CHICAGO – While relaxing and catching his breath after the stressful task of filming “Marvel’s The Avengers,” writer/director Joss Whedon didn’t just drink wine, host parties, and take baths in his money. He decided to use his break to make another movie. Changing gears from one of the biggest blockbusters of all time, Whedon called his friends from TV shows and films he had made in the past and put together an adaptation of one of William Shakespeare's most beloved works, “Much Ado About Nothing.” The result is an undeniably fun diversion, a film that sometimes displays its “hey, let's make a movie!” status but will be like catnip for fans of Whedon’s ensemble.

As with most of his comedies, “Much Ado” is a web of mistaken identities and confused motivations. “Angel” stars Alexis Denisof & Amy Acker play Benedick & Beatrice, respectively, and Whedon immediately throws Shakespearian scholars for a loop by opening the film with the two of them in bed together. Benedick sneaks out in the morning and Beatrice looks perturbed. Her annoyance at the man who snuck away permeates the first act of “Much Ado” when she encounters Benedick again when he arrives at the home of her Uncle Leonato (Clark Gregg of “The Avengers”) with Don Pedro (Reed Diamond of “Dollhouse”), Claudio (Fran Kranz of “The Cabin in the Woods”), the nefarious Don John (Sean Maher of “Firefly”), Borachio (Spencer Treat Clark), and Conrade (Riki Lindhome, who appeared on, you guessed it, “Buffy the Vampire Slayer”).

Claudio falls in love with Leonato's daughter Hero (Jillian Morgese) but brother Don John deems the girl below his standing and seeks to sabotage their love by having Borachio seduce maid Margaret (Ashley Johnson, who appeared in both “Dollhouse” and “The Avengers”) and have Claudio mistake the seduction as Hero's betrayal. Nathan Fillion (“Firefly”) and Tom Lenk (“Buffy the Vampire Slayer”) pop up as Dogberry & Verges, reimagined as ‘70s-style cops/security guards with sunglasses and short ties. True Whedon fans will sit back and wonder where Anthony Head, David Boreanaz, Alan Tudyk, Adam Baldwin, and Felicia Day could have fit in.

“Much Ado About Nothing” stars Amy Acker, Alexis Denisof, Clark Gregg, Reed Diamond, Fran Kranz, Sean Maher, Jillian Morgese, Spencer Treat Clark, Riki Lindhome, Ashley Johnson, Tom Lenk, and Nathan Fillion. It was written and directed by Joss Whedon. It is now playing in some markets and opens wider tomorrow, June 21, 2013.