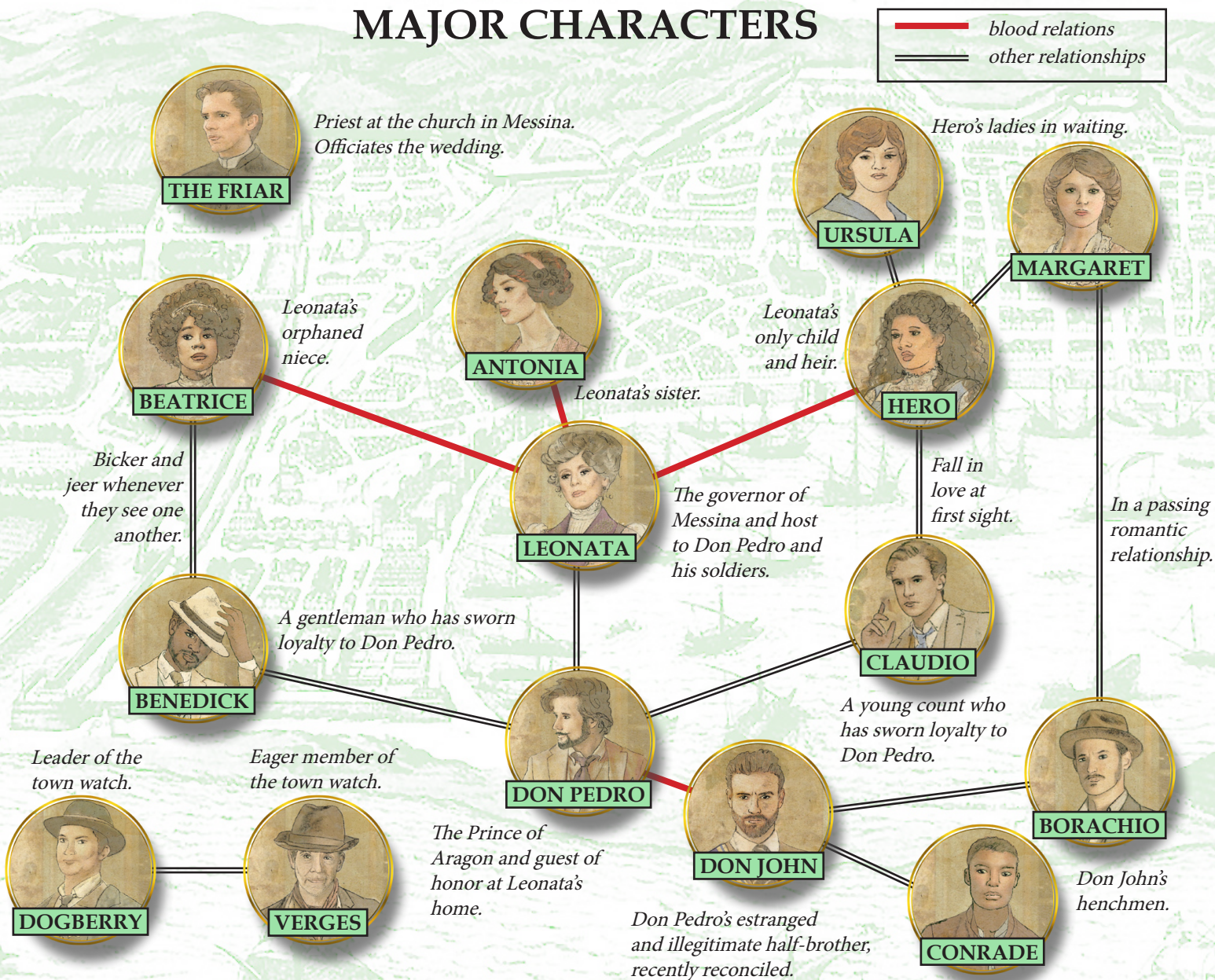


MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Directed by Lisa Gaye Dixon
 Costume Design by Rachel Pabst Barnett
 Dramaturgy by Kee-Yoon Nahm

MAJOR CHARACTERS



SYNOPSIS

Following a successful military campaign, **Don Pedro** and his band of soldiers visit the estate of **Lady Leonata** in Messina. Thus begins the two romantic relationships of this story, representing different phases of love in life. The young lieutenant **Claudio** is enamored with Leonata's daughter, **Hero**, but is inexperienced in the ways of love. Don Pedro courts Hero for Claudio, and it is decided that the spring lovers will be wed in a week. The other love story, meanwhile, doesn't go as smoothly. **Beatrice** and **Benedick** are more mature and less concerned with social expectations, but hesitate to enter an intimate relationship. Instead, they engage in a battle of wits every time they meet, one-upping each other with insults. The other characters see through the façade. To amuse themselves while they wait for the wedding ceremony, they plan to trick Beatrice and Benedick into thinking that the other is madly in love with them.

Amidst this merrymaking, trouble brews. **Don John**, Pedro's illegitimate half-brother, hatches a malicious plan to ruin the wedding. He pulls the wool over Claudio's eyes, making him think that Hero is having an affair with another man. Claudio rashly accuses Hero of infidelity right at the altar, causing her to collapse in shock. The **Friar** officiating the marriage advises that Leonata hide Hero and announce her death, hoping that the sad news will stir remorse in Claudio. Will this budding relationship be cut short, or can it be salvaged? And what about Beatrice and Benedick, who are still coming to terms with their true feelings towards one another during this woeful incident?