

HAMLET

Prince of Denmark



*'Tis given out that sleeping in my chamber
A serpent stung me ... but know, that noble mind
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.*

*O my prophetic soul
My uncle!*

Typical Danish ghost.

Did we behold that person?

As Hamlet, prince of Denmark, kept watch with his friend Horatio on the battlements of Elsinore Castle, his father's ghost appeared to him. The ghost told Hamlet that he had been murdered by his brother, Claudius, and urged Hamlet to take revenge.



*But now, my cousin Hamlet,
and my son,
How is it that the clouds still
hang on you?*

*Not so, my lord;
I am too much in the sun.*

*Do not for ever with
thy vailed lids
Seek for thy noble
father in the dust.*

Am I crazy?

And her hubby hardly cold!

Gentle Hamlet had idolized his father and was outraged when his mother, Queen Gertrude, married his uncle, Claudius, who then became king. But Hamlet had not suspected his uncle of murder.



Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.



*Not I,
my lord.*

*Then I would you
were so honest
a man.*

It's Polonius under the basket, really.

Hamlet kept the ghost's secret, but all at court, including the king's chamberlain, Polonius, noticed how unstable Hamlet had become.

He often exaggerated his madness so that his uncle, Claudius, and Polonius would not realize that he was suspicious.

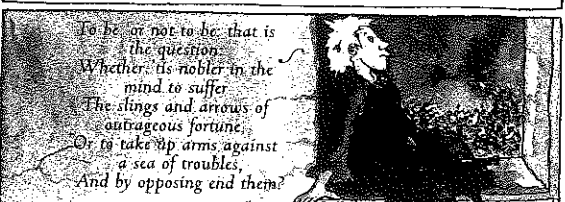


*I did love
thee once.*

*Indeed, my lord,
you made me
believe so.*

*You should not
have believed me:
I loved you not.*

*I was the
more
deceived.*



*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 up arms against
a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?*

Poor dear.

Even Ophelia, Polonius's daughter, suffered from Hamlet's erratic behavior. Hamlet's feelings for her fluctuated between tenderness and scorn.

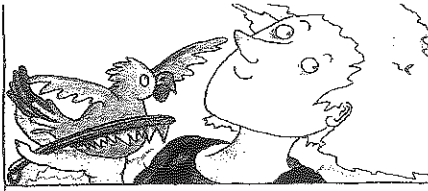
Unable to trust anyone at court, Hamlet felt miserable and confused. Should he take his own life or that of his father's murderer, Claudius?

Thou know'st 'tis common: All that live must die.



Hamlet's mother, unaware that Claudius had murdered Hamlet's father, thought his madness was grief for the good king's death.

I am but mad north-north-west: When the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.



Polonius was sure that Hamlet's madness stemmed from his love for Ophelia. Only Claudius feared a more sinister reason.

I'll have these players Play something like the murder of my father Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks.



Meanwhile, Hamlet's distress grew daily as he watched his mother, so recently widowed, and his murderous uncle together. Yet he hesitated to take revenge without more evidence. Then the arrival of an acting troupe gave Hamlet an idea of how to unmask King Claudius.

That Dane has had his due!



Before the assembled court, the actors, on Hamlet's orders, put on a play mimicking the ghost's story of his murder and its consequences. Claudius was so affected by the murder scene that he rushed from the room; Hamlet no longer doubted his uncle's guilt.

He's going to his mother's closet: Behind the arras I'll convey myself.



Claudius realized that he had been discovered and, hoping to learn more, encouraged Polonius to spy on Hamlet and Queen Gertrude.

Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

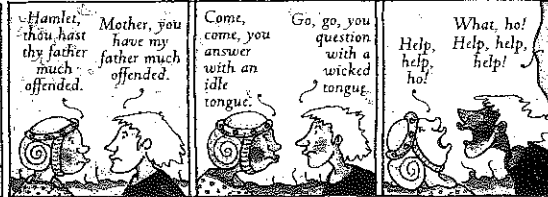
Mother, you have my father much offended.

Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Help, help, ho!

What, ho! Help, help, help!



From behind the drapes, Polonius overheard Hamlet grow violent when his mother spoke of Claudius as his "father." He cried out in alarm.

'Ere I'm the rat catcher around here.



Hamlet, thinking it was Claudius's voice, plunged his sword through the drapes, killing Polonius. Anger made Hamlet unrepentant.

Do you not come your tardy son to chide?

Do not forget!

Alas! He's mad.



Hamlet continued to chide his mother until his father's ghost appeared, urging him to be gentler, but to avenge his death.

Get that vermin out.

That ghost is asking too much.

I'm sick of standing.

Lovey oranges!

I think that poor Hamlet'll kill himself.

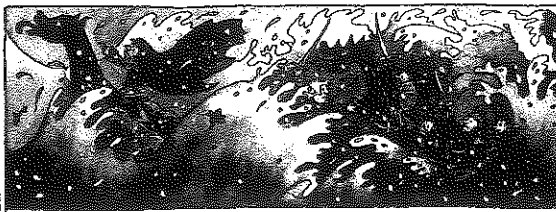
No, but you have!





*I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range.
He to England shall along with you.*

Polonius's death gave Claudius an excuse to be rid of Hamlet. Claudius sent the prince to England with two of his spies, who carried a letter ordering the English to execute Hamlet upon arrival. But Hamlet found the letter and exchanged the spies' names for his own.

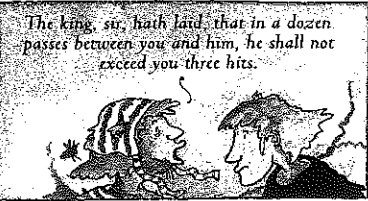


On the journey, their ship was attacked by pirates. Hamlet leaped aboard to fight, while his companions fled to England—and their deaths.

The pirates, discovering that they had Prince Hamlet on board, returned him safely to Denmark, hoping for future favors.



At Elsinore, Hamlet was greeted with the news of Ophelia's death. Deranged by her father's violent end, Ophelia had been garlanding a willow tree when she fell into the brook below and drowned. Hamlet was heartbroken. So too was Laertes, who mourned her loss as only a brother can.



*Revenge should have
no bounds.*

*The king, sir, hath laid that in a dozen
passes between you and him, he shall not
exceed you three hits.*

*I will win for him and I can; if
not, I will gain nothing but my
shame and the odd hits.*

In fact, Laertes blamed Hamlet for killing both his father and his sister, and he longed for Hamlet's death as much as Claudius did. The pair therefore plotted to kill Hamlet and make his death look like an accident. To do this they issued a challenge to the prince.



*Gertrude, do not drink.
I will, my lord.
I pray you,
pardon me.*

*Have at
you now!*

*Now, come again.
They bleed
on both sides.*

Hamlet was tempted into a fencing match with Laertes, who fought with a poisoned sword instead of a blunt foil. When Laertes drew blood, Hamlet let fly his fury, and in the scuffle, the swords changed hands. Then Laertes too was wounded by his own deadly weapon.



I want to play a jolly tune.

She swoons to see them bleed.

No, no, the drink, the drink.

O villainy! Ho! Let the door be lock'd. Treachery!

Pray for a happy ending!



Just then, the queen cried out. Unwittingly, she had drunk from a poisoned cup, prepared for Hamlet by Claudius, in case Laertes failed to kill him. Queen Gertrude collapsed on the floor. Hamlet at once suspected his treacherous uncle.

Ooh! I love it. Drama, drama!

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand. . . Thy mother poison'd. I can no more. The king, the king's to blame.

The point evenom'd too!

Then, venom to thy work!

Of yet defend me friends: I am but hurt!

What friends?



As Laertes lay dying, he told Hamlet that they had both been mortally wounded, and he confessed his part in Claudius's plot.

Reacting to his uncle's fresh villainy, Hamlet stabbed Claudius with the lethal sword, then forced him to drink from the cup of poison.

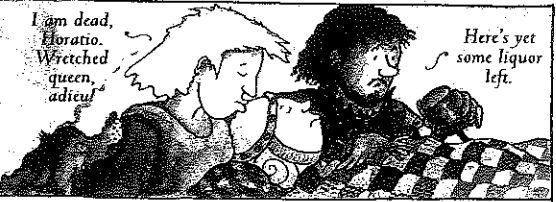
That dog will die next.

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!

Here's yet some liquor left.

Give me the cup. . . And in this harsh world annoy thy breath in pain, I'll tell my story.

O sad Hamlet.



At last Hamlet had avenged his father's and now his mother's murder. As death drew near, he saw Horatio reach for the poison.

Horatio wished to join his friend in death. But Hamlet persuaded him that he must live to tell the true story of Prince Hamlet.

Bleak, bleak, bleak.

She's not with me.



Where's the happy ending?

I hope those guns don't set fire to the theater.

This Horatio did when, moments later, the prince of Norway arrived. After hearing the story, the prince ordered his canons to fire a salute. For all who heard the tale knew that, had the fates allowed, Hamlet, prince of Denmark, would have been a most royal and noble king.

I hope Will gets knighted for this.

Never! The queen knights only explorers.

It makes you think.

Yes. To seek an early revenge.





ROMEO and JULIET

Go, sirrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find
those persons out
Whose names are written there,
and to them say,
My house and welcome on
their pleasure stay.



I am sent to find those persons
Whose names are here writ. . .
I must to the learned.

Do you bite your
thumb at us, sir?



In the ancient Italian city of Verona, Lord Capulet was planning a party. He was sure no members of the Montague family would turn up, as the Capulets and Montagues had been feuding for years. The quarrel ran so deep that even their servants fought. But Lord Capulet was wrong.

Is love a tender thing? It is too rough,
Too rude, too boisterous; and it pricks like thorn.



Romeo, Lord Montague's son, and Mercutio, his friend, *did* come—in disguise. Romeo was infatuated with Lord Capulet's niece, Rosaline.

Did my heart love
till now?



However, Romeo forgot all about Rosaline when he saw Lord Capulet's sweet young daughter, Juliet. Her beauty stole his heart.

Uncle, this is
a Montague!



Young Romeo, is it?

O! She doth
teach the
torches to burn
bright.

'Tis a
shame.
He shall be endur'd.



A snowy dove
trooping with crows.

The only
son of your
great enemy.



My only love
sprung
from my
only
hate!

And
her
only 13.

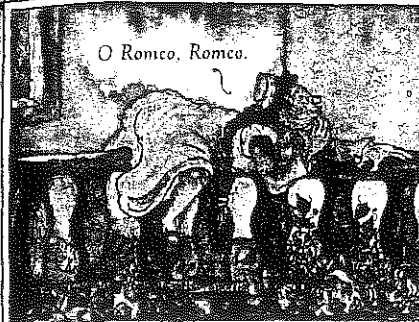
Unfortunately, Romeo was recognized by Lord Capulet's fiery nephew, Tybalt.

But Lord Capulet forbade fighting at his ball and made Romeo welcome.

So Romeo wooed Juliet and soon their love was mutual, despite the feud.

Nuts
for sale!
Eat my
fine
nuts!





O Romeo, Romeo.

As the party ended, Juliet ran to her balcony to declare her love for Romeo to the stars.



O gentle Romeo.

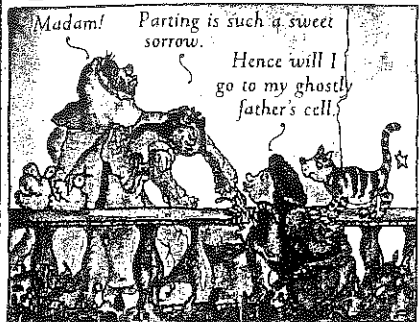
O! It is my love.

Romeo risked death by climbing the Capulets' orchard wall to see Juliet.



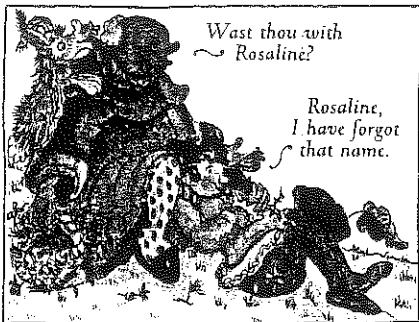
'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.

That night, the loving pair agreed to wed in secret, lest their feuding families part them.



Madam! Parting is such a sweet sorrow. Hence will I go to my ghostly father's cell.

As dawn broke, and Juliet's nurse finally got her to bed, Romeo raced to Friar Lawrence.



Wast thou with Rosaline?

Rosaline, I have forgot that name.

The friar agreed to marry the sweethearts, hoping this would unite the families.



These violent delights have violent ends.

Later that morning, Juliet joined Romeo at the chapel, and the happy pair were wed.



Ah! Juliet!

True love.

Violent ends.

Then Romeo and Juliet parted, as they knew they must, until Friar Lawrence had broken the news to their families.



Thou consort'st with Romeo—

GRRRR!

Good Capulet, which name I tender as dearly as mine own.

On the way home, Romeo met his good friends Benvolio and Mercutio, who were being harangued by Tybalt for consorting with a Montague.



Put thy rapier up.

Romeo, now related to Tybalt by his marriage, tried to prevent a fight, but failed.



A plague o' both your houses! They have made worms' meat of me.

Tybalt and Mercutio's swords clashed and Mercutio fell dead.



Romeo, away! Be gone! Tybalt's slain.

O! I am Fortune's fool.

Provoked by his friend's death, Romeo struck Tybalt a fatal blow.



Soppy nonsense!

Yes, dear.

Watch, dear. Nice Mr. Shakespeare wrote this just for you.

Boring

Well done, boys, nice deaths.

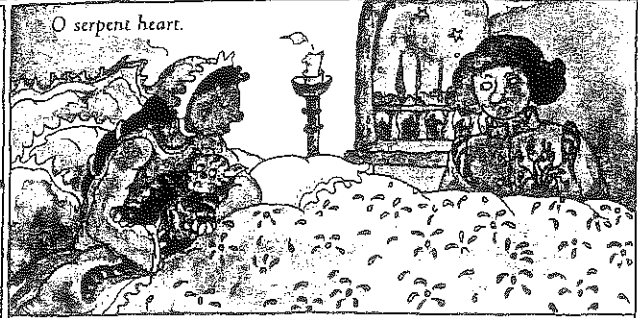
Hey, get that bear

Is he really



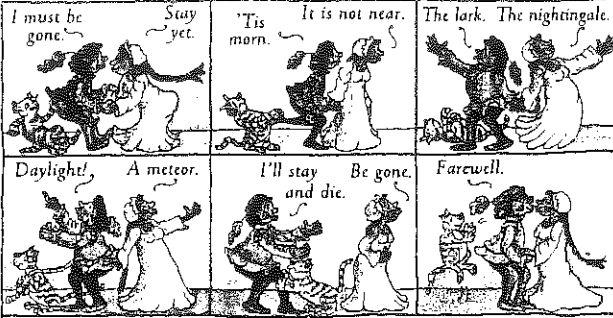
Let Romeo hence
in haste.

The prince of Verona was tired of the feuding families disturbing the peace, so when he heard of the deaths, he banished Romeo.



O serpent heart.

Unhappy Juliet! Her cousin killed by Romeo and Romeo exiled! What could Romeo do but go and beg her forgiveness—and say farewell?



I must be gone. Stay yet. 'Tis morn. It is not near. The lark. The nightingale.

Daylight! A meteor. I'll stay and die. Be gone. Farewell.

Not until morning did the lovers part, hoping that soon Friar Lawrence could secure a pardon for Romeo and pacify their families.



I would that Thursday were tomorrow. Prepare her, wife. Hot Daughter.

But Lord Capulet, thinking to comfort Juliet after Tybalt's death, told her faithful suitor, Paris, that they could marry on Thursday.



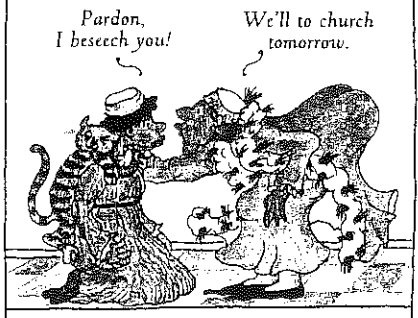
God's bread! It makes me mad. Discipline is what she needs.

Horrified, Juliet rejected the plan, but dared not reveal her marriage to Romeo.



I do spy a kind of hope. And I will do it without fear or doubt.

Juliet ran to Friar Lawrence for help, and in desperation, they agreed to a devious plot.



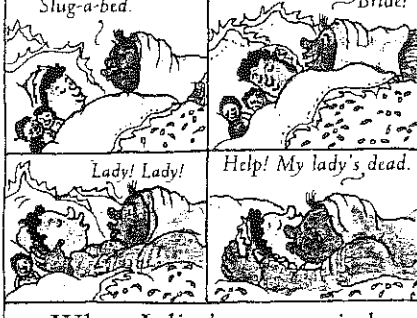
Pardon, I beseech you! We'll to church tomorrow.

Accordingly, Juliet went home and, to her father's joy, agreed to marry Paris.



What if it be poison?

Before the wedding, Juliet took a drug so as to appear dead for forty-two hours.



Slug-a-bed. Lady! Lady!

Bride! Help! My lady's dead.

When Juliet's nurse tried to wake her, she seemed quite lifeless.



So, amid deep mourning, the wedding party became a funeral procession.

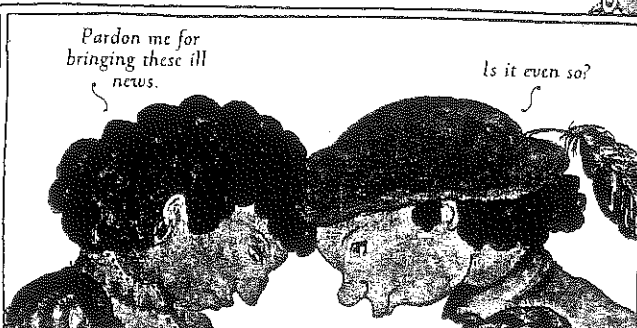


You should see this side, buddy.



O lamentable day.
Alack the day.

Juliet was carried to the family burial vault, from where, according to the friar's plan, Romeo would rescue her.



Pardon me for bringing these ill news.

Is it even so?

Romeo, mate, it's not true.

But the friar's letter, telling Romeo of the scheme, went astray. A messenger told Romeo the false news of Juliet's sudden "death."



O, I am slain.

I will go call the watch.

I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave.

Romeo bought poison and went to the tomb. There he found Paris, who in his misery, attacked Romeo, who slew him in defence.



Romeo! Alack, alack.

We are not happy.

Then Romeo gave Juliet a kiss and drank the poison. Just too late, Friar Lawrence arrived, now aware that his letter had not reached Romeo.

Nobility only appears, if you don't mind.



What an unkind hour.

As the friar cried out in horror, Juliet awoke to see Romeo, lifeless beside her.



O happy dagger.

I dare no longer stay.

Stop crying.

Hearing voices approach, the friar fled. But Juliet, unable to imagine life without Romeo, took up his dagger and, stabbing herself, fell dead upon her husband's body.



Poor sacrifices of our enmity.

For never was a story of more woe Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

I thought this was a romance. It's a bloomin' tragedy.

When the families of the Montagues and Capulets arrived upon this tragic scene, they were grief stricken at the consequences of their vendetta. Lord Capulet and Lord Montague vowed to raise a golden statue to each other's child. Thus they buried their feud, along with their precious children, Romeo and his sweet Juliet.

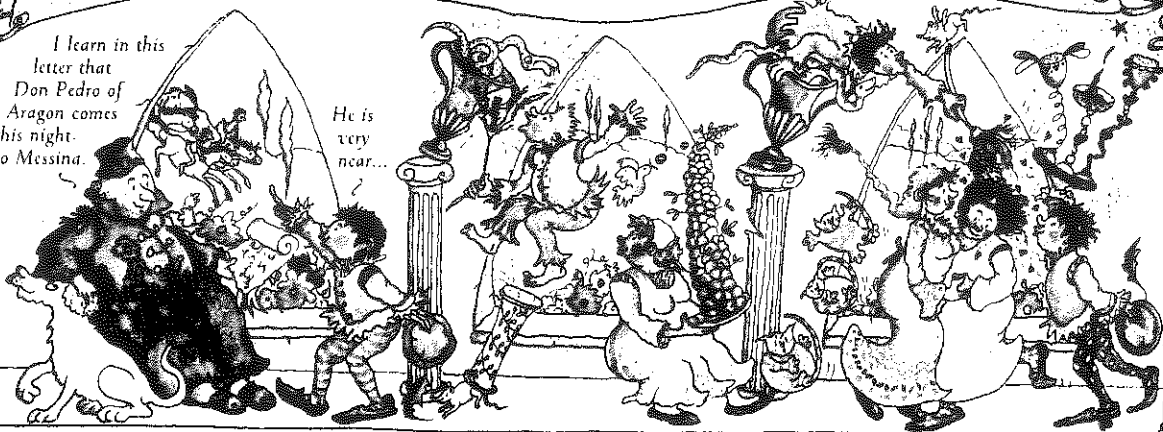
Who left

I hat they can't recall

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina.

He is very near...



In Messina, Sicily, Governor Leonato's household was expecting guests—Don Pedro, the Prince of Aragon; his brother, Don John; and two young officers, Claudio and Signior Benedick. The last time these gallants visited, they had been off to war. Now, they would have time for fun.

Romantic music? Or battle music?

Count, take of me my daughter.

I am yours.



What! My dear Lady Disdain, are you yet living?

Is it possible Disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it?



On their arrival, young Claudio realized he loved Leonato's daughter, sweet Hero. He asked the governor for her hand in marriage.

But when proud Signior Benedick met Hero's haughty cousin Beatrice once more, they fell to their old game of arguing.

Not if I get my hands on you!

I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

I will live a bachelor.



I will ... bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection the one with the other.

My lord, I am for you.

And I am for my lord.



Just a little hillock would do me

Beatrice and Benedick both scorned the idea of marriage as much as they scorned one another. Each was determined to stay single.

But the prince, Don Pedro, thought they were well matched. He asked Leonato, Claudio, and Hero to help him trick them into marriage.

Ye olde soft cushions verily only 3p hite

What was it you told me of today, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick?

She loves him with an enraged affection.

Tears her hair, prays, curses, "O sweet Benedick!"

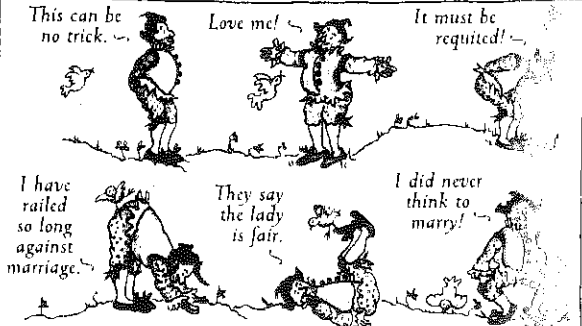


Just you keep your enraged affection away from me!

This can be no trick.

Love me!

It must be requited!



I have rail'd so long against marriage.

They say the lady is fair.

I did never think to marry!

The next day Benedick just happened to overhear Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato say that Beatrice was sick for love of him.

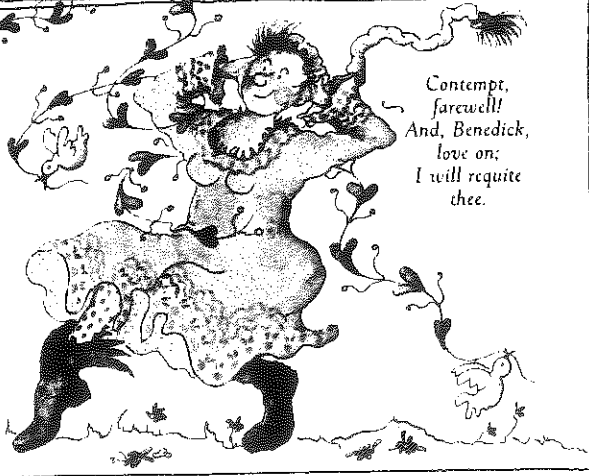
Convinced Leonato would not lie, Benedick believed them. He resolved to give up being proud and love Beatrice back.

I did never think to marry either, but it comes to us all



But are you sure that Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?

So says the prince and my new-trothed lord.



Contempt, farewell! And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee.

The Master of the Revels says you're tone deaf!

Later, Beatrice just happened to overhear Hero and her maid say that Benedick was sick for love of her.

Convinced her sweet cousin would not lie, Beatrice believed them. She resolved to give up being haughty and return Benedick's love.

Situation Vacant By Order Of M.O.R.



Verily, I must be in love! It is so; the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Yea, my Lord; but I can cross it.



Is it really Hero? I can't see.

But meanwhile, Don Pedro's spiteful brother, Don John, and his cohort, Borachio, were plotting to ruin Hero's wedding plans.

Don John took Don Pedro and Claudio to a window, where they thought they saw Hero embrace Borachio.



Give not this rotten orange to your friend.

Is my lord well?

What do you mean, my lord?



Sweet prince, why speak not you?

What should I speak? I stand dishonor'd, that have gone about to link my dear friend to a common stale.

Boo! Hiss!

The following day, as Friar Francis was about to marry them, Claudio accused Hero of disloyalty.

When Don Pedro also bore witness against Hero, even her own father began to believe the slanderous accusation.



Dead, I think! Help, uncle!

Let her awhile be secretly kept in, And publish it that she is dead indeed.

How doth the lady?



What will this do?

Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf change slander to remorse.

Hero, don't you marry him, be he ever so remorseful.

However, Leonato soon came to his senses when Hero fell to the ground in a deathlike trance. This also gave Friar Francis an idea.

He would take Hero into hiding and then announce the false news of her death. The shock might knock some sense into Claudio.



By my roth, shhh! I'm trying to listen.

Truly, my Lord, 'tis the toothy-ague.

Jellied eels, jellied trotters! Eat 'em or they'll cool.

Your eel hath eaten my finger! That'll be two pennies, Mother.

Metinks Will does not understand women.

No, but he's good for a laugh.

're laugh like parrots.



Her cousin slandered, Beatrice asked Benedick to challenge Claudio to a duel.



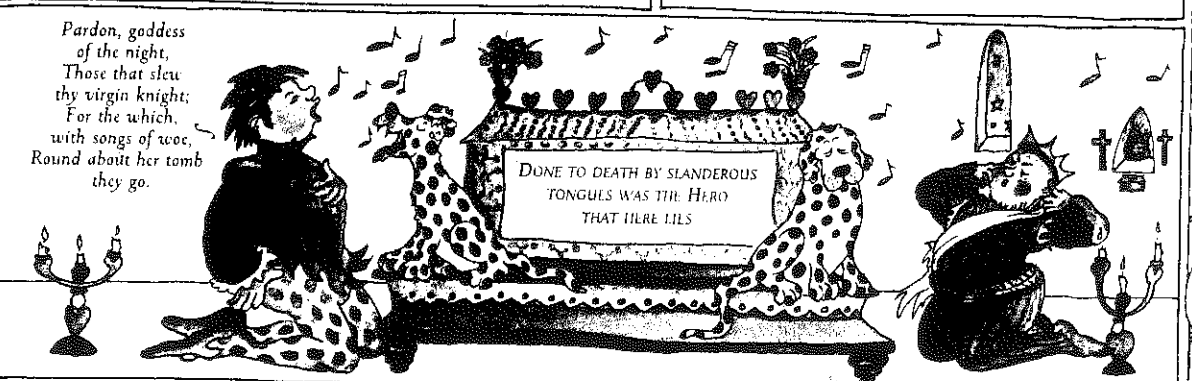
But before the fight, Borachio was heard to boast of his conspiracy with Don John.



Borachio was arrested and confessed he had embraced not Hero—but a maid dressed in Hero's clothes. Don John's flight confirmed the story.



Filled with remorse, Claudio begged Leonato to punish him for having (as he believed) caused sweet Hero's death.



Leonato instructed Claudio to spend the night beside Hero's tomb, singing of her innocence.



Then, the next morning, Claudio must go to Friar Francis and marry Hero's unknown cousin. As the chapel bells rang out, two ladies arrived, each hidden behind a mask.

1599

That constable is the famous actor Will Kemp

Hic!

Don't you make it too easy for the rotter.

POST VE NO BILLS

Buy your confetti here. A penny a petal.

If I were Hero I wouldn't

159

Don John was jealous of Don Pedro's power.

Prince Powerfu

Who's really in the tomb?

Some old ghost

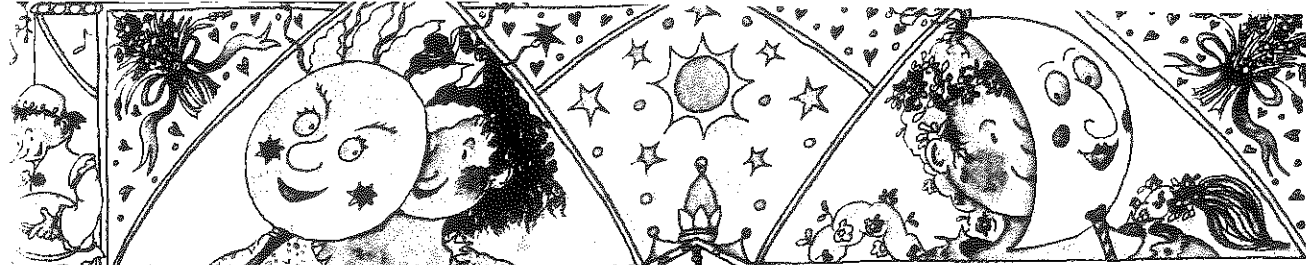
I know who's behind those masks.

But don't

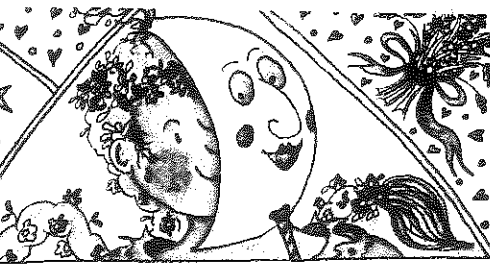
It's only a list of sins

Repent ye your sins brother!

Go ye home.



The first mask revealed Hero, not her unknown cousin. Claudio was overcome with joy!



The second hid Beatrice, still bent on teasing her beloved Benedick.


Did one receive an invitation?

Majesty is always welcome.

Master of the Revels ONLY

Love!

BRAVO! BRAVO!



After much playful banter, which Benedick interrupted with a kiss, Beatrice agreed to marry him. The delighted Friar Francis united the two couples. When news arrived that Don John had been captured, the wedding party decided to think about a punishment for him another day. Today was a day to revel in their recovered happiness, to feast and dance through the sun-filled day and sweet-scented Sicilian night!

O merriment and love.

Nice one, Will!

I'm going to be an actor.

I'm going to Sicily!

Hic!

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Hey, I don't know any Greek music.

Full of vexation come I, with complaint against my child.
 What say you, Henna? Your father should be as a god!



Just play our usual star-crossed lovers theme.

Long ago, in Athens, the law decreed that a daughter must marry the man of her father's choice or be punished. Consequently, Egeus had brought his daughter, Hermia, to the court of Theseus, duke of Athens, for refusing Demetrius, the man of his choice. Hermia actually loved Lysander.

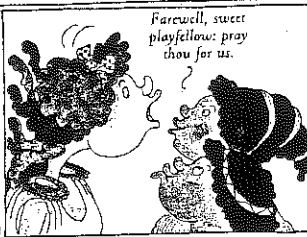
That duke is a softie. He must be in love.

Take time to pause.

O hell! To choose love by another's eye!



Farewell, sweet playfellow: pray thou for us.



Did you bring the wine?

Theseus was sympathetic and gave Hermia four days to choose between love and duty.

Unable to part, Lysander and Hermia told their friend Helena they would flee Athens.

So, that very night, they fled to the woods, away from the city and its cruel law.

Is this one of Will's comedies?



Ale for sale!

Meanwhile, Helena revealed their plans to Demetrius because she loved him, and he had once loved her. But Demetrius was now obsessed with Hermia and set out after the runaway lovers, followed by the lovelorn Helena.

Actually, yes.

Well, you won't catch me laughing.

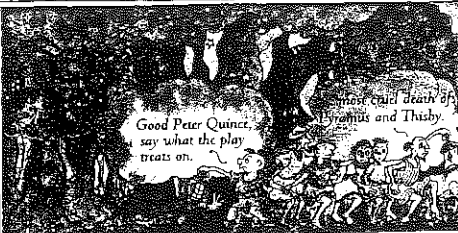
Some hope.

That rabbit can act!

I could do with one of them for my supper.



Quit that racket.



Good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on.

...the cold death of Pyramus and Thisby

That same night, six Athenian workmen went to the woods to rehearse in secret a play for Duke Theseus's wedding to Hippolyta.

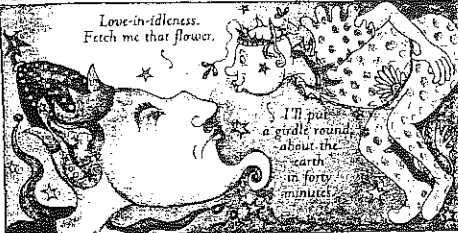


I'll met by moonlight, proud Titania.

What! Jealous Oberon!

Nearby, the fairy king, Oberon, with his sprite, Puck, was arguing with Queen Titania over a changeling boy they both wanted.

We find you groundlings very stinky.



Love-in-idleness. Fetch me that flower.

I'll put a giddle round about the earth in forty minutes.

Oberon, annoyed, planned a trick: he sent Puck to fetch a plant, whose juice made people love the first creature they saw upon waking.



I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.

I am your spaniel.

I wish my wife were as obedient as a spaniel.

Now, as it happened, Demetrius, with Helena in hot pursuit, passed close to Oberon's hiding place.

Do you love your little Puck?



Thou shalt know the man by the Athenian garments he hath on.

Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

Pitying lovesick Helena, Oberon, on Puck's return, told him to anoint Demetrius's eyelids, thinking he would wake to see Helena.



What thou seest, when thou dost wake, Do it for thy true-love take.

Just like you, she's quite sweet asleep.

Meanwhile, Oberon found his sleeping queen, Titania. He squeezed the flower's magic juice upon her eyelids.

Is this good for my education?



Weeds of Athens he doth wear.

But Puck mistook Lysander, sleeping near Hermia, for Demetrius and anointed his eyes with the flower's juice.



O, wilt thou darkling leave me?

I alone will go.

Oops!

Then, as luck would have it, Helena, still in pursuit of Demetrius, tripped over Lysander in the dark and woke him!

Is this good for my education?

I doubt it, dear.

This is the best.

Can we come tomorrow?



Not Hermia, but Helena I love.

Do not say so.



To honor Helen, and to be her knight!

Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?



I swoon almost with fear.

So, by the flower's magic, Lysander forgot his love for Hermia and fell instantly in love with Helena.

Shocked by Lysander's unexpected love, Helena ran off, pursued by Lysander.

Thus, poor Hermia woke alone. Fearfully, she set out in search of Lysander.

Which is the proper play?



Are we all met?

Pat, pat, and here's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal!

All this while Titania slept on, unaware that the troupe of Athenians, led by Bottom and Peter Quince, had chosen to rehearse their play nearby. It was a perfect opportunity for the mischievous Puck to play one of his tricks, for Titania's eyelids still glistened with magic juice.



If I were, fair Thisby, I were only thine.

Yoo-ho Puck.

Has he got fleas?

Suddenly, at the height of the action, Bottom, the weaver, appeared wearing a donkey's head! The other actors fled in fright. Then Puck, who had transformed Bottom into this ridiculous creature, guided him to the sleeping Titania's side.

Get her jewels next.

Sssh! I'm listening.

How do they do that?

Can we do that to Daddy?

I need to wee!



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The man's a donkey!

Are they real?

Is it over yet?

Will the wonder I call him.

Who acts the fairies?

That's right, you chase the donkey away!

When Titania awoke, the first creature she saw was Bottom, with a donkey's head! Instantly, she fell in love with him. Bottom was not displeased by the attention, especially when Titania ordered her fairies to attend his every whim.

Your imagination acts them, dear!

I'm going to be a fairy when I grow up

Grownups can't see fairies, stupid.





About the wood go swifter than the wind. I go, I go; look how I go. Out, dog! Out, cur!

As Puck reported all this to Oberon, Hermia hurried past. Demetrius was close behind, but now, exhausted and disheartened, he paused to rest. Realizing Puck's error, Oberon sent him to fetch Helena, while he anointed Demetrius's lids with the flower juice.



In my day, love was so simple.

O Helena, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine! O spite! O hell!



O me! You juggler! You canker-blossom! You thief of love!

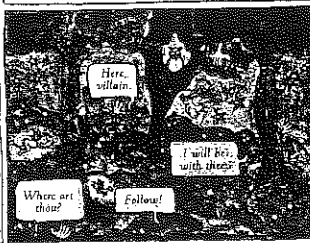
At last, a fight!

So when Demetrius awoke and saw Helena, he loved her once again. Helena, far from being happy about this, believed herself mocked.

When Hermia arrived she quickly understood that both Lysander and Demetrius now loved Helena. Hermia screamed insults at Helena.



I have no idea what's going on.



Here, villain! I will fix with thee! Where art thou? Follow!



Jack shall have Jill; nought shall go ill.



See as thou was wont to see.

Fancy grown in writing about fat!

Puck, on Oberon's orders, drew the lovers on and on until, tired and confused, they fell asleep.

Then Puck anointed Lysander's eyelids in order to restore his love for Hermia.

As Bottom lay sleeping in Titania's arms, Oberon put an antidote on her lids.



Disgusting! Kissing, yuk!



Methought I was enamour'd of an ass!



I have had a most rare vision.

Are the fairies on strings?

Then Oberon woke Titania, who was so mortified at being seen with a snoring donkey that she promised Oberon the changeling boy.

Oberon, satisfied at last, danced happily away with Titania, leaving Puck to restore Bottom to his usual self.



Does your cat like Shakespeare?

I look stupid!

Just think what might happen if you got fairy dust up your nostrils.

He's been transformed again!



My love shall hear
the music of my hounds.

As day dawned, a hunting party entered the woods, led by Duke Theseus and Hippolyta; Egeus was also in the party.



I beg
the law!

When they happened upon the reunited lovers, Egeus was still eager to impose the law of Athens on his daughter, Hermia.



Well roared, lion.
Well shone, moon.
ROAR!

O sweet and lovely wall.
Show me thy chink.

Are we the audience or are they?

Did you pay for two plays?

But it was Theseus's wedding day, and when he saw the young people back with their original loved ones, he overruled Egeus. He bade the party return to Athens and resolved to have all three couples wed that very day: himself to Hippolyta, Hermia to Lysander, and Helena to Demetrius. After the ceremony, Bottom and his troupe were called to put on their play, which earned them all a goodly sum and much applause. Then the whole company, at last restored to happy harmony, retired to bed.



Hand in hand, with
fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless
this place.

IF WE SHADOWS
HAVE OFFENDED,
THINK BUT THIS,
AND ALL IS MENDED.
THAT YOU HAVE BUT
SLUMBER'D HERE,
WHILE THESE VISIONS
DID APPEAR.

Ooh! That's so pretty.

Slumber? With all that going on?

That left the way clear for the fairy king and queen, attended by Puck, to bless the palace of Theseus and bid all good night—the perfect end to the story, or to a beautifully woven midsummer night's dream in the enchanted woods.



SOLD OUT

Are they all happy now?

We've got fairies in our house!

Most people call them fleas!

Well, that's what I call a finale!

MACBETH

*When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning,
or in rain?*

*When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's
lost and won.*



*So foul and fair a day
I have not seen.*



Is that
a barren
heath?

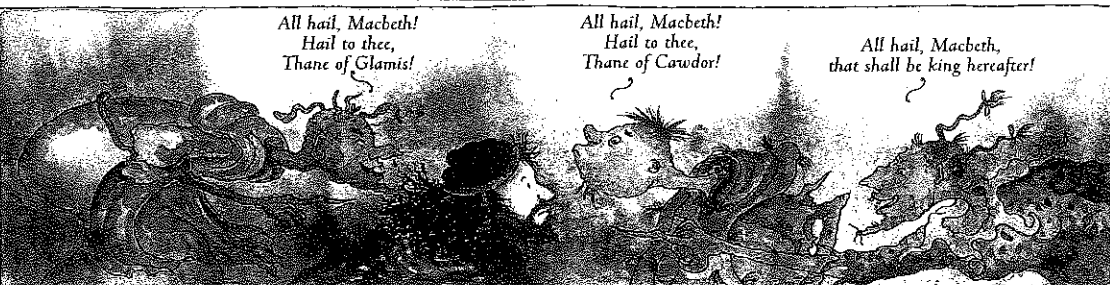
Stop
jabbering
and give
them some
thunder!

Macbeth and Banquo, two Scottish generals living under the reign of King Duncan, were returning home to Inverness across a barren heath. They had just bravely defeated an army of rebels, much to the delight of the king, who was also Macbeth's cousin.

*All hail, Macbeth!
Hail to thee,
Thane of Glamis!*

*All hail, Macbeth!
Hail to thee,
Thane of Cawdor!*

*All hail, Macbeth,
that shall be king hereafter!*



Don't they
duck
witches in
Scotland?

I hope
he doesn't
believe
them.

Suddenly, as if from nowhere, three hideous witches appeared. The first witch greeted Macbeth as Thane (or Lord) of Glamis, which was his correct title. The second greeted him as Thane of Cawdor, which he was not, and the third as King of Scotland, an honor held by Duncan.

*Thou shalt get kings,
though thou be none!*



*He bade me,
from him, call thee
Thane of Cawdor!*



Those
witches
got a
quick
result.

Just before the witches vanished they also prophesied that Banquo would never be king, but that he would father kings.

As the two generals stood, stunned, news arrived that the king had made Macbeth Thane of Cawdor, in honor of his victory.

MUSICIANS
ONLY
PLEASE

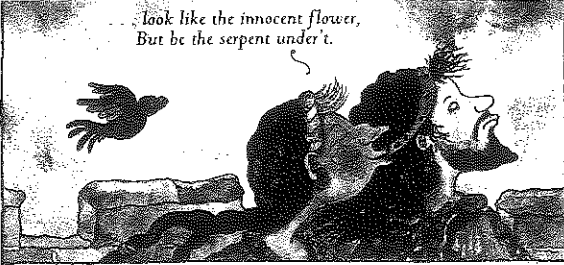
Stop your croak!

Hail, king that shalt be!



The witches' first prediction had come true! Macbeth sent word to his ambitious wife. Would he, they wondered, soon be king?

... look like the innocent flower, But be the serpent under 't.



When Macbeth reached his castle, Lady Macbeth, her mind already fixed on the crown, was plotting King Duncan's death.

Shoo!

You see, you too could act!

See, see, our honor'd hostess!

... honors deep and broad wherewith Your majesty loads our house.



King Duncan duly arrived with his two sons: Prince Malcolm, heir to the throne, and Donalbain. They had come to thank Macbeth for his valor in battle. Lady Macbeth played the charming hostess, but secretly urged her husband to kill the king that very night.

Typical, says one thing, means another.

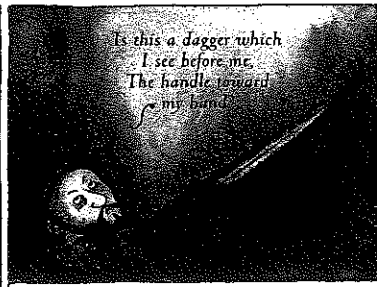
Does she want to be king?

I have drugg'd their possets.



In preparation for the evil deed, Lady Macbeth drugged King Duncan's two guards.

Is this a dagger which I see before me, The handle toward my hand.



Macbeth, agonizing over the murder, saw a phantom dagger hovering before him.

That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold.



Fearing her husband would fail, Lady Macbeth crept into Duncan's room herself.

She's more wicked than the witches.

You see, she's all heart, really.



But the sleeping king looked so like her own father that she was unable to kill him.

Steep your courage to the sticking place!



Lady Macbeth summoned her husband, pouring scorn on his own hesitation.

I have done the deed.



So, reluctantly, Macbeth took the daggers from the drugged guards and slew the king.

One death always leads to another.

Shall we throw apple cores at them?

No, I want to see what happens.

I don't think this is quite suitable for children.

He'll have to kill the sons next.

Death-knell music.

Their hands and faces were all bathed with blood. So were their daggers.



O! Yet I do repent me of my fury, That I did kill them.

Help me go from here!

I'll to England. To Ireland, I.



With their daggers bloodied, the grooms were blamed. Macbeth, claiming vengeance, killed them both to safeguard his secret.

Despite their display of grief, many suspected the Macbeths of the murder. The king's sons, fearing for their own lives, fled Scotland.

Teardrop music!

Don't pick your nose, the queen's here.



Thou hast it now, King Cawdor, Glamis, all

Macbeth, as next in line to the throne, was then crowned king, fulfilling the third prophecy.



To be thus is nothing. But to be safely thus, Our fears in Banquo stick deep.

Haunted by guilt, but still anxious to retain power, Macbeth worried that Banquo's descendants, not his own, would one day reign, as had also been foretold.

We love to see Scottish monarchs tumble.

Three thugs to crack one nut!



So Macbeth resolved to murder Banquo and his son, Fleance, and thus invited all the local thanes to a feast. As Banquo and Fleance made their way to the palace, they were brutally attacked by Macbeth's hired assassins. Fleance managed to escape, but Banquo died.

My very words!

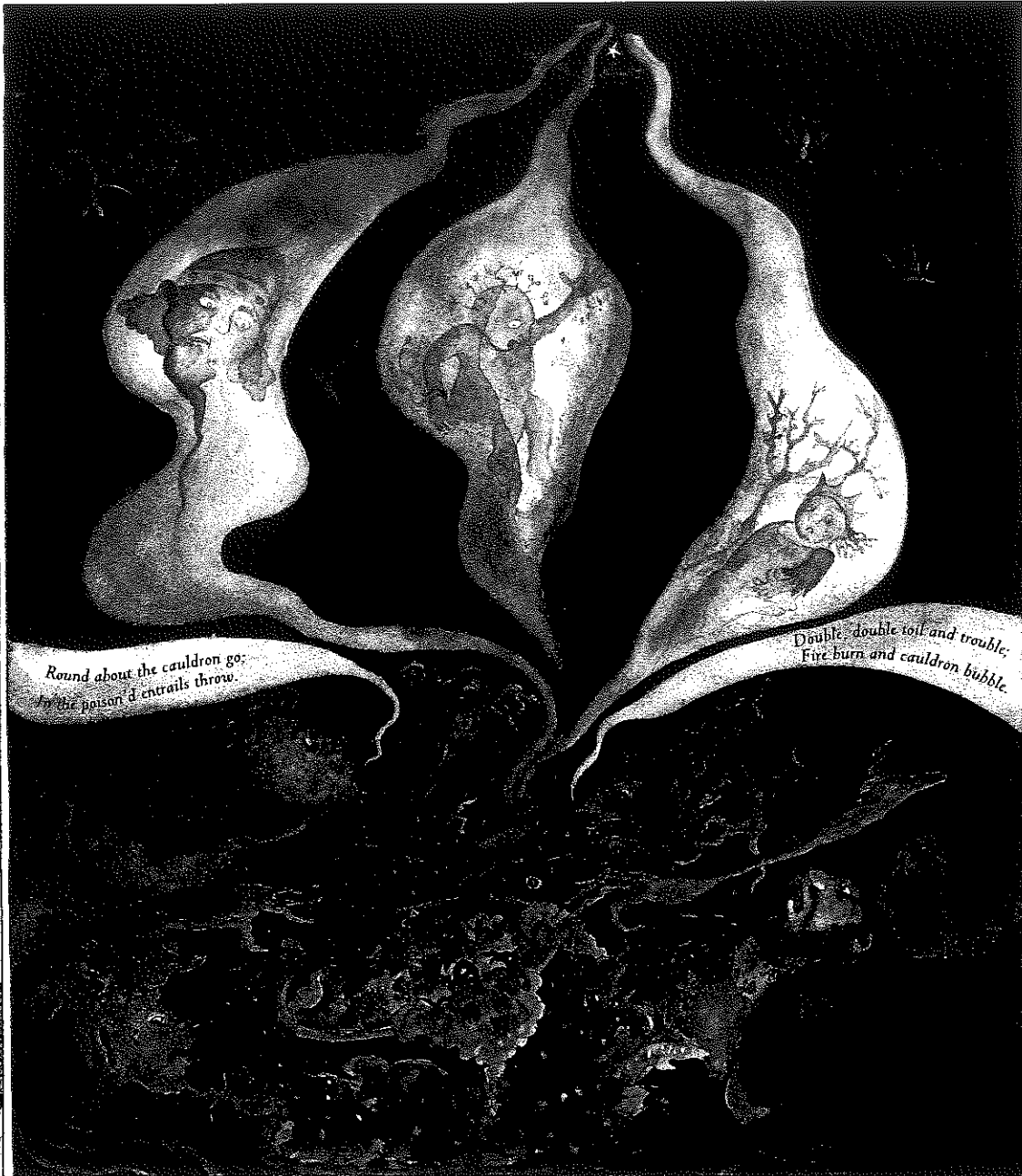
Speaking of nats, your honor.



Thou canst not say I did it: never shake thy gory locks at me.

Oblivious to this horrific deed, the other thanes were merrily dining when Banquo's ghost suddenly appeared. Only Macbeth could see the specter and it so unnerved him that the queen soon dismissed their guests, lest they wonder at the strange behavior of their king.

Hey, Will, tell the missus it's just a play!



Round about the cauldron go,
In the poison'd entrails throw.

Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Thereafter, Macbeth and his queen began to suffer long, sleepless nights filled with hideous dreams. Yet Macbeth was still obsessed with not losing the throne, so he returned to the heath to seek out the witches. He found them in a cave, chanting over a cauldron of boiling hell-broth, from which three apparitions rose: the first was an armed head, which warned Macbeth to beware of Macduff, the thane of Fife; the second was a bloody child, who told Macbeth that no man born of woman could harm him; the third was another child, wearing a crown and holding a tree, who reassured Macbeth that he would never be vanquished until Great Birnam Wood came to Dunsinane Hill, where Macbeth's castle stood.



MORE
WOMEN
MUSICIANS

Cheers,
queenie.

Behave,
or I'll
put you
in the
cauldron.

Is it
true?

Throw that
at the witches,
not at me!

It's not that
I'm scared....

Are you
selling
or
watching?



This is too
bloomin'
spooky!

That brew
smells
poisonous.

Tell me
when it's
over.

He's not
out of the
woods yet.

Ghosts are okay, but BATS! I'm off!



My own does scar mine eyeballs.

When Macbeth asked if Banquo's heirs would reign, the cauldron sank into the ground and eight ghostly kings passed by, followed by Banquo's ghost. The last king carried a mirror that showed many kings, and Macbeth knew them to be Banquo's descendants.

Well, that's it! I don't like Macbeth anymore.



My children, too?

Wife, children, servants, all that could be found.

Let's make us medicine of our great revenge, To cure this deadly grief.

Malcolm for king!

From this day, insecurity plagued Macbeth. So when he heard that Macduff, thane of Fife, had joined forces with Prince Malcolm, Macbeth ordered the death of Macduff's wife and children. This bloody deed lost Macbeth many friends and determined Malcolm and Macduff to seek revenge.

That'll teach her to be naughty.



The queen, my lord, is dead.

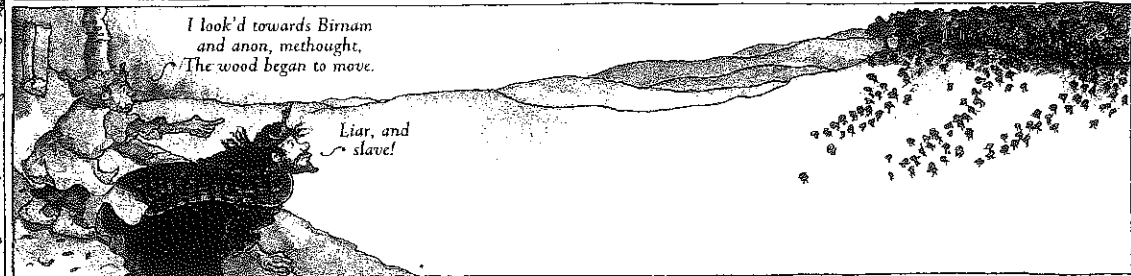
She should have died hereafter; There would have been time for such a word.

I should report that which I say I saw, But know not how to do it.

Maybe that forest is walking!

Then Macbeth received a terrible blow: his queen, who had never come to terms with her guilt and whose nights and days were ceaselessly haunted by ghastly visions, finally succumbed to death. Macbeth felt totally alone. Still more grave news followed. . . .

Macbeth forever!



I look'd towards Birnam and anon, methought, The wood began to move.

Liar, and slave!

Remember cheer for Malcolm or you won't get any tea!

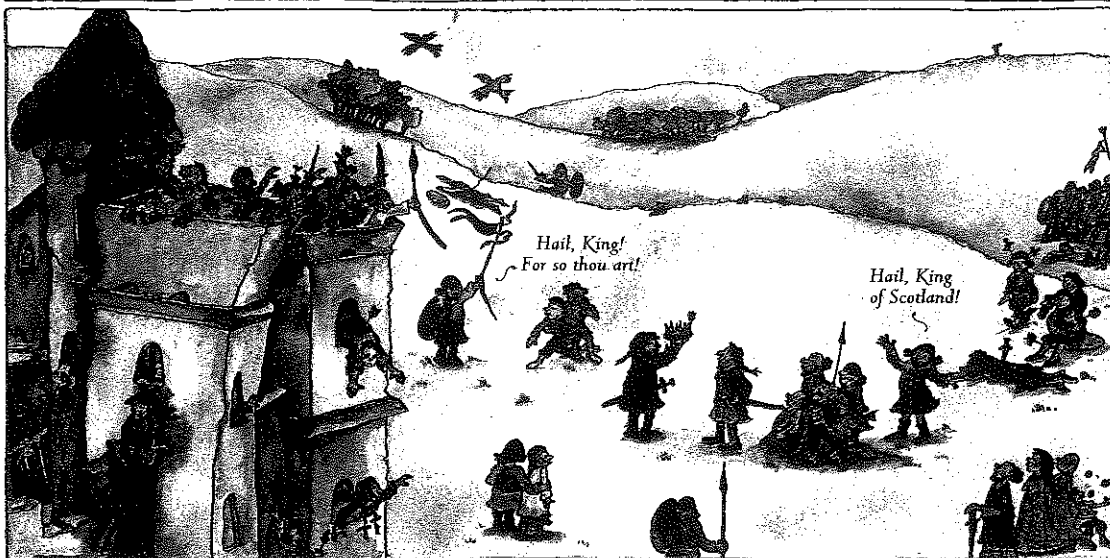
Thousands of Prince Malcolm's troops were fast approaching, shielded behind branches cut from Great Birnam Wood. Thus it appeared that the forest moved toward Dunsinane Hill and Macbeth's castle, the event predicted to precede Macbeth's downfall.



Despair thy charm;
And let the angel whom
thou still hast serv'd
Tell thee, Macduff was from
his mother's womb
f' Untimely ripp'd.

Let fall thy blade on
vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life,
which must not yield
To one of woman born.

Macbeth still believed himself invulnerable. Rallying his remaining forces, he waged a bloody war, until he met Macduff, face to face. When Macduff disclosed that he had not been born by natural means, but by cesarean birth with the help of a surgeon, Macbeth knew his end had come.



Hail, King!
For so thou art!

Hail, King
of Scotland!

Now Prince Malcolm, the rightful heir, claimed his father's throne. Macbeth was dead and the people rejoiced. The wicked reign of Macbeth and his ambitious queen had ended just as had been prophesied. Scotland was at peace, ruled once more by a true and noble king.

Can't think why
you rawboned
Englishman!

Barbarians!

Well, they had
to defend their
rights, stupid!

I wanted to see
Macbeth's head
chopped off

Someone would
have only had to
sew it back on.

The
end!

Thank
goodness
I brought
my
smelling
salts.

Need
any
help?

No one
told me
they
were
using
extras.

Macduff is
a real
Braveheart.

Scottish
castles leave
a lot to be
desired.

It's a good
idea to kill
off your
actors. Then
you don't
have to
pay them!