



A TASTE *of* SHAKESPEARE

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF WICHITA SHAKESPEARE COMPANY



- FRI, 9/1 - COLLEGE HILL PARK, WICHITA
- SAT, 9/2 - CENTRAL RIVERSIDE PARK, WICHITA
- SUN, 9/3 - BUFFALO PARK, WICHITA
- FRI, 9/8 - COLLEGE HILL PARK, WICHITA
- SAT, 9/9 - HAP MCLEAN PARK, PARK CITY
- SUN, 9/10 - ANDOVER CENTRAL PARK
- FRI, 9/15 - CENTRAL RIVERSIDE PARK, WICHITA
- SAT, 9/16 - HIGH PARK AMPHITHEATER, DERBY
- SUN, 9/17 - UNIVERSITY FRIENDS CHURCH (INSIDE)

SHOWTIME: 7PM | FREE TO THE PUBLIC | DONATIONS ARE APPRECIATED | WEATHER INFO: 316.655.2017 | WWW.WICHITASHAKESPEARECOMPANY.ORG

Good evening, and welcome to Wichita Shakespeare Company's production of A Taste of Shakespeare: Celebrating 25 Years of Wichita Shakespeare Company. My name is Ben Blankley, and I am the director of our production.

Everyone involved with our production here tonight is a volunteer. From off-stage to on-stage, we all donate our time and resources. If you have interest in getting involved, please check our website or Facebook page for information. Wichita Shakespeare Company is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization, and we rely on your individual donations. If you have cash, please go to our donation table indicated with the lantern during or after our show and shove it up Shakespeare's nose. To donate right now without having to get up from your spot of grass, please visit our website with your phone at wichitashakespearecompany.org/donate.

Public parks around the Wichita area have hosted popular Shakespeare productions since the summer of 1981. By the early 1990s, Shakespeare-in-the-Park, with financial support from Friends University and the Claude Lambe Charitable Foundation, often entertained summer audiences of nearly 8,000 Wichitans.

After a hiatus in the late 1990s, Wichita Shakespeare Company has since been the production company for our region's summer Shakespeare. Since 1981, Jane Tanner has played a critical off-stage role designing costumes for each production. We also have her on-stage tonight, concluding our ensemble performance. We thank Jane for her over 40 years of service to the performing arts in Wichita.

Thank you for attending live theater here in south central Kansas, and please enjoy "A Taste of Shakespeare".

"A Taste of Shakespeare" 2023

Edited by Jane Tanner, Vonda Schuster,
Liz Anderson, Dan Schuster, Ed Belsan,
Ben Blankley

1. As You Like It. I.7—Melancholy Jaques—"The Seven Ages of Man"
2. Merry Wives of Windsor. II.1—"The Mistresses Make Plans"
3. Hamlet: Prince of Denmark. III.1—"To Be or Not to Be"
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5. Macbeth . II.1—"Is This a Dagger I See Before Me"
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7. Romeo & Juliet. Prologue—"The Two Hours Traffic"
8. Henry V. IV.3—"St. Crispin's Day"
9. King Lear. I.4—"Make Not This Creature Fruitful"
10. Two Gentlemen of Verona. II.3—"A Man and His Dog"
11. Cymbeline, King of Britain. III.6—"Family Reunion"
12. Love's Labour's Lost. III.1—"To Seek or Not Seek a Wife"
13. The Taming of the Shrew. V.2—"I Am Ashamed Women Are So Simple"
14. A Winter's Tale. II.1—"Suspicious of Adultery and Treason"
15. King Lear. IV.2—"Blow Winds, Crack Your Cheeks"
16. A Midsummer Night's Dream. V.I—"Pyramus and Thisby's Wall"
17. EPILOGUE—A Midsummer Night's Dream V.1 —"Puck's Apology"

1. As You Like It I.7—Jaques—"The Seven Ages of Man"

As You Like It is a tale of two siblings, two dukes who are at odds. One exiles his brother from the city. Duke Senior, heads for the forest with his band of faithful men, including a very melancholy philosopher by the name of Jaques [Jakes]. Some scholars believe his name cites, ironically, a British word for toilet, much like our word "john," because he often drifts into cesspools of contemplation. The "Seven Ages Monologue" is one of Shakespeare's most famous.

As You Like It, Act I. Scene vii.**JAQUES (the Melancholy Philosopher)**

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

2. Merry Wives of Windsor II.1—"The Mistresses Make Plans"

Merry Wives of Windsor is a play about middle class manners. Tradition says that after watching the Henry plays with Sir John Falstaff, Shakespeare's most comedic single character, Queen Elizabeth I requested that a play be written about Falstaff falling in love. Instead, Shakespeare wrote about the obese former knight's designs upon two witty wives, who in turn mock him through a series of comic circumstances. Mistresses Page and Ford, with the help of Mistress Quickly, keeper of the Boar's Head Inn, conspire against the overly self-assured Sir John.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, ACT 2, SCENE I. Before PAGE'S house.

Enter MISTRESS PAGE, with a letter

MISTRESS PAGE

What, have I scaped love-letters in the holiday- time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see.

Reads

'Ask me no reason why I love you; for though Love use Reason for his physician, he admits him not for his counsellor. You are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's sympathy: you are merry, so am I; ha, ha! then there's more sympathy: you love sack, and so do I; would you desire better sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page.

Thine own true knight,

By day or night,

Or any kind of light,

With all his might

For thee to fight, JOHN FALSTAFF'

O wicked world! One that is well-nigh worn to pieces with age to show himself a young gallant! What an unweighed behavior hath this drunkard picked out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company! What should I say to him? Why, I'll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down of men. How shall I be revenged on him? for revenged I will be, as sure as his guts are made of puddings.

Enter MISTRESS FORD

MISTRESS FORD

Mistress Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

MISTRESS PAGE

And, trust me, I was coming to you. You look very ill.

MISTRESS FORD

Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

MISTRESS PAGE

Faith, but you do, in my mind.

MISTRESS FORD

Well, I do then; yet I say I could show you to the contrary. O Mistress Page, give me some counsel!

MISTRESS PAGE

What's the matter, woman?

MISTRESS FORD

O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!

MISTRESS PAGE

Hang the trifle, woman! take the honour.
Dispense with trifles; what is it?

MISTRESS FORD

If I would but go to hell for an eternal moment or so, I could be knighted.

MISTRESS PAGE

What? thou liest! Sir Alice Ford! These knights will hack; and so thou shouldst not alter the article of thy gentry.

MISTRESS FORD

We burn daylight: here, read, read; perceive how I might be knighted. I shall think the worse of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking: and yet he would not swear. What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his belly, ashore at Windsor? How shall I be revenged on him? I think the best way were to entertain him with hope, till the wicked fire of lust have melted him in his own grease. Did you ever hear the like?

MISTRESS PAGE

Letter for letter, but that the name of Page and Ford differs! To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions, here's the twin-brother of thy letter: but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant he hath a thousand of these letters, writ with blank space for different names.

MISTRESS FORD

Why, this is the very same; the very hand, the very words. What doth he think of us?

MISTRESS PAGE

Let's be revenged on him:

let's appoint him a meeting; give him a show of comfort in his suit and lead him on with a fine-baited delay, till he hath pawned his horses to mine host of the Garter.

MISTRESS FORD

Nay, I will consent to act any villany against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. O, that my husband saw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealousy.

MISTRESS PAGE

Why, look where he comes; and my good man too: he's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause; and that I hope is an unmeasurable distance.

MISTRESS FORD

You are the happier woman.

MISTRESS PAGE

Let's consult together against this greasy knight. Come hither.

They retire

Enter FORD with PISTOL, and PAGE with NYM

FORD

Well, I hope it be not so.

PISTOL

Hope is a curtal dog in some affairs:
Sir John affects thy wife.

FORD

Why, sir, my wife is not young.

PISTOL

He wooes both high and low, both rich and poor, Both young and old, one with another.

NYM

[To PAGE] And this is true; I like not the humour of lying. He loves your wife; there's the short and the long. I speak and I avouch; 'tis true: my name is Nym and Falstaff loves your wife. Adieu.

Exit

PAGE

'The humour of it,' quoth a'! here's a fellow frights English out of his wits.

FORD

I will seek out Falstaff.

PAGE

I never heard such a drawling, affecting rogue.

MISTRESS PAGE and MISTRESS FORD enter

How now, Meg!

MISTRESS PAGE

Whither go you, George? Hark you.

MISTRESS FORD

How now, sweet Frank! why art thou melancholy?

FORD

I melancholy! I am not melancholy. Get you home, go.

MISTRESS FORD

Now, will you go, Mistress Page?

MISTRESS PAGE

Have with you. You'll come to dinner, George.

Aside to MISTRESS FORD

Look who comes yonder: she shall be our messenger to this paltry knight.

MISTRESS FORD

[Aside to MISTRESS PAGE] Trust me, I thought on her: she'll fit it.

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY

MISTRESS PAGE

You are come to see my daughter Anne?

MISTRESS QUICKLY

Ay, forsooth; and, I pray, how does good Mistress Anne?

MISTRESS PAGE

Go in with us and see: we have an hour's talk with you.

Exeunt MISTRESS PAGE, MISTRESS FORD, and MISTRESS QUICKLY

PAGE

How now, Master Ford!

FORD

You heard what this knave told me, did you not?

PAGE

Yes: and you heard what the other told me?

FORD

Do you think there is truth in them?

PAGE

I do not think the knight would offer it: but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives are a yoke of his discarded men.

FORD

Were they his men?

PAGE

Marry, were they.

FORD

I like it never the better for that. Does he lie at the Garter?

PAGE

Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage towards my wife, I would turn her loose to him; and what he gets more of her than sharp words, let it lie on my head.

FORD

I do not misdoubt my wife; but I would be loath to turn them together. A man may be too confident: I would have nothing lie on my head: I cannot be thus satisfied.

PAGE

Look where my ranting host of the Garter comes:

Enter Host

How now, mine host!

Host

How now, bully-rook! thou'rt a gentleman. Cavaleiro-justice, I say!

Enter SHALLOW

SHALLOW

Good Master Page! Master Page, will you go with us? we have sport in hand.

Sir, there is a fray to be fought between Sir Hugh the Welsh priest and Caius the French doctor.

FORD

Good mine host o' the Garter, a word with you.

Drawing him aside

SHALLOW

[To PAGE] Will you go with us to behold it? My merry host hath had the measuring of their weapons; and, I think, hath appointed them contrary places; for, believe me, I hear the parson is no jester.

Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be.

They converse apart

Host

Hast thou no suit against my knight?

FORD

None, I protest: but I'll give you a bottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him and tell him my name is Brook; only for a jest.

Host

My hand, bully; thou shalt have egress and regress; and thy name shall be Brook.

PAGE

I have heard the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier. I would rather hear them scold than fight.

Exeunt Host, SHALLOW, and PAGE

FORD

Though Page be a secure fool, an stands so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily: she was in his company at Page's house; and what they made there, I know not. Well, I will look further into't: and I have a disguise to sound Falstaff. If I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestowed.

Exit

3. Hamlet: Prince of Denmark III.1—"To Be or Not to Be"

Hamlet: Prince of Denmark, who has been schooling in Germany, returns home when he learns that his father has died while sleeping in his garden. He is deeply hurt to learn that his mother has just wed his Uncle Claudius, the new king. His companions tell him of a ghostly apparition, and he meets with the specter who calls him to avenge the foul assassination perpetrated by his uncle. Hamlet does not know whether he can trust this ghost to speak truth. His life spirals into confusion as he contemplates his father's death, his mother's remarriage, and the Ghost's charge. In some minutes alone, he considers taking his own life to avoid the morass in which he finds himself. Many consider Hamlet among the top few tragedies ever written and this soliloquy as, perhaps, the best that Shakespeare ever composed.

Hamlet, From Act III. Scene i.**Hamlet, Prince of Denmark:**

To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them. To die—to sleep,
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to: 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep, perchance to dream—ay, there's the rub:
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause—there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th'oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.

4. The Taming of the Shrew II.1 "Fighting Words"

The Taming of the Shrew is about the Battle of the Sexes. Petruchio, an arrogant knight, agrees to woo and win, Katherina of Padua, so that his friend will then be free to wed her younger sister Bianca. Kate is not having it and resists the strong advances of her brash suitor. Eventually, through Petruchio's machinations, she becomes convinced that, though he is full of himself, he might make a nice match and agrees to marry him, lest she become an old maid. The caustic conversations between shrewish Kate and her narcissistic suitor are some of the best lines Shakespeare penned.

PETRUCHIO

I will attend her here,
 And woo her with some spirit when she comes.
 Say that she rail; why then I'll tell her plain
 She sings as sweetly as a nightingale:
 Say that she frown, I'll say she looks as clear
 As morning roses newly wash'd with dew:
 Say she be mute and will not speak a word;
 Then I'll commend her volubility,
 If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,
 As though she bid me stay by her a week:
 If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day
 When I shall ask the banns and when be married.
 But here she comes; and now, Petruchio, speak.

Enter KATARINA

Good morrow, Kate; for that's your name, I hear.

KATARINA

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing:
 They call me Katarina that do talk of me.

PETRUCHIO

You lie, in faith; for you are call'd plain Kate,
 And bonny Kate and sometimes Kate the curst;
 But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom
 Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate,
 For dainties are all Kates, and therefore, Kate,
 Take this of me, Kate of my consolation;
 Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,
 Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded,
 Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs,
 Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

KATARINA

Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither Remove you hence: I
 knew you at the first You were a moveable.

PETRUCHIO

Why, what's a moveable?

KATARINA

A join'd-stool.

PETRUCHIO

Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.

KATARINA

Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO

Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATARINA

No such jade as you, if me you mean.

PETRUCHIO

Alas! good Kate, I will not burden thee;
For, knowing thee to be but young and light--

KATARINA

Too light for such a swain as you to catch; And yet as heavy as my weight
should be.

PETRUCHIO

Should be! should--buzz!

KATARINA

Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO

Come, come, you wasp; i' faith, you are too angry.

KATARINA

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

PETRUCHIO

My remedy is then, to pluck it out.

KATARINA

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies,

PETRUCHIO

Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? In his tail.

In his tongue.

PETRUCHIO

Whose tongue?

KATARINA

Yours, if you talk of tails: and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO

What, with my tongue in your tail? nay, come again, Good Kate; I am a gentleman.

KATARINA

That I'll try.

She strikes him

PETRUCHIO

I swear I'll cuff you, if you strike again.

KATARINA

So may you lose your arms:

If you strike me, you are no gentleman; And if no gentleman, why then no arms.

PETRUCHIO

A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books!

KATARINA

What is your crest? a coxcomb?

PETRUCHIO

A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

KATARINA

No cock of mine; you crow too like a craven.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, come, Kate, come; you must not look so sour.

KATARINA

It is my fashion, when I see a crab.

PETRUCHIO

Why, here's no crab; and therefore look not sour.

KATARINA

There is, there is.

PETRUCHIO

Then show it me.

KATARINA

Had I a glass, I would.

PETRUCHIO

What, you mean my face?

KATARINA

Well aim'd of such a young one.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

KATARINA

Yet you are wither'd.

PETRUCHIO

'Tis with cares.

KATARINA

I care not.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, hear you, Kate: in sooth you scape not so.

KATARINA

I chafe you, if I tarry: let me go.

PETRUCHIO

No, not a whit: I find you passing gentle.

'Twas told me you were rough and coy and sullen,

And now I find report a very liar;

For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,

But slow in speech, yet sweet as spring-time flowers:

Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?

O slanderous world! Kate like the hazel-twigg

Is straight and slender and as brown in hue

As hazel nuts and sweeter than the kernels.

O, let me see thee walk: thou dost not halt.

KATARINA

Where did you study all this goodly speech?

PETRUCHIO

It is extempore, from my mother-wit.

KATARINA

A witty mother! witless else her son.

PETRUCHIO

Am I not wise?

KATARINA

Yes; keep you warm.

PETRUCHIO

Marry, so I mean, sweet Katarina, in thy bed:
 And therefore, setting all this chat aside,
 Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented
 That you shall be my wife; your dowry 'greed on;
 And, Will you, nill you, I will marry you.
 Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn;
 For, by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,
 Thy beauty, that doth make me like thee well,
 Thou must be married to no man but me;
 For I am he am born to tame you Kate,
 And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate
 Conformable as other household Kates.
 Here comes your father: never make denial;
 I must and will have Katarina to my wife.

Re-enter BAPTISTA, GREMIO, and TRANIO

BAPTISTA

Now, Signior Petruchio, how speed you with my daughter?

PETRUCHIO

How but well, sir? how but well?
 It were impossible I should speed amiss.

BAPTISTA

Why, how now, daughter Katarina! in your dumps?

KATARINA

Call you me daughter? now, I promise you
 You have show'd a tender fatherly regard,
 To wish me wed to one half lunatic;
 A mad-cup ruffian and a swearing Jack,
 That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.

PETRUCHIO

Father, 'tis thus: yourself and all the world,
 That talk'd of her, have talk'd amiss of her:
 If she be curst, it is for policy,
 For she's not froward, but modest as the dove;
 She is not hot, but temperate as the morn;
 For patience she will prove a second Grissel,
 And Roman Lucrece for her chastity:
 And to conclude, we have 'greed so well together,
 That upon Sunday is the wedding-day.

KATARINA

I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday first.

GREMIO

Hark, Petruchio; she says she'll see thee hang'd first.

TRANIO

Is this your speeding? nay, then, good night our part!

PETRUCHIO

Be patient, gentlemen; I choose her for myself:
 If she and I be pleased, what's that to you?
 'Tis bargain'd 'twixt us twain, being alone,
 That she shall still be curst in company.
 I tell you, 'tis incredible to believe
 How much she loves me: O, the kindest Kate!
 She hung about my neck; and kiss on kiss
 She vied so fast, protesting oath on oath,
 That in a twink she won me to her love.
 O, you are novices! 'tis a world to see,
 How tame, when men and women are alone,
 A meacock wretch can make the cursest shrew.
 Give me thy hand, Kate: I will unto Venice,
 To buy apparel 'gainst the wedding-day.
 Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests;
 I will be sure my Katarina shall be fine.

BAPTISTA

I know not what to say: but give me your hands;
 God send you joy, Petruchio! 'tis a match.

GREMIO & TRANIO

Amen, say we: we will be witnesses.

PETRUCHIO

Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu;

I will to Venice; Sunday comes apace:

We will have rings and things and fine array;

And kiss me, Kate, we will be married o'Sunday.

Exeunt PETRUCHIO and KATARINA severally

5. Macbeth II.1 "Is This a Dagger I See Before Me?"

Macbeth, great general of Scotland, defends his king, Duncan, admirably in battle against Norway. On his return, he and his fellow general, Banquo, meet three weird sisters who prophesy that he will soon be king. When he returns to his castle, Inverness, his wife, who has pledged her heart to the forces of darkness, convinces Macbeth to kill King Duncan that night when he comes to stay with them. Macbeth reluctantly agrees but battles with carrying out this act against God, nature, and Scotland up to the very moment he does it.

Macbeth. From Act II. Scene i.

MACBETH

Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
 She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.
 Is this a dagger which I see before me,
 The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
 I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
 Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
 To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
 A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
 Proceeding from the heat-oppresed brain?
 I see thee yet, in form as palpable As this which now I draw.
 Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
 And such an instrument I was to use.
 Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
 Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,
 And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
 Which was not so before. There's no such thing:
 It is the bloody business which informs
 Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one halfworld
 Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
 The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates
 Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,
 Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace.
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,
 And take the present horror from the time,
 Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
A bell rings
 I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
 Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
 That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

6. A Midsummer Night's Dream II.1, III.1, IV.1—"Loving Eye Drops"

Midsummer Night's Dream, Shakespeare's most popular comedy, begins with Duke Theseus of Athens preparing to marry his bride, Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. He is asked to intervene in a planned marriage which is being resisted. Two young couples, confused as to whom they have loved and now love, head to the woods to avoid the situation. Oberon, the Faery King, after arguing with his wife, Titania, commissions his servant Puck, to find a flower, the juice of which causes one to love the first creature seen after waking. The magical drops stimulate new and strange passions in Titania and the young sleeping lovers. The queen falls madly in love with Bottom, a weaver, who has been magically turned into an ass. Later, when she awakes, she considers it all a dream, and pledges her love to Oberon, and the young couples, too have unraveled their confusions in love.

Midsummer Night's Dream, II.1, III.1, IV.1

Enter FAIRY at one side and PUCK (ROBIN GOODFELLOW) at another

PUCK

How now, spirit? Whither wander you?

FAIRY

Over hill, over dale,
 Thorough bush, thorough brier,
 Over park, over pale,
 Thorough flood, thorough fire.
 I do wander everywhere
 Swifter than the moons sphere.
 And I serve the fairy queen
 To dew her orbs upon the green.
 I must go seek some dewdrops here
 And hang a pearl in every cowslips ear.
 Farewell, thou lob of spirits. I'll be gone.
 Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

PUCK

The king doth keep his revels here tonight.
 Take heed the queen come not within his sight.
 For now they never meet in grove or green,
 By fountain clear or spangled starlight sheen.
 But they do square, that all their elves for fear

 Creep into acorn cups and hide them there.

FAIRY

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
 Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
 Called Robin Goodfellow.
 Are not you he
 That frights the maidens of the villagery,
 Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck,
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck.
 Are not you he?

PUCK

Thou speakst aright.
 I am that merry wanderer of the night.
 I jest to Oberon and make him smile
 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
 Neighing in likeness of a filly foal.
 And sometime lurk I in a gossips bowl
 In very likeness of a roasted crab,
 And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
 And on her withered dewlap pour the ale.
 The wisest aunt telling the saddest tale
 Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me.
 Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
 And Tailor! cries, and falls into a cough,
 And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,
 And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
 A merrier hour was never wasted there.
 But, room, fairy! Here comes a wagtail.

FAIRY

And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

Enter BOTTOM , with an ass's head FAIRIES hide (PUCK could exit or hide)

BOTTOM

This is to make an ass that of they me, to fright me if they could...I will walk up and down here and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid
(sings)

TITANIA

(waking) What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?
 I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.
 Mine ear is much enamored of thy note.
 So is mine eye enthralld to thy shape.
 And thy fair virtues force perforce doth move me
 On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

BOTTOM

Not so, neither. But if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

TITANIA

Out of this wood do not desire to go.
 Thou shalt remain here whether thou wilt or no.
 I am a spirit of no common rate.
 The summer still doth tend upon my state.
 And I do love thee. Therefore go with me.
 I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee.
 And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
 And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep.
 And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
 That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.
 Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed!

Enter fairies: PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, and MUSTARDSEED

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

COBWEB

And I.

MUSTARDSEED

And I.

ALL

Where shall we go?

TITANIA

Be kind and courteous to this gentleman.
 Hop in his walks and gambol in his eyes.
 Feed him with apricots and dewberries,
 With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries.
 The honey bags steal from the humble-bees,
 And for night tapers crop their waxen thighs
 And light them at the fiery glowworms eyes
 To have my love to bed and to arise.
 And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
 To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes.
 Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

PEASEBLOSSOM

Hail, mortal.

COBWEB

Hail.

MUSTARDSEED

Hail.

BOTTOM

I cry your worships mercy, heartily. I beseech your worships name.

COBWEB

Cobweb.

BOTTOM

I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb. If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. Your name, honest gentleman?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Peaseblossom.

BOTTOM

I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too. Your name, I beseech you, sir?

MUSTARDSEED

Mustardseed.

BOTTOM

Good Master Mustardseed, I know your patience well. I desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed.

TITANIA

(to BOTTOM) Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed

While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,

And stick musk roses in thy sleek, smooth head,

And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

BOTTOM

Wheres Peaseblossom?

PEASEBLOSSOM

Ready.

BOTTOM

Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. Wheres Monsieur Cobweb?

COBWEB

Ready.

BOTTOM

Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur, get you your weapons in your hand and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle. And, good monsieur, bring me the honey bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur. And good monsieur, have a care the honey bag break not. I would be loath to have you overflown with a honey bag, signor.

Exit COBWEB

Wheres Monsieur Mustardseed?

MUSTARDSEED

Ready.

BOTTOM

Give me your neaf, Monsieur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur.

MUSTARDSEED

What's your will?

BOTTOM

Nothing, good monsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barbers, monsieur, for methinks I am marvelous hairy about the face. And I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

TITANIA

What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

BOTTOM

I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let's have the tongs and the bones.

TITANIA

Or say, sweet love, what thou desirest to eat.

BOTTOM

Truly, a peck of provender. I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay. Good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

TITANIA

I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrels hoard and fetch thee new nuts.

BOTTOM

I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me. I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

TITANIA

Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms.

Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away.

Exeunt FAIRIES

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle

Gently entwist. The female ivy so

Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.

Oh, how I love thee! How I dote on thee!

7. Romeo & Juliet Prologue—"The Two Hours Traffic"

William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, studied in most U.S. high schools, is one of his best-known plays and one of the most famous love stories ever penned. It begins much like film trailers do today, giving us a peak into the story of play and its conflicts. Listen along as the prologue shares with us.

Romeo and Juliet. Prologue.

Two households, both alike in dignity
(In fair Verona, where we lay our scene),
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-marked love
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which, if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

8. Henry V... IV.3—"St. Crispin's Day"

After a public insult by the Dauphin [*Daw fen*], the French crown prince, Henry V of England invades France to take the throne to which he has a distant lineal right. After foiling an assassination plot and inspiring his men, Henry wins against the odds and woos and weds the Princess of France, uniting the two nations in peace and cooperation. As they head into battle at one point, Henry movingly shares his challenge speech which has come to be known as the "Band of Brothers" speech, the source of the name for the epic war series developed by historian Stephen Ambrose, director Steven Spielberg, and writer-producer Tom Hanks. It extols the willingness of heroic warriors to bleed and die for the benefit of future generations.

Henry V, From Act IV, Scene 3

What's he that wishes so?
My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair cousin:
If we are mark'd to die, we are enough
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.
By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires:
But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive.
No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England:
God's peace! I would not lose so great an honour
As one man more, methinks, would share from me
For the best hope I have. O, do not wish one more!
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,
That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart; his passport shall be made
And crowns for convoy put into his purse:
We would not die in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to die with us.
This day is called the feast of Crispian:
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian:'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day: then shall our names
Familiar in his mouth as household words

Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remember'd;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

9. King Lear I.4—"Make Not This Creature Fruitful"

King Lear of England, likely in his seventies, decides to split his kingdom among his three daughters. Two of his daughters schmooze him, telling him exactly what he wants to hear. His youngest refuses to exaggerate her love for him and ends up exiled with some of his faithful knights. The other two daughters split the kingdom and begin a systematic campaign to destroy and shred any remaining significance or power that Lear and his retinue might expect. In response, he viciously curses his oldest daughter Goneril.

King Lear, From Act I, Scene iv

Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatured torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! Away, away!

10. Two Gentlemen of Verona II.3—"A Man and His Dog"

In what is probably Shakespeare's first play, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, a pair of friends who live in the town near Venice, Italy, talk about life and love. Valentine goes to seek his fortune in Milan. His friend Proteus follows a bit later and believes he's fallen in love with Silvia, Valentine's girl. He forgets his commitment to his love, Julia, back home in Verona, who later dresses as a boy and comes to find him, unleashing plenty of confusion and frustration. Of course, it all works out in the end, and the couples are reunited. The clown Launce's speech with his talented dog is among the most comic in Shakespeare. Let's enjoy it together.

Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 2 Scene 3

LAUNCE

Nay, 'twill be this hour ere I have done weeping; all the kind of the Launces have this very fault. I have received my proportion, like the prodigious son, and am going with Sir Proteus to the Imperial's court. I think Crab, my dog, be the sourest-natured dog that lives: my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity, yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear: he is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog: a Jew would have wept to have seen our parting; why, my grandam, having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting. Nay, I'll show you the manner of it. This shoe is my father: no, this left shoe is my father: no, no, this left shoe is my mother: nay, that cannot be so neither: yes, it is so, it is so, it hath the worser sole. This shoe, with the hole in it, is my mother, and this my father; a vengeance on't! there 'tis: now, sit, this staff is my sister, for, look you, she is as white as a lily and as small as a wand: this hat is Nan, our maid: I am the dog: no, the dog is himself, and I am the dog—Oh! the dog is me, and I am myself; ay, so, so. Now come I to my father; Father, your blessing: now should not the shoe speak a word for weeping: now should I kiss my father; well, he weeps on. Now come I to my mother: O, that she could speak now like a wood woman! Well, I kiss her; why, there 'tis; here's my mother's breath up and down. Now come I to my sister; mark the moan she makes. Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear nor speaks a word; but see how I lay the dust with my tears.

11. Cymbeline, King of Britain III.6—"A Family Reunion"

Cymbeline is Shakespeare's tale of an English vassal king of the Roman Empire. He has lost two sons, has only a daughter, and has married a queen who wants Imogen, the daughter, to wed her evil and incompetent son Cloten. Imogen has secretly married with Posthumus, who is exiled by the king to Italy. Imogen, disguised as a male, goes in search of her lover, where a manipulative man Iachimo (yah kē mō) deceives Posthumus into thinking that his wife has been unfaithful. With help from her discovered long-lost brothers, confusing circumstances, deathbed confessions, and the intervention of the gods, Imogen and Posthumus are reunited.

Cymbeline, King of Britain

Act III, Scene 6

Wales. Before the cave of Belarius.

[Enter IMOGEN, in boy's clothes]

IMOGEN

I see a man's life is a tedious one:
 I have tired myself, and for two nights together
 Have made the ground my bed. I should be sick,
 But that my resolution helps me. Milford,
 When from the mountain-top Pisanio show'd thee,
 Thou wast within a ken: O Jove! I think
 Foundations fly the wretched; such, I mean,
 Where they should be relieved. Two beggars told me
 I could not miss my way: will poor folks lie,
 That have afflictions on them, knowing 'tis
 A punishment or trial? Yes; no wonder,
 When rich ones scarce tell true. To lapse in fulness
 Is sorer than to lie for need, and falsehood
 Is worse in kings than beggars. My dear lord!
 Thou art one o' the false ones. Now I think on thee,
 My hunger's gone; but even before, I was
 At point to sink for food. But what is this?
 Here is a path to't: 'tis some savage hold:
 I were best not to call; I dare not call:
 Ho! No answer? Then I'll enter.
 Best draw my sword: and if mine enemy
 But fear the sword like me, he'll scarcely look on't.
 Such a foe, good heavens!

[Exit, to the cave]

[Enter BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, and ARVIRAGUS]

BELARIUS

You, Polydote, have proved best woodman and
 Are master of the feast: Cadwal and I
 Will play the cook and servant;
 Now peace be here,
 Poor house that keep'st thyself!

GUIDERIUS

I am thoroughly weary.

ARVIRAGUS

I am weak with toil, yet strong in appetite.

GUIDERIUS

There is cold meat i' the cave; we'll browse on that,
 Whilst what we have kill'd be cook'd.

BELARIUS

[Looking into the cave]

Stay; come not in.

GUIDERIUS

What's the matter, sir?

BELARIUS

By Jupiter, an angel! or, if not,
 An earthly paragon!

[Re-enter IMOGEN]

IMOGEN

Good masters, harm me not:
 Before I enter'd here, I call'd; and thought
 To have begg'd or bought what I have took:
 I have stol'n nought, nor would not, though I had found
 Gold strew'd i' the floor. Here's money for my meat:
 I would have left it on the board so soon
 As I had made my meal, and parted
 With prayers for the provider.

GUIDERIUS

Money, youth?

ARVIRAGUS

All gold and silver rather turn to dirt!

IMOGEN

I see you're angry:

Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should
Have died had I not made it.

BELARIUS

Whither bound?

IMOGEN

To Milford-Haven.

BELARIUS

What's your name?

IMOGEN

Fidele, sir.

BELARIUS

Prithee, fair youth,

Think us no churls, nor measure our good minds

By this rude place we live in. Well encounter'd!

'Tis almost night: you shall have better cheer

Ere you depart: and thanks to stay and eat it.

Boys, bid him welcome.

GUIDERIUS

Were you a woman, youth,

I should woo hard but be your groom.

ARVIRAGUS

I'll make't my comfort

He is a man; I'll love him as my brother:

Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.

BELARIUS

Boys, we'll go dress our hunt. Fair youth, come in:
Discourse is heavy, fasting; when we have supp'd,
We'll mannerly demand thee of thy story,
So far as thou wilt speak it.

GUIDERIUS

Pray, draw near.

[Exeunt]

12. Love's Labour's Lost III.1—"To Seek or Not Seek a Wife"

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, one of Shakespeare's earlier plays, Ferdinand, King of Navarre, and three of his men determine to seek the intellectual life and to swear off of pursuing women. A wrench is thrown into their plans when the beautiful Princess of France and three of her gorgeous ladies arrive in town. The men have a very difficult time hiding their affection for these women. Shakespeare adds a cast of entertaining and frequently simple-minded eccentrics to the mix. Connecting the two groups is a Spaniard, Don Adriano de Armado, who makes no pretensions that he has but one goal—to woo women.

LOVE'S LABOURS LOST ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO and MOTH

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

Go, tenderness of years; take this key,
give enlargement to the swain, bring him festinately
hither: I must employ him in a letter to my love.

MOTH

A message well sympathized; a horse to be ambassador
for an ass.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

Ha, ha! what sayest thou?

MOTH

Marry, sir, you must send the ass upon the horse,
for he is very slow-gaited. But I go.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

The way is but short: away!

MOTH

As swift as lead, sir.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

The meaning, pretty ingenious?
Is not lead a metal heavy, dull, and slow?

MOTH

Minime, honest master; or rather, master, no.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

I say lead is slow.

MOTH

You are too swift, sir, to say so:
Is that lead slow which is fired from a gun?

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

Sweet smoke of rhetoric!
He reposes me a cannon; and the bullet, that's he:
I shoot thee at the swain.

MOTH

Thump then and I flee.

Exit

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

My herald is return'd.

Re-enter MOTH with COSTARD

MOTH

A wonder, master! here's a costard broken in a shin.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

But tell me; how was there a costard broken in a shin?

MOTH

I will tell you sensibly.

COSTARD

Thou hast no feeling of it, Moth:

I Costard, running out, that was safely within,

Fell over the threshold and broke my shin.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

Sirrah Costard, I will enfranchise thee.

COSTARD

O, marry me to one Frances:

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

By my sweet soul, I mean setting thee at liberty,
 enfreedoming thy person; thou wert immured,
 restrained, captivated, bound.

COSTARD

True, true; and now you will be my purgation and let me loose.

DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO

I give thee thy liberty, set thee from durance; and,
 in lieu thereof, impose on thee nothing but this:
 bear this significant

Giving a letter

to the country maid Jaquenetta:

there is remuneration; for the best ward of mine
 honour is rewarding my dependents. Moth, follow.

Exit

MOTH

Like the sequel, I. Signior Costard, adieu.

COSTARD

My sweet ounce of man's flesh!

Exit MOTH

Now will I look to his remuneration. Remuneration!

O, that's the Latin word for three farthings: three farthings--remuneration.--'What's the price of this inkle?'--'One penny.'--'No, I'll give you a remuneration:' why, it carries it. Remuneration! why, it is a fairer name than French crown. I will never buy and sell out of this word.

Enter BIRON

BIRON

O, my good knave Costard! exceedingly well met.

COSTARD

Pray you, sir, how much carnation ribbon may a man buy for a remuneration?

BIRON

What is a remuneration?

COSTARD

Marry, sir, halfpenny farthing.

BIRON

Why, then, three-farthing worth of silk.

COSTARD

I thank your worship: God be wi' you!

BIRON

I must employ thee:

As thou wilt win my favour, good my knave,
Do one thing for me that I shall entreat.

COSTARD

When would you have it done, sir?

BIRON

This afternoon.

COSTARD

Well, I will do it, sir: fare you well.

BIRON

Thou knowest not what it is.

COSTARD

I shall know, sir, when I have done it.

BIRON

Why, villain, thou must know first.

COSTARD

I will come to your worship to-morrow morning.

BIRON

It must be done this afternoon.

Hark, slave, it is but this:

The princess comes to hunt here in the park,
 And in her train there is a gentle lady;
 When tongues speak sweetly, then they name her name,
 And Rosaline they call her: ask for her;
 And to her white hand see thou do commend
 This seal'd-up counsel. There's thy guerdon; go.

Giving him a shilling

COSTARD

Gardon, O sweet gardon! better than remuneration,
 a'leven-pence farthing better: most sweet gardon! I
 will do it sir, in print. Gardon! Remuneration!

Exit

BIRON

And I, forsooth, in love! I, that have been love's whip;
 This whimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy;
 This senior-junior, giant-dwarf, Dan Cupid;
 Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
 The anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
 Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
 Dread prince of plackets, king of codpieces,
 Sole imperator and great general
 Of trotting 'paritors:--O my little heart:--
 What, I! I love! I sue! I seek a wife!

Nay, to be perjured, which is worst of all;
And, among three, to love the worst of all;
A wightly wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes;
And I to sigh for her! to watch for her!
To pray for her! Go to; it is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue and groan:
Some men must love my lady and some Joan.

Exit

13. The Taming of the Shrew V.2—"I Am Ashamed Women Are So Simple"

Earlier, we met the intense and witty Katharina Minola, from *Taming of the Shrew*, amidst her verbal jousts with Petruchio. The men hold a contest late in the play to determine which of their ladies is most cooperative. Kate wins the moment. She admits she has found her happiness in a way she never thought she could and talks to the ladies of the audience to convince them that being wed can be quite wonderful, and marriage may not be quite so bad after all.

Taming of the Shrew Act V, Scene 2

KATARINA

Fie, fie! unknit that threatening unkind brow,
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,
And in no sense is meet or amiable.

A woman mov'd is like a fountain troubled
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
And for thy maintenance commits his body
To painful labour both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe,
And craves no other tribute at thy hands
But love, fair looks, and true obedience
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
Even such a woman oweth to her husband,
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?
I am asham'd that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway,
When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,
But that our soft conditions and our hearts
Should well agree with our external parts?
Come, come, you forward and unable worms!

My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
My heart as great, my reason haply more,
To bandy word for word and frown for frown,
But now I see our lances are but straws,
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot;
In token of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready, may it do him ease

14. A Winter's Tale II.1—"Suspicions of Adultery and Treason"

In *A Winter's Tale*, one of Shakespeare's last plays, King Leontes of Sicilia and King Polixenes of Bohemia have been friends since childhood. Leontes unjustly accuses his wife Hermione of adultery with Polixenes, believing that the child she carries is his friend's. Leontes exiles the baby girl, and his queen dies of a broken heart. Eventually, Leontes owns his wretched errors and resolves to live the rest of his life in regret and sorrow. The girl, whose name means "little lost one," is raised by shepherds for 16 years. When grown, the girl, Perdita, falls in love with her father's friend, Prince Florizel, bringing her back home to Sicily. When she goes to see the monument of her deceased birth mother, the statue miraculously comes to life, leading everyone to be beautifully reconciled.

SCENE I. A room in LEONTES' palace.*Enter HERMIONE, MAMILLIUS, and Ladies***HERMIONE**

Take the boy to you: he so troubles me, 'tis past enduring.

LADY

Come, my gracious lord; shall I be your playfellow?

MAMILLIUS

No, I'll none of you.

LADY

Why, my sweet lord?

MAMILLIUS

You'll kiss me hard and speak to me as if I were a baby still. I love you better.

EMILIA

And why so, my lord?

MAMILLIUS

Not for because your brows are blacker; yet black brows, they say, become some women best, so that there be not too much hair there, but in a semicircle or a half-moon made with a pen.

EMILIA

Who taught you this?

MAMILLIUS

I learnt it out of women's faces. Pray now what colour are your eyebrows?

LADY

Blue, my lord.

MAMILLIUS

Nay, that's a mock: I have seen a lady's nose that has been blue, but not her eyebrows.

LADY

Hark ye; the queen your mother rounds apace: we shall present our services to a fine new prince one of these days; and then you'd wanton with us, if we would have you.

EMILIA

She is spread of late into a goodly bulk: good time encounter her!

HERMIONE

What wisdom stirs amongst you? Come, sir, now I am for you again:
pray you, sit by us, and tell 's a tale.

MAMILLIUS

Merry or sad shall't be?

HERMIONE

As merry as you will.

MAMILLIUS

A sad tale's best for winter: I have one of sprites and goblins.

HERMIONE

Let's have that, good sir. Come on, sit down: and do your best to fright
me with your sprites; you're powerful at it.

MAMILLIUS

There was a man--

HERMIONE

Nay, come, sit down; then on.

MAMILLIUS

Dwelt by a churchyard: I will tell it softly; yond crickets shall not hear it.

HERMIONE

Come on, then, and give't me in mine ear.

Enter LEONTES, with ANTIGONUS, Lords and others

LEONTES

Was he met there? His train? Camillo with him?

LORD

Behind the tuft of pines I met them; never saw I men scour so on their
way: I eyed them even to their ships.

LEONTES

How blest am I in my just censure, in my true opinion! Camillo was his
help in this, his pander: there is a plot against my life, my crown; all's
true that is mistrusted: that false villain whom I employ'd was
preemploy'd by him: He has discover'd my design, and I remain a
pinch'd thing; yea, a very trick for them to play at will. How came the
posterns so easily open?

LORD

By her great authority; which often hath no less prevail'd than so on your command.

LEONTES

I know't too well. Give me the boy: I am glad you did not nurse him: though he does bear some signs of me, yet you have too much blood in him.

HERMIONE

What is this? Sport?

LEONTES

Bear the boy hence; he shall not come about her; away with him! And let her sport herself with that she's big with; for 'tis Polixenes has made thee swell thus. You, my lords, look on her, mark her well; be but about to say 'she is a goodly lady,' and the justice of your hearts will thereto add 'tis pity she's not honest, honourable:' but be 't known, from him that has most cause to grieve it should be, she's an adulteress.

HERMIONE

Should a villain say so, the most replenish'd villain in the world, he were as much more villain: you, my lord, do but mistake.

LEONTES

You have mistook, my lady, Polixenes for Leontes. I have said she's an adulteress; I have said with whom: more, she's a traitor and Camillo is a federary with her; and one that knows what she should shame to know herself but with her most vile principal, that she's a bed-swarver.

HERMIONE

No, by my life. Privy to none of this. How will this grieve you, when you shall come to clearer knowledge, that you thus have publish'd me! Gentle my lord, you scarce can right me throughly then to say you did mistake.

LEONTES

Away with her! To prison! He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty but that he speaks.

HERMIONE

There's some ill planet reigns: I must be patient till the heavens look with an aspect more favourable. Good my lords, I am not prone to weeping, as our sex commonly are. But I have that honourable grief lodged here which burns worse than tears drown: beseech you all, my lords, with

thoughts so qualified as your charities shall best instruct you, measure me; and so the king's will be perform'd!

LEONTES

Shall I be heard?

HERMIONE

Who is't that goes with me? Beseech your highness, my women may be with me; for you see my plight requires it. Do not weep, good fools; there is no cause: when you shall know your mistress has deserved prison, then abound in tears as I come out: this action I now go on is for my better grace. Adieu, my lord: I never wish'd to see you sorry; now I trust I shall. My women, come.

LEONTES

Go, do our bidding; hence!

Exit HERMIONE, guarded; with Ladies

LORD

Beseech your highness, call the queen again.

ANTIGONUS

Be certain what you do, sir. For her, my Lord, I dare my life lay down and will do't, sir, for every inch of woman in the world, ay, every dram of woman's flesh is false, if she be.

LEONTES

What! lack I credit?

LORD

I had rather you did lack than I, my lord, upon this ground.

LEONTES

Then, for a greater confirmation, I have dispatch'd in post to sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple, Cleomenes and Dion, whom you know of stuff'd sufficiency: now from the oracle they will bring all; whose spiritual counsel had, shall stop or spur me. Have I done well?

ANTIGONUS

Well done, my lord.

LEONTES

Though I am satisfied and need no more than what I know, yet shall the oracle give rest to the minds of others, such as he whose ignorant credulity will not come up to the truth.

Exeunt

15. King Lear IV.2—"Blow Winds, Crack Your Cheeks"

King Lear, whom we met a short time ago, is finally driven into the wilderness with his fool, a witty jester, where they meet a nobleman's son, Tom O'Bedlam, who is pretending to be mad. Wading into the throes of the wretched weather, Lear speaks into the wildly storming tempest and likely experiences a break with his sanity, drifting into madness and his eventual death.

KING LEAR ACT III, SCENE II. Another part of the heath. Storm still.**KING LEAR**

Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, an germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!
Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure: here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

16. A Midsummer Night's Dream V.10—"Pyramus and Thisby's Wall"

We return to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to celebrate the marriage of Duke Theseus to Queen Hippolyta, a group of six amateur actors, all of whom are tradesmen, collaborate to put on a play. Though the primary actor, Nick Bottom, is extremely confident and the others somewhat insecure, they forge ahead. The two young lovers of the story communicate through a hole in a wall to the light of lantern before a roaring lion scares them apart. The group's efforts are accompanied by the ongoing comments of the king and queen who find the experience quaint, though with much need for improvement.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM, ACT V, SCENE 1

[Enter QUINCE for the Prologue]

QUINCE

If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to contest you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand and by their show
You shall know all that you are like to know.

THESEUS

This fellow doth not stand upon points.
He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows
not the stop. A good moral: it is not
enough to speak, but to speak true.

HIPPOLYTA

Indeed he hath played on his prologue like a child
on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

THESEUS

His speech, was like a tangled chain; nothing
impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

[Enter Pyramus and Thisbe, Wall, Moonshine, and Lion]

QUINCE

Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
 But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
 This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
 This beauteous lady Thisby is certain.
 This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
 Wall, that vile Wall which did these lovers sunder;
 And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
 To whisper. At the which let no man wonder.
 This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
 Presenteth Moonshine; for, if you will know,
 By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
 To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
 This grisly beast, which Lion hight by name,
 The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
 Did scare away, or rather did affright;
 And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
 Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
 Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,
 And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain:
 Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
 He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast;
 And Thisby, tarrying in mulberry shade,
 His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,
 Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain
 At large discourse, while here they do remain.

[Exeunt Prologue, Thisbe, Lion, and Moonshine]

THESEUS

I wonder if the lion be to speak.

HIPPOLYTA

No wonder, my lord: one lion may, when many asses do.

SNOUT

In this same interlude it doth befall
 That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
 And such a wall, as I would have you think,
 That had in it a crannied hole or chink,
 Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,
 Did whisper often very secretly.
 This loam, this rough-cast and this stone doth show
 That I am that same wall; the truth is so:
 And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
 Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

THESEUS

Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

HIPPOLYTA

It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard
 discourse, my lord.

[Enter Pyramus]

THESEUS

Pyramus draws near the wall: silence!

BOTTOM

O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
 O night, which ever art when day is not!
 O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,
 I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!
 And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
 That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
 Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
 Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!

[Wall holds up his fingers]

Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!
 But what see I? No Thisby do I see.

O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!
 Cursed be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

THESEUS

The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

BOTTOM

No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me'
is Thisby's cue: she is to enter now, and I am to
spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will
fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

[Enter Thisbe]

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

BOTTOM

I see a voice: now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face. Thisby!

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

My love thou art, my love I think.

BOTTOM

Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;
And, like Limander, am I trusty still.

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

BOTTOM Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

BOTTOM

O kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

BOTTOM

Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

'Tide life, 'tide death, I come without delay.

[Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe]

SNOUT *[as Wall]*

Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus Wall away doth go.

[Exit]

THESEUS

Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

HIPPOLYTA

This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

THESEUS

The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst
are no worse, if imagination amend them.

HIPPOLYTA

It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

THESEUS

If we imagine no worse of them than they of
themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here
come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

[Enter Lion and Moonshine]

SNUG*[as Lion]*

You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
 The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
 May now perchance both quake and tremble here,
 When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
 Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am
 A lion-fell, nor else no lion's dam;
 For, if I should as lion come in strife
 Into this place, 'twere pity on my life.

THESEUS

A very gentle beast, of a good conscience.

HIPPOLYTA

The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.
 This lion is a very fox for his valour.

THESEUS

True; and a goose for his discretion.

HIPPOLYTA

Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry his
 discretion; and the fox carries the goose.

THESEUS

His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour;
 for the goose carries not the fox. It is well:
 leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

STARVELING *[as Moonshine]*

This lantern doth the horned moon present;—

HIPPOLYTA

He should have worn the horns on his head.

THESEUS

He is no crescent, and his horns are
invisible within the circumference.

STARVELING *[as Moonshine]*

This lantern doth the horned moon present;
Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.

HIPPOLYTA

I am aweary of this moon: would he would change!

THESEUS

It appears, by his small light of discretion, that
he is in the wane; but yet, in courtesy, in all
reason, we must stay the time.

HIPPOLYTA

Proceed, Moon.

STARVELING *[as Moonshine]*

All that I have to say, is, to tell you that the
lantern is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this
thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

THESEUS

Why, all these should be in the lantern; for all
these are in the moon. But, silence! here comes Thisbe.

[Enter Thisbe]

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?

SNUG *[as Lion] [Roaring]*

Oh—

[Thisbe runs off]

HIPPOLYTA

Well roared, Lion.

THESEUS

Well run, Thisbe.

HIPPOLYTA

Well shone, Moon. Truly, the moon shines with a good grace.

[The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exit]

THESEUS

Well moused, Lion.

HIPPOLYTA

And so the lion vanished.

THESIUS

And then came Pyramus.

[Enter Pyramus]

BOTTOM

Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisby sight.

But stay, O spite!

But mark, poor knight,

What dreadful dole is here!

Eyes, do you see?

How can it be?

O dainty duck! O dear!

Thy mantle good,

What, stain'd with blood!

Approach, ye Furies fell!

O Fates, come, come,

Cut thread and thrum;

Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

THESEUS

This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would
go near to make a man look sad.

HIPPOLYTA

Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

BOTTOM

O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?
 Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:
 Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame
 That lived, that loved, that liked, that look'd
 with cheer.

Come, tears, confound;
 Out, sword, and wound
 The pap of Pyramus;
 Ay, that left pap,
 Where heart doth hop:
[Stabs himself]
 Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead,
 Now am I fled;
 My soul is in the sky:
 Tongue, lose thy light;
 Moon take thy flight:
[Exit Moonshine]
 Now die, die, die, die, die. *[Dies]*

Theseus

No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.

Hippolyta

Less than an ace, man; for he is dead; he is nothing.

THESEUS

With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and
 prove an ass.

HIPPOLYTA

How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes
 back and finds her lover?

THESEUS

She will find him by starlight. Here she comes; and
her passion ends the play.

[Re-enter Thisbe]

HIPPOLYTA

Methinks she should not use a long one for such a
Pyramus: I hope she will be brief.

Theseus

She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

HIPPOLYTA

And thus she means, videlicet:—

FLUTE *[as Thisbe]*

Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?
O Pyramus, arise!
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These My lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone:
Lovers, make moan:
His eyes were green as leeks.
O Sisters Three,
Come, come to me,
With hands as pale as milk;
Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk.
Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword;

Come, blade, my breast imbrue:

[Stabs herself]

And, farewell, friends;

Thus Thisby ends:

Adieu, adieu, adieu.

[Dies]

THESEUS

Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

HIPPOLYTA

Ay, and Wall too.

BOTTOM *[Starting up]*

No assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company?

THESEUS

No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse; for when the players are all dead, there needs none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it had played Pyramus and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy: and so it is, truly; and very notably discharged.

17. EPILOGUE—A Midsummer Night's Dream V. 1—"Puck's Apology"

[Enter PUCK]

Puck.

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend:
if you pardon, we will mend:
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call;
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends.