

A Midsummer Night's Dreame

Act V, sc. 1 (line 89)

THESEUS

The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.

Our sport shall be to take what they mistake:

And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect

Takes it in might, not merit.

Where I have come, great clerks have purposed

To greet me with premeditated welcomes;

Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,

Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Throttle their practised accent in their fears

And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,

Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,

Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;

And in the modesty of fearful duty

I read as much as from the rattling tongue

Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity

In least speak most, to my capacity.