

William Shakespeare's

Much Ado About Nothing

Level 3



At the Palace



Beatrice and Benedick carry on a war of their own - a war with words!

- Preview:**
1. Read the name of the story.
 2. Look at the picture.
 3. Read the sentence under the picture.
 4. Read the first paragraph of the story.
 5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that

- ☐ a. things are quiet around the palace.
- ☐ b. an old man is visiting the palace.
- ☐ c. Don John tries hard to like his brother.
- ☐ d. the war is over.

Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.

Now read the story.

Read to find out how Don John plans to get back at his brother.

A Surprise for Benedick

Benedick walked out into the lovely palace gardens. He was happy to be away from the rest of the group for a while. Above all, it was good being away from Beatrice. He got tired of her tongue that never stopped poking fun at him.

A young boy was in the garden, too. "Boy!" shouted Benedick. "Bring me the book on the shelf in my room. I want to read a bit." The boy ran to get the book off the shelf.

Just then Don Pedro, Leonato, and Claudio came into the garden. A singer named Balthasar, and a group of music makers were with them.

"Let's hear some music," Don Pedro said to the men. "Sing us a song, Balthasar."

Balthasar, who was a bit shy, answered, "Oh, I don't feel like singing right now. Maybe I'll sing a little later."

"Come, come, Balthasar," said Don Pedro, "we want to hear a song. You wouldn't want me to spoil the music with my voice," he said, laughing.

As Balthasar was getting ready to sing, Don Pedro whispered to Claudio. "Go see if you can find where Benedick is hiding. We want to be sure he can hear us when we talk about Beatrice."

Claudio took a walk through the garden. He saw where Benedick sat reading. He quietly returned to the group. He whispered that Benedick was nearby.

"Balthasar, we want to hear you sing, *now*," said Don Pedro. So Balthasar sang a love song.

Benedick heard the singing. *Balthasar sounds like a sick dog*, he thought to himself.

When the song was over, Balthasar and his music makers left the garden.

Claudio whispered to Don Pedro, "Let's raise our voices now. Benedick is nearby. He will hear us talking if we're loud enough." In a loud voice Claudio said, **"I did not think that Beatrice could love any man."**

"I am surprised too," said Leonato. **"And to think that she's in love with Benedick! One would never guess it by the way she talks."**

From his corner of the garden, Benedick's hands trembled. He dropped the book he was reading. He listened carefully at the words that would come next.

"I think she is trying to cover up her feelings," said Don Pedro.

"I never thought Beatrice could have any feelings," replied Claudio.

Leonato iced the cake. **"I heard it from my own daughter,"** he said. **"Hero saw Beatrice writing a letter to Benedick, but then she tore up the letter. When Beatrice wasn't looking, Hero put the pieces together. The letter told of her love for Benedick. I guess she couldn't bear to tell him what was in her heart. That's why she tore the letter. Beatrice is really a dear lady. Shall we go find Benedick and tell him of Beatrice's love?"**

"Never," replied Claudio. **"Benedick will just make fun of Beatrice. That will surely break her heart. Benedick is a good man. But he does not deserve one as kind and loving as Beatrice."**

"And Beatrice does not deserve someone who won't love her in return," said Don Pedro.

"Come, it's time for dinner," said Leonato, and they left the garden, smiling.

Benedick's heart was pounding. *This cannot be a trick*, he thought to himself. *I trust what Hero says. But is it really true that Beatrice loves me? What a fool I have been not to have seen it! If this is really so, I must find a way to make it up to her. I never thought I would marry. But maybe it is time for a change. Oh, I see the lovely Beatrice coming now.*

Beatrice walked through the garden and found Benedick. "Benedick, against my will I was sent to call you to dinner."

"Dear Beatrice," began Benedick, "I thank you for your trouble."

"It is no trouble," Beatrice answered. "If it were a trouble, I surely would not have come." And with her nose in the air, Beatrice hurried away.

"Hmmm, 'against my will,' she said. She must be trying to cover up her love for me.

Then he hurried off to dinner.

Caught!

COMPREHENSION CHECK

Choose the best answer.

Preview Answer:

d. tired.

1. Dogberry's men were on watch to guard
 - ☐ a. Leonato.
 - ☐ b. the wedding party.
 - ☐ c. the Prince and his guests.
 - ☐ d. Don John and Borachio.
2. Dogberry's men were to watch for anyone
 - ☐ a. talking.
 - ☐ b. whistling.
 - ☐ c. making mischief.
 - ☐ d. making music.
3. Who did the officers on watch see coming toward them?
 - ☐ a. Borachio and Conrade
 - ☐ b. Borachio and Don John
 - ☐ c. Borachio and Don Pedro
 - ☐ d. Leonato and his daughter
4. Borachio told his friend that he made a lot of money
 - ☐ a. working for rich people.
 - ☐ b. working for Dogberry.
 - ☐ c. taking care of the palace gardens.
 - ☐ d. playing a bad trick on Claudio.
5. Borachio
 - ☐ a. was very kind to everyone.
 - ☐ b. was not a nice man.
 - ☐ c. was a very wise man.
 - ☐ d. didn't have many friends.
6. The officers on watch took Borachio and Conrade to Dogberry. Dogberry then
 - ☐ a. took them to see Leonato.
 - ☐ b. took them to see the Prince.
 - ☐ c. took them to see Claudio.
 - ☐ d. locked them up.
7. When Dogberry and another officer went to see Leonato to tell him what Borachio had done,
 - ☐ a. Leonato was not pleased to see them.
 - ☐ b. Leonato was glad to see them.
 - ☐ c. Leonato had them locked up.
 - ☐ d. Leonato asked them in for a drink.
8. Leonato did not have time to listen to Dogberry's story because
 - ☐ a. it was late and he was going to sleep.
 - ☐ b. he was having a dinner party.
 - ☐ c. he was getting ready for his daughter's wedding.
 - ☐ d. he was going somewhere with the Prince.
9. Another name for this story could be
 - ☐ a. "Time in a Bottle."
 - ☐ b. "A Trouble-Maker Gets Caught!"
 - ☐ c. "Wedding Bells for Hero."
 - ☐ d. "How To Earn Easy Money."
10. This story is mainly about
 - ☐ a. how Don John's mean trick was found out.
 - ☐ b. the officers on the night watch.
 - ☐ c. why Margaret had dressed in Hero's clothes.
 - ☐ d. why Borachio and Conrade were locked up.

Check your answers with the key on page 67.

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