Benedick works on scribing a love poem for Beatrice and asks Margaret for help. Instead, she calls for Beatrice and Benedick explains that he has challenged Claudio to a duel in defense of Hero and Beatrice. They dance around their feelings for one another, still continuing to verbally spar back and forth. Ursula enters and tells them that Hero has been vindicated and the culprit, Don John, has run away. They immediately head to Leonato’s to see what will happen.

Don Pedro and Claudio enter Leonato’s family tomb in order to pay respects to Hero, whom they still believe to be dead. By her tomb, Claudio sees Hero’s epitaph, which reads that she was “done to death by slanderous tongues” (Viii.3). Claudio expresses his profound sadness and promises to honor Hero’s memory. Claudio and Don Pedro then leave for Leonato’s house so that Claudio can fulfill Leonato’s wishes.
BENEDICK
Enter, I must entreat your patience, I think.
FRIAR FRANCIS
To do what, signor?
BENEDICK
To bind me, or undo me; one of them.

CLAUDIO
I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiop.
LEONATO
Call her forth, brother; here's the fine muddy.

DON PEDRO
Good morrow, Benedick. Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness?
CLAUDIO
I think he thinks upon the springing bull.
FRIAR FRANCIS
Fools, few not, many we'll try by hence with gold
And all Europe shall rejoice at thee,
As unto Europe did at holy Jew.
CLAUDIO [cont.]
Which is the lady I must seize upon?

BENEDICK
Bull, Jew, no; had an amiable brow,
And some such strange bawl may 'd your father's ear,
And get a nail in that same noble foot
Much like to you, for you have just his beat.
CLAUDIO
For this I saw you have some other reckonings.
ANTONIO
That turns to false, and I do give you her.

CLAUDIO
Why, then she's mine. Sweet, tell me so your fear.
LEONATO
No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar and swear to marry her.

CLAUDIO
Give me your hand before this holy friar,
I am your husband, if you like of me.
HERO
And when I lived, I was your other wife.

LEONATO
She died, my lord, but whilst her slander lived.
FRIAR FRANCIS
All thisertainment can I satisfy:
When after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you truly of fair Heroe's death.
Montage it wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

BENEDICK
Why, then your words and the prince and Claudia
Have been derided; they swore you did.
BEATRICE
Do you love me?
BENEDICK
Tell me no more than reason.

HERO (con.)
And when I lived, I was your other husband.
LEONATO
Comes, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.
CLAUDIO
And I'll be sworn upon't that he loves her.
For here's a paper written in his hand,
A letter conteynce of his own pure brain,
Fashions'd to Beatrice.
HERO
And here's another
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

DON PEDRO
How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

BENEDICK
Come, come, we are friends let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and ease their 'heels.
LEONATO
We'll have dancing afterward.
BENEDICK
First, of my words, therefore play, mucho. Princes,
their art and got than a wife, get than a wife
there is no staff man renowned than one tipped with horn.

MESSENGER
My lord, your brother John is in the fight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

BENEDICK
Think not on him till to-morrow
I'll shew him what damned punishments for him.
Shakes up, piper.