

Much Ado About Nothing

Audition Materials

For Auditions:

Please prepare a Shakespearean monologue. It need not come from Much Ado About Nothing!

Provided below are some monologues from the show you may choose from.

BEATRICE

Here Beatrice demands that Benedick kills Claudio for shaming and killing her cousin with slander.

Kill Claudio! You kill me to deny it. Farewell. I am gone, though I am here: there is no love in you: nay, I pray you, let me go. In faith, I will go. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with my enemy. Is Claudio not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! What, bear her in hand until they come to take hands; and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour, – O, God that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place. Talk with a man out at window! A proper saying! Sweet Hero! She is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone. Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect; a sweet gallant surely! O that I were a man for his sake! Or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

BENEDICK

After overhearing that Beatrice has feelings for him, he convinces himself his own feelings are legitimate.

This can be no trick. The conference was serious;
from Hero they have this. Love me? Why?
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 to marry. I must not seem proud.
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,
it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of
her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her!
Some shots may be fired my way because I have railed so long
against marriage, but doth not the appetite alter?
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.

CLAUDIO

At the altar, Claudio rejects Hero, believing false rumors that she has been unchaste with another man.

There, Leonato, take her back again:
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!
O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed;
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

HERO

Hero says this knowing Beatrice can hear her, in the hopes to gull her into giving Benedick a chance.

Why, you speak truth. I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featured,
But she would spell him backward. If fair-faced,
She would swear the gentleman should be her sister;
If he were tall she'd dub him a lance ill-headed;
If low, an agate very vilely cut.
So turns she every man the wrong side out,
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth...
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air. O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like covered fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly.
It were a better death than die with mocks.

DON JOHN

In his introductory scene, Don John tells his confidante what he's all about..

I cannot hide
what I am: I must be sad when I have cause and smile
at no man's jests, eat when I have stomach and wait
for no man's leisure, sleep when I am drowsy and
tend on no man's business, laugh when I am merry and
claw no man in his humour...

I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in
his grace, and it better fits my blood to be
disdained of all than to fashion a carriage to rob
love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to
be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied
but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with
a muzzle and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I
have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my
mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do
my liking: in the meantime let me be that I am and
seek not to alter me.