Written around the middle of his career, Much Ado About Nothing is one of Shakespeare's great festive comedies. The men are back from the war, and everyone is ready for romance. The dashing young Claudio falls for Hero, the daughter of Leonato, governor of Messina, and his friend Don Pedro helps him secure her affection. These youthful lovers are contrasted with the more experienced (and more cynical) Benedick and Beatrice, who have to be tricked into falling in love. Don Pedro's bastard brother, Don John, provides the intrigue, and the dimwitted constable Dogberry provides the laughs.