

Prince, Leonato, and Claudio exit.

BENEDICK, *coming forward* This can be no trick. The
conference was sadly borne; they have the truth of
this from Hero; they seem to pity the lady. It seems 225
her affections have their full bent. Love me? Why, it
must be requited! I hear how I am censured. They
say I will bear myself proudly if I perceive the love
come from her. They say, too, that she will rather
die than give any sign of affection. I did never think 230
to marry. I must not seem proud. Happy are they
that hear their detractions and can put them to
mending. They say the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can
bear them witness. And virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot
reprove it. And wise, but for loving me; by my troth, 235
it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of
her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her! I
may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of
wit broken on me because I have railed so long
against marriage, but doth not the appetite alter? A 240
man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot
endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and
these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the
career of his humor? No! The world must be peopled.
When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not 245
think I should live till I were married. Here comes
Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady. I do spy some
marks of love in her.