman as Signor Benedick.

HERO
He is the only man of Italy.
Always attended my dear Claudio.

UPRSEULA
I pray you, he not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my tongue Signor Benedick,
For silence, for bearing, argument and value,
Got foremost in a report through Italy.

HERO
Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

UPRSEULA
Hee excellent did seem't, are he had it.
When are you married, madam?

HERO
Why, every day, to-morrow. Come, go to:
I'll show thee some affirme, and have thy counsel.
Where is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

BEATRICE
What fire is in mine eyes? Can this be true?
Sure I condemn'd her pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, basewitted and maiden pride, incline
No plain time behind the back of worth.
And, Benedick, love or I will requite thee,
Turning my will heart to thy loving hands.
If thou dost love, my kindness shall be better
To kind our bane up in a holy bond.
For others say thou dost deceive, and I
Believe it better than reportingly.

ACT III. Scene II (70-118).

Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, and Leonato gather and discuss their plans. Don Pedro and Claudio begin to poke fun at Benedick's budding love for Beatrice, pointing out that he has shaved his beard, worn cologne, and paid special attention to his wardrobe. Benedick says very little to defend himself and ushers Leonato away with him for a private discussion while the other men laugh.