

what woman I will not tell myself; and yet 'tis a milkmaid; yet 'tis not a maid, for she hath had gossips; yet 'tis a maid, for she is her master's maid, and serves for wages: she hath more qualities than a water-spaniel, which is much in a bare christian. Here is the cat-log [*pulling out a paper*] of her conditions; *imprimis*, she can fetch and carry; why, a horse can do no more; nay, a horse cannot fetch, but only carry; therefore is she better than a jade. *Item*, she can milk; look you, a sweet virtue in a maid with clean hands.

*Enter Speed.*

*Speed.* How now, signior *Launce*? what news with your mastership?

*Laun.* With my master's ship? why, it is at sea.

*Speed.* Well, your old vice still; mistake the word: what news then in your paper?

*Laun.* The blackest news that ever thou heard'st.

*Speed.* Why, man, how black?

*Laun.* Why, as black as ink.

*Speed.* Let me read them.

*Laun.* Fie on thee, jolthead, thou can'st not read.

*Speed.* Thou liest, I can.

*Laun.* I will try thee; tell me this, who begot thee?

*Speed.* Marry, the son of my grand-father.

*Laun.* O illiterate loiterer, it was the son of thy grandmother; this proves that thou canst not read.

*Speed.* Come, fool, come; try me in thy paper.

*Laun.* There, and *St Nicholas* be thy speed!

*Speed.* *Imprimis*, she can milk.

*Laun.* Ay, that she can.

*Speed.* *Item*, she brews good ale.

*Laun.* And thereof comes the proverb, *Blessing of your heart, you brew good ale.*

*Speed.* *Item*, she can sow.

*Laun.* That's as much as to say, *can she so?*

*Speed.* *Item*, she can knit.

*Laun.*