



2016/17 Season

The English-Speaking Union
**National Shakespeare
Competition**

Suggested
Monologues





The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition
SUGGESTED MONOLOGUES PACKET

These monologues are taken from the Folger Shakespeare Library Editions (Simon & Schuster, 2003-2013) and meet the line limit requirements. Students can play any part listed below (male or female).

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Helena

All's Well That Ends Well 1.1.84-103

O, were that all! I think not on my father,
And these great tears grace his remembrance more
Than those I shed for him. What was he like?
I have forgot him. My imagination
Carries no favor in 't but Bertram's.
I am undone. There is no living, none,
If Bertram be away. 'Twere all one
That I should love a bright particular star
And think to wed it, he is so above me.
In his bright radiance and collateral light
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere.
Th' ambition in my love thus plagues itself:
The hind that would be mated by the lion
Must die for love. 'Twas pretty, though a plague,
To see him every hour, to sit and draw
His archèd brows, his hawking eye, his curls
In our heart's table—heart too capable
Of every line and trick of his sweet favor.
But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy
Must sanctify his relics. Who comes here?





King

All's Well That Ends Well 2.3.162-178 w/cuts

Here, take her hand,
Proud, scornful boy, unworthy this good gift,
That dost in vile misprision shackle up
My love and her desert; that canst not dream
We, poisoning us in her defective scale,
Shall weigh thee to the beam; that wilt not know
It is in us to plant thine honor where
We please to have it grow. Check thy contempt;
Obey our will, which travails in thy good.
Believe not thy disdain, but presently
Do thine own fortunes that obedient right
Which both thy duty owes and our power claims,
Or I will throw thee from my care forever
Into the staggers and the careless lapse
Of youth and ignorance, both my revenge and hate
Loosing upon thee in the name of justice
Without all terms of pity. Speak. Thine answer.





Antony

Antony and Cleopatra 4.12.12-32 w/cuts

This foul Egyptian hath betrayèd me.
My fleet hath yielded to the foe, and yonder
They cast their caps up and carouse together
Like friends long lost. Triple-turned whore! 'Tis thou
Hast sold me to this novice, and my heart
Makes only wars on thee. Bid them all fly—
For when I am revenged upon my charm,
I have done all. Bid them all fly. Begone!
O sun, thy uprise shall I see no more.
Fortune and Antony part here;
The hearts
That spanieled me at heels, to whom I gave
Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets
On blossoming Caesar, and this pine is barked
That overtopped them all. Betrayed I am.
O, this false soul of Egypt! This grave charm,
Whose eye becked forth my wars and called them
home,
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,
Like a right gypsy hath at fast and loose
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.





Cleopatra

Antony and Cleopatra 4.15.86-105

No more but e'en a woman, and commanded
By such poor passion as the maid that milks
And does the meanest chares. It were for me
To throw my scepter at the injurious gods,
To tell them that this world did equal theirs
Till they had stolen our jewel. All's but naught.
Patience is sottish, and impatience does
Become a dog that's mad. Then is it sin
To rush into the secret house of death
Ere death dare come to us? How do you, women?
What, what, good cheer! Why, how now, Charmian?
My noble girls! Ah, women, women! Look,
Our lamp is spent; it's out. Good sirs, take heart.
We'll bury him; and then, what's brave, what's
noble,
Let's do 't after the high Roman fashion
And make death proud to take us. Come, away.
This case of that huge spirit now is cold.
Ah women, women! Come, we have no friend
But resolution and the briefest end.





Duke Senior

As You Like It 2.1.1-17

Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
Here feel we not the penalty of Adam,
The seasons' difference, as the icy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,
Which when it bites and blows upon my body
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile and say
"This is no flattery. These are counselors
That feelingly persuade me what I am."
Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.





Phoebe

As You Like It 3.5.9-28

I would not be thy executioner.
I fly thee, for I would not injure thee.
Thou tell'st me there is murder in mine eye.
'Tis pretty, sure, and very probable
That eyes, that are the frail'st and softest things,
Who shut their coward gates on atomies,
Should be called tyrants, butchers, murderers.
Now I do frown on thee with all my heart,
And if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee.
Now counterfeit to swoon, why, now fall down;
Or if thou canst not, O, for shame, for shame,
Lie not, to say mine eyes are murderers.
Now show the wound mine eye hath made in thee.
Scratch thee but with a pin, and there remains
Some scar of it. Lean upon a rush,
The cicatrice and capable impressure
Thy palm some moment keeps. But now mine eyes,
Which I have darted at thee, hurt thee not;
Nor I am sure there is no force in eyes
That can do hurt.





Adriana

The Comedy of Errors 2.1.92-106

His company must do his minions grace,
Whilst I at home starve for a merry look.
Hath homely age th' alluring beauty took
From my poor cheek? Then he hath wasted it.
Are my discourses dull? Barren my wit?
If voluble and sharp discourse be marred,
Unkindness blunts it more than marble hard.
Do their gay vestments his affections bait?
That's not my fault; he's master of my state.
What ruins are in me that can be found
By him not ruined? Then is he the ground
Of my defeatures. My decayèd fair
A sunny look of his would soon repair.
But, too unruly deer, he breaks the pale
And feeds from home. Poor I am but his stale.





Antipholus of Syracuse

The Comedy of Errors 3.2.31-49

Sweet mistress—what your name is else I know not,
Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine—
Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not
Than our Earth's wonder, more than Earth divine.
Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak.

Lay open to my earthy gross conceit,
Smothered in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,
The folded meaning of your words' deceit.
Against my soul's pure truth why labor you
To make it wander in an unknown field?
Are you a god? Would you create me new?
Transform me, then, and to your power I'll yield.

But if that I am I, then well I know
Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,
Nor to her bed no homage do I owe.
Far more, far more, to you do I decline.
O, train me not, sweet mermaid, with thy note
To drown me in thy 'sister's' flood of tears.
Sing, Siren, for thyself, and I will dote.





Volumnia

Coriolanus 3.2.68-85

Because that now it lies you on to speak
To th' people, not by your own instruction,
Nor by th' matter which your heart prompts you,
But with such words that are but roted in
Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.
Now, this no more dishonors you at all
Than to take in a town with gentle words,
Which else would put you to your fortune and
The hazard of much blood.

I would dissemble with my nature where
My fortunes and my friends at stake required
I should do so in honor. I am in this
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;
And you will rather show our general louts
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em
For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard
Of what that want might ruin.





Coriolanus

Coriolanus 3.3.150-165

You common cry of curs, whose breath I hate
As reek o' th' rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air, I banish you!
And here remain with your uncertainty;
Let every feeble rumor shake your hearts;
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair! Have the power still
To banish your defenders, till at length
Your ignorance—which finds not till it feels,
Making but reservation of yourselves,
Still your own foes—deliver you
As most abated captives to some nation
That won you without blows! Despising
For you the city, thus I turn my back.
There is a world elsewhere.





Imogen

Cymbeline 1.6.167-181

Away! I do condemn mine ears that have
So long attended thee. If thou wert honorable,
Thou wouldst have told this tale for virtue, not
For such an end thou seek'st, as base as strange.
Thou wrong'st a gentleman who is as far
From thy report as thou from honor, and
Solicits here a lady that disdains
Thee and the devil alike.—What ho, Pisanio!—
The King my father shall be made acquainted
Of thy assault. If he shall think it fit
A saucy stranger in his court to mart
As in a Romish stew and to expound
His beastly mind to us, he hath a court
He little cares for and a daughter who
He not respects at all.—What ho, Pisanio!





Posthumus

Cymbeline 5.5.246-264

Ay, so thou dost,
Italian fiend.—Ay me, most credulous fool,
Egregious murderer, thief, anything
That's due to all the villains past, in being,
To come. O, give me cord, or knife, or poison,
Some upright justicer.—Thou, king, send out
For torturers ingenious. It is I
That all th' abhorrèd things o' th' Earth amend
By being worse than they. I am Posthumus,
That killed thy daughter—villainlike, I lie—
That caused a lesser villain than myself,
A sacrilegious thief, to do 't. The temple
Of virtue was she, yea, and she herself.
Spit and throw stones, cast mire upon me, set
The dogs o' th' street to bay me. Every villain
Be called Posthumus Leonatus, and
Be villainy less than 'twas. O Imogen!
My queen, my life, my wife! O Imogen,
Imogen, Imogen!





Hamlet

Hamlet 3.3.77-98 w/cuts

Now might I do it (pat,) now he is a-praying,
And now I'll do 't. *He draws his sword.*

And so he goes to heaven,
And so am I (revenged.) That would be scanned:
A villain kills my father, and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is (hire) and (salary,) not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven.
But in our circumstance and course of thought
'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage?
No.

He sheathes his sword.
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in th' incestuous pleasure of his bed,
or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't—
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,





Gertrude

Hamlet 4.7.190-208

There is a willow grows askant the brook
That shows his ⟨hoar⟩ leaves in the glassy stream.
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do “dead men’s fingers” call
them.

There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clamb’ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up,
Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds,
As one incapable of her own distress
Or like a creature native and endued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.





Henry

Henry IV, Part 1 1.2.204-222 w/cuts

herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wondered at
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapors that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work,
But when they seldom come, they wished-for come,
And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
So when this loose behavior I throw off
And pay the debt I never promised,
By how much better than my word I am,
By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
And, like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation, glitt'ring o'er my fault,
Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.





Lady Percy

Henry IV, Part 1 2.3.49-67

In thy faint slumbers I by thee have watched,
And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars,
Speak terms of manage to thy bounding steed,
Cry “Courage! To the field!” And thou hast talked
Of sallies and retires, of trenches, tents,
Of palisadoes, frontiers, parapets,
Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin,
Of prisoners’ ransom, and of soldiers slain,
And all the currents of a heady fight.
Thy spirit within thee hath been so at war,
And thus hath so bestirred thee in thy sleep,
That beads of sweat have stood upon thy brow
Like bubbles in a late-disturbèd stream,
And in thy face strange motions have appeared,
Such as we see when men restrain their breath
On some great sudden hest. O, what portents are
these?
Some heavy business hath my lord in hand,
And I must know it, else he loves me not.





Rumor

Henry IV, Part 2 1.1.1-20 w/cuts

Open your ears, for which of you will stop
The vent of hearing when loud Rumor speaks?

I, from the orient to the drooping west,
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold
The acts commencèd on this ball of earth.
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,
The which in every language I pronounce,
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.

I speak of peace while covert enmity
Under the smile of safety wounds the world.

And who but Rumor, who but only I,
Make fearful musters and prepared defense
Whiles the big year, swoll'n with some other grief,
Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,

And no such matter? Rumor is a pipe
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures,
And of so easy and so plain a stop
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,
The still-discordant wav'ring multitude,
Can play upon it.





Hostess

Henry IV, Part 2 2.1.89-107 w/cuts

Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin chamber at the round table by a sea-coal fire, upon Wednesday in Wheeson week, when the Prince broke thy head for liking his father to a singing-man of Windsor, thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not Goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then and call me Gossip Quickly, coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar, telling us she had a good dish of prawns, whereby thou didst desire to eat some, whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound? And didst thou not, when she was gone downstairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people, saying that ere long they should call me madam? And didst thou not kiss me and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book-oath. Deny it if thou canst.





Hostess

Henry V 2.3.9-24 w/cuts

he's not in hell! He's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom. He made a finer end, and went away as it had been any christom child. He parted ev'n just between twelve and one, ev'n at the turning o' th' tide; for after I saw him fumble with the sheets and play with flowers and smile upon his finger's end, I knew there was but one way, for his nose was as sharp as a pen and he ^{talked} of green fields. "How now, Sir John?" quoth I. "What, man, be o' good cheer!" So he cried out "God, God, God!" three or four times. Now I, to comfort him, bid him he should not think of God; I hoped there was no need to trouble himself with any such thoughts yet. So he bade me lay more clothes on his feet. I put my hand into the bed and felt them, and they were as cold as any stone.





King Henry

Henry V 4.3.43-61

This day is called the feast of Crispian.
He that outlives this day and comes safe home
Will stand o' tiptoe when this day is named
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall see this day, and live old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbors
And say "Tomorrow is Saint Crispian."
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
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 remembered.
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 rememberèd—





Joan de Pucelle

Henry VI, Part 1 1.2.73-91

Dauphin, I am by birth a shepherd's daughter,
My wit untrained in any kind of art.
Heaven and Our Lady gracious hath it pleased
To shine on my contemptible estate.
Lo, whilst I waited on my tender lambs,
And to sun's parching heat displayed my cheeks,
God's Mother deigned to appear to me,
And in a vision full of majesty
Willed me to leave my base vocation
And free my country from calamity.
Her aid she promised and assured success.
In complete glory she revealed herself;
And whereas I was black and swart before,
With those clear rays which she infused on me
That beauty am I blest with, which you may see.
Ask me what question thou canst possible,
And I will answer unpremeditated.
My courage try by combat, if thou dar'st,
And thou shalt find that I exceed my sex.





King Henry

Henry VI, Part 1 4.1.135-152

Come hither, you that would be combatants:
Henceforth I charge you, as you love our favor,
Quite to forget this quarrel and the cause.—
And you, my lords, remember where we are:
In France, amongst a fickle wavering nation.
If they perceive dissension in our looks,
And that within ourselves we disagree,
How will their grudging stomachs be provoked
To willful disobedience and rebel!
Besides, what infamy will there arise
When foreign princes shall be certified
That for a toy, a thing of no regard,
King Henry's peers and chief nobility
Destroyed themselves and lost the realm of France!
O, think upon the conquest of my father,
My tender years, and let us not forgo
That for a trifle that was bought with blood.
Let me be umpire in this doubtful strife.





Queen Margaret

Henry VI Part 2, 3.2.76-95

What, dost thou turn away and hide thy face?
I am no loathsome leper. Look on me.
What, art thou, like the adder, waxen deaf?
Be poisonous too, and kill thy forlorn queen.
Is all thy comfort shut in Gloucester's tomb?
Why, then, Dame Margaret was ne'er thy joy.
Erect his statue and worship it,
And make my image but an alehouse sign.
Was I for this nigh-wracked upon the sea
And twice by awkward wind from England's bank
Drove back again unto my native clime?
What boded this, but well forewarning wind
Did seem to say "Seek not a scorpion's nest,
Nor set no footing on this unkind shore"?
What did I then but cursed the gentle gusts
And he that loosed them forth their brazen caves
And bid them blow towards England's blessed shore
Or turn our stern upon a dreadful rock?
Yet Aeolus would not be a murderer,
But left that hateful office unto thee.





Young Clifford

Henry VI, Part 2 5.2. 31-52 w/cuts

All is on the rout.

Fear frames disorder, and disorder wounds
Where it should guard. O war, thou son of hell,
Whom angry heavens do make their minister,
Throw in the frozen bosoms of our part
Hot coals of vengeance! Let no soldier fly.

He that is truly dedicate to war
Hath no self-love; nor he that loves himself
Hath not essentially, but by circumstance,
The name of valor. *['He sees his father, lying dead.']* O,
let the vile world end

And the premised flames of the last day
Knit Earth and heaven together!
Wast thou ordained, dear father,
To lose thy youth in peace, and to achieve
The silver livery of advised age,
And, in thy reverence and thy chair-days, thus
To die in ruffian battle? Even at this sight
My heart is turned to stone, and while 'tis mine,
It shall be stony.





Queen Margaret

Henry VI, Part 3 1.4.93-109

York cannot speak unless he wear a crown.
A crown for York! *She is handed a paper crown.*
And, lords, bow low to him.
Hold you his hands whilst I do set it on.
She puts the crown on York's head.
Ay, marry, sir, now looks he like a king.
Ay, this is he that took King Henry's chair,
And this is he was his adopted heir.
But how is it that great Plantagenet
Is crowned so soon and broke his solemn oath?—
As I bethink me, you should not be king
Till our King Henry had shook hands with Death.
And will you pale your head in Henry's glory
And rob his temples of the diadem
Now, in his life, against your holy oath?
O, 'tis a fault too too unpardonable.
Off with the crown and, with the crown, his head;
And whilst we breathe, take time to do him dead.





Son

Henry VI, Part 3 2.5.55-72

Ill blows the wind that profits nobody.
This man, whom hand to hand I slew in fight,
May be possessèd with some store of crowns,
And I, that haply take them from him now,
May yet ere night yield both my life and them
To some man else, as this dead man doth me.
Who's this? O God! It is my father's face,
Whom in this conflict I unwares have killed.
O heavy times, begetting such events!
From London by the King was I pressed forth.
My father, being the Earl of Warwick's man,
Came on the part of York, pressed by his master.
And I, who at his hands received my life,
Have by my hands of life bereavèd him.
Pardon me, God, I knew not what I did;
And pardon, father, for I knew not thee.
My tears shall wipe away these bloody marks,
And no more words till they have flowèd their fill.





Buckingham

Henry VIII 2.1.136-154 w/cuts

Henry the Eighth, life, honor, name, and all
That made me happy at one stroke has taken
Forever from the world. I had my trial,
And must needs say a noble one, which makes me
A little happier than my wretched father.
Yet thus far we are one in fortunes: both
Fell by our servants, by those men we loved most—
A most unnatural and faithless service.
Heaven has an end in all; yet, you that hear me,
This from a dying man receive as certain:
Where you are liberal of your loves and counsels
Be sure you be not loose; for those you make friends
And give your hearts to, when they once perceive
The least rub in your fortunes, fall away
Like water from you, never found again
But where they mean to sink you. All good people,
Pray for me. I must now forsake you. The last hour
Of my long weary life is come upon me.
Farewell.





Queen Katherine

Henry VIII 2.4.30-47 w/cuts

When was the hour
I ever contradicted your desire,
Or made it not mine too? Or which of your friends
Have I not strove to love, although I knew
He were mine enemy? What friend of mine
That had to him derived your anger did I
Continue in my liking? Nay, gave notice
He was from thence discharged? Sir, call to mind
That I have been your wife in this obedience
Upward of twenty years, and have been blessed
With many children by you. If, in the course
And process of this time, you can report,
And prove it too, against mine honor aught,
My bond to wedlock or my love and duty
Against your sacred person, in God's name
Turn me away and let the foul'st contempt
Shut door upon me, and so give me up
To the sharp'st kind of justice.





Portia

Julius Caesar 2.1.257-276 w/cuts

You've ungently, Brutus,
Stole from my bed. And yesternight at supper
You suddenly arose and walked about,
Musing and sighing, with your arms across,
And when I asked you what the matter was,
You stared upon me with ungentle looks.
I urged you further; then you scratched your head
And too impatiently stamped with your foot.
Yet I insisted; yet you answered not,
But with an angry wafture of your hand
Gave sign for me to leave you. So I did,
Fearing to strengthen that impatience
Which seemed too much enkindled, and withal
Hoping it was but an effect of humor,
Which sometime hath his hour with every man.
It will not let you eat nor talk nor sleep,
And could it work so much upon your shape
As it hath much prevailed on your condition,
I should not know you Brutus. Dear my lord,
Make me acquainted with your cause of grief.





Caesar

Julius Caesar 3.1.64-79

I could be well moved, if I were as you.
If I could pray to move, prayers would move me.
But I am constant as the Northern Star,
Of whose true fixed and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament.
The skies are painted with unnumbered sparks;
They are all fire, and every one doth shine.
But there's but one in all doth hold his place.
So in the world: 'tis furnished well with men,
And men are flesh and blood, and apprehensive.
Yet in the number I do know but one
That unassailable holds on his rank,
Unshaked of motion; and that I am he
Let me a little show it, even in this:
That I was constant Cimber should be banished
And constant do remain to keep him so.





Constance

King John 3.4.45-61

Thou art 'not' holy to belie me so.
I am not mad. This hair I tear is mine;
My name is Constance; I was Geoffrey's wife;
Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost.
I am not mad; I would to heaven I were,
For then 'tis like I should forget myself.
O, if I could, what grief should I forget!
Preach some philosophy to make me mad,
And thou shalt be canonized, cardinal.
For, being not mad but sensible of grief,
My reasonable part produces reason
How I may be delivered of these woes,
And teaches me to kill or hang myself.
If I were mad, I should forget my son,
Or madly think a babe of clouts were he.
I am not mad. Too well, too well I feel
The different plague of each calamity.





Lewis

King John 5.2.79-98 w/cuts

Your Grace shall pardon me; I will not back.
I am too high-born to be propertied,
To be a secondary at control,
Or useful servingman and instrument
To any sovereign state throughout the world.
Your breath first kindled the dead coal of wars
Between this chastised kingdom and myself
And brought in matter that should feed this fire;
And now 'tis far too huge to be blown out
With that same weak wind which enkindled it.
You taught me how to know the face of right,
Acquainted me with interest to this land,
Yea, thrust this enterprise into my heart.
And come you now to tell me John hath made
His peace with Rome? What is that peace to me?
I, by the honor of my marriage bed,
After young Arthur claim this land for mine.
And now it is half conquered, must I back
Because that John hath made his peace with Rome?
Am I Rome's slave?





Cordelia

King Lear 1.1.100-115

Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth. I love your Majesty
According to my bond, no more nor less.
Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me.
I return those duties back as are right fit:
Obey you, love you, and most honor you.
Why have my sisters husbands if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall
carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty.
Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
〈To love my father all.〉





King Lear

King Lear 1.4.289-303

Hear, Nature, hear, dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose if thou didst inten
 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 honor 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!





Berowne

Love's Labour's Lost 4.3.1-19

The King, he is hunting the deer; I am coursing myself. They have pitched a toil; I am toiling in a pitch—pitch that defiles. Defile! A foul word. Well, “set thee down, sorrow”; for so they say the fool said, and so say I, and I the fool. Well proved, wit. By the Lord, this love is as mad as Ajax.

It kills sheep, it kills me, I a sheep. Well proved again, o’ my side. I will not love. If I do, hang me. I’ faith, I will not. O, but her eye! By this light, but for her eye I would not love her; yes, for her two eyes. Well, I do nothing in the world but lie, and lie in my throat. By heaven, I do love, and it hath taught me to rhyme, and to be melancholy. And here is part of my rhyme, and here my melancholy. Well, she hath one o’ my sonnets already. The clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady hath it. Sweet clown, sweeter fool, sweetest lady. By the world, I would not care a pin, if the other three were in. Here comes one with a paper. God give him grace to groan.





Rosalind

Love's Labour's Lost 5.2.914-927

Oft have I heard of you, my Lord Berowne,
Before I saw you; and the world's large tongue
Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks,
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,
Which you on all estates will execute
That lie within the mercy of your wit.
To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain,
And therewithal to win me, if you please,
Without the which I am not to be won,
You shall this twelvemonth term from day to day
Visit the speechless sick, and still converse
With groaning wretches; and your task shall be,
With all the fierce endeavor of your wit,
To enforce the painèd impotent to smile.





Lady Macbeth

Macbeth 1.5.45-61

The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty. Make thick my blood.
Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
Th' effect and it. Come to my woman's breasts
And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief. Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry "Hold, hold!"





Macbeth

Macbeth 5.5.20-31

She should have died hereafter.
There would have been a time for such a word.
Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.





Angelo

Measure for Measure 2.4.168-184

Who will believe thee, Isabel?
My unsoiled name, th' austereness of my life,
My vouch against you, and my place i' th' state
Will so your accusation outweigh
That you shall stifle in your own report
And smell of calumny. I have begun,
And now I give my sensual race the rein.
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;
Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes
That banish what they sue for. Redeem thy brother
By yielding up thy body to my will,
Or else he must not only die the death,
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out
To ling'ring sufferance. Answer me tomorrow,
Or by the affection that now guides me most,
I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.





Isabella

Measure for Measure 2.4.185-201

To whom should I complain? Did I tell this,
Who would believe me? O, perilous mouths,
That bear in them one and the selfsame tongue,
 Either of condemnation or approof,
 Bidding the law make curtsy to their will,
Hooking both right and wrong to th' appetite,
 To follow as it draws. I'll to my brother.
Though he hath fall'n by prompture of the blood,
 Yet hath he in him such a mind of honor
 That, had he twenty heads to tender down
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up
 Before his sister should her body stoop
 To such abhorred pollution.
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die.
 More than our brother is our chastity.
 I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest.





Shylock

The Merchant of Venice 1.3.121-139

You call me misbeliever, cutthroat dog,
And spet upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help.
Go to, then. You come to me and you say
“Shylock, we would have moneys”—you say so,
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold. Moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
“Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?” Or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman’s key,
With bated breath and whisp’ring humbleness,
Say this: “Fair sir, you spet on me on Wednesday
last;
You spurned me such a day; another time
You called me ‘dog’; and for these courtesies
I’ll lend you thus much moneys”?





Portia

The Merchant of Venice 4.1.190-208 w/cuts

The quality of mercy is not strained.
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown.
His scepter shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptered sway.
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God Himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this:
That in the course of justice none of us
Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy.





Falstaff

The Merry Wives of Windsor 3.5.3-18

Go fetch me a quart of sack; put a toast in 't.
Have I lived to be carried in a basket like a barrow
of butcher's offal, and to be thrown in the Thames?
Well, if I be served such another trick, I'll have my
brains ta'en out and buttered, and give them to a
dog for a New Year's gift. 'Sblood, the rogues
slighted me into the river with as little remorse as
they would have drowned a blind bitch's puppies,
fifteen i' th' litter! And you may know by my size
that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking; if the bottom
were as deep as hell, I should down. I had
been drowned, but that the shore was shelvy and
shallow—a death that I abhor, for the water swells
a man, and what a thing should I have been when
I had been swelled! 'By the Lord, I should have
been a mountain of mummy.





Mistress Page

The Merry Wives of Windsor 2.1.1-31 w/cuts

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

[She reads.]

What a Herod of Jewry is this! O wicked, wicked
world! One that is well-nigh worn to pieces with
age, to show himself a young gallant! What an
unweighed behavior hath this Flemish drunkard
picked—with the devil's name!—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? I was then frugal of my
mirth. Heaven forgive me! 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.





Puck/Robin Goodfellow

A Midsummer Night's Dream 2.1.44-60

Thou speakest 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 gossip's 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 choir hold their hips and loffe
And waxen in their mirth and neeze and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But room, fairy. Here comes Oberon.





Helena

A Midsummer Night's Dream 3.2.148-164

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment.
If you were civil and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in souls to mock me too?
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so,
To vow and swear and superpraise my parts,
When, I am sure, you hate me with your hearts.
You both are rivals and love Hermia,
And now both rivals to mock Helena.
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes
With your derision! None of noble sort
Would so offend a virgin and extort
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.





Benedick

Much Ado About Nothing 2.3.22-36 w/cuts

May I be so converted and see
with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not. I will not
be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster,
but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an
oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool.
One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet
I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well; but till all
graces be in one woman, one woman shall not
come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain;
wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen
her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not
near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good
discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall
be of what color it please God. Ha! The Prince and
Monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbor.





Hero

Much Ado About Nothing 3.1.72-91

So turns she every man the wrong side out,
And never gives to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.
No, not to be so odd and from all fashions
As Beatrice is cannot be commendable.
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She would mock me into air. O, she would laugh
me

Out of myself, press me to death with wit.
Therefore let Benedick, like covered fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly.
It were a better death than die with mocks,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.
No, rather I will go to Benedick
And counsel him to fight against his passion;
And truly I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with. One doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.





Iago

Othello 1.3.429-447 w/cuts

I hate the Moor,
And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets
'Has done my office. I know not if 't be true,
 But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety. He holds me well.
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio's a proper man. Let me see now:
To get his place and to plume up my will
In double knavery—How? how?—Let's see.
After some time, to abuse Othello's 'ear'
 That he is too familiar with his wife.
He hath a person and a smooth dispose
To be suspected, framed to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,
And will as tenderly be led by th' nose
 As asses are.
I have 't. It is engendered. Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.





Desdemona

Othello 4.2.175-193

Alas, Iago,
What shall I do to win my lord again?
Good friend, go to him. For by this light of heaven,
I know not how I lost him. *She kneels.* [Here I
kneel.
If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse of thought or actual deed,
Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense
Delighted them *in* any other form,
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,
And ever will—though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement—love him dearly,
Comfort forswear me! *She stands.* Unkindness may
do much,
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love. I cannot say “whore”—
It does abhor me now I speak the word.
To do the act that might the addition earn,
Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.]





Pericles

Pericles 1.1.13-25

See where she comes, appareled like the spring,
Graces her subjects, and her thoughts the king
Of every virtue gives renown to men!
Her face the book of praises, where is read
Nothing but curious pleasures, as from thence
Sorrow were ever razed,⁷ and testy wrath
Could never be her mild companion.
You gods that made me man, and sway in love,
That have inflamed desire in my breast
To taste the fruit of yon celestial tree
Or die in th' adventure, be my helps,
As I am son and servant to your will,
To compass such a boundless happiness.





Marina

Pericles 5.1.95-111

I am a maid, my lord,
That ne'er before invited eyes, but have
Been gazed on like a comet. She speaks,
My lord, that may be hath endured a grief
Might equal yours, if both were justly weighed.
Though wayward Fortune did malign my state,
My derivation was from ancestors
Who stood equivalent with mighty kings.
But time hath rooted out my parentage,
And to the world and awkward casualties
Bound me in servitude. *Aside.* I will desist,
But there is something glows upon my cheek,
And whispers in mine ear "Go not till he speak."
I said, my lord, if you did know my parentage,
You would not do me violence.





Duchess

Richard II 1.2.60-76

Yet one word more. Grief boundeth where ^{it} falls,
Not with the empty hollowness, but weight.
I take my leave before I have begun,
For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.
Commend me to thy brother, Edmund York.
Lo, this is all. Nay, yet depart not so!
Though this be all, do not so quickly go;
I shall remember more. Bid him—ah, what?—
With all good speed at Plashy visit me.
Alack, and what shall good old York there see
But empty lodgings and unfurnished walls,
Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?
And what hear there for welcome but my groans?
Therefore commend me; let him not come there
To seek out sorrow that dwells everywhere.
Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die.
The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye.





King Richard

Richard II 4.1.170-185

Alack, why am I sent for to a king
Before I have shook off the regal thoughts
Wherewith I reigned? I hardly yet have learned
To insinuate, flatter, bow, and bend my knee.
Give sorrow leave awhile to tutor me
To this submission. Yet I well remember
The favors of these men. Were they not mine?
Did they not sometime cry “All hail” to me?
So Judas did to Christ, but He in twelve
Found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand,
none.
God save the King! Will no man say “amen”?
Am I both priest and clerk? Well, then, amen.
God save the King, although I be not he,
And yet amen, if heaven do think him me.
To do what service am I sent for hither?





Richard III

Richard III 5.3.194-213

What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by.
Richard loves Richard, that is, I[am] I.
Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am.
Then fly! What, from myself? Great reason why:
Lest I revenge. What, myself upon myself?
Alack, I love myself. Wherefore? For any good
That I myself have done unto myself?
O, no. Alas, I rather hate myself
For hateful deeds committed by myself.
I am a villain. Yet I lie; I am not.
Fool, of thyself speak well. Fool, do not flatter.
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the highest degree;
Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree;
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all "Guilty, guilty!"
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me,
And if I die no soul will pity me.





Lady Anne

Richard III 1.2.51-71 w/cuts

Foul devil, for God's sake, hence, and trouble us
not,

For thou hast made the happy Earth thy hell,
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.

['She points to the corpse.']

O, gentlemen, see, see dead Henry's wounds
Open their congealed mouths and bleed afresh!—
Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity,
For 'tis thy presence that exhales this blood
From cold and empty veins where no blood dwells.
Thy deeds, inhuman and unnatural,
Provokes this deluge most unnatural.—

O God, which this blood mad'st, revenge his death!
O Earth, which this blood drink'st, revenge his
death!

Either heaven with lightning strike the murderer
dead,

Or Earth gape open wide and eat him quick,
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood,
Which his hell-governed arm hath butcherèd.





Juliet

Romeo and Juliet 2.5.1-17

The clock struck nine when I did send the Nurse.
In half an hour she promised to return.
Perchance she cannot meet him. That's not so.
O, she is lame! Love's heralds should be thoughts,
Which ten times faster glides than the sun's beams,
Driving back shadows over louring hills.
Therefore do nimble-pinioned doves draw Love,
And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.
Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve
Is three long hours, yet she is not come.
Had she affections and warm youthful blood,
She would be as swift in motion as a ball;
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
And his to me.
But old folks, many feign as they were dead,
Unwieldy, slow, heavy, and pale as lead.





Romeo

Romeo and Juliet 3.3.31-45

'Tis torture and not mercy. Heaven is here
Where Juliet lives, and every cat and dog
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Live here in heaven and may look on her,
But Romeo may not. More validity,
More honorable state, more courtship lives
In carrion flies than Romeo. They may seize
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand
And steal immortal blessing from her lips,
Who even in pure and vestal modesty
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;
But Romeo may not; he is banishèd.
Flies may do this, but I from this must fly.
They are free men, but I am banishèd.
And sayest thou yet that exile is not death?





Petruchio

The Taming of the Shrew 4.1.190-209

My falcon now is sharp and passing empty,
And, till she stoop, she must not be full-gorged,
For then she never looks upon her lure.
Another way I have to man my haggard,
To make her come and know her keeper's call.
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.
She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat.
Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not.
As with the meat, some undeservèd fault
I'll find about the making of the bed,
And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,
This way the coverlet, another way the sheets.
Ay, and amid this hurly I intend
That all is done in reverend care of her.
And, in conclusion, she shall watch all night,
And, if she chance to nod, I'll rail and brawl,
And with the clamor keep her still awake.
This is a way to kill a wife with kindness.
And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humor.





Katherina

The Taming of the Shrew 5.2.177-195

I am ashamed 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 froward 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.





Miranda

The Tempest 1.2.1-13

If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea, mounting to th' welkin's cheek,
Dashes the fire out. O, I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer! A brave vessel,
Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,
Dashed all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
Against my very heart! Poor souls, they perished.
Had I been any god of power, I would
Have sunk the sea within the earth or ere
It should the good ship so have swallowed, and
The fraughting souls within her.





Prospero

The Tempest Epilogue 1-20

Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
And what strength I have 's mine own,
Which is most faint. Now 'tis true
I must be here confined by you,
Or sent to Naples. Let me not,
Since I have my dukedom got
And pardoned the deceiver, dwell
In this bare island by your spell,
But release me from my bands
With the help of your good hands.
Gentle breath of yours my sails
Must fill, or else my project fails,
Which was to please. Now I want
Spirits to enforce, art to enchant,
And my ending is despair,
Unless I be relieved by prayer,
Which pierces so that it assaults
Mercy itself, and frees all faults.
As you from crimes would pardoned be,
Let your indulgence set me free.





Timon

Timon of Athens 4.1.25-41 w/cuts

Lust and liberty,
Creep in the minds and marrows of our youth,
That 'gainst the stream of virtue they may strive
And drown themselves in riot! Itches, blains,
Sow all th' Athenian bosoms, and their crop
Be general leprosy! Breath infect breath,
That their society, as their friendship, may
Be merely poison! Nothing I'll bear from thee
But nakedness, thou detestable town!
Take thou that too, with multiplying bans!
Timon will to the woods, where he shall find
Th' unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.
The gods confound—hear me, you good gods all!—
Th' Athenians both within and out that wall,
And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow
To the whole race of mankind, high and low!
Amen.





Flavius

Timon of Athens 4.2.36-56 w/cuts

Who would not wish to be from wealth exempt,
 Since riches point to misery and contempt?
Who would be so mocked with glory, or to live
 But in a dream of friendship,
To have his pomp and all what state compounds
 But only painted, like his varnished friends?
Poor honest lord, brought low by his own heart,
 Undone by goodness! Strange unusual blood
When man's worst sin is he does too much good!
 Who then dares to be half so kind again?
For bounty, that makes gods, do still mar men.
 My dearest lord, blest to be most accursed,
 Rich only to be wretched, thy great fortunes
Are made thy chief afflictions. Alas, kind lord!
 He's flung in rage from this ingrateful seat
 Of monstrous friends,
 Nor has he with him to supply his life,
 I'll follow and inquire him out.
 I'll ever serve his mind with my best will.
Whilst I have gold, I'll be his steward still.





Tamora

Titus Andronicus 1.1.104-20

Stay, Roman brethren!—Gracious conqueror,
Victorious Titus, rue the tears I shed,
A mother's tears in passion for her son.
And if thy sons were ever dear to thee,
O think my son to be as dear to me.
Sufficeth not that we are brought to Rome
To beautify thy triumphs and return
Captive to thee and to thy Roman yoke,
But must my sons be slaughtered in the streets
For valiant doings in their country's cause?
O, if to fight for king and commonweal
Were piety in thine, it is in these!

¶She kneels.¶

Andronicus, stain not thy tomb with blood.
Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?
Draw near them then in being merciful.
Sweet mercy is nobility's true badge.
Thrice-noble Titus, spare my first-born son.





Aaron

Titus Andronicus 5.1.127-146

Even now I curse the day—and yet, I think,
Few come within the compass of my curse—
 Wherein I did not some notorious ill,
 As kill a man, or else devise his death;
 Ravish a maid or plot the way to do it;
Accuse some innocent and forswear myself;
 Set deadly enmity between two friends;
 Make poor men's cattle break their necks;
 Set fire on barns and haystacks in the night,
And bid the owners quench them with their tears.
Oft have I dugged up dead men from their graves
And set them upright at their dear friends' door,
 Even when their sorrows almost was forgot,
 And on their skins, as on the bark of trees,
Have with my knife carvèd in Roman letters
“Let not your sorrow die, though I am dead.”
But I have done a thousand dreadful things
 As willingly as one would kill a fly,
And nothing grieves me heartily indeed
But that I cannot do ten thousand more.





Troilus

Troilus and Cressida 1.1.49-64

O, Pandarus! I tell thee, Pandarus:
When I do tell thee there my hopes lie drowned,
Reply not in how many fathoms deep
They lie indrenched. I tell thee I am mad
In Cressid's love. Thou answer'st she is fair;
Pourest in the open ulcer of my heart
Her eyes, her hair, her cheek, her gait, her voice;
Handiest in thy discourse—O—that her hand,
In whose comparison all whites are ink
Writing their own reproach, to whose soft seizure
The cygnet's down is harsh, and spirit of sense
Hard as the palm of plowman. This thou tell'st me,
As true thou tell'st me, when I say I love her.
But, saying thus, instead of oil and balm
Thou lay'st in every gash that love hath given me
The knife that made it.





Cressida

Troilus and Cressida 3.2.117-133

Hard to seem won; but I was won, my lord,
With the first glance that ever—pardon me;
If I confess much, you will play the tyrant.
I love you now, but till now not so much
 But I might master it. In faith, I lie;
My thoughts were like unbridled children grown
Too headstrong for their mother. See, we fools!
Why have I blabbed? Who shall be true to us
 When we are so unsecret to ourselves?
But though I loved you well, I wooed you not;
And yet, good faith, I wished myself a man;
 Or that we women had men's privilege
Of speaking first. Sweet, bid me hold my tongue,
 For in this rapture I shall surely speak
The thing I shall repent. See, see, your silence,
[Cunning] in dumbness, from my weakness draws
 My very soul of counsel! Stop my mouth.





Viola

Twelfth Night 2.2.17-36

I left no ring with her. What means this lady?
 「She picks up the ring.」
Fortune forbid my outside have not charmed her!
 She made good view of me, indeed so much
 That methought her eyes had lost her tongue,
 For she did speak in starts distractedly.
She loves me, sure! The cunning of her passion
 Invites me in this churlish messenger.
None of my lord's ring? Why, he sent her none!
 I am the man. If it be so, as 'tis,
 Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
 Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness
 Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
 How easy is it for the proper false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!
 Alas, *「our」* frailty is the cause, not we,
 For such as we are made *「of,」* such we be.
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him,
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.
 What will become of this?





Sebastian

Twelfth Night 4.3.1-22 w/cuts

This is the air; that is the glorious sun.
This pearl she gave me, I do feel 't and see 't.
And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus,
Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio, then?
His counsel now might do me golden service.
For though my soul disputes well with my sense
That this may be some error, but no madness,
Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune
So far exceed all instance, all discourse,
That I am ready to distrust mine eyes
And wrangle with my reason that persuades me
To any other trust but that I am mad—
Or else the lady's mad. Yet if 'twere so,
She could not sway her house, command her
followers,
Take and give back affairs and their dispatch
With such a smooth, discreet, and stable bearing
As I perceive she does. There's something in 't
That is deceivable. But here the lady comes.





Proteus

The Two Gentlemen of Verona 2.4.202-220

Even as one heat another heat expels,
Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
So the remembrance of my former love
Is by a newer object quite forgotten.
'Is it' mine 'eye,' or Valentine's praise,
Her true perfection, or my false transgression,
That makes me reasonless to reason thus?
She is fair, and so is Julia that I love—
That I did love, for now my love is thawed,
Which like a waxen image 'gainst a fire
Bears no impression of the thing it was.
Methinks my zeal to Valentine is cold,
And that I love him not as I was wont.
O, but I love his lady too too much,
And that's the reason I love him so little.
How shall I dote on her with more advice
That thus without advice begin to love her?
'Tis but her picture I have yet beheld,
And that hath dazzled my reason's light;





Silvia

The Two Gentlemen of Verona 4.3.20-38

Thyself hast loved, and I have heard thee say
No grief did ever come so near thy heart
As when thy lady and thy true love died,
Upon whose grave thou vow'dst pure chastity.
Sir Eglamour, I would to Valentine,
To Mantua, where I hear he makes abode;
And for the ways are dangerous to pass,
I do desire thy worthy company,
Upon whose faith and honor I repose.
Urge not my father's anger, Eglamour,
But think upon my grief, a lady's grief,
And on the justice of my flying hence
To keep me from a most unholy match,
Which heaven and fortune still rewards with plagues.
I do desire thee, even from a heart
As full of sorrows as the sea of sands,
To bear me company and go with me;
If not, to hide what I have said to thee,
That I may venture to depart alone.





Jailor's Daughter

Two Noble Kinsmen 2.6.1-17 w/cuts

Let all the dukes and all the devils roar!
He is at liberty. I have ventured for him,
And out I have brought him; to a little wood
A mile hence I have sent him, where a cedar
Higher than all the rest spreads like a plane
Fast by a brook, and there he shall keep close
Till I provide him files and food, for yet
His iron bracelets are not off. O Love,
What a stout-hearted child thou art! My father
Durst better have endured cold iron than done it.
I love him beyond love and beyond reason
Or wit or safety. I have made him know it;
I care not, I am desperate. If the law
Find me and then condemn me for 't, some wenches,
Some honest-hearted maids, will sing my dirge
And tell to memory my death was noble,
Dying almost a martyr.





Leontes

The Winter's Tale 2.1.47-63 w/cuts

How blest am I
In my just censure, in my true opinion!
Alack, for lesser knowledge! How accursed
In being so blest! There may be in the cup
A spider steeped, and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge
Is not infected; but if one present
Th' abhorred ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider.
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 employed was pre-employed by him.
He has discovered my design, and I
Remain a pinched thing, yea, a very trick
For them to play at will.





Hermione

The Winter's Tale 3.2.98-115 w/cuts

Sir, spare your threats.
The bug which you would fright me with I seek.
To me can life be no commodity.
The crown and comfort of my life, your favor,
I do give lost, for I do feel it gone,
But know not how it went. My second joy
And first fruits of my body, from his presence
I am barred like one infectious. My third comfort,
Starred most unluckily, is from my breast,
The innocent milk in it most innocent mouth,
Haled out to murder; myself on every post
Proclaimed a strumpet; with immodest hatred
The childbed privilege denied, which longs
To women of all fashion; lastly, hurried
Here to this place, i' th' open air, before
I have got strength of limit. Now, my liege,
Tell me what blessings I have here alive,
That I should fear to die?

