

# **SHAKESPEARIENCE!**

## *Hamlet*

### **Act II, Scene 2**

#### **Petra**

Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!  
Is it not monstrous that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit  
That from her working all his visage wann'd,  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing— For Hecuba!

#### **Hannah**

What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba  
That he should weep for her? What would he do  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears  
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,  
Make mad the guilty and appall the free,  
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed  
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

#### **Lucian**

Yet I, A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak  
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,  
And can say nothing—no, not for a king,  
Upon whose property and most dear life  
A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?  
Who calls me "villain"? Breaks my pate across?  
Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face?  
Tweaks me by the nose? Gives me the lie i' th' throat  
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this? Ha!

#### **John**

'Swounds, I should take it, for it cannot be  
But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall

To make oppression bitter, or ere this  
I should have fatted all the region kites  
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain!  
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!  
O vengeance!

**Natalie**

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,  
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,  
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,  
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words  
And fall a-cursing like a very drab, A scullion!  
Fie upon 't, foh! About, my brain.

**Charlotte**

I have heard  
That guilty creatures sitting at a play  
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,  
Been struck so to the soul that presently  
They have proclaimed their malefactions.  
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players  
Play something like the murder of my father  
Before mine uncle.

**Anne**

I'll observe his looks.  
I'll tent him to the quick. If he do blench,  
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen  
May be the devil, and the devil hath power  
T' assume a pleasing shape. Yea, and perhaps  
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,  
As he is very potent with such spirits,  
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds  
More relative than this. The play's the thing  
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.