

Two Gentlemen of Verona

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SCENE II. The same. The DUKE's palace.

Enter DUKE and THURIO

DUKE

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

THURIO

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

DUKE

This weak impress of love is as a figure
Trenched 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, the good conceit I hold of thee--
For thou hast shown some sign of good desert--
Makes me the better to confer with thee.

PROTEUS

Longer than I prove loyal to your grace
Let me not live to look upon your grace.

DUKE

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 her 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 prevail'd, my lord; if I can do it
By ought 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 Silvia 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 composed 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 concert; to their instruments
Tune a deploring dump: 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

And thy advice this night I'll put in practise.
Therefore, sweet Proteus, my direction-giver,
Let us into the city presently
To sort some gentlemen well skill'd 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.

Exeunt