

# Much Ado About Nothing

[Shakespeare homepage](#) | [Much Ado About Nothing](#) | Act 4, Scene 2  
[Previous scene](#) | [Next scene](#)

## SCENE II. A prison.

*Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and Sexton, in gowns; and the Watch, with CONRADE and BORACHIO*

### DOGBERRY

Is our whole dissembly appeared?

### VERGES

O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

### Sexton

Which be the malefactors?

### DOGBERRY

Marry, that am I and my partner.

### VERGES

Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine.

### Sexton

But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

### DOGBERRY

Yea, marry, let them come before me. What is your name, friend?

### BORACHIO

Borachio.

### DOGBERRY

Pray, write down, Borachio. Yours, sirrah?

### CONRADE

I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

### DOGBERRY

Write down, master gentleman Conrade. Masters, do you serve God?

**CONRADE BORACHIO**

Yea, sir, we hope.

**DOGBERRY**

Write down, that they hope they serve God: and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

**CONRADE**

Marry, sir, we say we are none.

**DOGBERRY**

A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you: but I will go about with him. Come you hither, sirrah; a word in your ear: sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

**BORACHIO**

Sir, I say to you we are none.

**DOGBERRY**

Well, stand aside. 'Fore God, they are both in a tale. Have you writ down, that they are none?

**Sexton**

Master constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

**DOGBERRY**

Yea, marry, that's the eetest way. Let the watch come forth. Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

**First Watchman**

This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

**DOGBERRY**

Write down Prince John a villain. Why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

**BORACHIO**

Master constable,--

**DOGBERRY**

Pray thee, fellow, peace: I do not like thy look,  
I promise thee.

**Sexton**

What heard you him say else?

**Second Watchman**

Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of  
Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully.

**DOGBERRY**

Flat burglary as ever was committed.

**VERGES**

Yea, by mass, that it is.

**Sexton**

What else, fellow?

**First Watchman**

And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to  
disgrace Hero before the whole assembly. and not marry her.

**DOGBERRY**

O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting  
redemption for this.

**Sexton**

What else?

**Watchman**

This is all.

**Sexton**

And this is more, masters, than you can deny.  
Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away;  
Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner  
refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died.  
Master constable, let these men be bound, and  
brought to Leonato's: I will go before and show  
him their examination.

*Exit*

**DOGBERRY**

Come, let them be opinioned.

**VERGES**

Let them be in the hands--

**CONRADE**

Off, coxcomb!

**DOGBERRY**

God's my life, where's the sexton? let him write  
down the prince's officer coxcomb. Come, bind them.  
Thou naughty varlet!

**CONRADE**

Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

**DOGBERRY**

Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not  
suspect my years? O that he were here to write me  
down an ass! But, masters, remember that I am an  
ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not  
that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of  
piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness.  
I am a wise fellow, and, which is more, an officer,  
and, which is more, a householder, and, which is  
more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in  
Messina, and one that knows the law, go to; and a  
rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath  
had losses, and one that hath two gowns and every  
thing handsome about him. Bring him away. O that  
I had been writ down an ass!

*Exeunt*

