

*Falling in Love on Stage**The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act II, sc. 41. *Proteus Meets Silvia*

*Val.* Welcome, dear Proteus.—Mistress, I beseech you  
Confirm his welcome with some special favor. 95

*Sil.* His worth is warrant for his welcome hither,  
If this be he you oft have wished to hear from.

*Val.* Mistress, it is. Sweet lady, entertain him  
To be my fellow-servant to your Ladyship. 100

*Sil.* Too low a mistress for so high a servant.

*Prot.* Not so, sweet lady, but too mean a servant  
To have a look of such a worthy mistress.

*Val.* Leave off discourse of disability.  
Sweet lady, entertain him for your servant. 105

*Prot.* My duty will I boast of, nothing else.

*Sil.* And duty never yet did want his meed.  
Servant, you are welcome to a worthless mistress.

*Prot.* I'll die on him that says so but yourself.

*Sil.* That you are welcome?

*Prot.* That you are worthless. 110

*[Enter Servant.]*

*Servant.* Madam, my lord your father would speak with you.

*Sil.* I wait upon his pleasure. *[Servant exits.]*

Come, Sir Thurio,

Go with me.—Once more, new servant, welcome.

I'll leave you to confer of home affairs.

When you have done, we look to hear from you. 115

*Prot.* We'll both attend upon your Ladyship.

*[Sylvia and Thurio exit.]*

2. *Proteus and Valentine*

*Val.* Now tell me, how do all from whence you came?

*Prot.* Your friends are well and have them much commended.

*Val.* And how do yours?

*Prot.* I left them all in health.

*Val.* How does your lady? And how thrives your love? 120

*Prot.* My tales of love were wont to weary you.

I know you joy not in a love discourse.

*Val.* Ay, Proteus, but that life is altered now.

I have done penance for contemning Love,

Whose high imperious thoughts have punished me 125  
 With bitter fasts, with penitential groans,  
 With nightly tears, and daily heartsore sighs,  
 For in revenge of my contempt of love,  
 Love hath chased sleep from my enthralled eyes  
 And made them watchers of mine own heart's sorrow. 130  
 O gentle Proteus, Love's a mighty lord  
 And hath so humbled me as I confess  
 There is no woe to his correction,  
 Nor, to his service, no such joy on Earth.  
 Now, no discourse except it be of love. 135  
 Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep  
 Upon the very naked name of Love.

### 3. *Proteus and Valentine About Silvia*

*Prot.* Enough; I read your fortune in your eye.  
 Was this the idol that you worship so?  
*Val.* Even she. And is she not a heavenly saint? 140  
*Prot.* No, but she is an earthly paragon.  
*Val.* Call her divine.  
*Prot.* I will not flatter her.  
*Val.* O, flatter me, for love delights in praises.  
*Prot.* When I was sick, you gave me bitter pills,  
 And I must minister the like to you. 145  
*Val.* Then speak the truth by her; if not divine,  
 Yet let her be a principality,  
 Sovereign to all the creatures on the Earth.  
*Prot.* Except my mistress.  
*Val.* Sweet, except not any,  
 Except thou wilt except against my love. 150  
*Prot.* Have I not reason to prefer mine own?  
*Val.* And I will help thee to prefer her too:  
 She shall be dignified with this high honor--  
 To bear my lady's train, lest the base earth  
 Should from her vesture chance to steal a kiss 155  
 And, of so great a favor growing proud,  
 Disdain to root the summer-swellings flower  
 And make rough winter everlastingly.  
*Prot.* Why, Valentine, what braggartism is this?  
*Val.* Pardon me, Proteus, all I can is nothing 160  
 To her whose worth makes other worthies nothing.  
 She is alone--  
*Prot.* Then let her alone.

## 6. *Elopement and Marriage*

*Val.* Not for the world! Why, man, she is mine own,  
And I as rich in having such a jewel 165  
As twenty seas if all their sand were pearl,  
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.  
Forgive me that I do not dream on thee,  
Because thou seest me dote upon my love.  
My foolish rival, that her father likes 170  
Only for his possessions are so huge,  
Is gone with her along, and I must after,  
For love, thou know'st, is full of jealousy.

*Prot.* But she loves you?

*Val.* Ay, and we are betrothed; nay more, our marriage hour, 175  
With all the cunning manner of our flight  
Determined of: how I must climb her window,  
The ladder made of cords, and all the means  
Plotted and 'greed on for my happiness.  
Good Proteus, go with me to my chamber, 180  
In these affairs to aid me with thy counsel.

*Prot.* Go on before. I shall inquire you forth.  
I must unto the road to disembark  
Some necessaries that I needs must use,  
And then I'll presently attend you. 185

*Val.* Will you make haste?

## 7. *Proteus Alone*

*Prot.* I will. [*Valentine and Speed exit.*]  
Even as one heat another heat expels,  
Or as one nail by strength drives out another, 190  
So the remembrance of my former love  
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.  
Is it mine eye, or Valentine's praise,  
Her true perfection, or my false transgression,  
That makes me reasonless to reason thus?  
She is fair, and so is Julia that I love-- 195  
That I did love, for now my love is thawed,  
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire  
Bears no impression of the thing it was.  
Methinks my zeal to Valentine is cold,  
And that I love him not as I was wont. 200  
O, but I love his lady too too much,  
And that's the reason I love him so little.  
How shall I dote on her with more advice  
That thus without advice begin to love her?  
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld, 205

And that hath dazzled my reason's light;  
But when I look on her perfections,  
There is no reason but I shall be blind.  
If I can check my erring love, I will;  
If not, to compass her I'll use my skill. [*He exits.*]

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*Advice for Lovers from Proteus*

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act II, sc. 4*

*Prot.* But you, Sir Thurio, are not sharp enough.  
You must lay lime to tangle her desires  
By wailful sonnets, whose composèd rhymes  
Should be full-fraught with serviceable vows. 70

*Duke.* Ay, much is the force of heaven-bred poesy.

*Prot.* 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 75  
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. 80

After your dire-lamenting elegies,  
Visit by night your lady's chamber window  
With some sweet consort; to their instruments  
Tune a deploring dump; the night's dead silence  
Will well become such sweet complaining grievance 85  
This, or else nothing, will inherit her.

*Duke.* This discipline shows thou hast been in love.

*Thu.* And thy advice this night I'll put in practice.  
Therefore, sweet Proteus, my direction-giver, 90  
Let us into the city presently  
To sort some gentlemen well-skilled in music.  
I have a sonnet that will serve the turn  
To give the onset to thy good advice.

*Duke.* About it, gentlemen. 95

*Prot.* We'll wait upon your Grace till after supper  
And afterward determine our proceedings.

*Duke.* Even now about it! I will pardon you.