

Act 1 Scene 3 (edited)

COUNTESS

I say, I am your mother.

HELENA

Pardon, madam;
The Count Rousillon cannot be my brother:
My master, my dear lord he is; and I
His servant live, and will his vassal die:
He must not be my brother.

COUNTESS

Nor I your mother?

HELENA

You are my mother, madam; would you were,—
So that my lord your son were not my brother,—
Indeed my mother! or were you both our mothers,
So I were not his sister. Can't no other,
But, I your daughter, he must be my brother?

COUNTESS

You love my son; invention is ashamed,
Against the proclamation of thy passion,
To say thou dost not. Speak, is't so?

HELENA

Good madam, pardon me!

COUNTESS

Do you love my son?

HELENA

Your pardon, noble mistress!

COUNTESS

Love you my son?

HELENA

Do not you love him, madam?

COUNTESS

Go not about; my love hath in't a bond,
Whereof the world takes note: come, come, disclose
The state of your affection.

HELENA

Then, I confess,
Here on my knee, before high heaven and you,
That before you, and next unto high heaven,
I love your son.
Be not offended; for it hurts not him
That he is loved of me: I follow him not
By any token of presumptuous suit;
I know I love in vain, strive against hope;
My dearest madam,
Let not your hate encounter with my love
For loving where you do: but if yourself,
To her, whose state is such that cannot choose
But lend and give where she is sure to lose!

Act 2 Scene 3 (edited)

KING

Why, then, young Bertram, take her; she's thy wife.

BERTRAM

My wife, my liege! I shall beseech your highness,
In such a business give me leave to use
The help of mine own eyes.

KING

Know'st thou not, Bertram,
What she has done for me?

BERTRAM

Yes, my good lord;
But never hope to know why I should marry her.

KING

Thou know'st she has raised me from my sickly bed.

BERTRAM

But follows it, my lord, to bring me down
Must answer for your raising? I know her well:
She had her breeding at my father's charge.
A poor physician's daughter my wife! Disdain
Rather corrupt me ever!

KING

'Tis only title thou disdain'st in her, the which

I can build up. She is young, wise, fair;
In these to nature she's immediate heir,
And these breed honour: What should be said?
If thou canst like this creature as a maid,
I can create the rest: virtue and she
Is her own dower; honour and wealth from me.

BERTRAM

I cannot love her, nor will strive to do't.

KING

My honour's at the stake; which to defeat,
I must produce my power. Here, take her hand,
Proud scornful boy. Check thy contempt:
Or I will throw thee from my care for ever
Into the staggers and the careless lapse
Of youth and ignorance; both my revenge and hate
Loosing upon thee, in the name of justice,
Without all terms of pity. Speak; thine answer.

BERTRAM

Pardon, my gracious lord, I find that she, which late
Was in my nobler thoughts most base, is now
The praised of the king; who, so ennobled,
Is as 'twere born so.

KING

Take her by the hand,
And tell her she is thine.

BERTRAM

I take her hand.

KING

Good fortune and the favour of the king
Smile upon this contract; whose ceremony
Shall be perform'd to-night.