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Scene-Speare!: Shakespearean Scenes for
Student Actors**

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SCENE-SPEARE!:

SHAKESPEAREAN SCENES FOR STUDENT ACTORS

EDITED BY
Lindsay Price



Scene-Speare!:

Shakespearean Scenes for Student Actors

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Editor's Notes

This collection gives you all the tools you need to put together the best Shakespearean scene. Not only are the scenes emotionally and physically challenging, I've provided all the help you'll need with acting suggestions, background info and vocabulary.

General Shakespeare Performance Tips:

Understand what you're saying

Research every word you don't understand. Many words that seem familiar had different meanings in Shakespeare's day. The more you know, the more you can convey. This is especially important when you have to communicate with another actor!

Look at the context

Understand the way a word is used in the context of the scene. You may notice that some words in this collection are given different definitions based on the context of the dialogue.

Read the play

This will give you a richer comprehension of your character and his or her emotional state. At the very least, read the moments leading up to the scene.

Read the full scene

Many of these scenes have been edited for length.

Have fun!

Try different interpretations of the words and images. Shakespeare didn't give you many stage directions, and neither have I. I want you and your scene partner(s) to be creative when it comes to blocking the scene. I have asked a lot of questions in terms of the physical action and the characters. Answer as many of these questions as you can; it'll help you move away from static, boring, blocking!

Shakespeare is never easy, but with this collection you've got a great head start.

Break a leg!



scenes for

Two Women



THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA ACT I SCENE 2

Background:	<p>This is the first time we meet both characters. The scene takes place in a garden outside Julia's house. Julia wants to know Lucetta's opinion on falling in love and with which man she should fall in love. Lucetta reacts strongly to the mention of Proteus, one of the "Gentlemen of Verona." Proteus, incidentally, declares his love for Julia in Act I scene one.</p>
Character:	<p>Julia is a refined upper-class woman. Lucetta is Julia's maid. It's clear Julia trusts Lucetta, as Julia asks for her honest opinion in this scene. They have a close relationship. However, when Lucetta brings out Proteus' letter there is a definite change in Julia. She turns into "the boss" rather quickly.</p> <p>Julia is a smart girl who fears appearing foolish. She perceives that those in love act pretty foolishly. This is ironic considering how Julia behaves later in the scene.</p> <p>Even though Lucetta is not of the same class as Julia, this scene shows she thinks she's pretty clever. Why does Lucetta wait to reveal the letter?</p> <p>Consider the background of these two characters. How long have they known each other? How long has Lucetta worked for Julia? What is their age difference? Are they the same age?</p>
Tips:	<p>The most important thing to keep in mind is that Lucetta has Proteus' letter with her during the entire conversation. Does Lucetta know Julia is in love with Proteus, even though she pretends not to be? How will this information affect the way Lucetta acts in the scene? Lucetta says she has "shallow simple skill." Does she really believe this?</p> <p>For Julia this is a scene about pretence. She pretends to be above love, and has no interest in Proteus. This is her conscious objective for the scene. But if you continue reading, you'll see that Julia is hiding her true feelings. How can you show Julia is trying overly-hard to be casual?</p> <p>Is Julia surprised to hear Lucetta talk so emotionally about Proteus? Does Lucetta really feel this way or is she putting on an act because she's aware of her mistress' mind?</p> <p>This scene has both rhyming and non-rhyming couplets. Be careful not to get caught up in the rhythm of the couplets.</p> <p>After Julia sends Lucetta away with the letter, allow Julia a physical moment before she speaks. Perhaps she stamps her feet in anger and then starts thinking about how she really wants to read the letter. Or, show a hint of Julia's true feelings for Proteus.</p> <p>How does Julia's tone change once she asks Lucetta to return? How does Lucetta's attitude change? Is she truly irritated, or is she hiding a smile because she knows what Julia is going to ask?</p> <p>Decide how you will physically end the scene. Will Lucetta slyly offer Julia the letter, which Julia snatches hastily?</p> <p>Julia's speech following Lucetta's exit has been edited. Read the whole speech.</p>

JULIA AND LUCETTA

JULIA and LUCETTA stroll in.

JULIA: But say, Lucetta, now we are alone,
Wouldst thou then counsel me to fall in love?

LUCETTA: Ay, madam, so you stumble not **unheedfully**.

JULIA: Of all the fair resort of gentlemen
That every day with **parle** encounter me,
In thy opinion which is worthiest love?

LUCETTA: Please you repeat their names; I'll show my mind
According to my shallow simple skill.

JULIA: What think'st thou of the fair Sir Eglamour?

LUCETTA: As of a knight well-spoken, neat and fine;
But, were I you, he never should be mine.

JULIA: What think'st thou of the rich Mercatio?

LUCETTA: Well of his wealth; but of himself, so so.

JULIA: What think'st thou of the gentle Proteus?

LUCETTA: Lord, Lord! To see what folly reigns in us!

JULIA: How now? What means this passion at his name?

LUCETTA: Pardon, dear madam, 'tis a passing shame
That I, unworthy body as I am,
Should **censure** thus on lovely gentlemen.

JULIA: Why not on Proteus, as of all the rest?

LUCETTA: Then thus: of many good I think him best.

JULIA: Your reason?

LUCETTA: I have no other, but a woman's reason:
I think him so because I think him so.

JULIA: And **wouldst thou** have me cast my love on him?

LUCETTA: Ay, if you thought your love not cast away.

JULIA: Why he, of all the rest, hath never moved me.

VOCABULARY

unheedfully	carelessly	censure	harshly criticize
parle	talk	wouldst thou	would you

JULIA AND LUCETTA

LUCETTA: Yet he, of all the rest, I think, best loves ye.

JULIA: His little speaking shows his love but small.

LUCETTA: Fire that's closest kept burns most of all.

JULIA: They do not love that do not show their love.

LUCETTA: O, they love least that let men know their love.

JULIA: I would I knew his mind.

LUCETTA pulls out a letter and gives it to JULIA.

LUCETTA: **Peruse** this paper, madam.

JULIA: 'To Julia.' Say, from whom?

LUCETTA: That the contents will show.

JULIA: Say, say, who gave it thee?

LUCETTA: Sir Valentine's page; and sent, I think, from Proteus.
He would have given it you; but I, being in the way,
Did in your name receive it: pardon the fault I pray.

JULIA: Now, by my modesty, a goodly **broker**!
Dare you presume to harbour wanton lines?
To whisper and conspire against my youth?
Now, trust me, 'tis an office of great worth
And you an officer fit for the place.
Or else return no more into my sight.

JULIA thrusts the letter back at LUCETTA.

LUCETTA: To plead for love deserves more **fee** than hate.

JULIA: Will ye be gone?

LUCETTA: That you may **ruminate**.

LUCETTA exits. JULIA paces for a moment in her anger, which quickly fades. She looks offstage after LUCETTA.

VOCABULARY

peruse	look at	fee	reward
broker	go-between; middleman	ruminate	think about; ponder

JULIA AND LUCETTA

JULIA: And yet I would I had **o'erlooked** the letter:
 It were a shame to call her back again
 And pray her to a fault for which I **chid** her.
 What a fool is she, that knows I am a maid,
 And would not force the letter to my view!
 What ho! Lucetta!

LUCETTA slowly enters.

LUCETTA: What would your ladyship?

JULIA: Is't near dinner-time?

LUCETTA: I would it were,
 That you might kill your stomach on your meat
 And not upon your maid.

— END —

VOCABULARY

o'erlooked	looked at; read	chid	scold (chide)
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TWELFTH NIGHT ACT I SCENE 5

Background:	<p>The scene takes place at Olivia's house. This is the first time we meet Olivia. She is mourning over the death of her brother and plans to continue mourning for quite some time. She wants nothing to do with the love that's being offered to her by a gentleman named Count Orsino.</p> <p>Earlier, Olivia learns that a "young fellow" is at the door wishing to speak to her, and will not take "no" for an answer. Olivia's steward, Malvolio, reports that the youth will "stand at your door like a sheriff's post, and be the supporter to a bench, but he'll speak with you."</p> <p>The youth is Viola, a young woman who has arrived in Illyria as the result of a shipwreck. For safety, she has disguised herself as a Cesario, a boy, and is working for Count Orsino. Viola/Cesario has come to speak to Olivia on behalf of Orsino. Olivia does not fall in love with the count, but ends up falling for Viola/Cesario.</p> <p>In the moment before, Olivia and her maid, Maria, wear veils in an attempt to trick Viola/Cesario. Viola/Cesario wiggles the truth out of Olivia, earning a private meeting.</p>
Character:	<p>Olivia is wealthy and of high class. She's used to getting her way. Viola/Cesario defies this; is this what Olivia falls for? Viola is also a high class woman, pretending to be a servant.</p> <p>Olivia chooses a very public, "woe is me" form of mourning. She plans to mourn her brother for seven years. How sincere is her mourning if she can fall for Viola/Cesario and put her mourning aside so quickly?</p> <p>Viola expresses her grief more privately. She's a practical character. She knows when she lands in Illyria that it is neither the time nor the place for a breakdown.</p> <p>In this scene we learn how witty Viola is! She has to be quick on her feet to earn the private meeting with Olivia, and to deliver the message she's been sent to deliver.</p> <p>Olivia is likewise witty. When she talks of Viola/Cesario's "text," the "chapter of [Orsino's] bosom" and "heresy," she is metaphorically referring to the Bible.</p>
Tips:	<p>This conversation takes place in the middle of a scene. Read what comes before to understand the build-up to Olivia's first line.</p> <p>Remember that Viola is a girl pretending to be a boy. How does this affect the way you will physically play her?</p> <p>During this scene Olivia begins to fall in love with Viola/Cesario. How can you show Olivia's growing emotional connection to Viola/Cesario?</p> <p>Viola is quite direct in this scene, almost to the point of being rude. When she sees Olivia's face, she comments that it's pretty if it's natural: "If God did all." She also calls Olivia "too proud" and addresses her as "fair cruelty." Is Olivia used to hearing this type of talk? Is she shocked and surprised by the way Viola/Cesario talks to her?</p> <p>Olivia wants Viola/Cesario to leave. Viola/Cesario wants to stay. Play with these clashing objectives.</p>

OLIVIA AND VIOLA

OLIVIA stands, veiled, in front of VIOLA.

OLIVIA: Now, sir, what is your text?

VIOLA goes into a deep bow.

VIOLA: Most sweet lady...

OLIVIA: A comfortable **doctrine**, and much may be said of it.
Where lies your text?

VIOLA: In Orsino's **bosom**.

OLIVIA: In his bosom! In what chapter of his bosom?

VIOLA: To answer by the method, in the first of his heart.

OLIVIA: O, I have read it: it is **heresy**. Have you no more to say?

VIOLA: Good madam, let me see your face.

OLIVIA: Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face? You are now out of your text: but we will draw the curtain and show you the picture. Look you, sir, such a one I was this present: is't not well done?

OLIVIA takes off the veil.

VIOLA: Excellently done, if God did all.

OLIVIA: '**Tis in grain**, sir; 'twill endure wind and weather.

VIOLA: 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white
Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on.
Lady, you are the cruell'st she alive,
If you will lead these graces to the grave
And leave the world no copy.

OLIVIA: O, sir, I will not be so hard-hearted; I will give out divers **schedules** of my beauty: it shall be inventoried, and every particle and utensil labelled to my will as: item, two lips,

VOCABULARY

doctrine	something taught; method of instruction	'Tis in grain	ingrained; deeply rooted
bosom	chest; heart	schedules	a list
heresy	an opinion that goes against the church		

OLIVIA AND VIOLA

indifferent red; item, two grey eyes, with lids to them; item, one neck, one chin, and so forth. Were you sent hither to praise me?

VIOLA: I see you what you are, you are too proud;
But, if you were the devil, you are fair.
My lord and master loves you: O, such love
Could be but recompensed, though you were crown'd
The **nonpareil** of beauty!

OLIVIA: How does he love me?

VIOLA: With adorations, fertile tears,
With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

OLIVIA: Your lord does know my mind; I cannot love him:
Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble,
Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth;
In voices well divulged, free, learn'd and valiant;
And in dimension and the shape of nature
A gracious person. But yet I cannot love him.
He might have took his answer long ago.

VIOLA: If I did love you in my master's flame,
With such a suffering, such a deadly life,
In your denial I would find no sense;
I would not understand it.

OLIVIA: Why, what would you?

VIOLA: Make me a **willow cabin** at your gate,
And call upon my soul within the house;
Write loyal **cantons** of contemned love
And sing them loud even in the dead of night;
Hallow your name to the reverberate hills
And make the babbling gossip of the air
Cry out 'Olivia!' Oh, you should not rest
Between the elements of air and earth,
But you should pity me!

VOCABULARY

nonpareil	something that has no equal	cantons	poems or songs
willow cabin	the willow is a symbol of unrequited love	hallow	shout

OLIVIA AND VIOLA

OLIVIA: Get you to your lord;
 I cannot love him: let him send no more;
 Unless, perchance, you come to me again,
 To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well.

*She takes a coin out of her purse and offers it to
 VIOLA.*

I thank you for your pains: spend this for me.

VIOLA: I am no **fee'd post**, lady; keep your purse:
 My master, not myself, lacks **recompense**.
 Love make his heart of flint that you shall love,
 And let your fervor, like my master's, be
 Placed in contempt! Farewell, fair cruelty.

VIOLA sweeps out, leaving OLIVIA dumbfounded.

— END —

VOCABULARY

fee'd post	paid messenger	recompense	payment
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scenes for

Two Men



THE COMEDY OF ERRORS ACT I SCENE 2

Background:	<p>Two sets of twins (a pair of masters and a pair of servants) are separated at birth. One master/servant pair ends up in Syracuse and the other ends up in Ephesus. Many years later the Syracuse pair goes searching for their long-lost brothers. They end up in Ephesus, not knowing their twins live there.</p> <p>Both masters are named Antipholus, and both servants are named Dromio, which causes a great deal of confusion. The Syracuse pair are confused for the Ephesus pair and vice versa.</p> <p>In this scene Antipholus of Syracuse mistakes the Ephesus Dromio for the Syracuse Dromio. The confusion causes each character thinks the other is crazy. Dromio tries to get his master to return home (where Antipholus of Ephesus' wife waits), which Antipholus knows nothing about. Antipholus tries to get his gold (which he sent with Dromio of Syracuse for safekeeping), which Dromio knows nothing about.</p>
Character:	<p>Antipholus is upper class while Dromio is lower class. Antipholus doesn't have a close relationship with his servant; he clearly sees himself as superior and has no problem with putting Dromio in his place. What does Dromio think of his boss?</p> <p>Antipholus of Syracuse becomes convinced that witchcraft is the cause for all the confusion, something for which the town of Ephesus has a reputation. What does this say about Antipholus' character that he assumes trickery is involved, and never suspects it might be his twin?</p>
Tips:	<p>This scene represents the first confusion between the two pairs. Antipholus of Syracuse meets Dromio of Ephesus, not Dromio of Syracuse, as he assumes. A complete misunderstanding ensues. Both characters have different agendas and stories that clash head-on.</p> <p>The key to finding comedy in this scene is to have the characters aggressively pursue their agendas. Both characters must truly believe they know who the other is. There should be no winks to the audience about the silly miscommunication the characters find themselves in. It is only at the very end of the play that the characters begin to suspect the person they see in front of them could be someone else.</p> <p>In the story, the towns of Syracuse and Ephesus were sworn enemies. It was dangerous for anyone from Syracuse to be in Ephesus and indeed the play starts out with a merchant from Syracuse being condemned to death. How does this information affect the scene?</p>

ANTIPHOLUS AND DROMIO

DROMIO enters. He sees ANTIPHOLUS and runs towards him.

ANTIPHOLUS: What now? How chance thou art return'd so soon?

DROMIO: Return'd so soon! Rather approach'd too late:

The **capon** burns, the pig falls from the spit,
The clock hath stricken twelve upon the bell;
My mistress made it **one upon my cheek**:
She is so hot because the meat is cold;
The meat is cold because you come not home;
You come not home because you have no stomach;
You have no stomach having broke your fast;
But we that know what 'tis to fast and pray
Are **penitent** for your default to-day.

ANTIPHOLUS: Stop in your **wind**, sir: tell me this, I pray:
Where have you left the money that I gave you?

DROMIO: O, sixpence, that I had o' Wednesday last
To pay the saddler for my mistress' **crupper**?
The saddler had it, sir; I kept it not.

ANTIPHOLUS: I am not in a sportive humour now:
Tell me, and **dally** not, where is the money?
We being strangers here, how dardest thou trust
So great a charge from thine own custody?

DROMIO: I pray you jest, sir, as you sit at dinner:
I from my mistress come to you in **post**;
If I return, I shall be post indeed,
For she will score your fault upon my **pate**.

VOCABULARY

capon	fattened rooster	crupper	leather strap on a saddle
one upon my cheek	Antipholus' wife struck him	dally	delay
penitent	sorrowful	post	The first refers to traveling in haste. The second refers to an actual post in which marks are made. See the next line about "scores on the pate."
wind	talking	pate	head

ANTIPHOLUS AND DROMIO

Methinks your **maw**, like mine, should be your clock,
And strike you home without a messenger.

ANTIPHOLUS: Come, Dromio, come, these jests are out of season;
Reserve them till a merrier hour than this.
Where is the gold I gave in charge to thee?

DROMIO: To me, sir? Why, you gave no gold to me.

ANTIPHOLUS: Come on, sir knave, have done your foolishness,
And tell me how thou hast disposed thy charge.

DROMIO: My charge was but to fetch you from the mart
Home to your house, the Phoenix, sir, to dinner:
My mistress and her sister stays for you.

ANTIPHOLUS: Now as I am a Christian answer me.
In what safe place you have bestow'd my money,
Or I shall break that merry **sconce** of yours
That stands on tricks when I am undisposed:
Where is the **thousand marks** thou hadst of me?

DROMIO: I have some marks of yours upon my pate,
Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders,
But not a thousand marks between you both.
If I should pay your worship those again,
Perchance you will not bear them patiently.

ANTIPHOLUS: Thy mistress' marks? What mistress, slave, hast thou?

DROMIO: Your worship's wife, my mistress at the Phoenix;
She that doth fast till you come home to dinner,
And prays that you will **hie** you home to dinner.

ANTIPHOLUS: What, wilt thou **flout** me thus unto my face,
Being forbid? There, take you that, sir knave.

He raises a hand to hit DROMIO.

DROMIO: What mean you, sir? For God's sake, hold your hands!
Nay, and you will not, sir, I'll take my heels.

VOCABULARY

maw	stomach	perchance	maybe
sconce	head	hie	hurry
thousand marks	large sum of money	flout	insult

ANTIPHOLUS AND DROMIO

DROMIO exits on the run.

ANTIPHOLUS: Upon my life, by some device or other
 The villain **is o'er-raught** of all my money.
 They say this town is full of **cozenage**,
 As, nimble jugglers that deceive the eye,
 Dark-working sorcerers that change the mind,
 Soul-killing witches that deform the body,
 Disguised cheaters, **prating mountebanks**,
 And many such-like liberties of sin:
 If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.
 I'll to the **Centaur**, to go seek this slave:
 I greatly fear my money is not safe.

— END —

VOCABULARY

is o'er-raught	outwitted me	prating mountebanks	babbling quack doctors
cozenage	scam artists	Centaur	an inn

KING JOHN ACT 4 SCENE 1

Background:	<p>King John is a weak king. Arthur, son of Richard the Lionhearted, is the rightful heir to the throne. He is just a boy. Hubert, King John's right-hand man, has been sent by King John to burn out Arthur's eyes, in effect, killing him.</p> <p>By the end of the scene Arthur convinces Hubert to save him. Hubert will lie to the king, claiming Arthur has died.</p>
Character:	<p>We first meet Arthur in Act I scene two. He comes across as a mellow and calming force. An interesting tidbit about Arthur is that he has a "stage mom." Constance spends the play viciously fighting to get Arthur on the throne. Historically speaking, Arthur was very popular.</p> <p>King John is the evil King John of the Robin Hood stories. He decides that Arthur is a serpent (Act III scene three) and must be killed. Arthur has an air of innocence about him. Do you think it's genuine? Based on this scene, do you think Arthur is a serpent?</p> <p>Arthur and Hubert first meet in Act III scene two. This is where King John imprisons Arthur.</p> <p>Hubert is caught between a rock and a hard place. Being the king's right-hand man, he must do whatever the king says. Read more about the relationship between Hubert and the king in Act III scene three. Keep this relationship in mind when Hubert decides to save Arthur and lie to the king.</p> <p>Arthur tells Hubert that he loves him. In the full version of Act IV scene one he goes so far to say he wishes Hubert was his father. In Act III scene three the king does the same thing. Are these men just using Hubert so that he will do what they want? What does that say about Hubert's personality?</p>
Tips:	<p>This scene has been edited. Read the full scene.</p> <p>This is a life and death moment between an executioner and his victim. That is the most important thing to keep in mind during the scene: the stakes are high. Arthur could die at any moment and he knows it.</p> <p>There are two distinct acting styles in this scene. Hubert says very little but must physically convey the inner torment he's feeling over hurting Arthur. Because an audience cannot see what Hubert is thinking, he must wear his heart on his sleeve. What actions can you think of to achieve this?</p> <p>What does Hubert do when he realizes he cannot kill Arthur?</p> <p>Arthur babbles constantly throughout the scene. His objective is to avoid having his eyes burned out. Notice how he uses a soft touch as he appeals to Hubert. How does Arthur move? Does he have an agitated physical state to match his text?</p>

ARTHUR AND HUBERT

ARTHUR is sitting. HUBERT enters slowly.

ARTHUR: **Good morrow**, Hubert.

HUBERT: Good morrow, little prince.

ARTHUR: As little prince, having so great a title
To be more prince, as may be. You are sad.

HUBERT: Indeed, I have been merrier.

ARTHUR: Are you sick, Hubert? You look pale today:
In **sooth**, I would you were a little sick,
That I might sit all night and watch with you:
I **warrant** I love you more than you do me.

HUBERT: Read here, young Arthur.

He shows a paper to ARTHUR.

HUBERT: (*aside*) How now, foolish **rheum**!
Turning **dispiteous** torture out of door!
I must be brief, lest resolution drop
Out at mine eyes in tender womanish tears.
Can you not read it? Is it not fair **writ**?

ARTHUR: Too fairly, Hubert, for so foul effect:
Must you with hot irons burn out both mine eyes?

HUBERT: Young boy, I must.

ARTHUR: And will you?

HUBERT: And I will.

ARTHUR: Have you the heart? Will you put out mine eyes?
These eyes that never did nor never shall
So much as frown on you.

HUBERT: I have sworn to do it;
Come forth.

HUBERT grabs ARTHUR.

VOCABULARY

good morrow	good morning	rheum	tears
sooth	truth	dispiteous	without pity
warrant	guarantee	writ	written

ARTHUR AND HUBERT

ARTHUR: Alas, what need you be so boisterous-rough?
 I will not struggle, I will stand stone-still.
 For heaven sake, Hubert, let me not be bound!
 And I will sit as quiet as a lamb;
 I will not stir, nor wince, nor speak a word,
 Whatever torment you do put me to.

HUBERT: Come, boy, prepare yourself.

ARTHUR: Is there no remedy?

HUBERT: None, but to lose your eyes.

ARTHUR: O heaven, that there were but a **mote** in yours,
 A grain, a dust, a gnat, a wandering hair,
 Any annoyance in that precious sense!
 Then feeling what small things are boisterous there,
 Your vile intent must needs seem horrible.

HUBERT: Is this your promise? Go to, hold your tongue.

ARTHUR: Hubert, the utterance of a **brace** of tongues
 Must needs want pleading for a pair of eyes:
 Let me not hold my tongue, let me not, Hubert;
 Or, Hubert, if you will, cut out my tongue,
 So I may keep mine eyes. O, spare mine eyes,
 Though to no use but still to look on you!
 Lo, by my truth, the instrument is cold
 And would not harm me.

HUBERT: I can heat it, boy.

ARTHUR: No, in good sooth: the fire is dead with grief,
 Being create for comfort, to be used
 In undeserved extremes: see else yourself;
 There is no malice in this burning coal;
 The breath of heaven has blown his spirit out
 And strew'd repentent ashes on his head.

HUBERT: But with my breath I can revive it.

ARTHUR: An if you do, you will but make it blush
 And glow with shame of your proceedings, Hubert:

VOCABULARY

mote particle

brace pair

ARTHUR AND HUBERT

Nay, it **perchance** will sparkle in your eyes;
 And like a dog that is compell'd to fight,
 Snatch at his master that doth **tarre** him on.
 All things that you should use to do me wrong
 Deny their office: only you do lack
 That mercy which fierce fire and iron extends,
 Creatures of note for mercy-lacking uses.

HUBERT: Well, see to live; I will not touch thine eye
 For all the treasure that thine uncle **owes**:
 Yet am I sworn and I did purpose, boy,
 With this same very iron to burn them out.

ARTHUR: O, now you look like Hubert! All this while
 You were disguised.

HUBERT: Silence; no more: go **closely** in with me:
 Much danger do I undergo for thee.

They exit.

— END —

VOCABULARY

perchance	maybe	owes	owns
tarre	urge	closely	secretly



scenes for
One Woman
and
One Man



CYMBELINE ACT 2 SCENE 3

Background:	<p>This play takes place in ancient Britain where Cymbeline is king. Imogen is Cymbeline's daughter. She has married Posthumus in secret. When Cymbeline finds out, he banishes Posthumus. This is because Cymbeline's second wife has been pushing the king to have Imogen marry her son, Cloten.</p> <p>Once Posthumus is out of the way, Cloten steps in to try and woo Imogen. The problem is he's not very good at it. Imogen knows full well Cloten is only attracted to her money.</p> <p>In the moment before, Cloten awakes Imogen in the middle of the night by having a band of musicians play music. She is polite at first, but eventually runs out of patience, and is unable to control her loathing for Cloten.</p>
Character:	<p>Read Act I scene two to see Cloten's first appearance. Cloten is a spoiled child. Notice at the end of this conversation how he says he's going to "tell" on Imogen. He is used to getting what he wants. He is flabbergasted Imogen doesn't want him and doesn't understand why Imogen would choose Posthumus over him.</p> <p>Cloten has no concept of romance. He is going through the motions and thinks that will be enough to win Imogen. It doesn't occur to him Imogen might be mourning Posthumus' banishment. Furthermore, Cloten goes out of his way to insult Posthumus. He is not a sensitive guy.</p> <p>Additionally, Cloten pursues Imogen because his mother has told him to do so. What does this say about his character? Imogen describes Cloten as someone "whose love-suit hath been to me as fearful as a siege." She also calls him a foolish suitor in Act I scene six.</p> <p>Imogen is a strong high class lady. Her love for Posthumus never wavers.</p>
Tips:	<p>Clarify Imogen's frame of mind in this scene. She does not like Cloten and is still in love with Posthumus. She is a smart girl though and understands (at least at the beginning of the scene) the danger of angering her stepbrother, and in turn her stepmother.</p> <p>Look at the difference in the language used by Cloten and Imogen. How does language define a character?</p> <p>Avoid screaming too much in the scene. Allow Imogen's anger to build throughout. The longer she keeps her temper in check, the stronger the impact when she explodes. Think of a time when you've had to speak civilly to a person you didn't like. It's not an easy thing to do.</p> <p>Another approach would be to have Imogen constantly lose her temper, then wrestle it back under control, only to lose it again; thus creating a roller coaster effect.</p> <p>In terms of romance, compare a scene between Posthumus and Imogen (Act I scene one) and this one between Cloten and Imogen.</p> <p>At the top of the scene Cloten takes Imogen's hand and kisses it. Since it's clear he is not a great romantic, how will you show his clumsiness in this action? How can you say a line like "Still I swear I love you" and show his lack of romance?</p>

CLOTEN AND IMOGEN

CLOTEN enters. IMOGEN stands, trying to conceal her irritation.

CLOTEN: Good morrow, fairest: sister, your sweet hand.

CLOTEN grabs her hand and kisses it.

IMOGEN: Good morrow, sir. You lay out too much pains
For purchasing but trouble. The thanks I give
Is telling you that I am poor of thanks
And scarce can spare them.

CLOTEN: Still, I swear I love you.

IMOGEN: If you but said so, 'twere as deep with me:
If you swear still, your **recompense** is still
That I regard it not.

CLOTEN: This is no answer.

IMOGEN: But that you shall not say I yield being silent,
I would not speak. I pray you, spare me: 'faith,
I shall unfold equal discourtesy
To your best kindness: one of your great knowing
Should learn, being taught, **forbearance**.

CLOTEN: To leave you in your madness, 'twere my sin:
I will not.

IMOGEN: Fools are not mad folks.

CLOTEN: Do you call me fool?

IMOGEN: As I am mad, I do:
If you'll be patient, I'll no more be mad;
That cures us both. I am much sorry, sir,
You put me to forget a lady's manners,
By being so verbal: and learn now, for all,
That I, which know my heart, do here pronounce,
By the very truth of it, I care not for you,
And am so near the lack of charity
To accuse myself I hate you; which I had rather
You felt than make't my boast.

VOCABULARY

recompense

satisfaction, reward or punishment

forbearance

patience

CLOTEN AND IMOGEN

CLOTEN: You sin against

Obedience, which you owe your father. For
 The contract you pretend with that **base wretch**,
 One bred of alms and foster'd with cold dishes,
 With scraps o' the court, it is no contract, none:
 And though it be allow'd in meaner parties
 Yet who than he more mean? To knit their souls,
 On whom there is no more dependency
 But brats and beggary, in **self-figured knot**;
 Yet you are curb'd from that enlargement by
 The consequence o' the crown, and must not **foil**
 The precious note of it with a **base** slave,
 A **hilding for a livery**, a squire's cloth,
 A **pantler**, not so eminent.

IMOGEN: Profane fellow!

Wert thou the son of Jupiter and no more
 But what thou art besides, thou wert too base
 To be his groom. Thou wert dignified enough,
 Even to the point of envy, if 'twere made
 Comparative for your virtues, to be styled
 The under-hangman of his kingdom, and hated
 For being preferred so well.

CLOTEN: The **south-fog** rot him!

IMOGEN: He never can meet more mischance than come

To be but named of thee. His **meanest** garment,
 That ever hath but **clipp'd** his body, is dearer
 In my respect than all the hairs above thee,
 Were they all made such men.

CLOTEN: You have abused me:

'His meanest garment!'

VOCABULARY

base wretch	referring to Posthumus	pantler	servant
self-figured knot	knot tied by yourself	south-fog	a symbolically unpleasant fog
foil	spoil	meanest	shabbiest
base	low born (Posthumus)	clipp'd	hit
hiding...livery	a man only fit to wear servant's clothes (Posthumus)		

CLOTEN AND IMOGEN

IMOGEN: Ay, I said so, sir:
If you will make't an action, call witness to't.

CLOTEN: I will inform your father.

IMOGEN: Your mother too:
She's my good lady, and will conceive, I hope,
But the worst of me. So, I leave you, sir,
To the worst of discontent.

She storms off.

CLOTEN: I'll be revenged:
'His meanest garment!' Well.
He exits in the other direction.

— END —

ROMEO AND JULIET ACT 2 SCENE 4

Background:	<p>Romeo and Juliet (the son and daughter of enemies) have met, fallen in love, and decided to marry. Juliet has sent her Nurse to meet Romeo and devise a secret plan to make the wedding happen.</p> <p>In the moment before, Romeo and his friends Mercutio and Benvolio tease and make fun of the Nurse, which flusters her.</p>
Character:	<p>Is the Nurse's bluster in this scene genuine or an act? If you read her first appearance in Act I scene three you'll see that she is a pretty lowbrow character herself. Is she only trying to be a lady here? Is she truly offended or does she secretly like the attention?</p> <p>The Nurse doesn't have the greatest of attention spans or smarts. When Romeo tells the nurse to "commend me to thy lady" or send his regards, she's ready to leave the scene without getting the details of the wedding.</p> <p>This scene shows how protective the Nurse is of Juliet. Also note that the Nurse is inconsistent. Here she says that Paris is a terrible match where in Act I scene three she says the opposite.</p> <p>This scene shows Romeo at his happiest. Before the Nurse enters, he is witty and playful with his friends. In this moment he seems logical and calm. It's probably the closest to his true self. Contrast this with the melancholy side he presents in Act I scene one, and the helpless romantic in Act II scene two.</p>
Tips:	<p>A light fast-paced scene. The stakes are high for Romeo because he's planning a secret wedding. Even though the Nurse seems flustered, she is playing games with Romeo. Notice she tells Romeo she and Juliet talked, but won't relay what Juliet said. What is Romeo's physical response to this? What does this moment tell you about the Nurse's feelings on the marriage?</p> <p>At the beginning of the scene the Nurse is speaking of Mercutio, who has just left. She should start the scene in a fit of energy. Does Romeo try to calm her down, or does he stay out of the way?</p> <p>Romeo gives Nurse a coin for her troubles. At first she protests, but what does she do after Romeo insists? Shakespeare doesn't provide a stage direction indicating her action. Does she continue to refuse or does she snatch the coin?</p> <p>After everything is set for the wedding, the Nurse goes on a bizarre tangent about Paris and how "Romeo" and "rosemary" begin with the same letter. Why does she do this? What is Romeo's reaction? There is great comic potential here.</p> <p>What if Romeo continually tries to interrupt her or tries to get away as she blathers on unaware? Is Romeo amused by her? Bewildered? Notice at the end Romeo doesn't address her bizarre musings. Play with this moment.</p>

ROMEO AND NURSE

The NURSE stalks on with ROMEO following behind.

NURSE: I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his **ropery**?

ROMEO: A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

NURSE: **An a' speak** any thing against me, I'll take him down, an a' were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his **flirt-gills**; I am none of his **skains-mates**. Now, afore God, I am so vexed, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave! Pray you, sir, a word: and as I told you, my young lady bid me inquire you out; what she bid me say, I will keep to myself. But first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behavior, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

ROMEO: Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee -

NURSE: Good heart, and, i' faith, I will tell her as much. Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

ROMEO: What wilt thou tell her, nurse? Thou dost not **mark me**.

NURSE: I will tell her, sir that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

ROMEO: Bid her devise
Some means to come to **shrift** this afternoon;
And there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell
Be shrived and married.

VOCABULARY

ropery	foolishness	skains-mates	an insult
an a' speak	and if he speaks	mark me	listen to me
flirt-gills	prostitute	shrift	confession (Catholic)

ROMEO AND NURSE

He gives her a coin.

Here is for thy pains.

NURSE: No truly sir; not a penny.

ROMEO: **Go to**; I say you shall.

NURSE: This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall be there.

ROMEO: And stay, good nurse, behind the abbey wall:
 Within this hour my man shall be with thee
 And bring thee **cards** made like a tackled stair;
 Which to the high top-gallant of my joy
 Must be my convoy in the secret night.
 Farewell; be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains:
 Farewell; commend me to thy mistress.

NURSE: Now God in heaven bless thee! Hark you, sir.

ROMEO: What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

NURSE: Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say,
 Two may keep counsel, putting one away?

ROMEO: I warrant thee, my man's as true as steel.

NURSE: Well, sir; my mistress is the sweetest lady - Lord, Lord!
 When 'twas a little **prating** thing: O, there is a nobleman
 in town, one Paris, that would fain **lay knife aboard**; but
 she, good soul, had as **lief** see a toad, a very toad, as
 see him. I anger her sometimes and tell her that Paris is
 the properer man; but, I'll warrant you, when I say so,
 she looks as pale as any **clout** in the **versal** world. **Doth**
 not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

ROMEO: Ay, nurse, what of that? Both with an R.

VOCABULARY

go to	nonsense	lief	gladly
cards	rope (to make a ladder)	clout	cloth
prating	foolish	versal	whole (universal)
lay knife aboard	Paris also wishes to marry Juliet	doth	does

ROMEO AND NURSE

NURSE: Ah, mocker! That's the dog's name; R is for the - No; I know it begins with some other letter - and she hath the prettiest **sententious** of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

ROMEO: **Commend** me to thy lady.

NURSE: Ay, a thousand times.

— END —

VOCABULARY

sententious	sayings	commend	recommend
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scenes for
Groups

TWELFTH NIGHT ACT 3 SCENE 4

Background:	<p>Malvolio works for Olivia. He is the steward (or manager) of her household. He enjoys bossing the other servants around.</p> <p>Earlier in the play Malvolio chastises Maria, a maid, in front of her friends. This is the final straw for Maria. She devises a plan to humiliate Malvolio. She writes a letter from Olivia, indicating Olivia's supposed love for someone who fits Malvolio's description.</p> <p>The letter gives a number of instructions for this "someone" to follow in order to gain Olivia's love. The instructions ask the "someone" to wear yellow stockings, to wear garters crossed at the knee, to be surly with the servants, and to always smile, no matter what.</p>
Character:	<p>Olivia is a wealthy noble woman. She is mourning the death of her brother and seems to enjoy being miserable. She has never seen Malvolio act the way he does in this scene.</p> <p>Malvolio is normally straight-laced and dour. He thinks himself above everyone else. Read Act I scene five for an example of Malvolio's typical behaviour. Everything Malvolio does in this scene is against his nature. He acts so out-of-character Olivia assumes he is mad.</p> <p>Maria also works for Olivia. She is clever enough to deduce that Malvolio is secretly in love with Olivia, which is why her scheme is a success. Maria is also a bit vengeful. She enjoys witnessing Malvolio's misfortune and doesn't regret her actions. (Act II scene three)</p>
Tips:	<p>Remember that Maria knows exactly what's wrong with Malvolio. Does she have to restrain herself from laughing? She should have a hard time keeping a straight face. How can you show the audience that Maria is in on the joke, while Olivia is not? Because she doesn't have a lot of lines, Maria must convey her feelings through her actions.</p> <p>The lines Malvolio says in quotes are lines from Maria's falsified letter. What if Maria mouthed the words of the letter along with Malvolio?</p> <p>Read Act II scene three to see Maria hatch the plan to humiliate Malvolio. Then read Act II scene five to see the letter Malvolio "finds."</p> <p>Focus on how Malvolio behaves out-of-character emotionally, verbally and physically. He says the cross-gartering is cutting off his circulation. His awkward movements must terrify Olivia to the point where she thinks he's mad.</p> <p>At the end of the scene, Olivia says she would not have Malvolio come to harm "for the half of my dowry." Why only half?</p>

OLIVIA, MARIA, MALVOLIO

OLIVIA and MARIA enter.

OLIVIA: Where is Malvolio? He is sad and civil,
And suits well for a servant with my fortunes:
Where is Malvolio?

MARIA: He's coming, madam, but in very strange manner.
He is sure possessed, madam.

OLIVIA: Why, what's the matter? Does he rave?

MARIA: No, madam, he does nothing but smile. Your
ladyship were best to have some guard about you if
he come, for sure, the man is tainted **in's** wits.

OLIVIA: Go call him **hither**.

MARIA exits.

OLIVIA: I am as mad as he,
If sad and merry madness equal be.

MARIA enters, with MALVOLIO.

OLIVIA: **How now**, Malvolio!

MALVOLIO: Sweet lady, ho, ho.

OLIVIA: Smilest thou?
I sent for thee upon a sad occasion.

MALVOLIO: Sad, lady! I could be sad: **this does make some
obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering**; but
what of that? If it please **the eye of one**, it is with me
as the very true sonnet is, 'Please one, and please
all.'

OLIVIA: Why, **how dost thou**, man? What is the matter with
thee?

VOCABULARY

in's	in his	this...cross-gartering	the garters are cutting off his circulation
hither	here	the eye of one	he means Olivia
how now	greetings	how dost thou	how do you (how are you)

OLIVIA, MARIA, MALVOLIO

MALVOLIO: Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs. It did come to his hands, and commands shall be executed: I think we do know the sweet Roman hand.

OLIVIA: Wilt thou go to bed, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO: To bed! Ay, sweet-heart, and I'll come to thee.

OLIVIA: God comfort thee! Why dost thou smile so and kiss thy hand so **oft**?

MARIA: How do you, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO: **At your request**! Yes, nightingales answer **daws**.

MARIA: Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady?

MALVOLIO: 'Be not afraid of greatness:' 'twas well writ.

OLIVIA: What meanest thou by that, Malvolio?

MALVOLIO: 'Some are born great,'

OLIVIA: Ha!

MALVOLIO: 'Some achieve greatness,'

OLIVIA: What sayest thou?

MALVOLIO: 'And some have greatness thrust upon them.'

OLIVIA: Heaven restore thee!

MALVOLIO: 'Remember who **commended** thy yellow stockings,'

OLIVIA: Thy yellow stockings!

MALVOLIO: 'And wished to see thee cross-gartered.'

OLIVIA: Cross-gartered!

MALVOLIO: 'Go to thou art made, if thou desirest to be so,'

OLIVIA: Am I made?

VOCABULARY

oft	often	daws	crows
at your request	Dare you ask me a question?	commended	recommended

OLIVIA, MARIA, MALVOLIO

MALVOLIO: 'If not, let me see thee a servant still.'

OLIVIA: Why, this is very **midsummer madness**. Good Maria, let this fellow be looked to. Where's my cousin Toby? Let some of my people have a special care of him: I would not have him **miscarry** for the half of my dowry.

They run off, leaving MALVOLIO alone.

— END —

VOCABULARY

midsummer madness	a time associated with insanity
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miscarry	come to harm
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OTHELLO ACT 4 SCENE 2

Background:	<p>Othello and Desdemona have married. Othello's right-hand man, Iago, is determined to drive a wedge between the couple for no other reason than to be evil. Iago lies to Othello that Desdemona has been unfaithful.</p> <p>At this point in the play, Othello seethes with jealousy and the innocent Desdemona is baffled by his behaviour. In the moment before, Othello calls Desdemona a whore and insists she confess to the affair.</p>
Character:	<p>Emilia is a low-brow character who often speaks her mind. She doesn't care that she's speaking out against her boss. Notice Emilia has no trouble saying the word "whore." Desdemona is so innocent, she can't even utter the word. Desdemona has no idea what she could have done to be called such a name. What other differences can you find between Emilia and Desdemona?</p> <p>By this point in the play Desdemona is a broken woman, yet she remains unwavering in her love and trust. She trusts Iago completely in this scene. What does that say about her personality?</p> <p>Read Act I scene three to see a different side of Desdemona.</p> <p>Emilia knows Desdemona is innocent and suspects someone else is involved. But you must decide whether Emilia herself is innocent. Is she a willing partner in Iago's plan? Read Act III scene three where Emilia gives Desdemona's handkerchief to Iago, which in turn is used to "prove" Desdemona's adultery to Othello.</p> <p>Or is Emilia oblivious to Iago's plan? Does she even suspect Iago? She becomes quite passionate in this scene over Desdemona's innocence. Is she passionate because she's "acting" and overdoing it? Or does she truly feel this way?</p> <p>Iago is a good actor in this scene. His true nature is the exact opposite of how he shows himself here. Throughout the play he never explains why he does what he does. He just wants to see people suffer. What does he feel when Desdemona kneels in front of him?</p>
Tips:	<p>Iago has planned Othello's and Desdemona's destruction. While he's being kind to Desdemona, find a moment to show his evil side; he's enjoying her pain. The challenge is to show his goodness to Desdemona and his evilness to the audience. For example, he could smile behind Desdemona's back, while saying sad words.</p> <p>Read the moment before Iago enters to understand Emilia's and Desdemona's emotional state of mind. This conversation should start with a bang.</p> <p>How do Iago and Emilia act around each other? Their actions will be determined by your opinion of Emilia's place in the scheme. Create some background for this couple.</p> <p>Give Iago a moment alone onstage at the end of the scene. Show his true reaction to Desdemona's distress.</p>

IAGO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA

EMILIA comforts a weeping DESDEMONA as IAGO enters.

IAGO: What is your pleasure, madam?
How is't with you?

DESDEMONA: I cannot tell. Those that do teach young babes
Do it with gentle means and easy tasks:
He might have chid me so; for in good faith
I am a child to chiding.

IAGO: What's the matter, lady?

EMILIA: Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhored her.
Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

DESDEMONA: Am I that name, Iago?

IAGO: What name, fair lady?

DESDEMONA: Such as she says my lord did say I was.

EMILIA: He call'd her whore: a beggar in his drink
Could not have laid such terms upon his **callat**.

IAGO: Why did he so?

DESDEMONA: I do not know; I am sure I am none such.

IAGO: Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!

EMILIA: Hath she **forsook** so many noble matches,
Her father and her country and her friends,
To be call'd whore? Would it not make one weep?

DESDEMONA: It is my wretched fortune.

IAGO: **Beshrew** him **for't**!
How comes this trick upon him?

DESDEMONA: Nay, heaven doth know.

VOCABULARY

callat	prostitute	beshrew	curse
forsook	renounced	for't	for it

IAGO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA

EMILIA: I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some **cogging**, **cozening** slave, to get some office,
Have not devised this slander; I'll be hang'd else.

IAGO: Fie, there is no such man; it is impossible.

DESDEMONA: If any such there be, heaven pardon him!

EMILIA: A **halter** pardon him! And hell gnaw his bones!
Why should he call her whore? Who keeps her company?
What place? What time? What form? What likelihood?
The Moor's abused by some most villanous knave,
Some base notorious **knave**, some **scurvy** fellow.
O heaven, that such companions **thou'ldst** unfold,
And put in every honest hand a whip
To lash the rascals naked through the world
Even from the east to the west!

IAGO: **Speak within door.**

EMILIA: O, fie upon them! Some such squire he was
That turn'd your wit the **seamy side without**,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

IAGO: You are a fool; **go to.**

DESDEMONA: O good 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. 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;

VOCABULARY

cogging	cheating	scurvy	vile
cozening	deceitful	thou'ldst	you would
halter	noose	speak within door	be quiet
The Moor	Othello	seamy side without	inside out
knave	dishonest man	go to	get out of here

IAGO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA

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! 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.

IAGO: I pray you, be content; 'tis but his humour:
 The business of the state does him offence,
 And he does chide with you.

DESDEMONA: If **'twere** no other -

IAGO: 'Tis but so, I **warrant**.
 Go in, and weep not; all things shall be well.

— END —

VOCABULARY

forswear	deny	'twere	it were
abhor me	fills me with disgust	warrant	guarantee



help@theatrefolk.com www.theatrefolk.com

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