

Explore how Shakespeare presents Beatrice as a strong female character

- *"Contempt, farewell! And maiden pride, adieu!"* - This line highlights how Beatrice's place will change when she marries Benedick and that she will have to become silent, subservient and a good wife, to fit in with society's expectations of women at the time. It also suggests that women had a lot to lose, hence the use of verse in this extract - it signifies the importance of such a decision for Beatrice. The use of *"farewell!"* and *"adieu!"* could also be quite mocking and humorous, as women would become unchaste once married, meaning that Beatrice could be waving goodbye to her previous life as an unmarried virgin. Hero also describes how *"disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes"*. This could imply that Beatrice enjoys her life as an unmarried woman and the freedom to be "unladylike", whilst also signifying her ability to converse easily and amusingly with men.
- *"Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand"* - this phrase presents Beatrice as untameable and a free spirit, due to the earlier use of animal metaphors. The verb *"taming"* implies that Beatrice needs to be domesticated, whilst the rhyme of *"hand"* and *band"* signifies the anticipation of marriage for her. *"Taming"* also links to Hero's earlier line, in which she describes how *"Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps"*. The word *"traps"* implies that Beatrice is animalistic in her behaviours, once again showing her unwillingness to accept her status and path in society. It also could suggest that Beatrice is actually too strong to be hit by arrows" and so Hero has to almost force her to fall in love. This presents Beatrice as strong-willed and contrasts Hero, who doesn't appear to know her own mind.
- *"I know her spirits are as coy and wild as Haggards of the rock"* - this phrase also links to Beatrice's untameable nature, as Haggards are wild birds. Birds are often a symbol of freedom and here Hero could actually be jealous of how Beatrice is not controlled by Leonato. These animal metaphors once again separate her from the other women in the play.
- *"And I believe it better than reportingly"* - this shows how despite Beatrice being very intelligent and having a *"merry war of wits"* with Benedick, she is blind to the fact that she has been gulled. It also highlights the motif of appearance vs reality in the play, and how what people see can deceive them. This response also mirrors Benedick, as in the previous scene he too believes the trick without question. *"Better than reportingly"* could indicate Beatrice's acceptance at the fact that she will now marry, despite her earlier vow to not marry until a *"hot January"*. This shows how quickly her view of Benedick has been skewed and her entire morals shift towards being more traditional and conformist.
- *"No glory lives behind the back of such"* - here Beatrice realises that her constant *"scorn"* has not been received well by Benedick (or so she believes) and seems to want to change her ways. This could show her maturity. At another point in the play, Beatrice describes herself as *"sunburnt"* which could show that she has a much lower opinion of herself than the people around