

Lines from non-curricular Shakespeare plays  
For Mary Hartman's Sculpture Garden

**A chilling sweat o'erruns my trembling joints**

In the early play, *Titus Andronicus*, one of Titus's sons, Quintus, is caught up in a revenge plot against his father. Quintus and his brother Martius are taken out hunting, and led to a dark and secluded part of the woods, where Martius falls into a pit onto a murdered corpse. Quintus and Martius are left alone when Quintus has this line. And he's right, as they're being framed for the murder.

**By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap  
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon.**

In the first part of *Henry IV*, a character nicknamed Hotspur is very eager for action and for glory.

**Contempt and clamour  
Will be my knell.**

Leontes, King of Sicily in *The Winter's Tale* is mistakenly convinced that his wife is sexually unfaithful to him, and believes that the disgrace of this will kill him, and his death will be acknowledged only with derision and jeering.

**I am a feather for each wind that blows.**

Again in *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes is convinced that his new-born daughter is the product of an adulterous liaison and has ordered his lords to take the baby away and throw it into fire. As they try to persuade him to reconsider, this is something he says.

**I am amaz'd, methinks, and lose my way  
Among the thorns and dangers of this world.**

The play *King John* is about disputed succession. Richard I (The Lionheart) has died without an heir and his youngest brother, John is on the throne. But the middle brother, Geoffrey, had a son, Arthur, before he died. So in the dispute, the child, Arthur, is taken prisoner and then dies. This line is spoken by a very appealing, very articulate character called, oddly enough, Bastard (because his mother had an adulterous affair with Richard the Lionheart).

**I am angling now  
Though you perceive me not how I give line.**

In *The Winter's Tale*, King Leontes has just begun to suspect his wife has had an affair with his best friend.

**I am a scribbled form, drawn with a pen  
Upon a parchment**

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At the end of *King John*, the title character has been poisoned by a monk and is dying in agony. The rest of the line is "and against this fire do I shrink up."

**I am not weary, and 'tis long to night**

In *Twelfth Night*, Antonio has followed Sebastian to Illyria after rescuing him from a shipwreck. Antonio has many enemies in this place, and wants to go straight to the inn. Sebastian wants to see the sights.

**I am wrapp'd in dismal thinkings.**

**I can hardly forbear hurling things at him.**

Maria, a waiting gentlewoman to Countess Olivia in *Twelfth Night*, has played a trick on the puritanical steward of the household, Malvolio. When he follows ridiculous instructions believing they come from the Countess (and giving him hope that she's in love with him) his behaviour inspires Maria to speak this.

**I can swim like a duck, I'll be sworn.**

Trinculo, the King's jester, describes how he survived the shipwreck at the beginning of the play *The Tempest*.

**I do not without danger walk these streets**

Antonio describes his predicament, being in Illyria, in *Twelfth Night*.

**I will not hear her speak; away with her!**

In *Titus Andronicus*, Tamora takes revenge on Titus for killing her eldest son. The centerpiece of her revenge takes the form of an elaborate trap: on a hunting outing, she contrives to be found alone in a desolate place by Titus's daughter, Lavinia and her new husband, Bassianus. But she's not alone, her two sons arrive and kill Bassianus. She then commands her sons to rape Lavinia on her husband's corpse then silence her so she can't reveal the culprits. This is Tamora's response when Lavinia pleads for mercy.

**I will scour you with my rapier**

In *Henry V*, we first see Pistol and Nym, old friends of Falstaff's, at odds with one another. The main reason for the quarrel is that Pistol has married Nell Quickly, who was promised to Nym. These are some of Nym's words for Pistol.

**I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song.**

In *The Comedy of Errors*, Antipholus of Syracuse is very confused in the unfamiliar town of Ephesus – mainly because he and his servant both

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have identical twins there. He's falling in love with a young woman, but he's resolved to leave town to escape the "witchcraft".

**In cunning I must draw my sword upon you.**

Pretending to help his half-brother, Edgar, Edmund is actually setting him up in the subplot of *King Lear*.

**In the dust I write**

**My heart's deep languor and my soul's sad tears**

Titus Andronicus (in the play that bears his name) pleads to the tribunes of Rome to spare his condemned sons' lives. Quintus and Martius have been framed for murder and are condemned to death. I should mention that he's already lost 22 other sons – 21 in war and another he killed himself for the sake of his honour. Besides Quintus and Martius, he has just one son remaining, and his only daughter has been horribly mutilated.

**Let him that makes but trifles of his eyes**

**First hand me!**

King Leontes in *The Winter's Tale* falsely accuses his wife of adultery and has her put into prison, where she gives birth to a daughter. Leontes is convinced that he's not the child's father. Paulina, a waiting gentlewoman, decides to present the daughter to him, convinced that the moment he sees the baby, he'll see the error of his ways. This is her response when Leontes commands his attendants to remove her from his presence.

**Let my tears stanch the earth's dry appetite**

Titus begging for mercy for his sons.

**Look how well my garments sit upon me.**

In *The Tempest* Antonio has usurped his brother Prospero's dukedom. He encourages his friend Sebastian to usurp his brother's kingdom, and offers this observation as evidence that it's a good idea.

**Mine ear is open and my heart prepared.**

King Richard II, in the play that bears his name, is about to hear news of his cousin's invasion. It will eventually lead to him losing his crown.

**Mount, mount, my soul! Thy seat is up on high,  
Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward here to die.**

King Richard II has had his throne taken away by his cousin, Henry Bolingbroke, and has been imprisoned. Of course, it never works to have more than one monarch, so someone hoping to gain favour with the new king kills Richard in prison. These are his dying words.

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**My dancing soul doth celebrate  
This feast of battle**

In *Richard II*, Sir Thomas Mowbray is in conflict with the King's cousin, Henry of Bolingbroke. King Richard rules that they will settle their differences through a formal combat. Mowbray says this before the combat, which doesn't end up happening.

**My heart is great, but it must break with silence.**

In *Richard II*, the Earl of Ross is outraged by King Richard's treatment of a fellow nobleman, Bolingbroke, son of the wealthiest man in the kingdom. King Richard had banished Bolingbroke at the beginning of the play; when Bolingbroke's father died shortly thereafter, Richard confiscated all of the wealth.

**My heart is heavy and mine age is weak.**

In *All's Well that Ends Well*, a Countess is troubled by how poorly her son is treating a lovely young woman who's in love with him.

**My old bones ache.**

In *The Tempest*, King Alonso and his courtiers have been shipwrecked on an island, and they've been searching all over for the king's son, Ferdinand, whom they believe has drowned. The "kind, old lord Gonzalo" needs to rest.

**My old heart is cracked, it's cracked.**

In *King Lear*, The Earl of Gloucester believes that his son and heir, Edgar, is plotting to kill him and speaks these lines. Of course, it's his other son, Edmund who has framed his half-brother, but Gloucester doesn't know that yet.

**My spirits are nimble.**

In *The Tempest*, King Alonso and several of his courtiers suddenly asleep (at the mercy of an enchantment by the spirit, Ariel). The King's brother, Sebastian and his friend, Antonio, remain awake (and they start plotting).

**Now I stand as one upon a rock  
Environed with a wilderness of sea**

In the extremely bloody revenge play, *Titus Andronicus*, Titus speaks these lines after his son-in-law has been murdered and two of his last surviving

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sons have been framed for the crime and condemned to die, his last surviving son has been banished and his only daughter has been raped and had her tongue cut out and her hands cut off.

**O I am pressed to death  
Through want of speaking!**

In *Richard II*, the Queen overhears a gardener and servant talking about the kingdom with an extended gardening metaphor. The gardener then shares the news that King Richard has been deposed. But it's all too much and she must finally react.

**Sometime am I  
All wound with adders who with cloven tongues  
Do hiss me into madness.**

Caliban in *The Tempest* describes one of the many torments he suffers at the hands of his master, the magician Prospero.

**The bow is bent and drawn; make from the shaft**

Lear to Kent when he tries to intervene in Lear's disowning of Cordelia.

**These burrs are in my heart.**

Rosalind in *As You Like It* has fallen in love and likens the experience to being caught in briars.

**These words are razors to my wounded heart.**

Titus has promised his daughter, Lavinia, to Saturninus, the new emperor, when she chooses his brother, Bassianus instead and one of her brothers defends her choice, Titus kills him to preserve his family's honour and fulfill the promise. Meanwhile, Saturninus decides to marry Tamora instead, so it's all for nothing, and he insults the family to boot.

**'Tis wonder that enwraps me thus**

Sebastian in *Twelfth Night* has just arrived in Illyria to have a beautiful Countess not only act like she knows him, but declare her love for him. He's bewildered, but not unhappy.

**Upon mine honour,  
I will stand twixt you and danger.**

Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* assures the gaoler that it's all right to let her take Hermione's newborn baby to Leonotes.

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**Upon my feeble knee  
I beg this boon with tears not lightly shed.**

Titus begs for mercy for his sons who have been falsely condemned for murder.

**Vengeance is in my heart, death in my hand.**

Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* uses this excuse to rebuff his lover's Tamora's sexual advances; he has a murder plot on his mind instead.

**Whilst I can vent clamour from my throat  
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.**

The Earl of Kent trying to advise Lear not to disown Cordelia.

**With a passion would I shake the world.**

Constance in *King John* has this response when her young son, Arthur, has been taken prisoner by the forces of King John.

**With long travel I am stiff and weary.**

Antipholus of Syracuse has just arrived in Ephesus as he travels throughout the world in search of his long-lost twin.

**You cram these words into mine ears against  
The stomach of my sense.**

King Alonso in *The Tempest* has this response to the courtier who is trying to look at the bright side after a ship wreck the King's son.