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## **All's Well That Ends**

**Well**

**By**

**William Shakespeare**

### **About Shakespeare:**

William Shakespeare All's Well That Ends Well (baptised 26 April 1564 – died 23 April 1616) was an English poet and playwright, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard All's Well That Ends Well of Avon" (or simply "The Bard"). His surviving works consist of 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long All's Well That Ends Well narrative poems, and several other poems. His plays have been translated into every major living language, and are performed more often than those of any other playwright. Shakespeare was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon. At the age of 18 he married Anne Hathaway, who bore him three children: Susanna, and All's Well That Ends Well twins Hamnet and Judith. Between 1585 and 1592 he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part owner of the playing company the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later known as the King's Men. He appears to have retired to Stratford around 1613, where he died three years later. Few records of Shakespeare's private life survive, and there has been considerable speculation about

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such matters All's Well That Ends Well as his sexuality, religious beliefs, and whether the works attributed to him were written by others. Shakespeare produced most All's Well That Ends Well of his known work between 1590 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies and histories, genres he raised to the peak of sophistication and artistry by the end of the sixteenth century. Next he wrote mainly tragedies until about 1608, including Hamlet, King Lear, and Macbeth, considered some of the finest examples in the English language. In his last phase, he wrote tragicomedies, also known as romances, and collaborated with other playwrights. Many of his plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy during his lifetime, All's Well That Ends Well and in 1623 two of his former theatrical colleagues published the First Folio, a collected edition of his dramatic works that included all but two of the plays now recognised as Shakespeare's. Shakespeare was a respected poet and playwright in his own day, but his reputation did not rise to its present heights until the nineteenth century. The Romantics, in particular, acclaimed Shakespeare's genius, and the Victorians hero-worshipped Shakespeare with a reverence that George Bernard Shaw called "bardolatry". In the twentieth century, his work was repeatedly adopted and rediscovered by

new movements in scholarship All's Well That Ends Well and performance. His plays remain

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highly popular today and are consistently performed and reinterpreted in diverse cultural and political contexts throughout the world.

## **ACT I**

### **SCENE I. Rousillon. The COUNT's palace.**

*Enter BERTRAM, the COUNTESS of Rousillon, HELENA, and LAFEU, all*

*in black*

#### **COUNTESS**

In delivering my son from me, I bury a second husband.

#### **BERTRAM**

And I in going, madam, weep o'er my father's death anew: but I must attend his majesty's command, to whom I am now in ward, evermore in subjection.

#### **LAFEU**

You shall find of the king a husband, madam; you, sir, a father: he that so generally is at all times good must of necessity hold his virtue to you; whose worthiness would stir it up where it wanted rather than lack it where there is such abundance.

#### **COUNTESS**

What hope is there of his majesty's amendment?

#### **LAFEU**

He All's Well That Ends Well hath abandoned his physicians, madam; under whose

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practises he hath persecuted time All's Well That Ends Well with hope, and finds no other advantage in the process but only the losing of hope by time.

**COUNTESS**

This young gentlewoman had a father,--O, that 'had'! how sad a passage 'tis!--whose skill was almost as great as his honesty; had it stretched so far, would have made nature immortal, and death should have play for lack of work. Would, for the king's sake, he were living! I think it would All's Well That Ends Well be the death of the king's disease.

**LAFEU**

All's Well That Ends Well  
How called you the man you speak of, All's Well That Ends Well madam?

**COUNTESS**

He was famous, sir, in his profession, and it was his great right to be so: Gerard de Narbon.

**LAFEU**

He was excellent indeed, madam: the king very lately spoke of him admiringly and mourningly: he was skilful enough to have lived still, if knowledge could be set up against mortality.

**BERTRAM**

What is it, my good lord, the king languishes All's Well That Ends Well of?

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**LAFEU**

A fistula, my lord.

**BERTRAM**

I heard not of it before.

**LAFEU**

I would it were not notorious. Was this gentlewoman  
the daughter of Gerard de Narbon?

**COUNTESS**

His sole child, my lord, and bequeathed to my  
overlooking. I have those hopes of her good that  
her education promises; her dispositions she  
inherits, which makes fair gifts fairer; for where  
an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, there  
commendations go with pity; they are virtues and  
traitors too; in her they are the better for their  
simpleness; she derives her honesty and achieves her goodness.

**LAFEU**

Your commendations, madam, get from her tears.

**COUNTESS**

All's Well That Ends Well  
'Tis the best brine a maiden can season her praise  
in. The remembrance of her father never approaches  
her heart but the tyranny of her sorrows takes all  
liveliness from her cheek. No more of this, Helena;

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go to, no more; lest it be All's Well That Ends Well rather thought you affect  
a sorrow than have it.

### **HELENA**

I do affect a sorrow indeed, but I have it too.

### **LAFEU**

Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead,

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