SIGNIOR “MOUNTANTO”
p.14: Beatrice
(Act 1, Scene 1)
Beatrice’s first reference to Benedick is also the opening salvo in the ‘merry war’ of wits between them. She refers to him by a nonsense nickname that implies a fancy piece of fencing (the Italian term montanto is an upward thrust of a fencer’s sword), as well as his ‘mounting’ ambition as a social climber; and, in a dirtier joke, his sexual appetite [Signior Mount-on-to!]. The title ‘Signior’ is the English version of the Italian Signor, indicating a gentleman.

TAX
p.15: Leonato
(Act 1, Scene 1)
‘criticize’, ‘censure’

HE HATH AN EXCELLENT STOMACH...
p.15: Beatrice
(Act 1, Scene 1)
‘Stomach’ can mean both ‘appetite for glory’, and therefore ‘courage’ (so that Beatrice can pretend to agree with the Messenger that Benedick ‘hath done good service . . . in these wars’), and ‘appetite for food’ (so that Beatrice can sneak in another barbed comment about his beer belly). [See also p.64.]

MISTAKE
p.16: Leonato
(Act 1, Scene 1)
‘misunderstand’

FOUR OF HIS FIVE WITS WENT HALTING OFF, AND NOW IS THE WHOLE MAN GOVERNED WITH ONE.
p.16: Beatrice
(Act 1, Scene 1)
Beatrice imagines a battle in which she so wounds four of Benedick’s five senses [or mental faculties] so badly, that they retreat limping from the battlefield ‘went halting off’.

IN YOUR BOOKS
p.16: Messenger
(Act 1, Scene 1)
i.e., as we would say, ‘not in your good books’.

AN
p.17: Beatrice
(Act 1, Scene 1)
‘if’ [and see p.72]

STUDY
p.17: Beatrice
(Act 1, Scene 1)
‘library’

TROUBLE
p.18 Don Pedro
(Act 1, Scene 1)
i.e., ‘the burden of hospitality’

FATHERS HERSELF
p.19: Don Pedro
(Act 1, Scene 1)
‘silently declares who her father is by so strongly resembling him’
YOU ALWAYS END WITH A JADE’S TRICK.

p.21: Beatrice  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
“You always finish our conversations like a stubborn horse – stopping abruptly and throwing me off.”

NOTE . . . NOTED HER NOT

p.22: Claudio and Benedick  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
‘notice . . . didn’t pay her much attention’

LOW . . . BROWN . . . LITTLE

p.22: Benedick  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
‘short . . . sun-tanned . . . unremarkable’. [For Elizabethan views on fair or dark complexions, see p.194 below.]

WITH A SAD BROW

p.22: Benedick  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
‘with serious intent’

A BACHELOR OF THREESCORE

p.24: Benedick  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
i.e., ‘an unmarried man in his sixties’

IF THIS WERE SO, SO WERE IT UTTERED

p.25: Claudio  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
Claudio is being deliberately evasive: ‘Well, were that to be the case, that would be the way to describe the situation’

I WILL DIE IN IT AT THE STAKE . . . THOU WAST EVER AN OBSTINATE HERETIC IN THE DESPITE OF BEAUTY

p.27: Benedick and Don Pedro  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
Benedick likens himself to a martyr who refuses to change his mind, even when being burnt at the stake; Pedro continues the comparison, telling him he has always been a stubborn infidel [‘heretic’] when it comes to the gentlemanly duty of always honouring female beauty.

NOTABLE ARGUMENT

p.28: Don Pedro  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
‘significant talking-point’

“IN TIME THE SAVAGE BULL DOTH BEAR THE YOKE”

p.28: Don Pedro  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
A proverbial saying about marriage: ‘Even the wildest bull eventually submits to pulling a cart or plough.’ [A ‘yoke’ is the wooden collar worn by beasts of burden.] So to say, ‘Even the most confirmed of lady’s men eventually settles down.’

EMBASSAGE

p.28: Benedick  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
‘errand’, ‘mission’

AFFECT

p.29: Don Pedro  
(Act 1, Scene 1)  
‘love’, ‘fancy’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>THIS ENDED ACTION</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1, 1</td>
<td>'these last wars'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT THEE</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1, 1</td>
<td>'supply you', 'furnish you'</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASSUME THY PART</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1, 1</td>
<td>'impersonate you'</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOLD</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>'consider', 'treat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUT OF MEASURE</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>'excessively'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| THERE IS NO MEASURE IN THE OCCASION THAT BREEDS IT . . . | 34 | 3 | 'There is no moderation in the circumstances that gave rise to it . . .'
| WITHOUT CONTROLMENT | 35 | 3 | 'unhindered', 'unrestrained' |
| CANKER | 35 | 3 | 'weed' |
| I USE IT ONLY | 36 | 3 | 'do nothing else but cultivate it' [i.e., 'I am never anything but discontented'] |
| THAT YOUNG START-UP HATH ALL THE GLORY OF MY OVERTHROW | 39 | 3 | 'That young upstart has gained all the benefits I have lost by falling out of favour [with my brother]' |
| CROSS | 39 | 3 | 'thwart', 'prevent' [and see also p.65] |
SHREWED  
*p.41: Leonato  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
'sharp', 'critical'

IN GOOD TIME  
*p.42: Beatrice  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
(a) 'quickly'; (b) 'at a brisk musical tempo'

WALK A BOUT  
*p.44: Don Pedro (disguised as Claudio)  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
'take a turn on the dance-floor'

BREAK A COMPARISON OR TWO ON ME, WHICH NOT MARKED, OR LAUGHED AT . . .  
*p.47: Beatrice  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
'attempt one or two witty put-downs of me, which when they go unnoticed, or else are ridiculed for their feebleness . . .'

LEADERS  
*p.47: Beatrice  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
i.e., the 'leading couple in the dance'

VISOR  
*p.48: Don John  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
'mask'

HURT FOWL . . . CREEP INTO SEDGES  
*p.52: Benedick  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
'wounded bird . . . crawl for protection into marsh-reeds'

SHE MISUSED ME PAST THE ENDURANCE OF A BLOCK!  
*p.54: Benedick  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
'She abusively tested my patience beyond that of any inert block of wood!'

PONIARDS  
*p.55: Benedick  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
'daggers'

ALL THAT ADAM HAD BEFORE HE TRANSGRESSED  
*p.55: Benedick  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
A reference to the Biblical Garden of Eden, where Adam, the first man, was lord of all creation – before he and Eve (the first woman) were banished from Paradise for their disobedience.

HARPY  
*p.56: Benedick  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
In classical mythology, a monstrous beast with the face and body of a woman, and the wings and claws of a rapacious bird.

WITH FALSE DICE  
*p.57: Beatrice  
(Act 2, Scene 1)  
i.e., 'by deception'. This is an intriguing reference to Beatrice and Benedick's 'back-story': these two go way back – they have a past – and share the awkwardness we many of us feel in the company of our 'ex' . . .
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ACT TWO

PUT HIM DOWN
p.57: Don Pedro
(Act 2, Scene 1)
'cast him into depression'; 'got the better of him'

COMPLEXION . . . CONCEIT
p.59: Beatrice
(Act 2, Scene 1)
'temperament . . . understanding'

'TIS YOUR CUE
p.59: Beatrice
(Act 2, Scene 1)
i.e. 'It's your turn to speak' (as if in a theatrical script)

HERALD
p.60: Claudio
(Act 2, Scene 1)
'messenger'

DOTE UPON THE EXCHANGE
p.60: Claudio
(Act 2, Scene 1)
'dearly love the transaction'

ONE OF HERCULES' LABOURS
p.63: Don Pedro
(Act 2, Scene 1)
In classical mythology, Hercules successfully performed twelve impossibly difficult tasks, or 'labours': Don Pedro here imagines a thirteenth – to make Benedick and Beatrice love one another.

QUEASY STOMACH
p.64: Don Pedro
(Act 2, Scene 1)
i.e. 'small appetite' (for marriage); and see p.15.

COMES ATHWART . . . RANGES EVENLY
p.65: Don John
(Act 2, Scene 2)
'runs counter to . . . runs parallel'

COVERTLY
p.66: Borachio
(Act 2, Scene 2)
'secretly'

MEET
p.68: Borachio
(Act 2, Scene 2)
'appropriate', 'fit'

BORN IN A MERRY HOUR . . . NO, SURE MY LORD, MY MOTHER CRIED
p.61: Don Pedro and Beatrice
(Act 2, Scene 1)
The Prince comments that Beatrice's witty ('merry') character has been predetermined as such by astrology; to which she replies that her mother certainly didn't think so when she was crying out in pain when giving birth to her.

Monsieur Love
p.70: Benedick
(Act 2, Scene 3)
Benedick is sarcastically referring to the lovelorn Claudio.
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING GLOSSARY

ARBOUR
p.70: Benedick
(Act 2, Scene 3)
'shaded alleyway', 'bower'

WEAR IT OUT WITH GOOD COUNSEL
p.81: Claudio
(Act 2, Scene 3)
'survive and endure it by steady resolution'

STALK ON!
THE FOWL SITS.
p.73: Claudio
(Act 2, Scene 3)
Claudio comically refers to Benedick as the bird (or sitting duck) that they are creeping up on in their hunt. (He supplies a variation on the idea on p.75: 'Bait the hook well – this fish will bite!'; on p.82 Don Pedro suggests that 'the same net [be] spread' for Beatrice; and Hero lays the same 'false sweet bait' for Beatrice on p.89.)

ON A KNIFE’S POINT
p.86: Beatrice
(Act 2, Scene 3)
i.e., when threatened with an unsheathed dagger

MADE HER HALF MYSELF
p.80: Don Pedro
(Act 2, Scene 3)
i.e., 'shared my life equally with her by marrying her'

THERE'S A DOUBLE MEANING IN THAT
p.86: Benedick
(Act 2, Scene 3)
Erm . . . there isn’t.

ERE
p.80: Claudio
(Act 2, Scene 3)
'before . . .'

BATE ONE BREATH OF HER ACCUSTOMED CROSSNESS
p.80: Claudio
(Act 2, Scene 3)
'modify a single word of her usual contrariness'
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

GL OSS ARY

ACT THREE

MISPRIZING

p.91: Hero
(Act 3, Scene 1)
’disdaining’, ‘condemning’, ‘under-valuing’

SELF-ENDEARED

p.91: Hero
(Act 3, Scene 1)
’in love with herself’

I NEVER YET SAW MAN, HOW WISE . . . BUT SHE WOULD SPELL HIM BACKWARD

p.92: Hero
(Act 3, Scene 1)
This is a complicated way of saying that, however marvellous their qualities may be, Beatrice has only ever criticized or disparaged men.

CUPIDS

p.94: Hero
(Act 3, Scene 1)
In classical mythology, Cupid [a.k.a. Eros] was the blindfolded god of love whose arrows randomly struck the hearts of lovers.

MAIDEN PRIDE

p.95: Beatrice
(Act 3, Scene 1)
i.e. ‘the pride I take in remaining single’

CHARM

p.98: Benedick
(Act 3, Scene 2)
’remedy’

HOBBY-HORSES

p.98: Benedick
(Act 3, Scene 2)
‘buffoons’, ‘jokers’

BEAR IT COLDLY . . . ISSUE

p.103: Don John
(Act 3, Scene 2)
‘Stay calm about it . . . result’

WATCH

p.104: Dogberry
(Act 3, Scene 3)
‘police patrol’

CHARGE

p.104: Verges
(Act 3, Scene 3)
‘orders’

NEIGHBOUR SEACOAL . . . A GOOD NAME

p.104: Dogberry
(Act 3, Scene 3)
Dogberry notes that Seacoal has an appropriate surname for carrying the lantern at the head of the night-patrol, since ‘seacoal’ [rather like our modern North Sea Gas] was particularly prized as a fuel.

YOU ARE TO BID ANY MAN STAND, IN THE PRINCE’S NAME

p.105: Dogberry
(Act 3, Scene 3)
‘You must order anyone you see to halt, in the name of the Prince’
**KNAVE**

p.105: Dogberry  
*(Act 3, Scene 3)*

‘wretch’, ‘rascal’

---

**VIGITANT**

p.105: Dogberry  
*(Act 3, Scene 3)*

Constable Dogberry is enormously stupid, as partly shown by his impressive ignorance of words. In this case, he means to say ‘vigilant’ (i.e. ‘attentive’, ‘watchful’); later on he confuses ‘discerns’ with ‘concerns’ (p.116), ‘comprehended’ for ‘apprehended’ (p.117), ‘auspicious’ (i.e. ‘favourable’) for ‘suspicious’ (p.117), and ‘opinoned’ for ‘pinioned’ (i.e. ‘securely bound’). His grasp of numbers is equally dodgy on p.164.

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**DEAR**

p.106: Conrad  
*(Act 3, Scene 3)*

‘well-paid’, ‘lucrative’

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**A GOODLY COMMODITY . . . A COMMODITY IN QUESTION**

p.111: Borachio and Conrad  
*(Act 3, Scene 3)*

‘a very useful pair . . . subject to due legal process’

---

**CARDUUS BENEDICTUS**

p.112: Margaret  
*(Act 3, Scene 3)*

A herbal remedy (literally ‘holy thistle’), said to be effective against disease (but here punning, of course, on Benedick’s name).

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**NOT A FALSE GALLOP**

p.114: Margaret  
*(Act 3, Scene 4)*

A ‘false gallop’ was the technical term for a horse’s rate of movement (a strolling canter midway between a ‘snail’s gallop’ and a ‘full gallop’), but Margaret uses this expression to mean ‘However quickly I may be speaking, I’m still telling you the truth’.

---

**COZ**

p.115: Hero  
*(Act 3, Scene 4)*

i.e., ‘cousin’

---

**EXAMINED . . . EXAMINATION**

p.117: Leonato and Dogberry  
*(Act 3, Scene 5)*

‘interrogated . . . interrogation’

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**INKHORN**

p.117: Dogberry  
*(Act 3, Scene 5)*

‘inkwell’, ‘bottle of ink’
BEING THAT I FLOW IN GRIEF, THE SMALLEST TWINE MAY LEAD ME
p.135: Benedick
(Act 4, Scene 1)
‘Since I am almost swimming in tears, even the weakest thread may pull me along’

STAYED ME IN A HAPPY HOUR
p.139: Beatrice
(Act 4, Scene 1)
‘interrupted me at a favourable moment’

PROTEST
p.141: Beatrice
(Act 4, Scene 1)
‘swear’, ‘assert’, ‘avow’. (And see p.160.)

IS HE NOT APPROVED A VILLAIN . . .
 p.142: Beatrice
(Act 4, Scene 1)
i.e., ‘Has he not been proved to be a villain . . .’

TARRY
p.144: Benedick
(Act 4, Scene 1)
‘wait’, ‘hang on’

CHALLENGE
p.144: Benedick
(Act 4, Scene 1)
i.e., to a duel. (See also p.153.)

RENDER ME A DEAR ACCOUNT
p.145: Benedick
(Act 4, Scene 1)
‘pay me back at a costly rate’

SECOND GRIEF AGAINST YOURSELF
p.150: Antonio
(Act 5, Scene 1)
‘augment your misery by blaming yourself’

BUT NO MAN’S VIRTUE BE SO MORAL WHEN HE SHALL ENDURE THE LIKE HIMSELF
p.151: Leonato
(Act 5, Scene 1)
‘but no one who suffers the same grief himself can trot out those easy moral sentiments’

ADVERTISEMENT
p.151: Leonato
(Act 5, Scene 1)
‘instruction’, ‘counsel’, ‘advice’

BEND
p.152: Antonio
(Act 5, Scene 1)
‘aim’, ‘direct’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>IN A TOMB WHERE NEVER SCANDAL SLEPT</strong></th>
<th><strong>PLUCK UP</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>p.153: Leonato (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
<td>p.163: Don Pedro (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
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<td>'in a family grave, all of whose dead occupants were beyond reproach'</td>
<td>'rouse yourself', 'pull yourself together'</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>APES, BRAGGARTS, JACKS, MILKSORPS!</strong></th>
<th><strong>CUNNING</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p.156: Antonio (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
<td>p.164: Don Pedro (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'fools, boasters, rascals, feeble infants!'</td>
<td>'ingenious', 'clever'</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>SMART</strong></th>
<th><strong>INCENSED</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>p.157: Antonio (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
<td>p.165: Borachio (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'feel a painful wound'</td>
<td>'incited', 'persuaded'</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>WE HAD LIKE TO HAVE HAD . . .</strong></th>
<th><strong>SEMELANCE</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>p.158: Leonato (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
<td>p.168: Claudio (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
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<td>'We were in danger of having . . .'</td>
<td>'likeness'</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>WE ARE HIGH-PROOF MELANCHOLY</strong></th>
<th><strong>OUR SEXTON</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p.159: Claudio (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
<td>p.168: Dogberry (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'We are in the utmost misery'</td>
<td>i.e., the church official who has previously written down the evidence [and whom we have met on p.147].</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>FOR MY LORD LACKBEARD THERE . . .</strong></th>
<th><strong>PENANCE</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>p.161: Benedick (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
<td>p.170: Claudio (Act 5, Scene 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>'And as for that arrogant boy over there . . .' [Compare Beatrice's reference to Benedick as Signor 'Mountanto' on p.14, and Benedick's reference to her as 'Lady Disdain' p.20 and 'Lady Tongue' on p.57.]</td>
<td>'punishment', 'restitution'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Penance . . . Invention**  
*p.170: Claudio, (Act 5, Scene 1)*  
‘punishment . . . imagination’

**Enjoin Me To**  
*p.171: Don Pedro (Act 5, Scene 1)*  
‘impose on me’

**Possess**  
*p.172: Leonato (Act 5, Scene 1)*  
‘inform’

**Packed In**  
*p.174: Leonato (Act 5, Scene 1)*  
‘party to’, ‘implicated in’

**Sonnet**  
*p.176: Margaret (Act 5, Scene 2)*  
‘love-song’, ‘poem about love’

**In So High A Style . . . That No Man . . . Shall Come Over It.**  
*p.176: Benedick (Act 5, Scene 2)*  
Benedick promises that the literary ‘style’ of his poem will be so sophisticated (‘high’) that no other writer could surpass (‘come over’) it; at the same time, his words form a simple pun on the country-gate (or ‘stile’) that will be built so ‘high’ as to keep all his rivals out.

**To Have No Man Come Over Me? . . . Why, Shall I Always Keep Below Stairs?**  
*p.176: Margaret (Act 5, Scene 2)*  
Margaret picks up and returns Benedick’s pun [see previous note]: if the poem Benedick pretends to be writing about her will keep off all other rivals, she says, does this mean she will always remain a mere servant (‘keep below stairs’), and so always be denied suitors of a higher social rank?

**The Fencer’s Foils, Which Hit But Hurt Not**  
*p.177: Margaret (Act 5, Scene 2)*  
i.e. the rapiers in a fencing-match that are tipped or blunted to avoid any real injury.

**Innocent . . . Hard . . . Babbling**  
*p.178: Benedick (Act 5, Scene 2)*  
‘simple, idiotic’ . . . ‘unsophisticated, injudicious’ . . . ‘drivelling’

**Born Under A Rhyming Planet**  
*p.178: Benedick (Act 5, Scene 2)*  
‘destined to be a poet by my star-sign’

**O, But Stay Till Then! / “Then” Is Spoken. Fare You Well Now.**  
*p.179: Benedick and Beatrice (Act 5, Scene 2)*  
Beatrice takes Benedick literally, pretending to obey him by leaving when he speaks the word “then”.
ONLY FOUL WORDS . . .
FOUL WORDS IS BUT BAD BREATH
p.180: Benedick and Beatrice
(Act 5, Scene 2)
Benedick means that he and
Claudio have had a quarrelsome
argument; Beatrice replies
with a version of the proverbial
saying that all words, since they
are composed of breath, are as
transient as the wind.

SUBSCRIBE
p.180: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 2)
‘proclaim’, ‘declare’

EPITHET
p.181: Beatrice
(Act 5, Scene 2)
‘turn of phrase’

TRUMPET
p.183: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 2)
‘herald’, ‘announcer’

MEND
p.184: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 2)
i.e., ‘restore yourself to health’

IN GUERDON OF HER WRONGS
p.187: Claudio
(Act 5, Scene 3)
‘in recompense of the wrongs
done to her’

HYMEN
p.188: Claudio
(Act 5, Scene 3)
i.e., in classical mythology, the
god of marriage.

RECKONING
p.190: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘settlement of accounts’
(whether concerning a financial
debt, or the honourable dispute
of a challenge)

OFFICE
p.191: Leonato
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘task’, ‘rôle’, ‘part’

TO BIND ME... OR UNDO ME.
p.192: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 4)
Benedick is awkwardly asking
the Friar to marry him to
Beatrice, but his old bachelor
ways result in a final piece of
word-play, their marriage either
joining him to her (‘bind me’) – or
resulting in his ruin (‘undo me’).

ENIGMATICALLY
p.193: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘mysterious’, ‘puzzling’ (because,
of course, he doesn’t yet realize
the trick that has been played on
him and Beatrice)
DETERMINED
p.194: Leonato
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘resolved’, ‘decided’

ETHIOPE
p.194: Claudio
(Act 5, Scene 4)
Because Elizabethan fashion valued a fair skin over the dark one (and to be sun-tanned was considered particularly ugly, probably because it implied physical out-door labour), an African complexion (‘Ethiope’) was a by-word for ugliness.

DEFILED
p.197: Hero
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘polluted’, ‘sullied’

I’LL THINK NOTHING TO ANY PURPOSE THAT
p.202: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘I will consider as superfluous nonsense anything that . . .’

FLOUT AT
p.202: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘taunt’, ‘mock’, ‘jeer at’

GIDDY
p.203: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 4)

CUDGELLED
p.203: Claudio
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘beaten’

BRAVE
p.205: Benedick
(Act 5, Scene 4)
‘fine’, ‘impressive’