

HENRY VI / TWELFTH NIGHT / MACBETH – MALE – UNDER 30-ish

YOUNG CLIFFORD

(in the middle of a battle that his side is losing)

Shame and confusion! 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 –

Sees his father dead

O, let the vile world end,
And the promised flames of the last day
Knit earth and heaven together!
Now let the general trumpet blow his blast,
Particularities and petty sounds
To cease! 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. York not our old men spares;
No more will I their babes.
Henceforth I will not have to do with pity:
Meet I an infant of the house of York,
Into as many gobbets will I cut it
As wild Medea young Absyrtus did.
In cruelty will I seek out my fame.

KING HENRY VI

(after wandering away from a battle)

This battle fares like to the morning's war,
When dying clouds contend with growing light,
What time the shepherd, blowing of his nails,
Can neither call it perfect day nor night.
Here on this molehill will I sit me down.
To whom God will, there be the victory!
For Margaret my queen, and Clifford too,
Have chid me from the battle, swearing both
They prosper best of all when I am thence.
Would I were dead, if God's good will were so;
For what is in this world but grief and woe?
O God! methinks it were a happy life,
To be no better than a homely swain;
To sit upon a hill, as I do now,
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,
Thereby to see the minutes how they run,
How many make the hour full complete;
How many hours bring about the day;
How many days will finish up the year;
How many years a mortal man may live.
Ah, what a life were this, how sweet, how lovely!
The shepherd's homely curds,
His cold thin drink out of his leather bottle,
His wonted sleep under a fresh tree's shade,
All which secure and sweetly he enjoys,
Is far beyond a prince's delicacies,
His viands sparkling in a golden cup,
His body couchèd in a curious bed,
When care, mistrust, and treason waits on him.

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DUKE ORSINO

(listening to music and wallowing in being in love)

If music be the food of love, play on;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again! It had a dying fall;
O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour! Enough; no more.
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.
O spirit of love! How quick and fresh art thou,
That, notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
But falls into abatement and low price,
Even in a minute.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK

(reading a challenge he intends to send to Viola while she is disguised as a man)

Here's the challenge. I warrant there's vinegar and pepper in't.

“Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a scurvy fellow. Wonder not, nor admire not in thy mind, why I do call thee so, for I will show thee no reason for't. Thou comest to the lady Olivia, and in my sight she uses thee kindly, but thou liest in thy throat. That is not the matter I challenge thee for. I will waylay thee going home; where if it be thy chance to kill me, thou killest me like a rogue and a villain. Fare thee well; and God have mercy upon one of our souls! He may have mercy upon mine, but my hope is better, and so look to thyself. Thy friend, as thou usest him, and thy sworn enemy, ANDREW AGUECHEEK.”

FESTE

(pretending to be Sir Topas to trick Malvolio, who is locked up)

[Singing] Hey, Robin, jolly Robin,
Tell me how thy lady does.

[Hears Malvolio] Master Malvolio? Alas, sir, how fell you besides your five wits? Advise you what you say; the minister is here. [as Sir Topas] Malvolio, Malvolio, thy wits the heavens restore! Endeavour thyself to sleep, and leave thy vain bibble babble. Maintain no words with him, good fellow. [as himself] Who, I, sir? Not I, sir. God be with you, good Sir Topas. [as Sir Topas] Marry, amen. [as himself to Malvolio] Alas, sir, be patient. I am shent for speaking to you. But tell me true, are you not mad indeed? Or do you but counterfeit?

MALCOLM

(after pretending to be evil to test Macduff's integrity)

Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste. But God above
Deal between thee and me! I am yet
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
At no time broke my faith, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
No less in truth than life. My first false speaking
Was this upon myself. What I am truly
Is thine and my poor country's to command.