

# **The Two Gentlemen of Verona**

## **By William Shakespeare**

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with Michael Poston and Rebecca Niles  
Folger Shakespeare Library

Script cut and revised for the Curtain Theatre by Steve Beecroft, 2 Feb 2022

### **Characters in the Play**

VALENTINE, a gentleman of Verona  
SPEED, his servant

PROTEUS, a gentleman of Verona  
LANCE, his servant  
ANTONIO, Proteus' father  
PANTINO, an attendant to Antonio

JULIA, a lady of Verona  
LUCETTA, her waiting-gentlewoman

SYLVIA, a lady of Milan  
DUKE of Milan, Sylvia's father

THURIO, a gentleman  
EGLAMOUR, a gentleman

HOST, proprietor of an inn in Milan

OUTLAWS, living in a forest near Mantua

Servants; Musicians;

Crab, a dog

## ACT 1

**Scene 1** (*Enter Valentine and Proteus*) (*Props: 2 swords, a flower, purse of coins for Proteus*)

VALENTINE

Cease to persuade, my loving Proteus.  
Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits.  
Were 't not affection chains thy tender days  
To the sweet glances of thy honored love,  
I rather would entreat thy company  
To see the wonders of the world abroad  
Than, living dully sluggardized at home,  
Wear out thy youth with shapeless idleness.  
But since thou lov'st, love still and thrive therein,  
Even as I would when I to love begin.

PROTEUS

Wilt thou be gone? Sweet Valentine, adieu.  
Think on thy Proteus when thou haply seest  
Some rare noteworthy object in thy travel.  
Wish me partaker in thy happiness  
When thou dost meet good hap; and in thy danger,  
If ever danger do environ thee,  
Commend thy grievance to my holy prayers,  
For I will be thy beadsman, Valentine.

VALENTINE

And on a love-book pray for my success?

PROTEUS

Upon some book I love I'll pray for thee.

VALENTINE

Ah, to be in love, where scorn is bought with groans,  
Coy looks with heart-sore sighs, one fading moment's mirth  
With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights.  
'Tis but a folly bought with wit,  
Or else a wit by folly vanquished.

PROTEUS

So, by your circumstance, you call me fool.

VALENTINE

So, by your circumstance, I fear you'll prove.

PROTEUS

'Tis love you cavil at; I am not Love.

VALENTINE

Love is your master, for he masters you;  
And he that is so yokèd by a fool  
Methinks should not be chronicled for wise.

But wherefore waste I time to counsel thee  
That art a votary to fond desire?  
Once more adieu. My father at the road  
Expects my coming, there to see me shipped.

PROTEUS

And thither will I bring thee, Valentine.

VALENTINE

Sweet Proteus, no. Now let us take our leave.  
To Milan let me hear from thee by letters  
Of thy success in love, and what news else  
Betideth here in absence of thy friend.  
And I likewise will visit thee with mine.

PROTEUS

All happiness bechance to thee in Milan.

VALENTINE

As much to you at home. And so farewell.

*(He exits.)*

PROTEUS

He after honor hunts, I after love.  
He leaves his friends, to dignify them more;  
I leave myself, my friends, and all, for love.  
Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me,  
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,  
War with good counsel, set the world at nought;  
Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.

*(Enter Speed)*

SPEED

Sir Proteus, 'save you. Saw you my master?

PROTEUS

But now he parted hence to embark for Milan.

SPEED

Twenty to one, then, he is off already,  
And I have played the sheep in losing him.

PROTEUS

Indeed a sheep doth very often stray,  
An if the shepherd be awhile away.

SPEED

You conclude that my master is a shepherd, then, and I a sheep?

PROTEUS

I do.

SPEED

Why, then my horns are his horns, whether I wake or sleep.

PROTEUS

A silly answer, and fitting well a sheep.

SPEED

This proves me still a sheep.

PROTEUS

True, and thy master a shepherd.

SPEED

Nay, that I can deny by a circumstance.

PROTEUS

It shall go hard but I'll prove it by another.

SPEED

The shepherd seeks the sheep, and not the sheep the shepherd; but I seek my master, and my master seeks not me. Therefore I am no sheep.

PROTEUS

The sheep for fodder follow the shepherd; the shepherd for food follows not the sheep. Thou for wages followest thy master; thy master for wages follows not thee. Therefore thou art a sheep.

SPEED

Such another proof will make me cry "baa."

PROTEUS

But dost thou hear? Gav'st thou my letter to Julia?

SPEED

Ay, sir. I, a lost mutton, gave your letter to her, a laced mutton, and she, a laced mutton, gave me, a lost mutton, nothing for my labor.

PROTEUS

Here's too small a pasture for such store of muttons. Beshrew me, but you have a quick wit.

SPEED

And yet it cannot overtake your slow purse.

PROTEUS

Come, come, open the matter in brief. What said she?

SPEED

Open your purse, that the money and the matter may be both at once delivered.

PROTEUS (*giving money*)

Well, sir, here is for your pains. What said she?

SPEED (*looking at the money*)

Truly, sir, I think you'll hardly win her.

PROTEUS

Why? Couldst thou perceive so much from her?

SPEED

Sir, I could perceive nothing at all from her, no,  
not so much as a ducat for delivering your letter.  
And being so hard to me that brought your mind,  
I fear she'll prove as hard to you in telling your mind.  
Give her no token but stones, for she's as hard as steel.

PROTEUS

What said she? Nothing?

SPEED

No, not so much as "Take this for thy pains."  
Henceforth carry your letters yourself.  
And so, sir, I'll commend you to my master.  
(*Speed exits*)

PROTEUS

Go, go, begone.  
I must go send some better messenger.  
I fear my Julia would not read my lines,  
Receiving them from such a worthless post.

(*He exits*)

## Scene 2

(*Enter Julia and Lucetta*) (*props: a letter*)

JULIA

But say, Lucetta, now we are alone,  
Wouldst thou then counsel me to fall in love?

LUCETTA

Ay, madam, so you stumble not unheedfully.

JULIA

Of all the fair resort of gentlemen  
That every day with parle encounter me,  
In thy opinion which is worthiest love?

LUCETTA

Please you repeat their names, I'll show my mind  
According to my shallow simple skill.

JULIA

What think'st thou of the fair Sir Nicolo?

LUCETTA

As of a knight well-spoken, neat, and fine;  
But, were I you, he never should be mine.

JULIA

What think'st thou of the rich Thurio?

LUCETTA

Well of his wealth, but of himself so-so.

JULIA

What think'st thou of the gentle Proteus?

LUCETTA

Lord, Lord, now there's a one that pleases us!

JULIA

How now? What means this passion at his name?

LUCETTA

Pardon, dear madam, 'tis a passing shame  
That I, unworthy body as I am,  
Should censure thus on lovely gentlemen.

JULIA

Why not on Proteus, as of all the rest?

LUCETTA

Then thus: of many good, I think him best.

JULIA

Your reason?

LUCETTA

I have no other but a woman's reason:  
I think him so because I think him so.

JULIA

And wouldst thou have me cast my love on him?

LUCETTA

Ay, if you thought your love not cast away.

JULIA

I would I knew his mind.

LUCETTA, handing her a paper. Peruse this paper, madam.

JULIA (*reads*)

“To Julia.”—Say from whom.

LUCETTA

That the contents will show.

JULIA

Say, say who gave it thee.

LUCETTA

Sir Valentine’s page; and sent, I think, from Proteus.  
He would have given it you, but I, being in the way,  
Did in your name receive it. Pardon the fault, I pray.

JULIA

Now, by my modesty, a goodly broker!  
Dare you presume to harbor wanton lines?  
To whisper and conspire against my youth?  
There, take the paper; see it be returned,  
Or else return no more into my sight.

LUCETTA (*taking the paper*)

To plead for love deserves more fee than hate.

JULIA

Will you be gone?

LUCETTA (*curtseys*)

That you may ruminate.

(*She exits*)

JULIA

And yet I would I had o’erlooked the letter.  
It were a shame to call her back again  
And pray her to a fault for which I chid her.  
What fool is she that knows I am a maid  
And would not force the letter to my view,  
Since maids in modesty say “no” to that  
Which they would have the profferer construe “ay”!  
Fie, fie, how wayward is this foolish love  
That like a testy babe will scratch the nurse  
And presently, all humbled, kiss the rod!  
How churlishly I chid Lucetta hence,  
When willingly I would have had her here!  
How angrily I taught my brow to frown,

When inward joy enforced my heart to smile!  
My penance is to call Lucetta back  
And ask remission for my folly past.—  
What ho, Lucetta!

*(Enter Lucetta)*

LUCETTA  
What would your Ladyship?

JULIA  
Is 't near dinner time?

LUCETTA  
I would it were,  
That you might kill your stomach on your meat  
And not upon your maid.  
*(She drops a paper and then retrieves it.)*

JULIA  
What is 't that you took up so gingerly?

LUCETTA  
Nothing.

JULIA  
Why didst thou stoop, then?

LUCETTA  
To take a paper up that I let fall.

JULIA  
And is that paper nothing?

LUCETTA  
Nothing concerning me.

JULIA  
Then let it lie for those that it concerns.

LUCETTA *(excited)*  
Madam, some love of yours hath writ to you in rhyme.

JULIA  
You, minion, are too saucy.  
Let's see this song.  
*(She takes the paper and reads it)*  
This babble shall not henceforth trouble me.  
Here is a coil with protestation.  
*(She rips up the paper. Lucetta stoops to pick up the pieces.)*  
Go, get you gone, and let the papers lie.  
You would be fing'ring them to anger me.

LUCETTA (*aside as she exits*)

She makes it strange, but she would be best pleased  
To be so angered with another letter.

JULIA

Nay, would I were so angered with the same!  
O hateful hands, to tear such loving words!  
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey  
And kill the bees that yield it with your stings!  
I'll kiss each several paper for amends.  
(*She picks up some pieces*)  
Look, here is writ "kind Julia." Unkind Julia,  
As in revenge of thy ingratitude,  
I throw thy name against the bruising stones,  
Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.  
And here is writ "love-wounded Proteus."  
Poor wounded name, my bosom as a bed  
Shall lodge thee till thy wound be thoroughly healed,  
And thus I search it with a sovereign kiss.  
But twice or thrice was "Proteus" written down.  
Be calm, good wind. Blow not a word away  
Till I have found each letter in the letter  
Except mine own name. That some whirlwind bear  
Unto a ragged, fearful, hanging rock  
And throw it thence into the raging sea.  
Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ:  
"Poor forlorn Proteus, passionate Proteus,  
To the sweet Julia." That I'll tear away—  
And yet I will not, sith so prettily  
He couples it to his complaining names.  
Thus will I fold them one upon another.  
Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

(*Enter Lucetta. She goes to Julia and drops to her knees with her. They hug, then Lucetta helps her pick up the pieces of paper, putting them in her apron*)

LUCETTA

Madam, dinner is ready, and your father stays.

JULIA

Well, let us go.

LUCETTA

I'll take these to your chamber.

JULIA

My heart will be ever grateful to thee.  
(*They exit together*)

### Scene 3

*(Enter Antonio and Pantino) (Props: a letter)*

ANTONIO

Tell me, Pantino, what sad talk was that  
Wherewith my brother held you in the cloister?

PANTINO

'Twas of his nephew Proteus, your son.

ANTONIO

Why, what of him?

PANTINO

He wondered that your Lordship  
Would suffer him to spend his youth at home  
While other men, of slender reputation,  
Put forth their sons to seek preferment out:  
Some to the wars to try their fortune there,  
Some to discover islands far away,  
Some to the studious universities.  
For any or for all these exercises  
He said that Proteus your son was meet,  
And did request me to importune you  
To let him spend his time no more at home,  
Which would be great impeachment to his age  
In having known no travel in his youth.

ANTONIO

Nor need'st thou much importune me to that  
Whereon this month I have been hammering.  
I have considered well his loss of time  
And how he cannot be a perfect man,  
Not being tried and tutored in the world.  
Experience is by industry achieved  
And perfected by the swift course of time.  
Then tell me whither were I best to send him.

PANTINO

I think your Lordship is not ignorant  
How his companion, youthful Valentine,  
Attends the Duke in his royal court.

ANTONIO

I know it well.

PANTINO

'Twere good, I think, your Lordship sent him thither.  
There shall he practice tilts and tournaments,  
Hear sweet discourse, converse with noblemen,  
And be in eye of every exercise  
Worthy of his youth and nobleness of birth.

ANTONIO

I like thy counsel. Well hast thou advised,  
And that thou mayst perceive how well I like it,  
The execution of it shall be made known.  
Even with the speediest expedition  
I will dispatch him to the Duke's court.

PANTINO

Tomorrow, may it please you, Don Alphonso,  
With other gentlemen of good esteem,  
Are journeying to salute the Duke  
And to commend their service to his will.

ANTONIO

Good company. With them shall Proteus go.  
And in good time! Now will we break with him.

*(Enter Proteus and Julia down the stairs from the top. They are holding hands. When they get near the redwoods, they stop. Julia kisses him passionately, gives him the letter and then goes backstage.)*

PROTEUS *(reads the letter, then speaks to himself)*

Sweet love, sweet lines, sweet life!  
Here is her hand, the agent of her heart;  
Here is her oath for love, her honor's pawn.  
O, that our fathers would applaud our loves  
To seal our happiness with their consents.  
O heavenly Julia!

ANTONIO

How now? What letter are you reading there?

PROTEUS

May 'it please your Lordship, 'tis a word or two  
Of commendations sent from Valentine,  
Delivered by a friend that came from him.

ANTONIO

Lend me the letter. Let me see what news.

PROTEUS

There is no news, my lord, but that he writes  
How happily he lives, how well beloved  
And daily gracèd by the Duke,  
Wishing me with him, partner of his fortune.

ANTONIO

And how stand you affected to his wish?

PROTEUS

As one relying on your Lordship's will,  
And not depending on his friendly wish.

ANTONIO

My will is something sorted with his wish.  
Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed,  
For what I will, I will, and there an end.  
I am resolved that thou shalt spend some time  
With Valentinus in the Emperor's court.  
What maintenance he from his friends receives,  
Like support thou shalt have from me.  
Tomorrow, be in readiness to go.  
Excuse it not, for I am peremptory.

PROTEUS

My lord, I cannot be so soon provided.  
Please you deliberate a day or two.

ANTONIO

What thou want'st shall be sent after thee.  
No more of stay. Tomorrow thou must go.—  
Come on, Pantino; you shall be employed  
To hasten on his expedition.

*(Antonio and Pantino exit)*

PROTEUS

Thus have I shunned the fire for fear of burning  
And drenched me in the sea, where I am drowned.  
I feared to show my father Julia's letter  
Lest he should take exception to my love,  
And with the vantage of mine own excuse  
Hath he excepted most against my love.  
O, how this spring of love resembleth  
The uncertain glory of an April day,  
Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,  
And by and by a cloud takes all away.

*(Re-enter Pantino)*

PANTINO

Sir Proteus, your father calls for you.  
He is in haste. Therefore, I pray you, go.

PROTEUS

Why, this it is: my heart accords thereto.  
And yet a thousand times it answers "no."

*(They exit together)*

## ACT 2

### Scene 1

(We move to Milan. Flourish of music. Cast members in livery run on from upstage center carrying flags with emblems of Milan and place them in holders on the sides of the stage. The Duke enters followed by procession, including Silvia who looks at Valentine DS left and intentionally drops a glove. *When the procession moves on, Speed goes to the glove and picks it up.*)

*(Props: a glove for Sylvia, a letter for Valentine)*

SPEED

Sir, your glove.

VALENTINE

Not mine. My gloves are on.

SPEED

Why, then, this may be yours, for this is but one.

VALENTINE

Ha? Let me see. Ay, give it me, it's mine.  
Sweet ornament that decks a thing divine!  
Ah, Sylvia, Sylvia!

SPEED (calling)

Madam Sylvia! Madam Sylvia!

VALENTINE

How now, sirrah?

SPEED

She is not within hearing, sir.

VALENTINE

Why, sir, who bade you call her?

SPEED

Your Worship, sir, or else I mistook.

VALENTINE

Well, you'll still be too forward.

SPEED

And yet I was last chidden for being too slow.

VALENTINE

Go to, sir. Tell me, do you know Madam Sylvia?

SPEED

She that your Worship loves.

VALENTINE

Why, how know you that I am in love?

SPEED

Marry, by these special marks: first, you have learned, like Sir Proteus, to wreath your arms like a malcontent; to relish a love song like a robin redbreast; to walk alone like one that had the pestilence; to sigh like a schoolboy that had lost his ABC; to fast like one that takes diet. You were wont, when you laughed, to crow like a cock; when you walked, to walk like one of the lions. When you fasted, it was presently after dinner; when you looked sadly, it was for want of money. And now you are metamorphosed with a mistress, that when I look on you, I can hardly think you my master.

VALENTINE

Are all these things perceived in me?

SPEED

Sir, they shine through you like the water in an urinal.

VALENTINE

But tell me, dost thou know my Lady Sylvia?

SPEED

She that you gaze on so as she sits at supper?

VALENTINE

Hast thou observed that? Even she I mean.

SPEED

Why, sir, I know her not.

VALENTINE

Dost thou know her by my gazing on her and yet know'st her not? Her beauty is exquisite; but her favor infinite.

SPEED

That's because the one is painted; the other out of all count.

VALENTINE

How painted? And how out of count?

SPEED

Marry, sir, so painted to make her fair, that no man counts of her beauty.

VALENTINE

How esteem'st thou me? I account of her beauty.

SPEED

You never saw her since she was deformed.

VALENTINE

How long hath she been deformed?

SPEED

Ever since you loved her.

VALENTINE

I have loved her ever since I saw her, and still I see her beautiful.

SPEED

If you love her, you cannot see her.

VALENTINE

Why?

SPEED

Because love is blind. O, that you had mine eyes,  
or your own eyes had the lights they were wont to  
have when you chid at Sir Proteus for going ungartered!

VALENTINE

What should I see then?

SPEED

Your own present folly and her passing deformity;  
for he, being in love, could not see to garter his  
hose, and you, being in love, cannot see to put on your hose.

VALENTINE

Belike, boy, then you are in love, for last  
morning you could not see to wipe my shoes.

SPEED

True, sir, I was in love with my bed. I thank you,  
you swung me for my love, which makes me the  
bolder to chide you for yours.

VALENTINE

In conclusion, I stand affected to her.

SPEED

I would you were set, so your affection would cease.

VALENTINE

Last night she enjoined me to write some lines to one she loves.

SPEED

And have you?

VALENTINE

I have.

SPEED

Are they not lamely writ?

VALENTINE

No, boy, but as well as I can do them.

Peace, here she comes.

*(Enter Sylvia)*

SPEED (aside)

O excellent motion! O exceeding puppet! Now will he interpret to her.

VALENTINE

Madam and mistress, a thousand good-morrows.

SPEED (aside)

O, give ye good ev'n! Here's a million of manners.

SYLVIA

Sir Valentine, and servant, to you two thousand.

SPEED (aside)

He should give her interest, and she gives it him.

VALENTINE

As you enjoined me, I have writ your letter  
Unto the secret, nameless friend of yours,  
Which I was much unwilling to proceed in  
But for my duty to your Ladyship.

*(He gives her a paper.)*

SYLVIA

I thank you, gentle servant, 'tis very clerkly done.

VALENTINE

Now trust me, madam, it came hardly off,  
For, being ignorant to whom it goes,  
I writ at random, very doubtfully.

SYLVIA

Perchance you think too much of so much pains?

VALENTINE

No, madam. So it stead you, I will write,  
Please you command, a thousand times as much,  
And yet—

SYLVIA

A pretty period. Well, I guess the sequel;  
And yet I will not name it. And yet I care not.  
And yet take this again.  
(*She holds out the paper*)  
And yet I thank you,  
Meaning henceforth to trouble you no more.

SPEED (*aside*)

And yet you will; and yet another "yet."

VALENTINE

What means your Ladyship? Do you not like it?

SYLVIA

Yes, yes, the lines are very quaintly writ,  
But, since unwillingly, take them again.  
Nay, take them.  
(*She again offers him the papers*)

VALENTINE

Madam, they are for you.

SYLVIA

Ay, ay. You writ them, sir, at my request,  
But I will none of them. They are for you.  
I would have had them writ more movingly.

VALENTINE (*taking the paper*)

Please you, I'll write your Ladyship another.

SYLVIA

And when it's writ, for my sake read it over,  
And if it please you, so; if not, why, so.

VALENTINE

If it please me, madam? What then?

SYLVIA

Why, if it please you, take it for your labor.  
And so good-morrow, servant.

(*Sylvia exits*)

SPEED (*aside*)

O jest unseen, inscrutable, invisible  
As a nose on a man's face, or a weathercock on a steeple!  
My master sues to her, and she hath taught her suitor,  
He being her pupil, to become her tutor.  
O excellent device! Was there ever heard a better?  
That my master, being scribe, to himself should write the letter?

VALENTINE

How now, sir? What, are you reasoning with yourself?

SPEED

Nay, I was rhyming. 'Tis you that have the reason.

VALENTINE

To do what?

SPEED

To be a spokesman from Madam Sylvia.

VALENTINE

To whom?

SPEED

To yourself. Why, she woos you by a figure.

VALENTINE

What figure?

SPEED

By a letter, I should say.

VALENTINE

Why, she hath not writ to me!

SPEED

What need she when she hath made you write to yourself? Why, do you not perceive the jest?

VALENTINE

No, believe me.

SPEED

No believing you indeed, sir. But did you perceive her earnest?

VALENTINE

She gave me none, except an angry word.

SPEED

Why, she hath given you a letter.

VALENTINE

That's the letter I writ to her friend.

SPEED

And that letter hath she delivered, and there an end.

VALENTINE

I would it were no worse.

SPEED

I'll warrant you, 'tis as well.  
For often have you writ to her, and she, in modesty  
Or else for want of idle time, could not again reply,  
Or fearing else some messenger that might her mind discover,  
Herself hath taught her love himself to write unto her lover.  
All this I speak in print, for in print I found it. Why  
muse you, sir? 'Tis dinnertime.

VALENTINE

I have dined.

SPEED

Ay, but hearken, sir, though the chameleon love  
can feed on the air, I am one that am nourished by  
my victuals and would fain have meat. O, be not like  
your mistress! Be moved, be moved.

*(They exit)*

## Scene 2

*(Back to Verona. Enter Julia singing a sad song with the band. Proteus follows.)*  
*(Props: 2 rings)*

PROTEUS

Have patience, gentle Julia.

JULIA

I must, where is no remedy.

PROTEUS

When possibly I can, I will return.

JULIA

If you turn not, you will return the sooner.  
Keep this remembrance for thy Julia's sake.  
*(She gives him a ring)*

PROTEUS

Why, then we'll make exchange. Here, take you this.  
*(He gives her a ring also.)*

JULIA

And seal the bargain with a holy kiss. *(They kiss)*

PROTEUS

Here is my hand for my true constancy.  
And when that hour o'erslips me in the day

Wherein I sigh not, Julia, for thy sake,  
The next ensuing hour some foul mischance  
Torment me for my love's forgetfulness.  
My father stays my coming. Answer not.  
The tide is now—nay, not thy tide of tears;  
That tide will stay me longer than I should.  
Julia farewell. (*He hugs her.*)

*(Julia exits)*

What, gone without a word?  
Ay, so true love should do. It cannot speak,  
For truth hath better deeds than words to grace it.

*(Enter Pantino)*

PANTINO  
Sir Proteus, you are stayed for.

PROTEUS  
Go. I come, I come.  
(Aside) Alas, this parting strikes poor lovers dumb.

*(They exit)*

### **Scene 3**

*(Enter Lance, weeping, with his dog, Crab) (Props: leash, staff, hat)*

LANCE Nay, 'twill be this hour ere I have done weeping.  
All the kind of the Lances have this very fault. I have  
received my proportion like the Prodigious Son and  
am going with Sir Proteus to the Imperial's court. I  
think Crab my dog be the sourest-natured dog that  
lives: my mother weeping, my father wailing, my  
sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing  
her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity,  
yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear. He  
is a stone, a very pibble stone, and has no more pity  
in him than a dog. Anyone would have wept to have  
seen our parting. Why, my grandam, having no  
eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting.

*(The next paragraph is optional)*

((Nay, I'll show you the manner of it. He takes off his  
shoes. This shoe is my father. No, this left shoe is  
my father; no, no, this left shoe is my mother. Nay,  
that cannot be so neither. Yes, it is so, it is so; it hath  
the worsor sole. This shoe with the hole in it is my

mother; and this my father. A vengeance on 't, there 'tis! Now sir, this staff is my sister, for, look you, she is as white as a lily and as small as a wand. This hat is Nan, our maid. I am the dog. No, the dog is himself, and I am the dog. O, the dog is me, and I am myself. Ay, so, so.))

Now come I to my father: "Father, your blessing."  
He cannot speak a word for weeping. Now come I to my mother. She cannot speak for sighing. Well, I kiss her. Now come I to my sister. Mark the moan she makes! Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear nor speaks a word. But see how I lay the dust with my tears.  
Well, I must away. My master is shipped and I must go. Come Crab.

(Lance starts walking off but the dog doesn't follow. Lance stops, throws his arms up in the air and goes back to get the dog. He picks him up and goes off.)

#### **Scene 4**

(Back to Verona. Enter Valentine, Sylvia, Thurio)

SYLVIA  
Servant!

VALENTINE  
Mistress?

SYLVIA  
Servant, you are sad.

VALENTINE  
Indeed, madam, I seem so.

THURIO  
Seem you that you are not?

VALENTINE  
Haply I do.

THURIO  
So do counterfeits.

VALENTINE  
So do you.

THURIO  
What seem I that I am not?

VALENTINE

Wise.

THURIO

What instance of the contrary?

VALENTINE

Your folly.

THURIO

And how quote you my folly?

VALENTINE

I quote it in your jerkin.

THURIO

My "jerkin" is a doublet.

VALENTINE

Well, then, I'll double your folly.

THURIO

How!

SYLVIA

What, angry, Sir Thurio? Do you change color?

VALENTINE

Give him leave, madam. He is a kind of chameleon.

THURIO

That hath more mind to feed on your blood than live in your air.

VALENTINE

You have said, sir.

THURIO

Ay, sir, and am done too for this time.

VALENTINE

I know it well, sir. You always end ere you begin.

SYLVIA

A fine volley of words, gentlemen, and quickly shot off.

VALENTINE

'Tis indeed, madam. We thank the giver.

SYLVIA

Who is that, servant?

VALENTINE

Yourself, sweet lady, for you gave the fire.  
Sir Thurio borrows his wit from your Ladyship's  
looks and spends what he borrows kindly in your company.

THURIO

Sir, if you spend word for word with me, I shall  
make your wit bankrupt.

VALENTINE

I know it well, sir. You have an exchequer  
of words and, I think, no other treasure to give your  
followers, for it appears by their bare liveries that  
they live by your bare words.

SYLVIA

No more, gentlemen, no more. Here comes my father.

*(Enter Duke)*

DUKE

Now, daughter Sylvia, you are hard beset.—  
Sir Valentine, your father is in good health.  
What say you to a letter from your friends  
Of much good news?

VALENTINE

My lord, I will be thankful  
To any happy messenger from thence.

DUKE

Know you Don Antonio, your countryman?

VALENTINE

Ay, my good lord, I know the gentleman  
To be of worth and worthy estimation,  
And not without desert so well reputed.

DUKE

Hath he not a son?

VALENTINE

Ay, my good lord, a son that well deserves  
The honor and regard of such a father.

DUKE

You know him well?

VALENTINE

I knew him as myself, for from our infancy  
We have conversed and spent our hours together,  
And though myself have been an idle truant,

Omitting the sweet benefit of time  
To clothe mine age with angel-like perfection,  
Yet hath Sir Proteus—for that's his name—  
Made use and fair advantage of his days:  
His years but young, but his experience old;  
His head unmellowed, but his judgment ripe;  
And in a word—for far behind his worth  
Comes all the praises that I now bestow—  
He is complete in feature and in mind,  
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

DUKE

Beshrew me, sir, but if he make this good,  
He is as worthy of an empress' love,  
As meet to be an emperor's counselor.  
Well, sir, this gentleman is come to me  
With commendation from great potentates,  
And here he means to spend his time awhile.  
I think 'tis no unwelcome news to you.

VALENTINE

Should I have wished a thing, it had been he.

DUKE

Welcome him then according to his worth.  
Sylvia, I speak to you—and you, Sir Thurio.  
For Valentine, I need not cite him to it.  
I will send him hither to you presently.

*(Duke exits)*

VALENTINE

This is the gentleman I told your Ladyship  
Had come along with me but that his mistress  
Did hold his eyes locked in her crystal looks.

SYLVIA

Belike that now she hath enfranchised them  
Upon some other pawn for fealty.

VALENTINE

Nay, sure, I think she holds them prisoners still.

SYLVIA

Nay, then, he should be blind, and being blind  
How could he see his way to seek out you?

VALENTINE

Why, lady, love hath twenty pair of eyes.

THURIO

They say that Love hath not an eye at all.

VALENTINE

To see such lovers, Thurio, as yourself.  
Upon a homely object, Love can wink.

SYLVIA

Have done, have done. Here comes the gentleman.

*(Enter Proteus)*

VALENTINE

Welcome, dear Proteus.—Mistress, I beseech you  
Confirm his welcome with some special favor.

SYLVIA

His worth is warrant for his welcome hither,  
If this be he you oft have wished to hear from.

VALENTINE

Mistress, it is. Sweet lady, entertain him  
To be my fellow-servant to your Ladyship.

SYLVIA

Too low a mistress for so high a servant.

PROTEUS

Not so, sweet lady, but too mean a servant  
To have a look of such a worthy mistress.

VALENTINE

Leave off discourse of disability.  
Sweet lady, entertain him for your servant.

PROTEUS

My duty will I boast of, nothing else.

SYLVIA

And duty never yet did want his meed.  
Servant, you are welcome to a worthless mistress.

PROTEUS

I'll set on him that says so but yourself.

SYLVIA

That you are welcome?

PROTEUS

That you are worthless.

*(Enter Servant)*

SERVANT

Madam, my lord your father would speak with you.

SYLVIA

I wait upon his pleasure. (*Servant exits*)  
Come, SirThurio, go with me.  
Once more, new servant, welcome.  
I'll leave you to confer of home affairs.  
When you have done, we look to hear from you.

PROTEUS

We'll both attend upon your Ladyship.

(*Sylvia and Thurio exit*)

VALENTINE

Now tell me, how do all from whence you came?

PROTEUS

Your friends are well and commend themselves to you.

VALENTINE

And how do yours?

PROTEUS

I left them all in health.

VALENTINE

How does your lady? And how thrives your love?

PROTEUS

My tales of love were wont to weary you.  
I know you joy not in a love discourse.

VALENTINE

Ay, Proteus, but that life is altered now.  
I have done penance for contemning Love,  
Whose high imperious thoughts have punished me  
With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,  
With nightly tears, and daily heartsore sighs.  
For in revenge of my contempt of love,  
Love hath chased sleep from my enthralled eyes  
And made them watchers of mine own heart's sorrow.  
O gentle Proteus, Love's a mighty lord  
And hath so humbled me as I confess  
There is no woe to his correction,  
Nor, to his service, no such joy on Earth.  
Now, no discourse except it be of love.  
Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep  
Upon the very naked name of Love.

PROTEUS

Enough; I read your fortune in your eye.  
Was this the idol that you worship so?

VALENTINE

Even she. And is she not a heavenly saint?

PROTEUS

No, but she is an earthly paragon.

VALENTINE

Call her divine.

PROTEUS

I will not flatter her.

VALENTINE

O, flatter me, for love delights in praises.

PROTEUS

When I was sick, you gave me bitter pills,  
And I must minister the like to you.

VALENTINE

Then speak the truth by her; if not divine,  
Yet let her be a principality,  
Sovereign to all the creatures on the Earth.

PROTEUS

Except my mistress.

VALENTINE

Sweet, except not any,  
Except thou wilt except against my love.

PROTEUS

Have I not reason to prefer mine own?

VALENTINE

And I will help thee to prefer her too:  
She shall be dignified with this high honor—  
To bear my lady's train, lest the base earth  
Should from her vesture chance to steal a kiss

PROTEUS

Why, Valentine, what braggartism is this?

VALENTINE

Pardon me, Proteus, all I can is nothing  
To her whose worth makes other worthies nothing.  
She is alone—

PROTEUS

Then let her alone.

VALENTINE

Not for the world! Why, man, she is mine own,  
And I as rich in having such a jewel  
As twenty seas if all their sand were pearl,  
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.  
Forgive me that I do not dream on thee,  
Because thou seest me dote upon my love.  
My foolish rival, that her father likes  
Only for his possessions are so huge,  
Is gone with her along, and I must after,  
For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy.

PROTEUS

But she loves you?

VALENTINE

Ay, and we are betrothed; nay more, our marriage hour,  
With all the cunning manner of our flight determined of: h  
How I must climb her window,  
The ladder made of cords, and all the means  
Plotted and 'greed on for my happiness.  
Good Proteus, go with me to my chamber,  
In these affairs to aid me with thy counsel.

PROTEUS

Go on before. I shall after you.  
I must unto the road to disembark  
Some necessaries that I needs must use,  
And then I'll presently attend you.

VALENTINE

Will you make haste?

PROTEUS

I will.

*(Valentine exits)*

Even as one heat another heat expels,  
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,  
So the remembrance of my former love  
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.  
Is it mine eye, or Valentine's praise,  
Her true perfection, or my false transgression,  
That makes me reasonless to reason thus?  
She is fair, and so is Julia that I love—  
That I did love, for now my love is thawed,  
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire  
Bears no impression of the thing it was.  
Methinks my zeal to Valentine is cold,  
And that I love him not as I was wont.  
O, but I love his lady too too much,

And that's the reason I love him so little.  
How shall I dote on her with more advice  
That thus without advice begin to love her?  
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,  
And that hath dazzled my reason's light;  
But when I look on her perfections,  
There is no reason but I shall be blind.  
If I can check my erring love, I will;  
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill.

(He exits)

## Scene 5

*(Enter Speed and Lance, with his dog, Crab) (Props: Lance's staff)*

SPEED

Lance, by mine honesty, welcome to Milan.

LANCE

Forswear not thyself, sweet youth, for I am not welcome.  
I reckon this always: that a man is never  
undone till he be hanged, nor never welcome to a  
place till some certain coin be paid and the Hostess  
say welcome.

SPEED

Come on, you madcap. I'll to the alehouse with  
you presently, where, for one shot of five pence,  
thou shalt have five thousand welcomes. But, sirrah,  
how did thy master part with Madam Julia?

LANCE

Marry, after they closed in earnest, they parted very fairly in jest.

SPEED

But shall she marry him?

LANCE

No.

SPEED

How then? Shall he marry her?

LANCE

No, neither.

SPEED

What, are they broken?

LANCE

No, they are both as whole as a fish.

SPEED

Why then, how stands the matter with them?

LANCE

Marry, thus: when it stands well with him, it stands well with her.

SPEED

What an ass art thou! I understand thee not.

LANCE

What a block art thou that thou canst not! My staff understands me.

SPEED What thou sayst?

LANCE

Ay, and what I do too. Look thee, I'll but lean, and my staff understands me.

SPEED

It stands under thee indeed.

LANCE

Why, "stand under" and "understand" is all one.

SPEED

But tell me true, will 't be a match?

LANCE

Ask my dog. If he say "Ay," it will; if he say  
"No," it will; if he shake his tail and say nothing, it will.

SPEED

The conclusion is, then, that it will.

LANCE

Thou shalt never get such a secret from me but by a parable.

SPEED

'Tis well that I get it so. But, Lance, how sayst  
thou that my master is become a notable lover?

LANCE

I never knew him otherwise.

SPEED

Than how?

LANCE

A notable lubber, as thou reportest him to be.

SPEED

Why, thou whoreson ass, thou mistak'st me.

LANCE

Why, fool, I meant not thee; I meant thy master.

SPEED

I tell thee, my master is become a hot lover.

LANCE

Why, I tell thee, I care not though he burn himself in love.

Wilt thou go with me to the alehouse?

SPEED

At thy service.

*(They exit)*

## **Scene 6**

*(Enter Proteus alone)*

PROTEUS

To leave my Julia, shall I be forsworn.

To love fair Sylvia, shall I be forsworn.

To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn.

And ev'n that power which gave me first my oath

Provokes me to this threefold perjury.

Love bade me swear, and love bids me forswear.

O sweet-suggesting Love, if thou hast sinned,

Teach me, thy tempted subject, to excuse it.

At first I did adore a twinkling star,

But now I worship a celestial sun;

Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken,

And he wants wit that wants resolve

To exchange the bad for better.

Fie, fie, unreverend tongue, to call her bad

Whose sovereignty so oft thou hast preferred

With twenty thousand soul-confirming oaths.

I cannot cease to love, and yet I do.

Julia I lose, and Valentine I lose;

If I keep them, I needs must lose myself;

I to myself am dearer than a friend,

For love is still most precious in itself.

I will forget that Julia is alive,

Rememb'ring that my love to her is dead.

And Valentine I'll hold an enemy,

Aiming at Sylvia as a sweeter friend.

I cannot now prove constant to myself

Without some treachery used to Valentine.  
This night he meaneth with a corded ladder  
To climb celestial Sylvia's chamber window,  
Myself in counsel his competitor.  
Now presently I'll give her father notice  
Of their disguising and pretended flight,  
Who, all enraged, will banish Valentine,  
For Thurio he intends shall wed his daughter.  
But Valentine being gone, I'll quickly cross  
By some sly trick blunt Thurio's dull proceeding.  
Love, lend me wings to make my purpose swift,  
As thou hast lent me wit to plot this drift.

*(He exits)*

## **Scene 7**

*(Back to Verona. We will play this on the side by the redwoods. Enter Julia and Lucetta)*

JULIA

Counsel, Lucetta. Gentle girl, assist me;  
And ev'n in kind love I do conjure thee—  
Who art the table wherein all my thoughts  
Are visibly characterized and engraved—  
To lesson me and tell me some good mean  
How with my honor I may undertake  
A journey to my loving Proteus.

LUCETTA

Alas, the way is wearisome and long.

JULIA

A true-devoted pilgrim is not weary  
To measure kingdoms with his feeble steps;  
Much less shall she that hath Love's wings to fly,  
And when the flight is made to one so dear,  
Of such divine perfection, as Sir Proteus.

LUCETTA

Better forbear till Proteus make return.

JULIA

O, know'st thou not his looks are my soul's food?  
Pity the dearth that I have pinèd in  
By longing for that food so long a time.  
Didst thou but know the inly touch of love,  
Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow  
As seek to quench the fire of love with words.

LUCETTA

I do not seek to quench your love's hot fire,  
But qualify the fire's extreme rage,  
Lest it should burn above the bounds of reason.

JULIA

The more thou damm'st it up, the more it burns.  
The current that with gentle murmur glides,  
Thou know'st, being stopped, impatiently doth rage,  
But when his fair course is not hinderèd,  
He makes sweet music with th' enameled stones,  
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge  
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage;  
And so by many winding nooks he strays  
With willing sport to the wild ocean.  
Then let me go and hinder not my course.  
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream  
And make a pastime of each weary step  
Till the last step have brought me to my love,  
And there I'll rest as after much turmoil  
A blessèd soul doth in Elysium.

LUCETTA

But in what habit will you go along?

JULIA

Not like a woman, for I would prevent  
The loose encounters of lascivious men.  
Gentle Lucetta, fit me with such weeds  
As may beseem some well-reputed page.

LUCETTA

Why, then, your Ladyship must cut your hair.

JULIA

No, girl, I'll knit it up in silken strings  
With twenty odd-conceited true-love knots.  
To be fantastic may become a youth  
Of greater time than I shall show to be.

LUCETTA

What fashion, madam, shall I make your breeches?

JULIA

Why, ev'n what fashion thou best likes, Lucetta.

LUCETTA

You must needs have them with a codpiece, madam.

JULIA

Out, out, Lucetta. That will be ill-favored.

LUCETTA

A round hose, madam, now's not worth a pin  
Unless you have a codpiece to stick pins on.

JULIA

Lucetta, as thou lov'st me, let me have  
What thou think'st meet and is most mannerly.  
But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me  
For undertaking so unstaied a journey?  
I fear me it will make me scandalized.

LUCETTA

If you think so, then stay at home and go not.

JULIA

Nay, that I will not.

LUCETTA

Then never dream on infamy, but go.  
If Proteus like your journey when you come,  
No matter who's displeas'd when you are gone.  
But I fear me he will scarce be pleas'd withal.

JULIA

That is the least, Lucetta, of my fear.  
A thousand oaths, an ocean of his tears,  
And instances of infinite of love  
Warrant me welcome to my Proteus.

LUCETTA

All these are servants to deceitful men.

JULIA

Base men that use them to base effect!  
But truer stars did govern Proteus' birth.  
His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles,  
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,  
His tears pure messengers sent from his heart,  
His heart as far from fraud as heaven from Earth.

LUCETTA

Pray heav'n he prove so when you come to him.

JULIA

Now, as thou lov'st me, do him not that wrong  
To bear a hard opinion of his truth.  
Only deserve my love by loving him.  
And presently go with me to my chamber  
To take a note of what I stand in need of  
To furnish me upon my longing journey.  
All that is mine I leave at thy dispose,  
My goods, my lands, my reputation.

Only, in lieu thereof, dispatch me hence.  
Come, answer not, but to it presently.  
I am impatient of my tarriance.

*(They exit to music.)*

**END OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE SHOW**

## ACT 3

### Scene 1

*(A party. Very festive. Dancers, including Valentine and Sylvia, enter and do a tarantella. Afterward, there is much cheering and mingling. Valentine and Sylvia move off DS left. They stop. He kisses her hand. They embrace and run off hand in hand. Duke and Thurio move DS center. Proteus, who was watching Valentine and Sylvia from the other side of the stage, moves to the Duke and whispers in his ear.)*

*(Props: Valentine later in the scene comes on with a cloak, rope ladder and letter. Lance has a piece of paper with text written on it for Speed to read.)*

DUKE

Sir Thurio, give us leave, I pray, awhile;  
We have some secrets to confer about.

*(Thurio exits)*

Now tell me, Proteus, what's your will with me?

PROTEUS

My gracious lord, that which I would discover  
The law of friendship bids me to conceal,  
But when I call to mind your gracious favors  
Done to me, undeserving as I am,  
My duty pricks me on to utter that  
Which else no worldly good should draw from me.  
Know, worthy prince, Sir Valentine my friend  
This night intends to steal away your daughter;  
Myself am one made privy to the plot.  
I know you have determined to bestow her  
On Thurio, whom your gentle daughter hates,  
And should she thus be stol'n away from you,  
It would be much vexation to your age.  
Thus, for my duty's sake, I rather chose  
To cross my friend in his intended drift  
Than, by concealing it, heap on your head  
A pack of sorrows which would press you down,  
Being unprevented, to your timeless grave.

DUKE

Proteus, I thank thee for thine honest care,  
Which to requite command me while I live.  
This love of theirs myself have often seen,  
Haply when they have judged me fast asleep,  
And oftentimes have purposed to forbid  
Sir Valentine her company and my court.  
But fearing lest my jealous aim might err  
And so, unworthily, disgrace the man—  
A rashness that I ever yet have shunned—  
I gave him gentle looks, thereby to find

That which thyself hast now disclosed to me.  
And that thou mayst perceive my fear of this,  
Knowing that tender youth is soon suggested,  
I nightly lodge her in an upper tower,  
The key whereof myself have ever kept,  
And thence she cannot be conveyed away.

PROTEUS

Know, noble lord, they have devised a mean  
How he her chamber-window will ascend  
And with a corded ladder fetch her down;  
For which the youthful lover now is gone,  
And this way comes he with it presently,  
Where, if it please you, you may intercept him.  
But, good my lord, do it so cunningly  
That my discovery be not aimed at;  
For love of you, not hate unto my friend,  
Hath made me publisher of this pretense.

DUKE

Upon mine honor, he shall never know  
That I had any light from thee of this.

PROTEUS

Adieu, my lord. Sir Valentine is coming. *(He exits)*

*(Enter Valentine)*

DUKE

Sir Valentine, whither away so fast?

VALENTINE

Please it your Grace, there is a messenger  
That stays to bear my letters to my friends,  
And I am going to deliver them.

DUKE

Be they of much import?

VALENTINE

The tenor of them doth but signify  
My health and happiness being at your court.

DUKE

Nay then, no matter. Stay with me awhile;  
I am to break with thee of some affairs  
That touch me near, wherein thou must be secret.  
'Tis not unknown to thee that I have sought  
To match my friend Sir Thurio to my daughter.

VALENTINE

I know it well, my lord, and sure the match  
Were rich and honorable. Besides, the gentleman  
Is full of virtue, bounty, worth, and qualities  
Beseeming such a wife as your fair daughter.  
Cannot your Grace win her to fancy him?

DUKE

No. Trust me, she is peevish, sullen, froward,  
Proud, disobedient, stubborn, lacking duty,  
Neither regarding that she is my child  
Nor fearing me as if I were her father;  
And may I say to thee, this pride of hers,  
Upon advice, hath drawn my love from her,  
And where I thought the remnant of mine age  
Should have been cherished by her childlike duty,  
I now am full resolved to take a wife  
And turn her out to who will take her in.  
Then let her beauty be her wedding dower,  
For me and my possessions she esteems not.

VALENTINE

What would your Grace have me to do in this?

DUKE

There is a lady in Verona here  
Whom I affect; but she is nice, and coy,  
And nought esteems my aged eloquence.  
Now therefore would I have thee to my tutor—  
For long ago I have forgot to court;  
Besides, the fashion of the time is changed—  
How and which way I may bestow myself  
To be regarded in her sun-bright eye.

VALENTINE

Win her with gifts if she respect not words;  
Dumb jewels often in their silent kind  
More than quick words do move a woman's mind.

DUKE

But she did scorn a present that I sent her.

VALENTINE

A woman sometimes scorns what best contents her.  
Send her another; never give her o'er,  
For scorn at first makes after-love the more.  
If she do frown, 'tis not in hate of you,  
But rather to beget more love in you.  
Take no repulse, whatever she doth say;  
For "get you gone" she doth not mean "away."

DUKE

But she I mean is promised by her friends  
Unto a youthful gentleman of worth  
And kept severely from resort of men,  
That no man hath access by day to her.

VALENTINE

Why, then, I would resort to her by night.

DUKE

Ay, but the doors be locked and keys kept safe,  
That no man hath recourse to her by night.

VALENTINE

May one may enter at her window?

DUKE

Her chamber is aloft, far from the ground,  
And built so shelving that one cannot climb it  
Without apparent hazard of his life.

VALENTINE

Why, then a ladder quaintly made of cords  
To cast up, with a pair of anchoring hooks,  
Would serve to scale another Hero's tower,  
So bold Leander would adventure it.

DUKE

Now, as thou art a gentleman of blood,  
Advise me where I may have such a ladder.

VALENTINE

When would you use it? Pray sir, tell me that.

DUKE

This very night; for love is like a child  
That longs for everything that he can come by.

VALENTINE

By seven o'clock I'll get you such a ladder.

DUKE

But hark thee: I will go to her alone;  
How shall I best convey the ladder thither?

VALENTINE

It will be light, my lord, that you may bear it  
Under a cloak that is of any length.

DUKE

A cloak as long as thine will serve the turn?

VALENTINE

Ay, my good lord.

DUKE

Then let me see thy cloak;  
I'll get me one of such another length.

VALENTINE

Why, any cloak will serve the turn, my lord.

DUKE

How shall I fashion me to wear a cloak?  
I pray thee, let me feel thy cloak upon me.

*(Pulling off the cloak, he reveals a rope ladder and a paper.)*

What letter is this same? What's here? *(He reads.)*

"To Sylvia."

I'll be so bold to break the seal for once.

*(Reads.)*

My thoughts do harbor with my Sylvia nightly,  
And slaves they are to me that send them flying.  
O, could their master come and go as lightly,  
Himself would lodge where, senseless, they are lying.  
My herald thoughts in thy pure bosom rest them,  
While I, their king, that thither them importune,  
Do curse the grace that with such grace hath blest them,  
Because myself do want my servants' fortune.  
I curse myself, for they are sent by me,  
That they should harbor where their lord should be.

And what's here? *(Reads.)*

"Sylvia, this night I will enfranchise thee."

'Tis so. And here's the ladder for the purpose.

Why, Phaëton—for thou art Merops' son—

Wilt thou aspire to guide the heavenly car

And with thy daring folly burn the world?

Wilt thou reach stars because they shine on thee?

Go, base intruder, overweening slave,

Bestow thy fawning smiles on equal mates

And think my patience, more than thy desert,

Is privilege for thy departure hence.

Thank me for this more than for all the favors

Which all too much I have bestowed on thee.

But if thou linger in my territories

Longer than swiftest expedition

Will give thee time to leave our royal court,

By heaven, my wrath shall far exceed the love

I ever bore my daughter or thyself.

Begone. I will not hear thy vain excuse,

But, as thou lov'st thy life, make speed from hence. *(He exits)*

VALENTINE

And why not death, rather than living torment?  
To die is to be banished from myself,  
And Sylvia is myself; banished from her  
Is self from self—a deadly banishment.

What light is light if Sylvia be not seen?  
What joy is joy if Sylvia be not by—  
Unless it be to think that she is by  
And feed upon the shadow of perfection?  
Except I be by Sylvia in the night,  
There is no music in the nightingale.  
Unless I look on Sylvia in the day,  
There is no day for me to look upon.  
She is my essence, and I leave to be  
If I be not by her fair influence  
Fostered, illumined, cherished, kept alive.  
I fly not death, to fly his deadly doom;  
Tarry I here, I but attend on death,  
But fly I hence, I fly away from life.

*(Enter Proteus and Lance)*

PROTEUS

Run, boy, run, run, and seek him out.

LANCE

So-ho, so-ho!

PROTEUS

What seest thou?

LANCE

Him we go to find. There's not a hair on his head but 'tis a Valentine.

PROTEUS

Valentine?

VALENTINE

No.

PROTEUS

Who then? His spirit?

VALENTINE

Neither.

PROTEUS

What then?

VALENTINE

Nothing.

LANCE

Can nothing speak? Master, shall I strike?

PROTEUS

Who wouldst thou strike?

LANCE

Nothing.

PROTEUS

Villain, forbear.

LANCE

Why, sir, I'll strike nothing. I pray you—

PROTEUS

Sirrah, I say forbear.—Friend Valentine, a word.

VALENTINE

My ears are stopped and cannot hear good news,  
So much of bad already hath possessed them.

PROTEUS

Then in dumb silence will I bury mine,  
For they are harsh, untunable, and bad.

VALENTINE

Is Sylvia dead?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

No Valentine indeed for sacred Sylvia.  
Hath she forsworn me?

PROTEUS

No, Valentine.

VALENTINE

No Valentine if Sylvia have forsworn me.  
What is your news?

LANCE

Sir, there is a proclamation that you are vanished.

PROTEUS

That thou art banishèd—O, that's the news—  
From hence, from Sylvia, and from me thy friend.

VALENTINE

O, I have fed upon this woe already,  
And now excess of it will make me surfeit.  
Doth Sylvia know that I am banishèd?

PROTEUS

Ay, ay, and she hath offered to the doom—  
Which unreversed stands in effectual force—  
A sea of melting pearl, which some call tears;  
Those at her father's churlish feet she tendered,  
With them, upon her knees, her humble self,  
Wringing her hands, whose whiteness so became them  
As if but now they waxèd pale for woe.  
But neither bended knees, pure hands held up,  
Sad sighs, deep groans, nor silver-shedding tears  
Could penetrate her uncompassionate sire;  
But Valentine, if he be ta'en, must die.  
Besides, her intercession chafed him so,  
When she for thy repeal was suppliant,  
That to close prison he commanded her  
With many bitter threats of biding there.

VALENTINE

No more, unless the next word that thou speak'st  
Have some malignant power upon my life.  
If so, I pray thee breathe it in mine ear  
As ending anthem of my endless dolor.

PROTEUS

Cease to lament for that thou canst not help,  
And study help for that which thou lament'st.  
Time is the nurse and breeder of all good.  
Here, if thou stay, thou canst not see thy love;  
Besides, thy staying will abridge thy life.  
Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that  
And manage it against despairing thoughts.  
Thy letters may be here, though thou art hence,  
Which, being writ to me, shall be delivered  
Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love.  
The time now serves not to expostulate.  
Come, I'll convey thee through the city gate  
And, ere I part with thee, confer at large  
Of all that may concern thy love affairs.  
As thou lov'st Sylvia, though not for thyself,  
Regard thy danger, and along with me.

VALENTINE

I pray thee, Lance, an if thou seest my boy,  
Bid him make haste and meet me at the North Gate.

PROTEUS

Go, sirrah, find him out.—Come, Valentine.

VALENTINE

O, my dear Sylvia! Hapless Valentine!

*(Valentine and Proteus exit)*

LANCE

I am but a fool, look you, and yet I have the wit to think my master is a kind of a knave, but that's all one if he be but one knave. He lives not now that knows me to be in love, yet I am in love, but a team of horse shall not pluck that from me, nor who 'tis I love; and yet 'tis a woman, but what woman I will not tell myself; and yet 'tis a milk-maid; yet 'tis not a maid, for she hath had gossips; yet 'tis a maid, for she is her master's maid and serves for wages. She hath more qualities than a water spaniel, which is much in a bare Christian.

*(He takes out a piece of paper.)*

Here is the catalog of her condition. *(Reads.)*  
Imprimis, She can fetch and carry. Why, a horse can do no more; nay, a horse cannot fetch but only carry; therefore is she better than a jade.

*(Reads.)* Item, She can milk. Look you, a sweet virtue in a maid with clean hands.

*(Enter Speed)*

SPEED

How now, Signior Lance? What news with your Mastership?

LANCE

With my master's ship? Why, it is at sea.

SPEED

Well, your old vice still: mistake the word.  
What news, then, in your paper?

LANCE

The black'st news that ever thou heard'st.

SPEED

Why, man? How black?

LANCE

Why, as black as ink.

SPEED

Let me read them.

LANCE

Fie on thee, jolt-head, thou canst not read.

SPEED

Thou liest. I can. Come, fool, come. Try me in thy paper.

LANCE (*giving him the paper*)

There, and Saint Nicholas be thy speed.

SPEED (*reads*)

Imprimis, She can milk.

LANCE

Ay, that she can.

SPEED

Item, She brews good ale.

LANCE

And thereof comes the proverb:

“Blessing of your heart, you brew good ale.”

SPEED

Item, She can sew.

LANCE

That’s as much as to say “Can she so?”

SPEED

Item, She can knit.

LANCE

What need a man care for a stock with a wench,  
when she can knit him a stock?

SPEED

Item, She can wash and scour.

LANCE

A special virtue, for then she need not be washed and scoured.

SPEED

Item, She can spin.

LANCE

Then may I set the world on wheels, when she can spin for her living.

SPEED

Item, She hath many nameless virtues.

LANCE

That's as much as to say "bastard virtues," that indeed know not their fathers and therefore have no names.

SPEED

Here follow her vices.

LANCE

Close at the heels of her virtues.

SPEED

Item, She is not to be kissed fasting in respect of her breath.

LANCE

Well, that fault may be mended with a breakfast. Read on.

SPEED

Item, She hath a sweet mouth.

LANCE

That makes amends for her sour breath.

SPEED

Item, She doth talk in her sleep.

LANCE

It's no matter for that, so she sleep not in her talk.

SPEED

Item, She is slow in words.

LANCE

O villain, that set this down among her vices! To be slow in words is a woman's only virtue. I pray thee, out with 't, and place it for her chief virtue.

SPEED

Item, She is proud.

LANCE

Out with that too; it was Eve's legacy and cannot be ta'en from her.

SPEED

Item, She hath no teeth.

LANCE

I care not for that neither, because I love crusts.

SPEED

Item, She is curst.

LANCE

Well, the best is, she hath no teeth to bite.

SPEED

Item, She will often praise her liquor.

LANCE

If her liquor be good, she shall; if she will not, I will, for good things should be praised.

SPEED

Item, She is too liberal.

LANCE

Of her tongue she cannot, for that's writ down she is slow of;  
of her purse she shall not, for that I'll keep shut;  
now, of another thing she may, and that cannot I help.  
Well, proceed.

SPEED

Item, She hath more hair than wit, and more  
faults than hairs, and more wealth than faults.

LANCE

Stop there. I'll have her. More wealth than faults...  
That makes the faults gracious. Well,  
I'll have her, and if it be a match, nothing is impossible.

SPEED

What then?

LANCE

Why, then will I tell thee that thy master stays for thee at the North Gate.

SPEED

For me?

LANCE

For thee? Ay, who art thou? He hath stayed for a better man than thee.

SPEED

And must I go to him?

LANCE

Thou must run to him, for thou hast stayed so  
long that going will scarce serve the turn.

SPEED *(handing him the paper)*

Why didst not tell me sooner? Pox of your love letters!

*(He exits)*

LANCE

Now will he be swung for reading my letter;  
an unmannerly slave, that will thrust himself into  
secrets. I'll after, to rejoice in the boy's correction.  
*(He exits)*

## Scene 2

*(Enter Duke and Thurio)*

DUKE

Sir Thurio, fear not but that she will love you  
Now Valentine is banished from her sight.

THURIO

Since his exile she hath despised me most,  
Forsworn my company and railed at me,  
That I am desperate of obtaining her.

DUKE

This weak impress of love is as a figure  
Trenchèd in ice, which with an hour's heat  
Dissolves to water and doth lose his form.  
A little time will melt her frozen thoughts,  
And worthless Valentine shall be forgot.

*(Enter Proteus)*

How now, Sir Proteus? Is your countryman,  
According to our proclamation, gone?

PROTEUS

Gone, my good lord.

DUKE

My daughter takes his going grievously.

PROTEUS

A little time, my lord, will kill that grief.

DUKE

So I believe, but Thurio thinks not so.  
Proteus, thou know'st how willingly I would effect  
The match between Sir Thurio and my daughter?

PROTEUS

I do, my lord.

DUKE

And also, I think, thou art not ignorant  
How she opposes him against my will?

PROTEUS

She did, my lord, when Valentine was here.

DUKE

Ay, and perversely she perseveres so.  
What might we do to make the girl forget  
The love of Valentine, and love Sir Thurio?

PROTEUS

The best way is to slander Valentine  
With falsehood, cowardice, and poor descent,  
Three things that women highly hold in hate.

DUKE

Ay, but she'll think that it is spoke in hate.

PROTEUS

Ay, if his enemy deliver it.  
Therefore it must with circumstance be spoken  
By one whom she esteemeth as his friend.

DUKE

Then you must undertake to slander him.

PROTEUS

And that, my lord, I shall be loath to do.  
'Tis an ill office for a gentleman,  
Especially against his very friend.

DUKE

Where your good word cannot advantage him,  
Your slander never can endamage him;  
Therefore the office is indifferent,  
Being entreated to it by your friend.

PROTEUS

You have prevailed, my lord. If I can do it  
By aught that I can speak in his dispraise,  
She shall not long continue love to him.  
But say this weed her love from Valentine,  
It follows not that she will love Sir Thurio.

THURIO

Therefore, as you unwind her love from him,  
Lest it should ravel and be good to none,  
You must provide to bottom it on me,  
Which must be done by praising me as much  
As you in worth dispraise Sir Valentine.

DUKE

And, Proteus, we dare trust you in this kind  
Because we know, on Valentine's report,

You are already Love's firm votary  
And cannot soon revolt and change your mind.  
Upon this warrant shall you have access  
Where you with Sylvia may confer at large—  
For she is lumpish, heavy, melancholy,  
And, for your friend's sake, will be glad of you—  
Where you may temper her by your persuasion  
To hate young Valentine and love my friend.

PROTEUS

As much as I can do I will effect.—  
But you, Sir Thurio, are not sharp enough.  
You must lay lime to tangle her desires  
By wailful sonnets, whose composèd rhymes  
Should be full-fraught with serviceable vows.

DUKE

Ay, much is the force of heaven-bred poesy.

PROTEUS

Say that upon the altar of her beauty  
You sacrifice your tears, your sighs, your heart.  
Write till your ink be dry, and with your tears  
Moist it again, and frame some feeling line  
That may discover such integrity.  
For Orpheus' lute was strung with poets' sinews,  
Whose golden touch could soften steel and stones,  
Make tigers tame, and huge leviathans  
Forsake unsounded deeps to dance on sands.  
After your dire-lamenting elegies,  
Visit by night your lady's chamber window  
With some sweet consort; to their instruments  
Tune a deploring song; the night's dead silence  
Will well become such sweet complaining grievance.  
This, or else nothing, will inherit her.

DUKE

This discipline shows thou hast been in love.

THURIO (*to Proteus*)

And thy advice this night I'll put in practice.  
Therefore, sweet Proteus, my direction-giver,  
Let us into the city presently  
To sort some gentlemen well-skilled in music.  
I have a sonnet that will serve the turn  
To give the onset to thy good advice.

DUKE

About it, gentlemen.

PROTEUS

We'll wait upon your Grace till after supper  
And afterward determine our proceedings.

DUKE

Even now about it! I will pardon you.

*(They exit)*

## ACT 4

### Scene 1

*(Enter certain Outlaws)* (

*Props: rough basket with some apples in it. Pewter or wood tankards in a rough satchel bag.)*

FIRST OUTLAW

Fellows, stand fast. I see a passenger.

SECOND OUTLAW

If there be ten, shrink not, but down with 'em.

*(Enter Valentine and Speed)*

THIRD OUTLAW

Stand, sir, and throw us that you have about you.

If not, we'll make you sit, and rifle you.

SPEED *(to Valentine)*

Sir, we are undone; these are the villains

That all the travelers do fear so much.

VALENTINE

My friends—

FIRST OUTLAW

That's not so, sir. We are your enemies.

VALENTINE *(drawing his sword)*

Why, come then.

*(A major sword battle ensues. Valentine easily outmatches his opponent and the fight becomes very jovial with lots of shouts and laughing and back slapping. They all end as friends.)*

VALENTINE:

I say again, my friends...

SECOND OUTLAW

Peace. We'll hear him.

THIRD OUTLAW

Ay, by my beard, will we, for he is a proper man.

VALENTINE

Then know that I have little wealth to lose.

A man I am crossed with adversity;

My riches are these poor habiliments,

Of which, if you should here disfurnish me,

You take the sum and substance that I have.

SECOND OUTLAW  
Whither travel you?

VALENTINE  
To Verona.

FIRST OUTLAW  
Whence came you?

VALENTINE  
From Milan.

THIRD OUTLAW  
Have you long sojourned there?

VALENTINE  
Some sixteen months, and longer might have stayed  
If crooked fortune had not thwarted me.

FIRST OUTLAW  
What, were you banished thence?

VALENTINE  
I was.

SECOND OUTLAW  
For what offense?

VALENTINE  
For the love of a lady.

FIRST OUTLAW  
Why, were you banished for so small a fault?

VALENTINE  
I was.

SECOND OUTLAW  
Have you the tongues?

VALENTINE  
My youthful travel therein made me happy,  
Or else I often had been miserable.

THIRD OUTLAW  
By the bare scalp of Robin Hood's fat friar,  
This fellow were a king for our wild faction.

FIRST OUTLAW  
We'll have him.—Sirs, a word.

*(The Outlaws step aside to talk)*

SPEED

Master, be one of them. It's an honorable kind of thievery.

VALENTINE

Peace, villain.

THIRD OUTLAW

Know, Sir, that some of us are gentlemen,  
Such as the fury of ungoverned youth  
Thrust from the company of lawful men.  
Myself was from Verona banishèd  
For practicing to steal away a lady,  
An heir and near allied unto the Duke.

SECOND OUTLAW

And I from Mantua, for a gentleman  
Who, in my mood, I stabbed unto the heart.

FIRST OUTLAW

And I for such like crimes as these.  
But to the purpose: for we cite our faults  
That they may excuse our lawless lives,  
And partly seeing you are beautified  
With goodly shape, and by your own report  
A linguist, and a man of such perfection  
As we do in our quality much want—

SECOND OUTLAW

Indeed because you are a banished man,  
Therefore, above the rest, we parley to you.  
Are you content to be our general,  
To make a virtue of necessity  
And live as we do in this wilderness?

THIRD OUTLAW

What sayst thou? Wilt thou be of our consort?  
Say ay, and be the captain of us all;  
We'll do thee homage and be ruled by thee,  
Love thee as our commander and our king.

FIRST OUTLAW

But if thou scorn our courtesy, thou diest.

SECOND OUTLAW

Thou shalt not live to brag what we have offered.

VALENTINE (*smiling*)

I take your offer and will live with you,  
Provided that you do no outrages on innocent women or poor passengers.

THIRD OUTLAW

No, we detest such vile base practices.  
Come, go with us; we'll bring thee to our crews  
And show thee all the treasure we have got,  
Which, with ourselves, all rest at thy dispose.

**(DRINKING SONG)**

*(They exit)*

**Scene 2**

*(Enter Proteus)*

PROTEUS

Already have I been false to Valentine,  
And now I must be as unjust to Thurio.  
Under the color of commending him,  
I have access to my love.  
But Sylvia is too fair, too true, too holy  
To be corrupted with my worthless gifts.  
When I protest true loyalty to her,  
She twits me with my falsehood to my friend;  
When to her beauty I commend my vows,  
She bids me think how I have been forsworn  
In breaking faith with Julia, whom I loved;  
And notwithstanding all her sudden quips,  
The least whereof would quell a lover's hope,  
Yet, spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love,  
The more it grows and fawneth on her still.  
But here comes Thurio. Now must we to her window  
And give some evening music to her ear.

*(Enter Thurio and Musicians)*

THURIO

How now, Sir Proteus, are you crept before us?

PROTEUS

Ay, gentle Thurio, for you know that love  
Will creep in service where it cannot go.

THURIO

Ay, but I hope, sir, that you love not here.

PROTEUS

Sir, but I do, or else I would be hence.

THURIO  
Who, Sylvia?

PROTEUS  
Ay, Sylvia, for your sake.

THURIO  
I thank you for your own.—Now, gentlemen,  
Let's tune, and to it lustily awhile.

*(Enter Host of the inn, and Julia, disguised as a page, Sebastian.  
They stand at a distance and talk)*

HOST  
Now, my young guest, methinks you're allycholly.  
I pray you, why is it?

JULIA *(as Sebastian)*  
Marry, mine host, because I cannot be merry.

HOST  
Come, we'll have you merry. I'll bring you where  
you shall hear music and see the gentleman that you asked for.

JULIA  
But shall I hear him speak?

HOST  
Ay, that you shall.

JULIA  
That will be music.

HOST  
Hark, hark. *(Music plays)*

JULIA  
Is he among these?

HOST  
Ay. But peace; let's hear 'em.

**(SONG)**

PROTEUS  
Who is Sylvia? What is she,  
That all our swains commend her?  
Holy, fair, and wise is she;  
The heaven such grace did lend her  
That she might admirèd be.

Is she kind as she is fair?  
For beauty lives with kindness.  
Love doth to her eyes repair  
To help him of his blindness;  
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Sylvia let us sing,  
That Sylvia is excelling;  
She excels each mortal thing  
Upon the dull earth dwelling.  
To her let us garlands bring.

HOST  
How now? Are you sadder than you were before?  
How do you, man? The music likes you not.

JULIA  
You mistake. The singer likes me not.

HOST  
Why, my pretty youth?

JULIA  
He plays false, father.

HOST  
How, out of tune on the strings?

JULIA  
Not so; but yet so false that he grieves my very heart-strings.

HOST  
You have a quick ear.

JULIA  
Ay, I would I were deaf; it makes me have a slow heart.

HOST  
I perceive you delight not in music.

JULIA  
Not a whit when it jars so.

HOST  
You would have them always play but one thing?

JULIA  
I would always have one play but one thing.  
But, host, doth this Sir Proteus, that we talk on,  
Often resort unto this gentlewoman?

HOST

I tell you what Lance his man told me:  
He loves her out of all nick.

JULIA

Where is Lance?

HOST

Gone to seek his dog, which tomorrow, by his  
master's command, he must carry for a present to his lady.

*(Music ends)*

JULIA

Peace. Stand aside. The company parts.

PROTEUS

Sir Thurio, fear not you. I will so plead  
That you shall say my cunning drift excels.

THURIO

Where meet we?

PROTEUS

At Saint Gregory's well.

THURIO

Farewell.

*(Thurio and the Musicians exit)*

*(Enter Sylvia, above)*

PROTEUS

Madam, good even to your Ladyship.

SYLVIA

I thank you for your music, gentlemen.  
Who is he that spake?

PROTEUS

One, lady, if you knew his pure heart's truth,  
You would quickly learn to know him by his voice.

SYLVIA

Sir Proteus, as I take it.

PROTEUS

Sir Proteus, gentle lady, and your servant.

SYLVIA

What's your will?

PROTEUS

That I may compass yours.

SYLVIA

You have your wish: my will is even this,  
That presently you hie you home to bed.  
Thou subtle, perjured, false, disloyal man,  
Think'st thou I am so shallow, so conceited,  
To be seduced by thy flattery,  
That hast deceived so many with thy vows?  
Return, return, and make thy love amends.  
For me, by this pale queen of night I swear,  
I despise thee for thy wrongful suit  
And by and by intend to chide myself  
Even for this time I spend in talking to thee.

PROTEUS

I grant, sweet love, that I did love a lady,  
But she is dead.

JULIA (*aside*)

'Twere false if I should speak it,  
For I am sure she is not buried.

SYLVIA

Say that she be; yet Valentine thy friend survives;  
To whom, thyself art witness, I am betrothed.  
And art thou not ashamed to wrong him with thy importunacy?

PROTEUS

I likewise hear that Valentine is dead.

SYLVIA

And so suppose am I, for in his grave,  
Assure thyself, my love is buried.

PROTEUS

Sweet lady, let me rake it from the earth.

SYLVIA

Go to thy lady's grave and call hers thence,  
Or, at the least, in her sepulcher thine.

(*Sylvia exits*)

(*Exit Proteus*)

JULIA (aside)  
He heard not that.  
(*To Host*) Host, will you go?

HOST  
By my halidom, I was fast asleep.

JULIA  
Pray you, where lies Sir Proteus?

HOST  
Marry, at my house. Trust me, I think 'tis almost day.

JULIA  
Not so; but it hath been the longest night  
That e'er I watched, and the heaviest.

*(They exit)*

### **Scene 3**

*(Enter Eglamour)*

EGLAMOUR  
This is the hour that Madam Sylvia  
Entreated me to call and know her mind;  
There's some great matter she'd employ me in.  
Madam, madam!

*(Enter Sylvia, above)*

SYLVIA  
Who calls?

EGLAMOUR  
Your servant, and your friend,  
One that attends your Ladyship's command.

SYLVIA  
Sir Eglamour, a thousand times good morrow.

EGLAMOUR  
As many, worthy lady, to yourself.  
According to your Ladyship's impose,  
I am thus early come to know what service  
It is your pleasure to command me in.

SYLVIA

O Eglamour, thou art a gentleman—  
Think not I flatter, for I swear I do not—  
Valiant, wise, remorseful, well accomplished.  
Thou art not ignorant what dear good will  
I bear unto the banished Valentine,  
Nor how my father would enforce me marry  
Vain Thurio, whom my very soul abhors.  
Thyself hast loved, and I have heard thee say  
No grief did ever come so near thy heart  
As when thy lady and thy true love died,  
Upon whose grave thou vow'dst pure chastity.  
Sir Eglamour, I would to Valentine,  
To Mantua, where I hear he makes abode;  
And for the ways are dangerous to pass,  
I do desire thy worthy company,  
Upon whose faith and honor I repose.  
Urge not my father's anger, Eglamour,  
But think upon my grief, a lady's grief,  
And on the justice of my flying hence  
To keep me from a most unholy match,  
Which heaven and fortune still rewards with plagues.  
I do desire thee, even from a heart  
As full of sorrows as the sea of sands,  
To bear me company and go with me;  
If not, to hide what I have said to thee,  
That I may venture to depart alone.

EGLAMOUR

Madam, I pity much your grievances,  
Which, since I know they virtuously are placed,  
I give consent to go along with you,  
Reckoning as little what betideth me  
As much I wish all good befortune you.  
When will you go?

SYLVIA

This evening coming.

EGLAMOUR

Where shall I meet you?

SYLVIA

At Friar Patrick's cell, where I intend holy confession.

EGLAMOUR

I will not fail your Ladyship. Good morrow, gentle lady.

SYLVIA

Good morrow, kind Sir Eglamour.

*(They exit)*

#### Scene 4

*(Enter Lance, with his dog, Crab)*

*(Props: Proteus entering later has a ring. Julia has two letters.)*

LANCE

When a man's servant shall play the cur with him, look you, it goes hard—one that I brought up of a puppy, one that I saved from drowning when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it. I was sent to deliver him as a present to Mistress Sylvia from my master; and I came no sooner into the dining chamber but he steps me to her trencher and steals her capon's leg. O, 'tis a foul thing when a cur cannot keep himself in all companies! If I had not had more wit than he, to take a fault upon me that he did, I think verily he had been hanged for 't. Sure as I live, he had suffered for 't. You shall judge. He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentlemanlike dogs under the Duke's table; he had not been there—bless the mark!—a pissing while but all the chamber smelt him. "Out with the dog!" says one. "What cur is that?" says another. "Whip him out!" says the third. "Hang him up!" says the Duke. I, having been acquainted with the smell before, knew it was Crab, and goes me to the fellow that whips the dogs. "Friend," quoth I, "You mean to whip the dog?" "Ay, marry, do I," quoth he. "You do him the more wrong," quoth I. "'Twas I did the thing you wot of." He makes me no more ado but whips me out of the chamber. How many masters would do this for his servant? N Ay, I'll be sworn I have sat in the stocks for puddings he hath stolen; otherwise he had been executed. I have stood on the pillory for geese he hath killed; Otherwise he had suffered for 't.

*(To Crab)*

Thou think'st not of this now. Nay, I remember the trick you served me when I took my leave of Madam Sylvia. Did not I bid thee still mark me, and do as I do? When didst thou see me heave up my leg and make water against a gentlewoman's farthingale? Didst thou ever see me do such a trick?

*(Enter Proteus and Julia disguised as Sebastian)*

PROTEUS

Sebastian is thy name? I like thee well  
And will employ thee in some service presently.

JULIA

In what you please. I'll do what I can.

PROTEUS

I hope thou wilt.

*(To Lance)* How now, you whoreson peasant?  
Where have you been these two days loitering?

LANCE

Marry, sir, I carried to Mistress Sylvia the dog you bade me.

PROTEUS

And what says she to my little jewel?

LANCE

Marry, she says your dog was a cur, and tells  
you currish thanks is good enough for such a present.

PROTEUS

But she received my dog?

LANCE

No, indeed, did she not. Here have I brought  
him back again.

PROTEUS

What, didst thou offer her this from me?

LANCE

Ay, sir. The other squirrel was stolen from me  
by the hangman's boys in the market-place, and  
then I offered her mine own, who is a dog as big as  
ten of yours, and therefore the gift the greater.

PROTEUS

Go, get thee hence, and find my dog again,  
Or ne'er return again into my sight.  
Away, I say. Stayest thou to vex me here?

*(Lance exits with Crab)*

A slave that still an end turns me to shame.  
Sebastian, I have entertainèd thee,  
Partly that I have need of such a youth  
That can with some discretion do my business—  
For 'tis no trusting to yond foolish lout—  
But chiefly for thy face and thy behavior,  
Which, if my augury deceive me not,  
Witness good bringing-up, fortune, and truth.  
Therefore, know thou, for this I entertain thee.  
Go presently, and take this ring with thee;  
Deliver it to Madam Sylvia.  
She loved me well delivered it to me.

*(He gives her a ring.)*

JULIA

It seems you loved not her, to leave her token.  
She is dead belike?

PROTEUS

Not so; I think she lives.

JULIA

Alas!

PROTEUS

Why dost thou cry "Alas"?

JULIA

I cannot choose but pity her.

PROTEUS

Wherefore shouldst thou pity her?

JULIA

Because methinks that she loved you as well  
As you do love your lady Sylvia.  
She dreams on him that has forgot her love;  
You dote on her that cares not for your love.  
'Tis pity love should be so contrary,  
And thinking on it makes me cry "Alas."

PROTEUS

Well, give her that ring and therewithal this letter. *(He gives her a paper)*  
Your errand done, hie home unto my chamber,  
Where thou shalt find me sad and solitary.  
*(Proteus exits)*

JULIA

How many women would do such a message?  
Alas, poor Proteus, thou hast entertained  
A fox to be the shepherd of thy lambs.  
Alas, poor fool, why do I pity him  
That with his very heart despiseth me?  
Because he loves her, he despiseth me;  
Because I love him, I must pity him.  
This ring I gave him when he parted from me,  
To bind him to remember my good will;  
And now am I, unhappy messenger,  
To plead for that which I would not obtain,  
To carry that which I would have refused,  
To praise his faith, which I would have dispraised.  
I am my master's true confirmèd love,  
But cannot be true servant to my master  
Unless I prove false traitor to myself.  
Yet will I woo for him, but yet so coldly  
As—Heaven it knows!—I would not have him speed.

*(Enter Sylvia)*

JULIA

Gentlewoman, good day. I pray you be my mean  
To bring me where to speak with Madam Sylvia.

SYLVIA

What would you with her, if that I be she?

JULIA

If you be she, I do entreat your patience  
To hear me speak the message I am sent on.

SYLVIA

From whom?

JULIA

From my master, Sir Proteus.  
Madam, please you peruse this letter. *(She gives it to Sylvia)*  
Pardon me, madam, I have unadvised  
Delivered you a paper that I should not.  
This is the letter to your Ladyship.  
*(She takes back the first paper and hands Sylvia another.)*

SYLVIA

I pray thee, let me look on that again.

JULIA

It may not be; good madam, pardon me.

SYLVIA

There, hold. I will not look upon your master's lines;  
I know they are stuffed with protestations  
And full of new-found oaths, which he will break  
As easily as I do tear his paper.

*(She tears the second paper)*

JULIA

Madam, he sends your Ladyship this ring. *(She offers Sylvia a ring.)*

SYLVIA

The more shame for him, that he sends it me;  
For I have heard him say a thousand times  
His Julia gave it him at his departure.  
Though his false finger have profaned the ring,  
Mine shall not do his Julia so much wrong.

JULIA

She thanks you.

SYLVIA  
What sayst thou?

JULIA  
I thank you, madam, that you tender her;  
Poor gentlewoman, my master wrongs her much.

SYLVIA  
Dost thou know her?

JULIA  
Almost as well as I do know myself.  
To think upon her woes, I do protest  
That I have wept a hundred several times.

SYLVIA  
Belike she thinks that Proteus hath forsook her?

JULIA  
I think she doth, and that's her cause of sorrow.

SYLVIA  
Is she not passing fair?

JULIA,  
She hath been fairer, madam, than she is;

SYLVIA  
How tall is she?

JULIA  
About my stature; for at Pentecost,  
When all our pageants of delight were played,  
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,  
And I was trimmed in Madam Julia's gown,  
Which served me as fit, by all men's judgments,  
As if the garment had been made for me;  
Therefore I know she is about my height.  
And at that time I made her weep agoon,  
For I did play a lamentable part;  
Which I so lively acted with my tears  
That my poor mistress, movèd therewithal,  
Wept bitterly; and would I might be dead  
If I in thought felt not her very sorrow.

SYLVIA  
She is beholding to thee, gentle youth.  
Alas, poor lady, desolate and left!  
I weep myself to think upon thy words.  
Here, youth, there is my purse. *(She gives Julia a purse.)*  
I give thee this for thy sweet mistress' sake,  
because thou lov'st her. Farewell.

JULIA

And she shall thank you for 't if e'er you meet her.

*(Sylvia exits.)*

A virtuous gentlewoman, mild and beautiful.

I hope my master's suit will be but cold,

Alas, how love can trifle with itself!

What should it be that he respects in her

But I can make respect in myself

Oh, if this fond Love were not a blinded god?

*(She exits)*

## **ACT 5**

### **Scene 1**

*(Enter Eglamour.)*

EGLAMOUR

The sun begins to gild the western sky,  
And now it is about the very hour  
That Sylvia at Friar Patrick's cell should meet me.  
She will not fail, for lovers break not hours,  
Unless it be to come before their time,  
So much they spur their expedition.

*(Enter Sylvia)*

See where she comes.—Lady, a happy evening.

SYLVIA

Amen, amen. Go on, good Eglamour,  
Out at the postern by the abbey wall.  
I fear I am attended by some spies.

EGLAMOUR

Fear not. The forest is not three leagues off;  
If we recover that, we are sure enough.

*(They exit.)*

### **Scene 2**

*(Enter Thurio, Proteus, and Julia, disguised as Sebastian.)*

THURIO

Sir Proteus, what says Sylvia to my suit?

PROTEUS

O sir, I find her milder than she was,  
And yet she takes exceptions at your person.

THURIO

What? That my leg is too long?

PROTEUS

No, that it is too little.

THURIO

I'll wear a boot to make it somewhat rounder.

JULIA *(aside)*

But love will not be spurred to what it loathes.

THURIO  
How likes she my discourse?

PROTEUS  
Ill, when you talk of war.

THURIO  
But well when I discourse of love and peace.

JULIA (*aside*)  
But better, indeed, when you hold your peace.

THURIO  
What says she to my valor?

PROTEUS  
O, sir, she makes no doubt of that.

JULIA (*aside*)  
She needs not when she knows it cowardice.

THURIO  
What says she to my birth?

PROTEUS  
That you are well derived.

JULIA (*aside*)  
True, from a gentleman to a fool.

THURIO  
Considers she my possessions?

PROTEUS  
O, ay, and pities them.

THURIO  
Wherefore?

JULIA (*aside*)  
That such an ass should own them.

PROTEUS  
That they are out by lease.

JULIA  
Here comes the Duke.

(*Enter Duke*)

DUKE  
How now, Sir Proteus?—How now, Thurio? Which of you saw Eglamour of late?

THURIO  
Not I.

PROTEUS  
Nor I.

DUKE  
Saw you my daughter?

PROTEUS  
Neither.

DUKE  
Why, then, she's fled unto that peasant, Valentine,  
And Eglamour is in her company.  
'Tis true, for Friar Lawrence met them both  
As he, in penance, wandered through the forest;  
Him he knew well and guessed that it was she,  
But, being masked, he was not sure of it.  
Besides, she did intend confession  
At Patrick's cell this even, and there she was not.  
These likelihoods confirm her flight from hence.  
Therefore I pray you stand not to discourse,  
But mount you presently and meet with me  
Upon the rising of the mountain foot  
That leads toward Mantua, whither they are fled.  
Dispatch, sweet gentlemen, and follow me.

*(He exits)*

THURIO  
Why, this it is to be a peevish girl  
That flies her fortune when it follows her.  
I'll after, more to be revenged on Eglamour  
Than for the love of reckless Sylvia.

*(He exits)*

PROTEUS  
And I will follow, more for Sylvia's love  
Than hate of Eglamour that goes with her.

*(He exits)*

JULIA  
And I will follow, more to cross that love  
Than hate for Sylvia, that is gone for love.

*(She exits)*

### Scene 3

*(Enter Sylvia and Outlaws)*

*(Props: Julia has two rings. Sylvia could have a rope tying her hands.)*

FIRST OUTLAW

Come, come, be patient. We must bring you to our captain.

SYLVIA

A thousand more mischances than this one  
Have learned me how to brook this patiently.

SECOND OUTLAW

Come, bring her away.

FIRST OUTLAW

Where is the gentleman that was with her?

THIRD OUTLAW

After battle and seeing himself outnumbered  
Being nimble-footed, he hath outrun us,  
But Moyses and Valerius follow him.  
Go thou with her to the west end of the wood;  
There is our captain. We'll follow him that's fled.  
The thicket is beset; he cannot 'scape.

*(Second and Third Outlaws exit.)*

FIRST OUTLAW

Come, I must bring you to our captain's cave.  
Fear not; he bears an honorable mind  
And will not use a woman lawlessly.

SYLVIA

O Valentine, this I endure for thee!

*(They exit)*

### Scene 4

*(Enter Valentine)*

VALENTINE

How use doth breed a habit in a man!  
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,  
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns;  
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,  
And to the nightingale's complaining notes  
Tune my distresses and record my woes.  
O thou that dost inhabit in my breast,  
Leave not the mansion so long tenantless  
Lest, growing ruinous, the building fall

And leave no memory of what it was.  
Repair me with thy presence, Sylvia;  
Thou gentle nymph, cherish thy forlorn swain.

*(Shouting and sounds of fighting.)*

What hallowing and what stir is this today?  
These my mates, that make their wills their law,  
Have some unhappy traveler in chase.  
They love me well, yet I have much to do  
To keep them from uncivil outrages.  
Withdraw thee, Valentine. Who's comes here?

*(He steps aside)*

*(Enter Proteus, Sylvia, and Julia, disguised as Sebastian.)*

PROTEUS

Madam, this service I have done for you—  
Though you respect not aught your servant doth—  
To hazard life, and rescue you from these men  
That would have forced your honor and your love.  
Vouchsafe me for my reward but one fair look;  
A smaller boon than this I cannot beg,  
And less than this I am sure you cannot give.

VALENTINE *(aside)*

How like a dream is this I see and hear!  
Love, lend me patience to forbear awhile.

SYLVIA

O miserable, unhappy that I am!

PROTEUS

Unhappy were you, madam, ere I came,  
But by my coming, I have made you happy.

SYLVIA

By thy approach thou mak'st me most unhappy.

JULIA *(aside)*

And me, when he approacheth to your presence.

SYLVIA

Had I been seizèd by a hungry lion,  
I would have been a breakfast to the beast  
Rather than have false Proteus rescue me.  
O heaven, be judge how I love Valentine,  
Whose life's as tender to me as my soul;  
And full as much, for more there cannot be,  
I do detest false perjured Proteus.  
Therefore begone; solicit me no more.

PROTEUS

What dangerous action, stood it next to death,  
Would I not undergo for one calm look!  
O, 'tis the curse in love, and still approved,  
When women cannot love where they're beloved.

SYLVIA

When Proteus cannot love where he's beloved.  
Read over Julia's heart, thy first best love,  
For whose dear sake thou didst then rend thy faith  
Into a thousand oaths; and all those oaths  
Descended into perjury to love me.  
Thou hast no faith left now,  
Thou counterfeit to thy true friend!

PROTEUS

In love, who respects friend?

SYLVIA

All men but Proteus.

PROTEUS

Nay, if the gentle spirit of moving words  
Can no way change you to a milder form,  
I'll woo you like a soldier, at arms' end,

*(He moves slowly toward Sylvia)*

SYLVIA *(she shrinks back)*

O, heaven!

VALENTINE *(rushes in with sword to save Sylvia)*

Ruffian, come not near her that I love,  
Thou friend of an ill fashion.

*(They fight with swords; Valentine in a rage defeats him and puts his sword point at his throat.)*

PROTEUS Valentine!

VALENTINE

Thou common friend, that's without faith or love,  
For such is a friend now. Treacherous man,  
Thou hast beguiled my hopes; nought but mine eye  
Could have persuaded me. Now I dare not say  
I have one friend alive; thou wouldst disprove me.  
Who should be trusted when one's right hand  
Is perjured to the bosom? Proteus,  
I am sorry I must never trust thee more,  
But count the world a stranger for thy sake.  
The private wound is deepest.  
O, time most accursed,  
'Mongst all foes that a friend should be the worst!

PROTEUS *(falls to his knees)*  
My shame and guilt confounds me.  
Forgive me, Valentine. If hearty sorrow  
Be a sufficient ransom for offense,  
I tender 't here. I do as truly suffer  
As e'er I did commit.

VALENTINE

*(In a rage, he wheels his sword and puts it again on Proteus' throat. He is on the verge of killing him when Sylvia shouts "Valentine", comes beside him and takes his free hand in hers. She could turn him to face her and kiss him. This calms him and he relents. Though he is still very dubious.)*

Then I am paid,  
Who by repentance is not satisfied  
Is not of heaven nor Earth, for these are pleased;  
By penitence th' Eternal's wrath is appeased.  
And that my love may appear plain and free,  
All that is mine in Sylvia *(he kisses her hand)* I wish for thee.

JULIA *(she swoons)*  
O me!

PROTEUS

Look to the boy.

VALENTINE *(goes to Julia)*  
Why, boy! Why, wag, how now?  
What's the matter? Look up. Speak.

JULIA

O, good sir, my master charged me to deliver a ring to Madam Sylvia,  
which out of my neglect was never done.

PROTEUS

Where is that ring, boy?

JULIA

Here 'tis; this is it. *(She hands him a ring)*

PROTEUS

How, let me see.  
Why, this is the ring I gave to Julia.

JULIA

O, cry you mercy, sir, I have mistook.  
This is the ring you sent to Sylvia.  
*(She offers another ring)*

PROTEUS

But how cam'st thou by this ring?  
At my depart I gave this unto Julia.

JULIA

And Julia herself did give it me,  
And Julia herself hath brought it hither.  
*(She reveals herself.)*

PROTEUS

How? Julia!

JULIA

Behold her that gave aim to all thy oaths  
And entertained 'em deeply in her heart.  
How oft hast thou with perjury cleft the root!  
O, Proteus, let this habit make thee blush.  
Be thou ashamed that I have took upon me  
Such an immodest raiment, if shame live in a disguise of love.  
It is the lesser blot, modesty finds,  
Women to change their shapes than men their minds.

PROTEUS

"Than men their minds"? 'Tis true.  
O heaven, were man but constant, he were perfect;  
That one error fills him with faults,  
Makes him run through all th' sins;  
Inconstancy falls off ere it begins.  
What is in Sylvia's face but I may spy  
More fresh in Julia's, with a constant eye?

*(Sylvia, the peacemaker, moves to Julia and Proteus and joins their hands.)*

SYLVIA

Come, come, a hand from either.  
Let me be blest to make this happy close.

*(She then goes to Valentine, brings him to Proteus and brings them together.)*

'And 'twere pity two such friends should be long foes.

*(Proteus offers his hand. Valentine pauses, but then relents and they grasp arms.)*

PROTEUS

Bear witness, heaven, I have my wish forever.

JULIA

And I mine.

*(Enter Thurio, Duke, and Outlaws.)*

OUTLAWS

A prize, a prize, a prize!

VALENTINE

Forbear, forbear, I say. It is my lord the Duke.

*(The Outlaws release the Duke and Thurio)*

Your Grace is welcome to a man disgraced,  
Banished Valentine.

DUKE

Sir Valentine?

THURIO

Yonder is Sylvia, and Sylvia's mine.

VALENTINE *(He instantly jumps in front of Sylvia and grabs his sword hilt in anger)*

Thurio, give back, or else embrace thy death;  
Come not within the measure of my wrath.  
Do not name Sylvia thine;  
I dare thee but to breathe upon my love!

THURIO

Sir Valentine, I care not for her, I.  
I hold him but a fool that will endanger  
His body for a girl that loves him not.  
I claim her not, and therefore she is thine.

DUKE

The more degenerate and base art thou  
To make such means for her as thou hast done,  
And leave her on such slight conditions.—  
Now, by the honor of my ancestry,  
I do applaud thy spirit, Valentine,  
And think thee worthy of an empress' love.  
Know, then, I here forget all former griefs,  
Cancel all grudge, repeal thee home again,  
Plead a new state in thy unrivaled merit,  
To which I thus subscribe: Sir Valentine,  
Thou art a gentleman, and well derived;  
Take thou thy Sylvia, for thou hast deserved her.

VALENTINE

I thank your Grace, the gift hath made me happy.  
I now beseech you, for your daughter's sake,  
To grant one boon that I shall ask of you.

DUKE

I grant it for thine own, whate'er it be.

VALENTINE

These banished men, that I have kept withal,  
Are men endued with worthy qualities.  
Forgive them what they have committed here,

And let them be recalled from their exile;  
They are reformèd, civil, full of good,  
And fit for great employment, worthy lord.

DUKE

Thou hast prevailed; I pardon them and thee.  
Dispose of them as thou know'st their deserts.  
Come, let us go; we will conclude all jars  
With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity.

VALENTINE

And as we walk along, I dare be bold  
With our discourse to make your Grace to smile.  
Pointing to Julia. What think you of this page, my lord?

DUKE

I think the boy hath grace in him; he blushes.

VALENTINE

I warrant you, my lord, more grace than boy.

DUKE

What mean you by that saying?

VALENTINE (*laughing*)

Please you, I'll tell you as we pass along,  
That you will wonder what hath fortunèd.—  
Come, Proteus, 'tis your penance but to hear  
The story of your loves discoverèd.  
That done, our day of marriage shall be yours,  
One feast, one house, one mutual happiness.

**(FINAL DANCE)**