



Transatlantyk2
present

1616: The Secrets and Passions of William Shakespeare

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SHAKESPEARE400

Sonnet 66

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
As to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplac'd,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgrac'd,
And strength by limping sway disabled
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly—doctor-like—controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill:
Tir'd with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

Montaigne on Death and the Art of Living:

“To lament that we shall not be alive a hundred years hence, is the same folly as to be sorry we were not alive a hundred years ago.”

“We should always, as near as we can, be bootied and spurred, and ready to go, and, above all things, take care, at that time, to have no business with any one but one’s self”

The scene takes place in Shakespeare’s house in Stratford Upon Avon England April 1616 two days after a heavy Birthday Drink with Ben Jonson, who has returned to London.

Disclaimer: Plagiarisms and downright theft from a variety of sources including many of Shakespeare’s plays abound.

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Characters:

Suzanna Shakespeare: *Oldest child of William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway, and older sister of Judith. She married John Hall,*

Judith Shakespeare: *Younger daughter of William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway and the fraternal twin of Shakespeare’s only son Hamnet Shakespeare.*

John Shakespeare: *father of William, he married Mary Arden, with whom he had eight children, five of whom survived into adulthood. A Glover by trade, he was elected to several municipal offices, before he fell on hard times. Records indicate that he was prosecuted for illegal dealing in wool and for usury, or lending money with excess interest*

Anne Hathaway: *wife of William Shakespeare, the English poet, playwright and actor. They were married in 1582, when she was 26 years old. She outlived her husband by seven years, In his will Shakespeare famously made only one bequest to his wife, his "second-best bed with the furniture". This bequest to Anne has often been interpreted as a slight.*

Mary Arden: *mother of William Shakespeare. She was the daughter of Robert Arden. The youngest of eight daughters; she inherited her father's farm,*

Ben Jonson: *English playwright, whose artistry exerted a lasting impact upon stage comedy. There are many legends about Jonson's rivalry with Shakespeare, a son of a bricklayer and a well-read and cultured man of the English Renaissance with an appetite for controversy (personal, political, artistic and intellectual) 1596, when a quarrel with Gabriel Spencer, one of the company's leading players, led to a duel. Spencer was killed and Jonson only spared execution by drawing on his knowledge of Latin to invoke the benefit of the clergy, which enabled the convicted criminal to pass as a clergyman, and therefore obtain a discharge from the civil courts. It is believed that while in Newgate Prison he converted to Roman Catholicism, and here was branded on his thumb with the "T" for Tyburn (the most famous place of execution in London after the Tower) to ever more remind him of his lucky escape.*

Edward Arden: *An English nobleman and head of the Arden family, who became a Catholic martyr. He lived in Park Hall, Castle Bromwich. He was a recusant Catholic and kept a priest, Hugh Hall, at his house disguised as a gardener. Arden's son-in-law, John Somerville, hatched a plan to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I, but was arrested long before he could attempt it. A purge of Arden's household ensued, and Arden, who may not have known of Somerville's plan, was executed and decapitated.*

Hugh Hall (see above)

John Fletcher: *John Fletcher's name is closely linked with that of Francis Beaumont. They collaborated on plays, working hard to feed the insatiable appetite the theatre-going public had for plays. 35, supposedly by the two, were published in a collection in 1647, and 18 more in 1679. John Fletcher lived with Beaumont in Bankside, near the theatres, and shared everything, even their bed and their clothes, for seven years. He also worked on plays with Massinger, Nathan Field, Shakespeare, Thomas Middleton, William Rowley, and even Ben Jonson. John Fletcher was without doubt the most popular playwright in London during his lifetime. He died in 1625, apparently of the plague, and was buried in Southwark Cathedral.*

Gilbert Shakespeare: *William's brother; In London he was a haberdasher, a seller of needlework supplies such as thread, needles, and ribbons, he moved back to Stratford by 1602.*

Augustine Phillips: *One of the first generation of English actors to achieve wealth and a degree of social status by means of his trade. In 1601, he was the representative of the company called to testify before the Privy Council about their involvement with the rebellion of the Earl of Essex. The evidence suggests a life deeply intertwined with the theatre.*

Philip Henslowe: *In 1584, Henslowe purchased a property known as The Little Rose, in Southwark, which contained rose gardens and, almost certainly, a brothel. In 1587, Henslowe and John Cholmley built The Rose, the third of the large, permanent playhouses in London, and the first in Bankside. From 1591, Henslowe partnered with the Admiral's Men after that company split with The Theatre's James Burbage over the division of receipts. Edward Alleyn, the Admiral's' lead actor, married Henslowe's stepdaughter Joan in 1592, and they worked in partnership. In 1598 Burbage's company (by then, the Lord Chamberlain's Men) erected the new Globe Theatre in Bankside; Henslowe moved the Admiral's Men to the north-western corner of the city, into a venue he had financed, the Fortune Theatre.*

James Burbage: *an English actor, theatre impresario, joiner, and theatre builder in the English Renaissance theatre. He built The Theatre, the first permanent dedicated theatre built in England since Roman times.*

Richard Burbage: *English stage actor and theatre owner. The son of James, Burbage's power and scope as an actor is revealed in the sheer size of the roles he played.*

Edward Aleyn: *He was rated by common consent as the foremost actor of his time; his only close rival was Richard Burbage. He played the title roles in three of Christopher Marlowe's major plays.*

Christopher (Kit) Marlowe: *an English playwright, poet and translator of the Elizabethan era. Marlowe was the foremost Elizabethan tragedian of his day. He greatly influenced William Shakespeare, who rose to become the pre-eminent Elizabethan playwright after Marlowe's mysterious early death.*

Thomas Kyd: English playwright, the author of *The Spanish Tragedy*, and one of the most important figures in the development of Elizabethan drama. He may have been the author of a *Hamlet* play pre-dating Shakespeare's, which is now known as the *Ur-Hamlet*.

Earl of Southampton: Henry Wriothesley, the only son of Henry Wriothesley, 2nd Earl of Southampton, and Mary Browne, daughter of Anthony Browne, 1st Viscount Montagu. Shakespeare's two narrative poems, *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, were dedicated to Southampton, who is generally identified as the Fair Youth of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*.

Hamnet Shakespeare: the only son of William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway, and the fraternal twin of Judith Shakespeare. He died at age 11.

Thomas Nashe: considered the greatest of the English Elizabethan pamphleteers. He was also a playwright, poet, and satirist.

George Peele: an English translator, poet, and dramatist, who is most noted for his supposed but not universally accepted collaboration with William Shakespeare on the play *Titus Andronicus*.

Robert Greene: an English author popular in his day, and now best known for a posthumous pamphlet attributed to him, *Greene's, Groats-worth of Witte*, widely believed to contain an attack on William Shakespeare.

Black Luce: a madam called "Lucy Negro" or "Black Luce", who ran a notorious bawdy house in Clerkenwell

Emilia Lanier: She was a musician and the first Englishwoman to assert herself as a professional poet. Born Emilia Bassano and part of the Lanier family tree. Several scholars have speculated that she may be Shakespeare's "Dark Lady".

William Kempe: commonly referred to as Will Kemp, was an English actor and dancer specialising in comic roles and best known for having been one of the original players in early dramas by William Shakespeare.

Edmund Shakespeare: The youngest child of John Shakespeare and Mary Arden and the brother of the playwright William Shakespeare. He followed William to London to become an actor

George Wilkins (c.1576-1618)^[1] was an English dramatist and pamphleteer best known for his probable collaboration with Shakespeare on the play Pericles, Prince of Tyre. By profession he was an inn-keeper, but he was also apparently involved in criminal activities. Wilkins was an inn-keeper in Cow-Cross, London, an area that was "notorious as a haunt of whores and thieves". Most biographical information about him derives from his regular appearance in criminal court records for thievery and acts of violence. Many of the charges against him involved violence against women, including kicking a pregnant woman in the belly, and knocking down and stomping another woman. *(he is not directly referred to in the play 1616 but is a shadow lurking in the wings)

***John Hall:** a local physician, they had one daughter, named Elizabeth, in 1608.

***Thomas Quiney:** Judith's husband; a vintner whose misconduct may have prompted the rewriting of Shakespeare's will. Thomas was struck out, while Judith's inheritance was attached with provisions to safeguard it from her husband. *(these two are elsewhere in the house at the time of the action!)

Some Poetic Sources:

Robert Greene Plagiarises elements of Nash's erotic Poem

Merrie Ballad of Nash, His Dildo, by Thomas Nashe (1567 – 1601)

With that she sprung full lightly to my lips,
And about my neck she hugs, she culls, she clips,
She wanton faines, and falls upon the bed,
And often tosses to and fro her head;
She shakes her feet, and waggles with her tongue:
Oh, who is able to forbear so long?
“I come, I come, sweet Lady, by thy leave”;
Softly my fingers up the curtains heave,
And send me happy stealing by degrees,
First unto the feet, and then unto the knees,
And so ascend unto her manly thigh—
A pox on lingering, when I come so nigh!
Smock, climb apace, that I may see my joys,
All earthly pleasures seem to this but toys,
Compared be these delights which I behold,
Which well might keep a man from being old.

Various lines of Greene's come from his GREENE'S GROAT'S-WORTH OF WIT,

“bought with a million of Repentance. Describing the folly of youth, the falsehood of make-shift flatterers, the misery of the negligent, and mischiefs of deceiving Courtesans.

Written before his death and published at his dying request. 1592.”

Sonnets referenced in the play

Sonnet 145

Though it is placed within the "Dark Lady" sequence, it has been claimed that the poem was originally written for Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife. This was first proposed by Andrew Gurr in 1971. Gurr suggested that the words "hate away" may be a pun (in Elizabethan pronunciation) on "Hathaway". It has also been suggested that the next words, "And saved my life", would have been indistinguishable in pronunciation from "Anne saved my life."

Those lips that Love's own hand did make
Breathed forth the sound that said 'I hate,'
To me that languish'd for her sake:
But when she saw my woeful state,
Straight in her heart did mercy come,
Chiding that tongue that ever sweet
Was used in giving gentle doom,
And taught it thus anew to greet:
'I hate' she alter'd with an end,
That follow'd it as gentle day
Doth follow night, who like a fiend
From heaven to hell is flown away;
'I hate' from hate away she threw,
And saved my life, saying -- 'not you.'

Sonnet 128

Sonnet 128 is comparable to the sonnet in Romeo and Juliet in which Romeo pleads for a first kiss. This sonnet is set in a public musical celebration. Shakespeare watches his dark lady play the keyboard virginal (or Bassano builtclavichord), captivated by her back swaying with the melody. Like Romeo, he longs for a kiss, but in this sonnet he envies the jacks (wooden keys) that the lady's playing fingers "tickle" while trilling the notes. Perhaps he also envies the other men (jacks) standing around the lady.

How oft when thou, my music, music play'st,
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap,
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilst my poor lips which should that harvest reap,
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand!
To be so tickled, they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips,
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,
Making dead wood more bless'd than living lips.
Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

Sonnet 129

Sonnet 129 is one of Shakespeare's most famous sonnets and centers around the idea of the human mind and its primal urges. The sonnet consists of an unknown narrator having an internal mediation with himself about his sexuality; he fears it and harvests feelings of self-disgust for having such desires.

Th' expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust,
Enjoyed no sooner but despisèd straight,
Past reason hunted; and, no sooner had
Past reason hated as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;
Mad in pursuit and in possession so,
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this

Sonnet 138

The opening line sets the scene by suggesting that there is a need to patch up the loving relationship, the woman having to swear that she is true, implying that doubt has arisen, and the poet having to pretend that he is younger than he is for fear of losing her. The basis for love is therefore flawed and the love between them mirrors the flaws in their characters. Nevertheless they seem to reach a plateau of relative contentment, and can almost enjoy the game of deception. This sonnet is a reworking of one first printed in 'The Passionate Pilgrim, a collection of 20 poems which appeared in 1599, published by William Jaggard; thought to have been pirated, unauthorised by Shakespeare.

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutored youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:
On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed:
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O! love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love, loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

The Rape of Lucrece (1594)

TO THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE, HENRY
Wriothesly, Earl of Southhampton,
and Baron of Tichfield.

THE love I dedicate to your lordship is without end; whereof this pamphlet, without beginning, is but a superfluous moiety. The warrant I have of your honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater; meantime, as it is, it is bound to your lordship, to whom I wish long life, still lengthened with all happiness.

Your lordship's in all duty,

William Shakespeare.

Excerpt from *The Rape of Lucrece*

'O, what excuse can my invention make,
When thou shalt charge me with so black a deed?
Will not my tongue be mute, my frail joints shake,
Mine eyes forego their light, my false heart bleed?
The guilt being great, the fear doth still exceed;
And extreme fear can neither fight nor fly,
But coward-like with trembling terror die.

'Had Collatinus kill'd my son or sire,
Or lain in ambush to betray my life,
Or were he not my dear friend, this desire
Might have excuse to work upon his wife,
As in revenge or quittal of such strife:
But as he is my kinsman, my dear friend,
The shame and fault finds no excuse nor end.

'Shameful it is; ay, if the fact be known:
Hateful it is; there is no hate in loving:
I'll beg her love; but she is own:
The worst is but denial and reproving:
My will is strong, past reason's weak removing.
Who fears a sentence or an old man's saw
Shall by a painted cloth be kept in awe.'

Thus, graceless, holds he disputation
'Tween frozen conscience and hot-burning will,
And with good thoughts make dispensation,
Urging the worser sense for vantage still;
Which in a moment doth confound and kill
All pure effects, and doth so far proceed,
That what is vile shows like a virtuous deed.

