

## **Proteus**

*(Proteus has met and fallen head-over-heels for the beautiful Silvia. Silvia, though, has made plans with Proteus' best friend Valentine to sneak away from her father's house in the dead of night and get married. In this monologue, Proteus betrays his friend Valentine by telling Silvia's father, the Duke, of their plans.)*

My gracious lord, that which I would discover  
The law of friendship bids me to conceal;  
But when I call to mind your gracious favours  
Done to me, undeserving as I am,  
My duty pricks me on to utter that  
Which else no worldly good should draw from me.  
Know, worthy prince, Sir Valentine, my friend,  
This night intends to steal away your daughter:  
Myself am one made privy to the plot.  
I know you have determined to bestow her  
On Thurio, whom your gentle daughter hates;  
And should she thus be stol'n away from you,  
It would be much vexation to your age.  
Thus, for my duty's sake, I rather chose  
To cross my friend in his intended drift  
Than, by concealing it, heap on your head  
A pack of sorrows which would press you down,  
Being unprevented, to your timeless grave.

## Valentine

*(Valentine has been banished from Milan for his plot to sneak away with the Duke's daughter Silvia and marry her against her father's wishes. In this monologue, he considers how unbearable it is to be separated from his true love.)*

And why not death rather than living torment?

To die is to be banish'd from myself;

And Silvia is myself: banish'd from her

Is self from self: a deadly banishment!

What light is light, if Silvia be not seen?

What joy is joy, if Silvia be not by?

Unless it be to think that she is by

And feed upon the shadow of perfection

Except I be by Silvia in the night,

There is no music in the nightingale;

Unless I look on Silvia in the day,

There is no day for me to look upon;

She is my essence, and I leave to be,

If I be not by her fair influence

Foster'd, illumined, cherish'd, kept alive.

I fly not death, to fly his deadly doom:

Tarry I here, I but attend on death:

But, fly I hence, I fly away from life.

## Julia

*(Julia is a beautiful young woman, pursued by many suitors. After a debate with her handmaiden about which gentleman is most worthy of her love, she tries to prove a point by tearing up a love letter from Proteus. In this monologue, she expresses her regret at tearing up such a sweet letter, as she kneels down to pick up each torn-up piece.)*

O hateful hands, to tear such loving words!  
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey  
And kill the bees that yield it with your stings!  
I'll kiss each several paper for amends.  
Look, here is writ 'kind Julia.' Unkind Julia!  
As in revenge of thy ingratitude,  
I throw thy name against the bruising stones,  
Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.  
And here is writ 'love-wounded Proteus.'  
Poor wounded name! my bosom as a bed  
Shall lodge thee till thy wound be thoroughly heal'd;  
And thus I search it with a sovereign kiss.  
But twice or thrice was 'Proteus' written down.  
Be calm, good wind, blow not a word away  
Till I have found each letter in the letter,  
Except mine own name: that some whirlwind bear  
Unto a ragged fearful-hanging rock  
And throw it thence into the raging sea!  
Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ,  
'Poor forlorn Proteus, passionate Proteus,  
To the sweet Julia:' that I'll tear away.  
And yet I will not, sith so prettily  
He couples it to his complaining names.  
Thus will I fold them one on another:  
Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.

## Silvia

*(Silvia has learned that her love, Valentine, has been banished from Milan after her father discovered their plans to run away together against his wishes. In this monologue, she pleads with Eglamour, a member of her father's court, to help her run away to Mantua, where Valentine is living in exile.)*

O Eglamour, thou art a gentleman—  
Think not I flatter, for I swear I do not—  
Valiant, wise, remorseful, well accomplish'd:  
Thou art not ignorant what dear good will  
I bear unto the banish'd Valentine,  
Nor how my father would enforce me marry  
Vain Thurio, whom my very soul abhors.  
Thyself hast loved; and I have heard thee say  
No grief did ever come so near thy heart  
As when thy lady and thy true love died,  
Upon whose grave thou vow'dst pure chastity.  
Sir Eglamour, I would to Valentine,  
To Mantua, where I hear he makes abode;  
And, for the ways are dangerous to pass,  
I do desire thy worthy company,  
Upon whose faith and honour I repose.  
Urge not my father's anger, Eglamour,  
But think upon my grief, a lady's grief,  
And on the justice of my flying hence,  
To keep me from a most unholy match,  
Which heaven and fortune still rewards with plagues.  
I do desire thee, even from a heart  
As full of sorrows as the sea of sands,  
To bear me company and go with me:  
If not, to hide what I have said to thee,  
That I may venture to depart alone.

## Launce

*(Launce, a witty servant to Proteus, sits with his dog Crab, and complains about how his bad behaviour is always getting Launce into trouble. In this monologue, he tells the story of how he brought Crab along to a feast, where the dog promptly stole a chicken leg, and peed on a lady's dress. When a servant threatened to whip Crab out of the chamber, Launce took the blame, and was whipped instead.)*

When a man's servant shall play the cur with him, look you, it goes hard: one that I brought up of a puppy; one that I saved from drowning, when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it. I have taught him, even as one would say precisely, 'thus I would teach a dog.' I was sent to deliver him as a present to Mistress Silvia from my master; and I came no sooner into the dining-chamber but he steps me to her trencher and steals her capon's leg: O, 'tis a foul thing when a cur cannot keep himself in all companies! He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentlemanlike dogs under the duke's table: he had not been there—bless the mark!—a pissing while, but all the chamber smelt him. 'Out with the dog!' says one: 'What cur is that?' says another: 'Whip him out' says the third: 'Hang him up' says the duke. I, having been acquainted with the smell before, knew it was Crab, and goes me to the fellow that whips the dogs: 'Friend,' quoth I, 'you mean to whip the dog?' 'Ay, marry, do I,' quoth he. 'You do him the more wrong,' quoth I; 'twas I did the thing you wot of.' He makes me no more ado, but whips me out of the chamber. How many masters would do this for his servant? Nay, I'll be sworn, I have sat in the stocks for puddings he hath stolen, otherwise he had been executed; I have stood on the pillory for geese he hath killed, otherwise he had suffered for't. Thou thinkest not of this now. Nay, I remember the trick you served me when I took my leave of Madam Silvia: did not I bid thee still mark me and do as I do? when didst thou see me heave up my leg and make water against a gentlewoman's farthingale? didst thou ever see me do such a trick?

## Duke

*(In this monologue, the Duke discovers a letter from Valentine to his daughter Silvia, planning to whisk her away and marry her. Enraged, he decides to banish Valentine from his lands.)*

What letter is this same? What's here? 'To Silvia'!

And here an engine fit for my proceeding.

I'll be so bold to break the seal for once.

*[Reads]*

'My thoughts do harbour with my Silvia nightly,

And slaves they are to me that send them flying:

O, could their master come and go as lightly,

Himself would lodge where senseless they are lying!'

What's here?

'Silvia, this night I will enfranchise thee.'

'Tis so; and here's the ladder for the purpose.

Wilt thou reach stars, because they shine on thee?

Go, base intruder! overweening slave!

Bestow thy fawning smiles on equal mates,

And think my patience, more than thy desert,

Is privilege for thy departure hence:

Thank me for this more than for all the favours

Which all too much I have bestow'd on thee.

But if thou linger in my territories

Longer than swiftest expedition

Will give thee time to leave our royal court,

By heaven! my wrath shall far exceed the love

I ever bore my daughter or thyself.

Be gone! I will not hear thy vain excuse;

But, as thou lovest thy life, make speed from hence.