While preparations are made to determine Hero's innocence, Leonato has come unraveled in his anguish. Antonio attempts to console and advise him, but it is to no avail. Don Pedro and Claudio enter the scene, and Leonato berates the men for having "killed" his daughter by weapon of slander. Don Pedro and Claudio are saddened and apologetic but continue to stand by their assertions that Hero was untrue. Just as Benedick comes across the group, Leonato and Antonio storm off.
CLAUDIO
If he be, he knows how to turn his gilt.
BENEDICK
Shall I speak a word in your ear?
CLAUDIO
God have me from a challenge!
BENEDICK
You are a villain; I must not
I will make it good how you do it, with what you
done, and when you done. Do me right, so I will
pretend your reward. You have killed a sweet
lady, and her death shall fall heavily on you. Let me
hate from you.
CLAUDIO
Well, I will treat you, as I may have good cause.
DON PEDRO
What, a feast, a feast?

DON PEDRO
Leonato and his brother. What thinkst thou? Had
we thought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.
BENEDICK
In a little quarmed there is no true valor. I came
to seek you both.
CLAUDIO
We have been up and down to seek these: for we are
high-judged matterly and would thin have it beaten
stiff. Will thou use thy wit?

BENEDICK
It is in thy mouth: shall I draw it?
DON PEDRO
Dost thou swear thy will be thy word?
CLAUDIO
Never did so, though very many have been heard to
their will. I will bid thee draw, as we do the
murderess: draw, to thine own use.

DON PEDRO
As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou
sick, or angry?
CLAUDIO
What, courage, man! What though one killed a cat,
they hunt mutton enough to him to kill none.
BENEDICK
Sir, I shall meet your will in the matter, and you
charge it against me. I pray you choose another subject.
CLAUDIO
Nay, thou. give him another shaft: this was
breaken cost.
DON PEDRO
By this light, he changes more and more; I think
he be angry indeed.

CLAUDIO
If truth, I thank thee he hath bid me to a wolf’s
host, and in requital the whale if I do not name most
curiously, say my knife’s naught. Shall I not find
a newish test?
BENEDICK
Sir, your wit alarmes well; it goes easily.
DON PEDRO
I’ll tell thee how Civitana joved thy will this
other day. I said, thou hast a fine wit. “True,”
said she, “a fine little one.” “No,” said I, “a
good wit.” “Right,” says she, “a good great one.”

“Nay,” said I, “a good wit.” “Just,” said she, “it
hurts nobody.” “Nay,” said I, “the gentleman
is wise.” “Curtain,” said she, “a wise gentleman.”
“Nay,” said I, “he both the tongue.” “That I
believe,” said she, “for he owns a thing to me on
Monday night, which he forsook on Tuesday morning;
there’s a double tongue; there’s two tongues.” Thus
did she, an hour together, transcribe this particular
versets yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou
wast the proudest man in Italy.
BENEDICK
Fair you well, boy; you know my mind. I will have you now to your goose-like humour: you break quite an ingrate to their bladders, which God be thanked, that is not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you. I meant dismember your company; your brother the bastard to flay, and Orosius you have among, you killed a sweet and innocent lady. For my lord, backward there, he and I shall meet and, till then, peace be with him.

DON PEDRO
He is in earnest.
CLAUDIUS
In most profound earnest; and, I warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.
DON PEDRO
And hath challenged him.
CLAUDIUS
Most sincerely.
DON PEDRO
What a pretty thing may be when he goeth in the doublet and hose and leave off his wig.
CLAUDIUS
He is then a giant to an ape, but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.
DON PEDRO
But, soft you, let me be pluck up, my heart, and be sad. Did he not say, my brother was dead?

DOGBERRY
Come, you, sir; if justice cannot move you, she shall no more weigh more reason in her balance now, so you be a cunning f Jugger nought, you must be looked to.
DON PEDRO
How now? two of my brother's men bound! Benedick and Claudio.
CLAUDIUS
Hasten after their offence, my lord.
DON PEDRO
First, I ask thee what they have done; secondly, I ask thee what's their allegiance: thirdly, why they are not married; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charges.
CLAUDIO
Rightly reasoned, and in his own division: and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited.
DON PEDRO
Who has you attended, master, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood what's your offense?

BORACHIO
Sweet prince, let no false reason to mine answer: do you bear me, and let this count kill me. I have revealed even your very eyes: what your wisdom could not discern, these shallow tools have brought to light who in the night overslept me concerning this man how Don John your brother betrayed me to attend the Lady Hero, how you were brought into the orchard and saw me count Margaret in Hero's garments, how you discover'd her, when you should miserly her: my vantage they have upon record which I had rather bear with my death than report ever to my wits: the lady it dead upon mine: and my master's false accusations: and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.
DON PEDRO
Shame not this squall like iron through your blood?
CLAUDIO
I have drunk poison whilst he utter'd it.
DON PEDRO
But did my brother tell us so to thee?
BORACHIO
Yes, and past me mildly for the practice of it.

DON PEDRO
He is componed and framed of treachers...
CLAUDIO
Sweet hall now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I loved it first.
DOCTOR
Come, bring away the plaintiff: by this time our custom hath ordered Signior Leonato to the castle and, master, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an act.
VERGE:
Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and the senator too.
LEONATO [cont.]

and if yourные

Our labour ought in sad invention,

Hang her an epistle upon her tomb.

And sing it to her bones, sing it to-night.

LEONATO [cont.]

To-morrow morning come you to my house;

And since you cannot be my son-in-law,

Be yet my nephew; my brother hath a daughter,

Almost the copy of my child that's dead,

And she alone is heir to both of us.

Give her the right you should have given her mother,

And to dine my menses.

CLAUDIO

O noble sir,

Your own kindness doth bring tears from me!

I do embrace your offer and dispose

For benefaction of your Claudius.

LEONATO

To-morrow then I will expect your coming;

To-night I take my leave. This naughty man

Shall hence to hence be brought to Margaret,

Who I believe will pack't in all this waking,

Wend to it by your brother.

BORACHIO

My soul, she was not,

Her name not what she did when she spoke to me,

But always hath been part and piece unto

Any thing that I do know by her.

DOCBERRY

Moreover, sir, which indeed is not under white and

black, thin plaintive tone, the offender, did call

me once I besought you, let it be remembered in his

punishment. And why the watch heard them talk of

one Donatello they say be were a key in his ear and

a fork hanging by it, and borrows money in God's

name, the which he hath used to long and never paid

that saw him grow hard hearted and will lend nothing;

for God's sake pray you, examine him upon that point.

LEONATO

I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

DOCBERRY

Your worship speaks like a most thankful and

mended youth, and I praise God for you.

LEONATO

There's for thy pains.

DOCBERRY

God ease the foundation!

LEONATO

O, I disturb thee of thy prayer, and I thank thee.