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The course of true love never did run smooth.

—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act I, Scene i

Cast of Characters

PUCK, a waiter, our host

ROMEO, the love-sick suitor

LADY MACBETH (LADY M), hiding a secret

BOTTOM, the fool

FIRST WITCH, the oldest, bossy

SECOND WITCH, middle one, considerate

THIRD WITCH, youngest, a bit naïve

KING LEAR, old

JULIET, a teenager

NURSE, her caretaker

MACBETH (MAC), recently, a king

CLEOPATRA, a middle-aged queen

VIOLA, sometimes a boy

DESDEMONA, the faithful wife

OTHELLO, the jealous husband

HAMLET, obsessed with revenge

JOAN of ARC, the unlikely war hero

WAITRESS/FAIRY, female, attractive

Author Notes

Casting:

Puck can be played by separate waiters, if necessary. But it would be nice if Puck was played by one actor, male or female.

Feel free to double, triple, quadruple cast. “A man in his time plays many parts.” (*As You Like It*)

Character Origins:

Puck (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*)

Romeo (*Romeo and Juliet*)

Lady Macbeth (Lady M) (*Macbeth*)

Bottom (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*)

First Witch (*Macbeth*)

Second Witch (*Macbeth*)

Third Witch (*Macbeth*)

King Lear (*King Lear*)

Juliet (*Romeo and Juliet*)

Nurse (*Romeo and Juliet*)

Macbeth (Mac) (*Macbeth*)

Cleopatra (*Antony and Cleopatra*)

Viola (*Twelfth Night; or, What You Will*)

Desdemona (*Othello, the Moor of Venice*)

Othello (*Othello, the Moor of Venice*)

Hamlet (*Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*)

Joan of Arc (*King Henry VI, Part I*)

References:

It would be helpful, of course, to read the play your character is from, as well as the other character’s play. Quotes are always pulled from the speaking character’s play (unless otherwise noted). Note that the quotes may be from several different points in that character’s journey.

Every time a quote is used, the title (if necessary), act, and scene are sited in parentheses.

Set:

Set-ups should be as simple as possible. A table and chairs will suffice. Some dates may call for a few easy-to-find props, like cutlery or glassware. (Plasticware is fine.)

Transitions:

The most important thing is to maintain the energy and flow of the play. One idea would be to not go completely black between scenes, but instead use a transition light. Stage crew can be dressed as wait staff to move chairs, plates, glasses, etc. If blackouts *are* used, it would be helpful to have the next scene (date) already setup on the opposite side of the stage.

TO DATE OR NOT TO DATE

by Jason Pizzarello and Maria Pizzarello

Prologue

(A restaurant.)

(PUCK enters, as a waiter.)

PUCK.

Two singles, neither alike in temperament,
In this trattoria, where we lay our scene,
From different plays test their fates intent,
And marinara sauce makes tablecloths unclean.
From forth Shakespearean text they did leap out
To seek another time with a new mate;
But we can not ignore this pang of doubt
That chaos shall be served upon a plate.
The outrageous match ups we have planned for you,
And th'fact that you are still in your own seat,
Gives our ensemble joy to bring to you
The harebrained play *To Date or Not To Date*;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

(Transition light.)

Scene 1

(ROMEO enters with flowers. PUCK goes to him.)

ROMEO. I have a reservation for two under Montague?

PUCK. Right this way, sir.

*(PUCK escorts ROMEO to a table and removes the reserved sign.
PUCK exits.)*

*(ROMEO looks around, then sniffs himself: not great. He sprays
some cologne and walks through the spray. Checks his breath. Sprays*

Binaca. Smells himself again. This time he sprays Binaca on himself and cologne in his mouth. Nasty.)

(LADY MACBETH enters. She is squirts some Purell hand sanitizer on her hands and rubs them together.)

LADY MACBETH.

A little Purell clears us of this deed. *(Act II, Scene ii)*

(ROMEO sees LADY MACBETH and immediately stands. He quickly drops down to his knee and presents the flowers.)

ROMEO.

Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night. *(Act I, Scene v)*

LADY MACBETH. You must be Romeo. ...Lady M.

(LADY MACBETH offers ROMEO her right hand, then "sees" something on it. She offers her left hand instead. ROMEO kisses it.)

ROMEO.

Thou art as glorious to this night
As is a winged messenger of heaven. *(Act II, Scene ii)*

LADY MACBETH. *(Trying to maintain normalcy:)* Oh. Okay.

(LADY MACBETH sits. ROMEO gets up and hands her the flowers. She just stares at them. Unsure what to do, she puts them in her purse.)

(ROMEO sits, slightly confused at her behavior.)

LADY MACBETH. Have you been here before?

ROMEO. Um...no.

LADY MACBETH. Me neither. It's nice to get out.

ROMEO. I'm sorry, but did you hear anything I just said?

LADY MACBETH. You mean the stuff about the winged messenger?

ROMEO. Right, and before that I spoke of your beauty.

LADY MACBETH. Sure, I heard you.

ROMEO. Did I offend you?

LADY MACBETH. Oh, no.

ROMEO. I don't get it. My game is strong.

LADY MACBETH. Oh, sure, sure. It seems strong.

(LADY MACBETH tries to look at her menu. ROMEO pulls it down.)

ROMEO.

Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn. *(Act I, Scene vi)*

LADY MACBETH. *(Suddenly:)* Pricks like thorn?? What do you know?

ROMEO. What do I know? About what?

LADY MACBETH. Who told you?

ROMEO. Who told me what?

LADY MACBETH. It wasn't my fault. I didn't think he'd actually go through with it.

(LADY MACBETH starts rubbing her hands together again.)

LADY MACBETH. All I wanted was to go on a simple date. Is that too much to ask?

ROMEO. I don't know what you're talking about.

LADY MACBETH. I thought maybe if I met someone new I could escape from...

ROMEO. —Escape from what?

LADY MACBETH. Wait. You really don't know what I'm talking about?

ROMEO. No.

LADY MACBETH. Good. That's good. Because if you did I'd have to kill you.

ROMEO. I see...

LADY MACBETH. Ha... Ha, ha, ha. I'm just kidding.

ROMEO. Oh. *(Forced:)* Ha, ha, ha.

(An awkward pause.)

ROMEO. Why don't we order?

LADY MACBETH. Good idea.

(LADY MACBETH does her best to put on a smile, then goes to pour herself a glass of wine.)

ROMEO. Let me get that. I am a *gentleman* after all.

(ROMEO reaches for the bottle.)

LADY MACBETH. That's all right, really.

ROMEO. I insist.

(As they struggle, ROMEO gets a hold of the bottle, but spills it on LADY MACBETH.)

LADY MACBETH. Agghhh!!!

ROMEO. Oops. Sorry.

LADY MACBETH. Ahhhhh!!

ROMEO. Here, let me help.

(ROMEO attempts to clean up.)

LADY MACBETH.

Out, damned spot; out, I say. *(Act V, Scene i)*

(PUCK, as the waiter, enters.)

PUCK. *(To ROMEO:)* You're just making it worse.

LADY MACBETH.

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting
With most admired disorder. *(Act III, Scene iv)*

(Beat, as PUCK and ROMEO share a look of concern.)

PUCK. I'll get some seltzer.

(PUCK exits.)

(LADY MACBETH *is furiously rubbing her shirt.*)

ROMEO. Why don't you try blotting it.

(LADY MACBETH *gives him the stare of death.*)

ROMEO. It's only a little wine.

LADY MACBETH. Are you mad?

ROMEO. Are you mad?

LADY MACBETH. Upset mad or crazy mad?

ROMEO. Either?

(LADY MACBETH *smells her shirt and then her hands intensely.*)

LADY MACBETH.

Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia
Will not sweeten the little hand. Oh, oh, oh! (*Act V, Scene i*)

(*Beat.*)

ROMEO. Never mind. That answers my question.

LADY MACBETH.

What's done cannot be undone. (*Act V, Scene i*)

ROMEO. Well, listen, I've had a great time.

(LADY MACBETH *is crazed, now staring off.*)

ROMEO. I'm not going to say I'll call you, because I'm not.

LADY MACBETH.

There's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come. (*Act V, Scene i*)

(LADY MACBETH *exits in a trance.*)

(*Beat.*)

ROMEO. Nice girl.

(ROMEO *sits at the table for a moment, alone.*)

(*A beautiful WAITRESS/FAIRY walks by. ROMEO watches her pass.*)

ROMEO.

Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night. (*Act I, Scene v*)

(ROMEO follows the WAITRESS/FAIRY off.)

(*Blackout.*)

Scene 2

(*Lights up on a WAITRESS/FAIRY setting a table. She exits and returns with the THREE WITCHES. All three are dressed alike and sit on one side of the table.*)

(BOTTOM enters, unseen, sees the WITCHES, and straightens his tie. He approaches the table with a confident stride and boastful manner. He's a fast talker, but not as smooth as he thinks.)

BOTTOM. Ladies, good evening, good evening.

FIRST WITCH. Nice of you to show up. Which one are you?

BOTTOM. Sir Bottom.

(*The WITCHES just stare.*)

BOTTOM. Don't get up. The pleasure is mine. I apologize if I kept you waiting. You wouldn't believe the weather out there, and the traffic, and the people. Where do they all come from? And why didn't they stay there, know what I mean? Hey, but I'm here now, let me make it up to you. (*Calling off:*) Monsieur Goodfellow—

(PUCK enters.)

BOTTOM. —your finest champagne. (*Handing him a slip of paper, as a tip:*) There you are, friend.

PUCK. (*Looks at the paper:*) A valet ticket?

BOTTOM. Let's be quick about it, Cobweb.

(PUCK, offended, leaves.)

(BOTTOM sits.)

FIRST WITCH. Where's your friend?

BOTTOM. Who, Snug?

SECOND WITCH. And your other friend?

BOTTOM. Who, Snout? They, uh, couldn't make it.

THIRD WITCH. But this is a triple date.

BOTTOM. Yes, and they send their apologies. And I apologize on their behalf. And the waiter, Mustardseed, or whoever that is, apologies too for not relaying the message. Shame on you, Mustardseed.

FIRST WITCH. (*Getting up:*) Well, let's reschedule.

BOTTOM. No!

SECOND WITCH. We can pick another night, when Snot and Snoot can make it.

BOTTOM. Snug and Snout. It doesn't matter. Let's just enjoy our dinner.

THIRD WITCH. There's only one of you and three of us. And we're sisters.

BOTTOM. Even better.

SECOND WITCH. And being sisters, either all of us are on a date, or none of us.

FIRST WITCH. C'mon, sisters, let's go back to our cave.

SECOND WITCH. (*Getting up.*) We can order Chinese and watch You've Got Mail.

THIRD WITCH. Again?

BOTTOM. No, wait!

I have to tell you: my friends, they could make it. If they knew about it, that is. You see, I never told them.

SECOND WITCH. That's just rude.

FIRST WITCH. You've wasted our time.

BOTTOM. Let me explain. Yes, there are three roles to play tonight as a companion to each of you beautiful women. But why would you cast three men to play those roles, when you can cast one capa-

ble gentleman to play all three. Seems like a waste of resources to me.

THIRD WITCH. Are you saying you want to date all three of us at the same time?

BOTTOM. Precisely.

FIRST WITCH. And how would you do that, exactly?

BOTTOM. I'm a trained actor. A master of disguises. And by nature, I have the wit, intellect, and physical prowess of three men.

SECOND WITCH. And the ego to match.

BOTTOM. One must have ego. If I am born with three times as many gifts, who am I to question it? It would be a sin not to put it to use, would it not?

SECOND WITCH. I suppose.

BOTTOM. What is it that concerns you? Afraid that you'll have to share me? You won't. I'll be a different man for each of you. (*Going up to the THIRD WITCH.*) With you, you are the youngest, yes?

THIRD WITCH. By a year.

BOTTOM. For you, I'll be that much younger and playful to keep up. You can call me Nick. I'll dress hip, and speak in a slightly higher register like this: Hey, Babe, wanna hit the town? We can be back before dawn... *Maybe.*

THIRD WITCH. Hot.

BOTTOM. (*To the SECOND WITCH.*) And you, middle sister, I can guess, are the artistic one. I'll let humor be my strong suit, and I'll take up painting. My voice: a little softer, and we can play cards at night, and have intense philosophical debates. The neighbors will complain, but I don't care.

SECOND WITCH. That's just what I had in mind.

BOTTOM. (*To the FIRST WITCH.*) And for you, first born, I'll have to lower my voice and be a bit more manly, rugged. I can see you're more adventurous than your sisters. Naturally, I'll have to acquire an interest in outdoor sports. We'll buy a kayak. Our favorite res-

taurant will be the seafood place down the street. I'll always order the spaghetti and clams even though you wish I'd try something new.

FIRST WITCH. You are a man of many faces.

BOTTOM. What say you, ladies, is it a deal?

FIRST WITCH. Let us confer.

BOTTOM. Certainly. But don't be long. My offer of three is a one-day sale.

(The WITCHES huddle and whisper. BOTTOM does his best to listen-in.)

FIRST WITCH. Okay, Bottom, we accept your proposal.

BOTTOM. Terrific! You made a smart choice, my peasblossoms. You won't regret it. Now they're a few minor details to work out. I'd like to look a little different for each of you, you know, to keep things interesting. I'll let you pick the color of my beard. You have your straw color beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, your— *(Act I, Scene ii)*

SECOND WITCH. We have a different disguise in mind for you altogether.

BOTTOM. No problem. I'm flexible. What is it? I can wear a moustache like a prince.

THIRD WITCH. It's a surprise.

SECOND WITCH. We're going to cast a few good-will spells on you.

BOTTOM. Nothing dangerous I hope.

FIRST WITCH. Not afraid are you?

BOTTOM. Of course not.

THIRD WITCH. Go to the Men's room, Nick sweetie, spin around three times and take a look in the mirror.

SECOND WITCH. Your transformation will have taken place.

BOTTOM. This is great. It's like my own private make-over show.

(BOTTOM *excitedly runs off.*)

(*The THREE WITCHES join hands.*)

WITCHES.

Double, double toil and trouble

Fire burn and cauldron bubble (*Act IV, Scene i*)

FIRST WITCH. Wait, wait we need a cauldron.

THIRD WITCH. Ask the waiter.

SECOND WITCH. Here, use this soup bowl.

FIRST WITCH. Fine, fine. Ready?

(*Taking from her purse:*)

Fillet of a slimy snake

In you go, to bowl and bake

SECOND WITCH. (*Pulling from her purse:*)

Eye of newt and wool of bat

THIRD WITCH. (*From her purse:*)

Toe of frog and...three tic tacs...

(*FIRST and SECOND WITCH look at her.*)

THIRD WITCH. Sorry, that's all I have.

(*They rejoin hands.*)

WITCHES.

Double, double toil and trouble

Fire burn and...soup bowl bubble.

FIRST WITCH. There, that's it.

SECOND WITCH. Think it'll work?

THIRD WITCH. If it doesn't, at least he'll have fresh breath.

FIRST WITCH.

Come let's make haste; he'll soon be back again. (*Act III, Scene vi*)

SECOND WITCH. Are you kidding? And miss the show?

THIRD WITCH. Quiet, here he comes. Pretend like nothing's wrong.

(BOTTOM comes out with the head of a donkey.)

(The WITCHES try to hold it together, but can't, and burst out laughing.)

FIRST WITCH. Fair is foul, and foul is fair! (Act I, Scene i)

SECOND WITCH. Let's go, girls.

(The WITCHES leave in a howl of pointing and snickering.)

BOTTOM.

I see their knavery: this is to make an ass of me; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can: I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid.

(BOTTOM starts to sing a bawdy tune.)

(PUCK, as the waiter, is standing next to him.)

PUCK. No, sir, you will not. I'm sorry to have to ask you to leave.

BOTTOM. What? Why?! Am I not a patron of this establishment?

PUCK. It's not you, sir. It's your...head...it's a health code violation.

(PUCK leads BOTTOM out, as he Hee-Haws in protest.)

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

(Lights up on MAC[BETH] and CLEOPATRA already at their table, in the middle of their date. CLEOPATRA wears way too much Egyptian garb and makeup. MAC[BETH] speaks in a slight Scottish accent, if possible.)

(PUCK sets down their dinner plates.)

PUCK. Bon Appetit.

CLEOPATRA. Grazie.

(PUCK exits.)

MACBETH. Here's to you, Cleopatra.

CLEOPATRA. And to you, Mac—

MACBETH. —To new beginnings.

CLEOPATRA. Here, here.

(They clink glasses and drink.)

(They begin to speak at the same time:)

MACBETH. Tomorrow, and
tomorrow, and...
(Act V, Scene v)

CLEOPATRA. When he
hath mused...
(Act III, Scene xiii)

MACBETH. Oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

CLEOPATRA. Ha, ha. No, you first. I wasn't saying anything.

MACBETH. Yes you were.

(Pause. They both ponder something terrific to say.)

MACBETH. Creeps in this petty
pace...
(Act V, Scene v)

CLEOPATRA. Of taking
kingdoms in...
(Act III, Scene xiii)

Ha, ha, ha...

Oh, sorry!

(Quick pause. They try again:)

MACBETH. From day to day...
(Act V, Scene v)

CLEOPATRA. Bestow'd
his lips on that...
(Act III, Scene xiii)

Oh, boy...

Go ahead.

(Quick agitated pause.)

MACBETH. You first...

CLEOPATRA. You first...

No you...

No you...

Ugghhhhhh...

Hhhmmmm...

(Longer pause. They stare off and cool down. Finally, CLEOPATRA raises her hand. MAC[BETH] gestures that she may speak. They try again:)

CLEOPATRA. How is Scotland this time of year?

MACBETH. Lovely. A bit of a chill, a good rain. My kind of weather. (*Romantically:*) Nothing like spending the evening by a roaring fire, discussing the law of the land...

CLEOPATRA. No, no that's dreadful. Far superior is a dry heat, spending the day absorbing the rays of the sun, playing billiards by the Nile...

MACBETH. (*Interrupting and laughing to himself:*) Sure, billiards are nice...if one has the time.

CLEOPATRA. How do you mean?

MACBETH. There's time to relax when you're more of a figure-head, per se, standing-in, while others—

CLEOPATRA. Are you saying I am not the leader of my country?

MACBETH. The people look to you I'm sure. You (*Makes quotation fingers:*) "mandate" the laws, but designing them is something else altogether.

CLEOPATRA. (*Boiling:*) Have you sat in my court?

MACBETH. Of course not.

CLEOPATRA. Exactly.

And how did you become Thane of Cawdor? Thane of Glamis? Word is that wasn't your doing at all, but the handiwork of witches.

MACBETH. (*Slamming his fist:*) Now see here...

CLEOPATRA. (*Calm:*) But I wouldn't know about your business, now would I?

MACBETH. No.

CLEOPATRA. Let's not talk about politics.

MACBETH. Good idea.

CLEOPATRA. We're both passionate about the subject clearly. And if you have high blood pressure like I do—

MACBETH. I'm afraid so.

CLEOPATRA. Let's have a nice meal...get to know one another... as just people.

(They both take a big swig of water.)

MACBETH. ...So...you've never been married?...

CLEOPATRA. The men I have known, I have outlasted. I'm looking for a man with staying power.

MACBETH. I have power.

CLEOPATRA. I know you do, darling. But power's easy. I'm talking about staying power. I need my man to last.

(MAC[BETH] snickers and takes a swig of water.)

CLEOPATRA. *(Flirting:)* So tell me how you became king.

(MAC[BETH] spits out the water.)

CLEOPATRA. Are you alright?!

MACBETH. Just...down the wrong pipe, that's all.

CLEOPATRA. Are you sure?

MACBETH. Fine, fine. What were we—?

CLEOPATRA. How you became the King of Scotland.

MACBETH. Right... Do you want to taste my meal? It's delicious.

CLEOPATRA. Thanks. But I don't eat meat.

MACBETH. Really? That's surprising.

CLEOPATRA. Is it?

MACBETH. Do you like to travel? Have any pets?

CLEOPATRA. I travel frequently actually. I used to spend a great deal of time in Rome with my former... His name was Julius...

(As she is speaking, PUCK enters using his tray as a frightening mask. Lights get darker, scary music swells. Only MAC[BETH] can see and hear "the ghost.")

PUCK. *(Chanting:)* MACBETH, MACBETH! Oooo...

MACBETH. Not again!

(Music goes out and lights shift back to normal. PUCK puts the tray down and works on cleaning a neighboring table.)

CLEOPATRA. I'm sorry?

MACBETH. Nothing. Uh, it's my heart burn acting up.

CLEOPATRA. It's all that meat. Antony had heart burn. He would eat too much... Romans...

(Lights shift again. Music swells. PUCK creeps with the mask.)

PUCK. *(More scary sounds:)* Oooo...

MACBETH.

Avaunt! And quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with. *(Act III, Scene iv)*

CLEOPATRA. Are you talking to me, pal?

MACBETH. *(Rising from his seat:)*

Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;

(MAC[BETH] pulls out the butter knife, or spoon from table and holds it out to the "ghost.")

MACBETH.

Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence!

(MAC[BETH] runs off in fear.)

(Lights come back. Music cuts out.)

(CLEOPATRA turns and sees PUCK as the waiter.)

CLEOPATRA. Excuse me, waiter?

PUCK. Ready for the check?

CLEOPATRA. First, tell me why all the men I go for have major character flaws?

PUCK. It's simple, really. I believe you suffer from what is known as tragedy-itis. At the end of the play, I mean, day, you're searching for a protector. Someone who will save you from your tragic ending. But deep down you know that's not going to happen. It's not in your cards. So, it's not these men at all, although they are clearly screwed up, that are hurting you. Your problem lies within. You just need to believe in yourself, know that you-are-enough. You are a beautiful, smart, powerful leader.

CLEOPATRA. *(After a moment of contemplation:)* Hmph. I never thought about it like that. Very insightful.

(Beat.)

What time do you get off?

PUCK. I don't think so.

(PUCK leaves.)

(CLEOPATRA sighs.)

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

(Lights up. JULIET sits at a table text messaging. Her NURSE paces around the table.)

NURSE. Put that noise maker away and sit up straight.

(JULIET laughs at the text that just came in.)

NURSE. Juliet Capulet! You listen to your Nurse!

(JULIET reluctantly looks up.)

NURSE. You are about to dine with a King: a King who wants to share his kingdom with you. Get it together, young lady.

An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish. *(Act I, Scene iii)*

JULIET.

All this talk of marriage! It is an honour that I dream not of.
(Act I, Scene iii)

(Enter PUCK, as the waiter.)

PUCK. Ladies, may I present to you: his royal majesty, King Lear!

(PUCK and the NURSE bow in reverence. JULIET is sneaking in one last text.)

(KING LEAR enters. He's old.)

(NURSE pulls JULIET down into a curtsy.)

KING LEAR. You may rise. *(To the NURSE:)* The lovely Juliet...

NURSE. Oh, no, thank you, your majesty. May I present, Juliet.

KING LEAR. *(Taking her hand:)* My Lady.

JULIET. What's up?

KING LEAR. Let us have a seat.

(PUCK and the NURSE both help KING LEAR sit down. JULIET flops down in her seat.)

PUCK. Do you require anything at this moment, your Excellency?

JULIET. I'll have a diet coke with lemon.

NURSE. *(Under her breath:)* The King, Juliet! Not you! The King!

JULIET. But I'm thirsty.

KING LEAR. The Lady requires a Diet Cola. And I will have the same. I like my lemon fresh. Would your sister like anything?

NURSE. Sister! Hee! Heee! Ohh, your majesty is a smooth one! Her sister, hooo hooo hee hee.

A water with lemon.

(PUCK rolls his eyes and exits.)

KING LEAR. You may have noticed, Juliet, that I am an older man.

JULIET. Way older.

KING LEAR. You may have heard that I am looking for someone to leave my kingdom to. My daughters have all betrayed me.

NURSE. Such a shame! Truly, truly. I read all about it in People, cried my eyes out.

KING LEAR. Thank you.

In these modern Elizabethan times, you are of a marrying age and I am willing to leave all I have to you and our children.

NURSE. *(Crying and leaping out of her seat:)* Yes! Yes! Yes!

(She just misses PUCK who has re-entered with the drinks. He wobbles to and fro trying to keep the drinks balanced. He sways off stage and we here the sound of a major fall into another table.)

OFF STAGE VOICES.

Hark!...

Eeeek!...

Blasts and fogs upon thee! *(Lear, Act I, Scene iv)*

...Thou knave! *(Twelfth Night, Act II, Scene iv)*

...Fools, all!

JULIET. *(Taking out her cell phone:)* Ha! Ha! Ha! OMG! Tybalt will think this is hilarious! *(She takes a pic and texts.)*

LEAR. What dost thou say?

(JULIET is still in a texting frenzy.)

JULIET. Oh... Tybalt sent me a cute pic of a cat!

(She shows it to the NURSE, who takes phone away.)

NURSE. *(Struggling to be polite:)* Answer the handsome King, my Lady.

JULIET.

Well, um, look, see I have an ill-divining soul.

Methinks I see thee As one dead in the bottom of a tomb.

(Act III, Scene v)

NURSE. Juliet!

KING LEAR. No, it's fine. This is my sixth date this week.

NURSE. *(To LEAR:)* No! It is not fine!

(To JULIET:)

His face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men; and for a hand, and a foot, and a body, though they not be talked on, yet

they are past compare: he is not the flower of courtesy, but, I warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. (*Act II, Scene v*)

JULIET. So you marry him! I'm outtie!

(JULIET exits.)

NURSE. (*Embarrassed:*) Oh, your majesty! I'm sorry! I'm so done with her whining...

KING LEAR. No. No apologizing. You deserve better.

NURSE. Oh, that's nice of you to say.

KING LEAR. No, I mean it.

Nurse lady, what dost thou think of marrying me?

NURSE. Repeaten, por favor.

KING LEAR. Marry me, fair Nurse.

NURSE. Oh, my!

KING LEAR. Did you mean all of those things you said?

NURSE. Yes! All of them.

KING LEAR. Even the stuff about my legs?

NURSE. Uh... Sure! That, too!

KING LEAR. The kid was right. You should marry me!

NURSE. I shall be your Queen!

(Music swells. They embrace.)

NURSE. Don't you want to know my name?

KING LEAR. (*With an indifferent shrug:*) Eh.

(Blackout.)

Scene 5

(Lights up. DESDEMONA is sitting alone at a corner table, trying not to be noticed.)

(VIOLA, dressed as a boy, enters and heads over to Desdemona's table.)

VIOLA. *(Trying to be very macho:)* Is this seat taken?

DESDEMONA. Yes.

VIOLA. *(Trying again:)* What's a pretty girl like you doing in a place like this?

DESDEMONA. *(Sarcastically:)* Why, looking for the man of my dreams, of course!

(VIOLA dives into the seat.)

VIOLA. Do I have the gentleman for you!
My lord and master loves you: O! such love
Could be but recompens'd— *(Act I, Scene v)*

DESDEMONA. —Who is your lord?

VIOLA. Count Orsino! Here's a photo. Isn't he handsome? This is him lounging on his estate—

DESDEMONA. —I'm sorry, I—

VIOLA. —I have a copy of his resume for you, his yearly earnings—

DESDEMONA. —I don't need—

VIOLA. —He likes long walks on the beach, candlelit dinners, cuddling—

DESDEMONA. —I don't think I need to know—

VIOLA. —He is a lover of poetry, a writer of song—

DESDEMONA. —Who is your lord?

VIOLA. The Count Orsino!

DESDEMONA. Never heard of 'im. How could he love me?

VIOLA.

Oh, with adorations, with fertile tears,
With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire. (*Act I, Scene v*)

DESDEMONA. We don't even know each other!

VIOLA. He's a passionate guy, what can I say?

DESDEMONA. Well, thank you for bringing him to my attention,
but I don't think—

VIOLA. —Let's blow this popsicle stand. We can head over to his
palace.

DESDEMONA. He sounds like a very nice man, but—

VIOLA. —There's a beautiful balcony, sprawling gardens, a moat...
with a draw bridge.

DESDEMONA. I'm waiting for my friend—

VIOLA. —Your friend can come!

DESDEMONA. She's on a blind date. I can't leave her. He may
turn out to be a nut job and—

VIOLA. —Please come?!?!

DESDEMONA. No!

VIOLA. (*Sinking in her seat:*) Ughh, I give up!

DESDEMONA. Why doesn't your master come and woo a lady
himself?

VIOLA. You know, I've been asking myself that all night. I don't
know if he realizes how much I actually do for him. Ya know? No
one else knows him like I do. Why can't he just see what's right in
front of him?!

(*VIOLA is almost in tears.*)

DESDEMONA. Well...he does have you out looking for girls...
so...

VIOLA. Oh, I always forget I have this thing on. (*VIOLA looks
around.*) Can you keep a secret?

(DESDEMONA *nods in agreement.*)

(VIOLA *takes her hat off and reveals her identity.*)

(*Just then, PUCK, as a waiter, enters with a tray.*)

PUCK. Oh, my. T.M.I.

(PUCK *exits.*)

DESDEMONA. You're not a...you're a?

VIOLA. Girl in disguise? Yes. But not because I like it.

(VIOLA *puts her hat back on.*)

DESDEMONA. Then why do you do it?

VIOLA. When my brother died, I needed to make some extra cash. I had to get this job and they were only looking for guys, so I did what I had to do. Sure enough, I fell in love with my boss.

(*She starts to cry.*)

(*Through tears:*) And he doesn't even know I'm a girl...

DESDEMONA. Oh, you poor thing!

VIOLA. It's so exhausting. Day in and day out. Matchmaking for the man you love.

DESDEMONA. I can only imagine. Tell me your name.

VIOLA. (*Sob.*) Viola. (*Sob.*)

DESDEMONA. Well, hi there, Viola. My name is Desdemona.

VIOLA. Hiya, Desdemona.

(VIOLA *puts her hat back on.* DESDEMONA *straightens it.*)

VIOLA. Thanks.

Have you ever been in love?

DESDEMONA. Actually, I'm married. His name's Othello. Actually, if he knew I was here he'd kill me.

VIOLA. But you're here with a friend, right?

DESDEMONA. You don't know my husband. He'd be jealous if I had an imaginary friend.

VIOLA. That's sounds really tough.

DESDEMONA. It's nice to talk to someone who understands me.

(They hug.)

(OTHELLO jumps out from under the table and sees the two hugging.)

OTHELLO. Aha! I knew it. Caught in the act!

DESDEMONA. It's not what it looks like, Othello.

OTHELLO.

Oh, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal
Part of myself, and what remains is bestial. *(Act II, Scene iii)*

DESDEMONA. Oh, great. Here we go. It's ALL right, honey—

OTHELLO. —Unhand my wife, you rogue!

(OTHELLO goes to charge at VIOLA. DESDEMONA blocks him.)

DESDEMONA. Calm down. I can explain—

OTHELLO. —This peevish boy—

DESDEMONA. How could this boy, who is but a girl in disguise,
hurt your reputation?

VIOLA. It's simply a misunderstanding.

OTHELLO.

Weighest thy words before thou givest them breath.
(Act III, Scene iii)

VIOLA. And I do, sir. I check the weight carefully. *(Taking off her hat:)* Everything is in order.

OTHELLO. Aghhh!

VIOLA. I'm just a girl.

DESDEMONA. Don't you see! There's nothing to suspect.

OTHELLO. But, look, now everyone is staring at us!

DESDEMONA. No one is staring at us. Your mind plays tricks.

VIOLA. Here, then, sit. Let us restore your reputation and bandage your boo-booed feelings.

(VIOLA helps OTHELLO to his seat.)

DESDEMONA. Let us kiss and make it better.

(DESDEMONA kisses OTHELLO, who is still sulking.)

VIOLA. There. Everything is mended.

OTHELLO. I guess.

DESDEMONA. Jealousy, good husband, is not your best shade.

VIOLA.

As they say, it is the green-eyed monster
Which doth mock the meat it feeds on. *(Othello, Act III, Scene iii)*

OTHELLO. Yes, I've heard that.

VIOLA. I bid you adieu.

DESDEMONA. Farewell, Viola. Let luck meet you on your quest.

VIOLA. Thank you, Desdemona. Let's hope luck won't be necessary with Love as my companion.

(She puts her hat back on. To OTHELLO:)

I know too well what love women to men may owe:
In faith, they are as true of heart as we. *(Act II, Scene iv)*

(VIOLA exits.)

(OTHELLO looks to DESDEMONA.)

(DESDEMONA looks to OTHELLO.)

(An uncomfortable moment.)

DESDEMONA and OTHELLO. *(Looking for the waiter:)* Check, please!

(Blackout.)

Scene 6

(Lights up on HAMLET, wearing all black, and JOAN of ARC, wearing some form of armor, in the middle of a very polite meal.)

JOAN of ARC. Dinner roll?

HAMLET. Thank you.

So, did I tell you about how Claudius, my uncle, killed my father, his brother?

JOAN of ARC. Earlier.

HAMLET. Did I mention I'm seeking revenge? 'Cause I am, by the way.

JOAN of ARC. Can't let things like that slide.

HAMLET. So what do you do?

JOAN of ARC. I fight in the War of the Roses.

HAMLET. Is that what you *do* do, or do you have a day job?

JOAN of ARC. No, just that.

HAMLET. That's great. I mean, not many people get to do what they love...

Did I mention I'm currently seeking revenge for the death of my father?

JOAN of ARC. It was implied. You said your Uncle—

HAMLET. Claudius, right.

JOAN of ARC. I used to fight with my family, too. That can be rough.

HAMLET. Let me guess. They didn't want you fighting 'cause you're a girl.

JOAN of ARC. That's sort of frowned upon. I dressed like a boy for a while.

HAMLET. I can see that.

JOAN of ARC. What do you mean?

HAMLET. No, I...it's just that...

JOAN of ARC. You think I look like a boy?

HAMLET. No, you just seem...like someone who likes disguises.

JOAN of ARC. Oh.

HAMLET. You are very pretty for a boy.

JOAN of ARC. I'm a girl.

HAMLET. No, I know.

JOAN of ARC. My family also didn't like who I was speaking to.

HAMLET. Boyfriend?

JOAN of ARC. God.

HAMLET. A lot of people talk to God.

JOAN of ARC. He was talking back.

HAMLET. Interesting.

JOAN of ARC. Do you think that's weird?

HAMLET. ...No...

JOAN of ARC. Cool. Most recently, His mother came to me and told me to fight for France.

HAMLET. Really.

JOAN of ARC. We've been fighting the English.

HAMLET. I think I read something about that.

JOAN of ARC.

I mean, I believe that one drop of blood drawn from thy country's
bosom

Should grieve thee more than streams of foreign gore.

(Act III, Scene iii)

But that's just me.

HAMLET. That's nice that you think of a whole country like that.
I'm really focused on my uncle right now.

JOAN of ARC. What's held you back?

HAMLET. ...Well...

JOAN of ARC. I'm a little surprised you haven't done the deed. I mean, it seems you're pretty determined.

HAMLET.

Seems, madam? Nay, it is. I know not seems. *(Act I, Scene ii)*

JOAN of ARC. Well, what has stood in your way?

HAMLET. Life is so crazy, ya know? My To-Do list just keeps piling up and then my mother, she's got my two best friends staying with us and once you get started with them, ha, ha...they are characters.

JOAN of ARC. Hmmmm...

HAMLET. Oh! I did make an attempt at revenge. I did, but he was in the middle of praying.

JOAN of ARC. Praying? You can't seek revenge on one whilst they pray.

HAMLET. That's what I said!

I'm thinking when he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,

At game, a-swearing, or about some act

That has no relish of salvation in't, Then trip him. *(Act III Scene iii)*

JOAN of ARC. I see where you are going with this but...

HAMLET. But what?

JOAN of ARC. Would you mind terribly if I gave you some pointers?

HAMLET. Shoot.

JOAN of ARC. When you see him next, challenge him on the spot.

HAMLET. On the spot?

JOAN of ARC. *(As though she is rallying her troops:)* No matter who be near or what his task. You are in the right, no? This is your father's wrongful death, The King, that you seek revenge for?!

HAMLET. Well...yeah.

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!

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