

Much Ado About Nothing

by William Shakespeare

Act 4, sc. 1 (Line 48 - Verse)

Claudio

Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.

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.

[cutting]

O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been,

If half thy outward graces had been placed

About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart!

But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,

Thou pure impiety and impious purity!

For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,

And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang,

To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,

And never shall it more be gracious.