Claudio.
My liege, your highness now may do me good.
Hath Leonata any son, my lord?

Don Pedro.
No child but Hero; she’s the only heir. Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

Claudio.
O, my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look’d upon her with a soldier’s eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand
Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return’d and that war-thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars.

Don Pedro.
Thou wilt be like a lover presently
And tire the hearer with a book of words.
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,
I know we shall have reveling to-night:   [Borachio enters unnoticed and eavesdrops.]
I will assume thy part in some disguise
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio,
And in her bosom I’ll unclasp my heart
And take her hearing prisoner with the force
And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then after to her mother will I break; [Exit Borachio]
And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.
In practice let us put it presently.   [Exeunt]

[1.2] [Enter DONNA ANNA and CONSTANCE]

Constance.
What the good-year, my lady! why are you thus out of measure sad?

Donna Anna.
There is no measure in the occasion that breeds sadness; therefore the sadness is without limit.

Constance.
You should hear reason.

Donna Anna.
And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

Constance.
If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance.

Donna Anna.
I wonder that thou go about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am:
I must be sad when I have cause and smile at no one’s jests, eat when I have stomach and wait for no
one’s leisure, sleep when I am drowsy and tend on no one’s business, laugh when I am merry and claw no man in his humor.

**Constance.**
Yea, but you must not make the full show of this till you may do it without controlment. You have of late warred against your brother, and he hath ta’en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true root, but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

**Donna Anna.**
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 rob love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest woman, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle; 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.

**Constance.**
Can you make no use of your discontent?

**Donna Anna.**
I make all use of it, for I use it only. Who comes here? [Enter BORACHIO] What news, Borachio?

**Borachio.**
I came yonder from a great supper: the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonata: and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

**Donna Anna.**
Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

**Borachio.**
Marry, it is your brother’s right hand.

**Donna Anna.**
Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

**Borachio.**
Even he.

**Donna Anna.**
A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

**Borachio.**
Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonata.

**Donna Anna.**
A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

**Borachio.**
Being by the doorway, comes me the prince and Claudio, in sad conference: I whipt me behind the curtain; and there heard it agreed upon that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to Count Claudio.

**Donna Anna.**
Come, come, let us thither: this may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

**Constance.**
To the death, my lady.