

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BEATRICE AND BENEDICK

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(Extract from Shakespeare's "Much Ado about Nothing" (Act 1, Scene 1))

- Beatrice:** I wonder that you're still talking, Benedick, nobody notices you!
- Benedick:** What, my dear Lady Disdain<sup>1</sup>! Are you still alive?
- Beatrice:** How could my disdain die when you're giving me so much reason to feel it for you?
- Benedick:** The fact is that every woman loves me - instead of you. But it's also true that I love none of them.
- Beatrice:** A dear happiness to these women, otherwise they would have been troubled with an annoying suitor. Thanks to God and my cold blood that I agree with you in this point: I would rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.
- Benedick:** You should keep this attitude, my Lady, so that some man can escape the danger of a scratched face.
- Beatrice:** But even scratching couldn't make your face look worse than now.
- Benedick:** Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher. / You're talking like a parrot.
- Beatrice:** A bird that speaks like me is better than a beast like you.
- Benedick:** I wish my horse would have the speed and the power of endurance of your quick tongue. But keep your way, I'm done.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How does Beatrice insult Benedick?
2. List how Benedick describes Beatrice and to whom he compares her.
3. What does Beatrice say/think about love?
4. How would you describe the feelings of Benedick and Beatrice for each other?
5. What could be the reason for the characters' behaviour?

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<sup>1</sup> Verachtung