

All's Well That Ends Well

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SCENE IV. Paris. The KING's palace.

Enter HELENA and Clown

HELENA

My mother greets me kindly; is she well?

Clown

She is not well; but yet she has her health: she's very merry; but yet she is not well: but thanks be given, she's very well and wants nothing i', the world; but yet she is not well.

HELENA

If she be very well, what does she ail, that she's not very well?

Clown

Truly, she's very well indeed, but for two things.

HELENA

What two things?

Clown

One, that she's not in heaven, whither God send her quickly! the other that she's in earth, from whence God send her quickly!

Enter PAROLLES

PAROLLES

Bless you, my fortunate lady!

HELENA

I hope, sir, I have your good will to have mine own good fortunes.

PAROLLES

You had my prayers to lead them on; and to keep them on, have them still. O, my knave, how does my old lady?

Clown

So that you had her wrinkles and I her money,
I would she did as you say.

PAROLLES

Why, I say nothing.

Clown

Marry, you are the wiser man; for many a man's
tongue shakes out his master's undoing: to say
nothing, to do nothing, to know nothing, and to have
nothing, is to be a great part of your title; which
is within a very little of nothing.

PAROLLES

Away! thou'rt a knave.

Clown

You should have said, sir, before a knave thou'rt a
knave; that's, before me thou'rt a knave: this had
been truth, sir.

PAROLLES

Go to, thou art a witty fool; I have found thee.

Clown

Did you find me in yourself, sir? or were you
taught to find me? The search, sir, was profitable;
and much fool may you find in you, even to the
world's pleasure and the increase of laughter.

PAROLLES

A good knave, i' faith, and well fed.
Madam, my lord will go away to-night;
A very serious business calls on him.
The great prerogative and rite of love,
Which, as your due, time claims, he does acknowledge;
But puts it off to a compell'd restraint;
Whose want, and whose delay, is strew'd with sweets,
Which they distil now in the curbed time,
To make the coming hour o'erflow with joy
And pleasure drown the brim.

HELENA

What's his will else?

PAROLLES

That you will take your instant leave o' the king
And make this haste as your own good proceeding,
Strengthen'd with what apology you think
May make it probable need.

HELENA

What more commands he?

PAROLLES

That, having this obtain'd, you presently
Attend his further pleasure.

HELENA

In every thing I wait upon his will.

PAROLLES

I shall report it so.

HELENA

I pray you.

Exit PAROLLES

Come, sirrah.

Exeunt