

Love is Nearsighted Cast List

4 Males, 3 Females, 3 M/F, and Extras

JESTER (M/F) professional jokester and smart aleck responder of the court

KING (M) loves the Queen but doesn't feel she appreciates him

QUEEN (F) loves the King but wants to be romanced

PRINCESS (F) is not ready to marry and would like the choice to be on her terms

MATCHMAKER (F) her record for making matches isn't exactly stellar, but she is desperate to find a match for the Princess

EROS (M) A.K.A. Cupid; he is extremely nearsighted and desperately needs glasses

BENEDICT THE BARBER (M) Barbers did everything health-related back then, so you didn't have to worry about going out of network for your health care. In this play, he's an optometrist.

COURTIER 1 (M) a noble at the Royal Table

COURTIER 2 (M/F) a noble or lady at the Royal Table

COURTIER 3 (M/F) a noble or lady at the Royal Table

EXTRAS

COURTIERS (M/F) Nobility who help fill the Royal Table.

SERVANTS, GUARDS, PAGES (M/F) Announce and escort guests and help serve the meal.

Sample Pages

JESTER:

Welcome, brave lords and ladies dear!

Forget your sorrow and have good cheer.

Welcome to the King's good feast,

And may your laughter be increased!

EROS: *(Enters.)* Excuse me, sir.

JESTER: Sir? I am no noble. I am a jester. Can you not tell by my motley?

EROS: Actually, no. I think I am having some eyesight problems. That's why I'm here. Could you direct me to the optometrist?

JESTER: You won't find any of them here. The King and Queen are thinking of separating, the Princess has sworn off men, and the Love Feast has been canceled. We're a kingdom of pessimists just now.

EROS: Not optimist. I said optometrist.

JESTER: What's that?

EROS: Someone who checks your eyes.

JESTER: A proofreader? A sailor?

EROS: Eyes. *(Points to her own eyes.)* E-y-e-s.

JESTER: Oh. That. All health-related problems are handled by the Barber.

EROS: The Barber?

JESTER: Yep. He can check your eyes, give you a good bloodletting, and give you a shave and a haircut ... two bits. He's sort of a jack-of-all-trades.

EROS: And master of none?

JESTER: Look, before you can see a specialist, you need a referral from your primary care barber.

EROS: Of course. Well, I need to see him, figuratively speaking.

JESTER: Of course.

EROS: You see, my eyesight is vital in my line of work.

JESTER: A proofreader? A sailor?

EROS: I'm an archer.

JESTER: Really? Where's your bow and arrows?

EROS: They're invisible.

JESTER: *(Surprised.)* I see. *(Pause.)* You know, our Barber also handles psychiatric problems. The cure involves a large-bit hand-drill.

EROS: No, no. I'm not crazy. I'm Eros. *(Blank look from JESTER.)* You may know me as Cupid.

JESTER: Riiiiight. Where's your diaper and wings?

EROS: I take it you're a Precious Moments collector.

JESTER: Of course, I am. I mean, who can resist those massive cow eyes?

EROS: *(Defensively.)* I'm not like a Precious Moments figurine. I'm a Greek god. I'm both very handsome and virile. *(Skeptical look from JESTER.)* I'm the son of Aphrodite. *(Skeptical look from JESTER.)* I've got my own cult!

JESTER: I'm sure that's all very nice ...

EROS: I'm famous in Greek mythology! Haven't you ever heard of the tragedy of Eros and Psyche?

JESTER: You certainly need Psyche-logical help. Either way, the Barber is your man.

EROS: Where can I find him?

JESTER: He's in the King's chambers, treating a serious case of Foot-in-Mouth disease.

EROS: You mean Hand, Foot, and Mouth disease.

JESTER: You haven't met our King. Lately, he's been saying exactly the wrong thing to our Queen. Every single time. So, if you just – *(BARBER enters.)* Oh. Here he is now. I say, Good Barber, how is the King?

BARBER: I've never seen such a bad case. The Queen asked the King if he still loved her.

JESTER: And?

BARBER: He said, "I married you for your dowry of land, didn't I?"

JESTER: Ouch.

EROS: Say, good Barber, are you an optometrist?

BARBER: No, I'm a glass-is-half-empty kind of guy.

JESTER: No. You are a glass-is-completely-empty kind of guy.

BARBER: I am not that much of a pessimist.

JESTER: But you are that much of a drinker.

BARBER: What do you expect working in this castle?

EROS: So, do you help people with eye trouble?

BARBER: I trouble? Like, you've got a massive ego?

JESTER: He did say that he is both very handsome and virile.

EROS: No, it's my eyes. I don't see well.

BARBER: Oh. Let's give you a quick eye exam. Jester, *(Hands scroll to JESTER.)* hold this scroll and walk over there. Now, what was your name again?

EROS: Eros.

JESTER: Otherwise known as Cupid. *(Looks knowingly at BARBER.)*

BARBER: Oh. Well, in that case, we don't need the eye scroll. Let me get my large-bit hand-drill.

EROS: Never mind all of that. Just help me with my eyesight.

BARBER: All right, already. Now, look at the scroll. What's the first thing you can read?

EROS: Nothing.

BARBER: You're as blind as a bat.

EROS: It would be better if the Jester unrolled the scroll.

BARBER: Drat. I keep having that problem with scrolls. I'll have to move to using an eye chart. Jester, unroll the scroll. *(JESTER unrolls the scroll.)* Now, cover one eye and read from the top as far as you can.

EROS: *(Struggles but can make out the words.)* Leeches for sale. Good for fishing or minor surgery.

BARBER: Whoops. Wrong scroll. *(Switches scrolls with JESTER.)* Now try again.

EROS: I can't read a thing.

BARBER: You don't see Joe Biden being elected or the COVID pandemic?

EROS: No.

BARBER: Then you definitely don't have 2020 vision. I'll have to make you some eye glasses.

JESTER: How do you make eye glasses?

BARBER: It involves glass grinding and arcane incantations to the HMO gods. You wouldn't understand.

EROS: How soon will they be ready?

BARBER: The HMO gods are fickle. It could take days or even weeks for me to find a suitable sacrifice.

JESTER: What do you sacrifice to the HMO gods?

BARBER: Your dignity. And I don't have much left.

EROS: What do I do until my eye glasses are ready?

BARBER: Avoid reading and operating heavy machinery.

JESTER: How about shooting invisible arrows of love?

BARBER: You're joking, right?

JESTER: Hello? He's Cupid.

BARBER: *(Confused. To JESTER.)* If you say so. *(To EROS.)* Well, make sure you aim for center mass, so that you don't miss.

EROS: Like the heart?

BARBER: Precisely.

EROS: No problem.

(BRASS FANFARE.)

JESTER: The Royal Court approaches.

BARBER: I've got to make myself scarce.

JESTER: Is the King still upset with you?

BARBER: Yes, and I told the Queen she needed a shave. Some women are so sensitive about facial hair. So, I must retreat to my rooms. Eros, you must come with me.

EROS: For what purpose?

BARBER: Before I make your eyeglasses, you must prove yourself worthy through a set of twelve labors. These twelve labors make the labors of Hercules look as easy as being a bagpipe tuner.

EROS: What is the name of these labors?

BARBER: Medical claim forms. (BARBER and EROS exit.)

Still operating without glasses, Eros takes his best shot. He shoots the King then the Queen, who fall in love with someone in the audience.

MATCHMAKER: Eros, take another arrow and shoot the Princess.

EROS: I'm out.

MATCHMAKER: Well, see if you can find more arrows! (EROS exits quickly.) This is a disaster!

JESTER: Who is the Queen staring at?

MATCHMAKER: (Looks to QUEEN, then to a male audience member (MAM).) It's Michael the Mumbler. Nobody can understand what he says, except for me. I'd better go over and translate what he says. And who is the King staring at?

JESTER: (Looks to KING, then to a female audience member (FAM).) I believe that's Quinn the Quiet. Nobody can hear what she says, except for me. I'd better go over there and translate what she says.

(SEE PRODUCTION NOTES. Audience members won't have to say anything. JESTER crosses to FAM and MATCHMAKER crosses to MAM.)

KING: *(To FAM.)* Why, hello there, beautiful. Come here often?

(JESTER leans in to listen to FAM.)

JESTER: She says she comes here every year, at about this time. At least until her son/daughter graduates ... or gets kicked out of school.

QUEEN: *(To MAM.)* Why, hello there, good sir. I don't believe we've met. I am the Queen. And you are?

(MATCHMAKER leans in to listen to MAM.)

MATCHMAKER: In love. He says he's in love. But the exact nuance gets lost in translation. He said it like, *(Sounds like a pickup artist with a low voice.)* "In loooooove." *(Wiggles her eyebrows. Points to her own face.)* And he wiggled his eyebrows, thus.

(QUEEN titters like a schoolgirl. Well, a schoolgirl from the 1950s. And she bats her eyelashes.)

QUEEN: And, pray tell, what is your name?

MATCHMAKER: This is Sir Michael. The Mumbler.

QUEEN: What a noble name!

KING: *(To FAM.)* I don't believe we've met, gorgeous. I am the King. And you are?

(JESTER leans in to listen to FAM.)

JESTER: In fatuated. *(He looks to FAM and leans in to listen.)* That's one word? Really? Who knew? *(Back to KING.)* Infatuated. But she said it more like *(Makes his voice higher and breathy.)* "Infatuated." *(Bats his eyelashes. Points to his own face.)* And she batted her eyelashes, thus.

KING: Really? Well, well, well. *(KING wiggles his eyebrows.)* And, prithee, what is your name?

JESTER: This is Lady Quinn the Quiet.

KING: Quiet, you say? Oh, I like that.

QUEEN: Dear Michael the Mumbler! I love romance! Oh, do recite to me a love poem.

MATCHMAKER: *(To MAM.)* Well? You heard the Queen. *(Bends down to listen to MAM.)* No, no, no! Mop-headed tortoise does NOT rhyme with drop dead gorgeous! That's terrible! Try again. *(MATCHMAKER bends down to listen to MAM.)* Oh, now that's good! Here's your poem,

my Queen, from Michael the Mumbler:

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. (*MATCHMAKER bends down to listen to MAM.*)

One, two, three

Or simple as Do-Re-Mi

A, B, C

One, two, three, baby, you and me, girl

QUEEN: What wonderful poetry! What wonderful rhyming!

JESTER: Yes. Wonderful. Now, what rhymes with "plagiarism?"

JESTER and MATCHMAKER continue to "translate" until the PRINCESS steps in to remind the KING and QUEEN of their love for each other. They let the audience members down gently.