

PORTIA The quality of mercy is not strain'd,  
It droppeth as the gentle dew 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 throned monarch better than his crown.  
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
The attribute to war and majesty,  
Wherein does sit the fear and dread of kings:  
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,  
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,  
It is an attribute to God himself;

*The Merchant of Venice Act IV scene i*

**JAQUES 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.  
Then, the whining schoolboy 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 lin'd,  
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 sav'd, 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.**

*As You Like It Act II scene vii*

**ORSINO** 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 so'er,  
But falls into abatement and low price,  
Even in a minute! So full of shapes is fancy,  
That it alone is high fantastical.

*Twelfth Night Act I scene i*

**CALIBAN** Be not afraid; the isle is full of noises,  
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.  
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments  
Will hum about mine ears; and sometime voices,  
That, if I then had wak'd after a long sleep,  
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,  
The clouds methought would open, and show riches  
Ready to drop upon me; that, when I wak'd,  
I cried to dream again.

*The Tempest Act III scene ii*

**MACBETH** 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.

*Macbeth Act V scene v*

**JULIET** O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?  
Deny thy father and refuse thy name.  
Or if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love  
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.  
'Tis but thy name that is my enemy:  
Thou art thyself but not a Montague.  
What's Montague? It is nor hand nor foot  
Nor arm nor face nor any other part  
Belonging to a man. O become some other name.  
What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet;  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,  
And for thy name, which is no part of thee,  
Take all myself.

***Romeo and Juliet Act II scene ii***

**GAUNT** This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
This fortress built by Nature for herself  
Against infection and the hand of war,  
This happy breed of men, this little world,  
This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive of a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands;  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England.

***King Richard II Act II scene i***

**LEAR** Blow winds and crack your cheeks! Rage, blow!  
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout  
Till you have drenched our steeples, drowned the cocks!  
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,  
Vaunt-couriers of oak-cleaving thunderbolts,  
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,  
Strike flat the thick rotundity o'the world,  
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once  
That make ungrateful man!

***King Lear Act III scene ii***

**ANTONY** Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;  
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.  
The evil that men do lives after them,  
The good is oft interred with their bones;  
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus  
Hath told you that Caesar was ambitious.  
If it were so it was a grievous fault,  
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.  
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest,  
(For Brutus is an honourable man,  
So are they all, all honourable men)  
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.  
He was my friend, faithful and just to me;  
But Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And Brutus is an honourable man.  
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,  
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:  
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?  
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept;  
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:  
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And Brutus is an honourable man.  
You all did see that on the Lupercal  
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,  
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?  
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,  
And sure he is an honourable man.  
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,  
But here I am to speak what I do know.  
You all did love him once, not without cause;  
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?

*Julius Caesar* Act III scene ii

HAMLET 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 -

*Hamlet Act III scene i*

### SONNET 116

*Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments; love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds,  
Or bends with the remover to remove.  
O no, it is an ever-fixed mark,  
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;  
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,  
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.  
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickle's compass come;  
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.  
If this be error and upon me proved  
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.*

**“BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE” by Cole Porter (from *Kiss Me Kate*)**

The girls today in society go for classical poetry,  
So to win their hearts one must quote with ease  
Aeschylus and Euripides.

One must know Homer, and believe me, Beau,  
Sophocles and Sappho-ho,  
Unless you know Shelley and Keats and Pope  
Dainty debbies will think you a dope.

But the poet of them all  
Who will start ‘em simply ravin’  
Is the poet people call  
The Bard of Stratford-on-Avon.

*Brush up your Shakespeare,  
Start quoting him now,  
Brush up your Shakespeare  
And the women you will wow -*

Just declaim a few lines from Othello  
And they’ll think you’re a hell of a fellow,  
If your blonde won’t respond when you flatter her  
Tell her what Tony told Cleopatra.

If she fights when her clothes you are mussing,  
What are clothes? Much Ado about Nothing.  
Brush up your Shakespeare  
And they’ll all kowtow ---

With the wife of the British ambassador  
Try a crack out of Troilus and Cressida,  
If she says she won’t buy it or take it  
Make her take it, what’s more As You Like It.

If she says your behaviour is heinous  
Kick her right in the Coriolanus,  
Brush up your Shakespeare  
And they’ll all kowtow ---

If you can’t be a ham and do Hamlet  
They won’t give a damn or a damnlet,  
Just recite an occasional sonnet  
And your lap will have honey upon it.

When your baby is pleading for pleasure  
Let her sample your Measure for Measure.  
Brush up your Shakespeare  
And they’ll all kowtow ---

**Better mention The Merchant of Venice  
When her sweet pound of flesh you would menace,  
If her virtue at first she defends, well,  
Just remind her that All's Well That Ends Well.**

**And if she still won't give you a bonus  
You know what Venus got from Adonis.  
Brush up your Shakespeare  
And they'll all kowtow ---**

**If your girls is a Washington Heights dream  
Treat the kid to A Midsummer Night's Dream,  
If she wants an all-by-herself night,  
Let her rest every eleventh or Twelfth Night.**

**If because of your heat she gets huffy  
Simply play on and "Lay on, Macduff-y!"  
Brush up your Shakespeare  
And they'll all kowtow ---**

**1 WITCH** Thrice the brinded cat has mew'd.

**2 WITCH** Thrice and once the hedge-pig whin'd.

**3 WITCH** Harpier cries: - 'Tis time, 'tis time.

**1 WITCH** Round about the cauldron go;  
In the poison'd entrails throw. –  
Toad, that under cold stone  
Days and nights has thirty-one  
Swelter'd venom, sleeping got,  
Boil thou first i'th' charmed pot.

**ALL** Double, double toil and trouble:  
Fire, burn; and, cauldron, bubble.

**2 WITCH** Fillet of a fenny snake,  
In the cauldron boil and bake;  
Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,  
Adder's fork and blind-worms sting,  
Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,  
For a charm of powerful trouble,  
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

**ALL** Double, double toil and trouble:  
Fire, burn; and, cauldron, bubble.

**3 WITCH** Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf;  
Witches' mummy; maw, and gulf,  
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark;  
Root of hemlock, digg'd i'th' dark;  
Liver of blaspheming Jew;  
Gall of goat, and slips of yew,  
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse;  
Finger of birth-strangled babe,  
Ditch-delivr'd by a drab,  
Make the gruel thick and slab:  
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron  
For th'ingredience of our cauldron.

**ALL** Double, double toil and trouble:  
Fire, burn, and, cauldron, bubble.

**2 WITCH** Cool it with a baboon's blood:  
Then the charm is firm and good.

*Macbeth* Act IV scene i