

Much Ado About Nothing By William Shakespeare
Act 2, Scene 1

Beatrice is waiting for the evening masked ball with her cousin Hero, Antonio and Leonato. They are talking about their perfect man and whether Beatrice will ever get married. She happily mocks the others for suggesting the idea.

BEATRICE:

How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burned an hour after.

He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if a' could get her good-will. Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way; for it is said 'God sends a curst cow short horns; but to a cow too curst he sends none.

Just, if he send me no husband: for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face: I had rather lie in the woollen.

What should I do with him? Dress him in my apparel and make him my waiting gentle-woman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the rearward and lead his apes into hell.

No, but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say 'Get you into heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids': so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy and say 'Father, as it please you.' But yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy and say 'Father as it please me.'

Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust? To make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and, truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.