



TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA – A POTTED SHAKESPEARE

Adapted by Daniel Webster

EXCERPT

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THE POTTED SHAKESPEARE – THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

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CHARACTERS

VALENTINE

PROTEUS

SPEED

JULIA

LUCETTA

LAUNCE

CRAB

SILVIA

DUKE OF MILAN

THRUIO

4 OUTLAWS

VALENTINE If you say so. But for you, love is all-consuming. Look my bus will be here shortly. I'd better get going.

PROTEUS Well think of me on your travels my dear friend. I hope happy – and less boring – times will await you in Milan.

VALENTINE I'll drop you a line with all my news.

They rise. VALENTINE picks up his bag.

PROTEUS I'll do the same, if there is anything interesting to report.

VALENTINE Bye my friend.

They embrace

PROTEUS Take care Valentine.

VALENTINE leaves

There he goes. God, I'll miss him. Fool that he is. I just hope I'm not wasting my time with Julia. Valentine is quite right. I am consumed with you Julia. Oh Julia! Look what you've done to me. I can't think of anything but you. I'm behind with my studies. Lost my appetite. Can't sleep. Can't concentrate on anything. And now, to boot, I've let my best friend leave Verona.

Enter SPEED, running

SPEED Mr Proteus. Mr Proteus.

PROTEUS Why are you always in a hurry Speed?

SPEED It's Mr Valentine. I've lost him.

PROTEUS You've missed him.

SPEED What?

PROTEUS Hey, did you give my letter to Julia?

SPEED Of course.

PROTEUS And what was the answer?

SPEED Sweet nothing. Not even a tip for my troubles. Hint hint.

PROTEUS gives a coin to SPEED

PROTEUS Here. Your Master is taking the bus to Milan. If you go now, you might catch him.

SPEED Thank you Mr Proteus

SPEED rushes off

PROTEUS Patience Proteus. She will respond in her good time. Patience. If only I had some. Oh Julia, please answer me soon!

PROTEUS walks away

JULIA'S HOUSE – VERONA

JULIA is having her hair brushed in front of a mirror by LUCETTA

JULIA Do you think I will ever fall in love Lucetta?

LUCETTA Of course Miss.

JULIA I don't know.

LUCETTA You have a ton of admirers Miss.

JULIA I know, but are any of them any good?

LUCETTA It's not really for me to say, but we can go through the main contenders if you wish and I will tell you what I think.

JULIA Oh, what fun, yes, let's. So, what do you think of Sir Eglamour? Think he is good enough?

LUCETTA He's hot. And a knight. But there's something about him I can't put my finger on. Maybe it's his wonky eye. He's not right for you.

JULIA Ok. What about Mercatio?

LUCETTA Loaded. If you are only interested in money; but I think you want a handsome man as well. Mercatio is a bit of a minger.

JULIA Fair point. What about Proteus? He never stops sending me messages. He is quite shy, but gentle....

LUCETTA And looks to die for. He's the best.

JULIA Although he writes nice notes to me, he always stops short of going too far in his declarations of love. The others never stop.

LUCETTA Ah, it's the quiet ones that you have to watch out for. Oh, I almost forgot. He sent this note via that joker, Speed. Here

LUCETTA hands the note to Julia

JULIA How long have you had this? You should have told me. I'm all of a quiver now. Let me read it.

LUCETTA Sorry Miss. Clean forgot about it.

JULIA starts to read the letter. She smiles. Giggles. Smiles again. Then stops and tears it up and throws it on the floor.

LUCETTA Oh Miss.

JULIA Say nothing. Leave me to my sorrow.

LUCETTA Oh dear. Maybe he isn't right for you.

JULIA I said, say nothing.

LUCETTA You did. Ok. I will say nothing. I just hope...

JULIA Nothing.

LUCETTA Right.

JULIA Go.

LUCETTA Right away.

JULIA GO!

LUCETTA leaves. JULIA checks she has completely gone and then returns to the torn-up letter which she pieces together again. She smiles and giggles.

JULIA 'To my Julia. One whose heart is so true. You are kindness personified with a beauty that transcends nature itself. My mind is in a whirl

when I think of you and dream of spending just one minute with you. May we find time to share and enjoy the pleasures of life itself. Your love-wounded Proteus.'

'Kind', am I? I have been awful to him. Look at what I have done with his letter – is that kindness? No wonder he is wounded, I have ripped him to shreds. Oh I am not worthy of him. I have to make up for it. I will send him a letter myself.
Lucetta. Come here now.

I must show that I am kind.

LUCETTA enters

LUCETTA What's the matter Miss?

JULIA I am going to send a letter to Proteus, will you deliver it for me?

LUCETTA Of course, what are you going to say? Go on, give me all the goss.

JULIA Mind your own business! Now, here we go.

JULIA starts to write the letter.

TOWN SQUARE - VERONA

PROTEUS enters with LAUNCE, his servant, who has his dog CRAB with him.

PROTEUS Life is unfair Launce.

LAUNCE Isn't that right Crab?

PROTEUS Just when you think everything is going your way, something comes and derails you. It's not at all fair.

LAUNCE I couldn't agree more.

PROTEUS As one door opens, so someone bangs it shut in your face.

LAUNCE We know what that's like don't we Crab?

PROTEUS That letter that Julia sent me was sublime. The best letter ever. It will have a place next to my heart. She is coming to meet me, only for me

to have to tell her what my Father is planning. My Father has no heart. He has never loved.

LAUNCE Never?

PROTEUS Well.....it doesn't matter. It's my love that counts. My Julia. Oh, why is love so complicated?

LAUNCE You want to get yourself a dog Sir. Their love is unconditional.

PROTEUS I only want my Julia.

LAUNCE Well, you won't have to wait long, she's on her way now. Look. I'll make myself scarce. Good luck Sir. Come on Crab.