THE DIVISION OF SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

A division of Shakespeare's plays is (to paraphrase Longinus) the last fruit of a long experience. There are some differences and likenesses which are more felt than able to be articulated. Some plays one tends to put together, or separate, more as the natural result of one's experience of them than by the understanding of differences. One should not, moreover, demand more certitude or precision than the matter admits.

A good division should orient both our imagination and our emotions in seeing or reading each play. As Aristotle said long ago, one should not seek the same pleasure from every kind of play. Each kind of play and, to some extent, each individual play, has its own delight. But there is a kinship among those of the same kind. Perhaps, too, one should be in a different mood or disposition to read a different kind of play. Or when one is in a different mood, a different kind of play may appeal to him. A mood, however, is easily changed.

We can begin a consideration of the division of Shakespeare's plays by recalling that given by the editors (who were also players, and friends and associates of Shakespeare) of what has often been called the single most important publication in the history of English fiction - the *Folio* of 1623. In this *Folio*, the plays are divided into tragedies, histories, and comedies.

This division is deficient in perhaps three ways. First, the same basis for division is not used throughout. Tragedies are divided against comedies on a different basis from that of tragedies against histories. Tragedy and comedy seem contrary in their plots, the characters they represent and the emotions which they arouse. But the history plays are distinguished from the tragedies only by having a more particular interest in the singular of history. (We do not mean that, in the history plays, Shakespeare is more concerned with the singular than the universal. All great plays and the epic are more concerned with the universal than the singular. That is why Aristotle said that fiction is more philosophical than history. Nevertheless, Shakespeare's English history plays have a more particular interest, especially for a citizen of England, than the tragedies. The novel, and the historical novel in particular, go even further in the direction of interesting us in the singular, but even in the great novels our interest is more in the universal than the singular.) The history plays hold up a mirror more to the age than do the tragedies. But this is a secondary difference in comparison to that of tragedy and comedy and, as we

have already noted, a different kind of difference than that between tragedy and comedy.

The second major defect of the *Folio* division is that the *Comedies* do not contain one kind of play, but three kinds of plays equivocally called *comedy*. Although all three could be called comedy in the loose sense of a play that ends happily for the main (good) characters, one of them is more a likeness of the serious than of the laughable. It is closer to tragedy than to pure comedy. Comedy, strictly speaking, is a likeness of the laughable. But between this kind of comedy and tragedy, there are perhaps two kinds of play among Shakespeare's works. One of these is closer to tragedy and the other to comedy (meaning a likeness of the laughable). These plays could perhaps be called *romances*. One has an affinity with the so-called Hellenistic Romance and this is more serious and closer to tragedy. The other has an affinity with the Medieval Romance and is closer to comedy or the likeness of the laughable. I call the former sometimes a Mercy and Forgiveness Romance. (Mercy is like the pity of tragedy.) But the latter Romance, I sometimes call the Love and Friendship Romance. Romantic love in these plays is sometimes in conflict with friendship. This kind of play has an element of the pitiful in that unrequited love makes one miserable, but there is so prominent an element of the laughable in these plays that one has a hard time making them altogether distinct from the pure comedy or the likeness of the laughable.

One has a more balanced view of Shakespeare's plays in their likeness and difference, a better spectrum of them, going from tragedy to pure comedy or comedy in the strict sense, if one distinguishes these two kinds of Romance from the comedies in the strict sense.

A third individual defect in the Folio is the placing of *Cymbeline* with the tragedies. It belongs with the comedies in the loose sense of that word in the Folio division since things end happily for the main good characters. But it would be better to place *Cymbeline* among the Mercy and Forgiveness Romances. And indeed in many editions of Shakespeare's plays now, it is placed with the other (mercy and forgiveness) Romances such as *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest* and *Pericles*. However, the mistake of the Folio in placing *Cymbeline* among the tragedies is perhaps a sign of the more serious character of the Mercy and Forgiveness Romances whereby (on the spectrum of Shakespeare plays) they are closer to tragedy while the Love and Friendship Romances are close to comedy in the strict sense. In other words, the particular mistake of the place of *Cymbeline* is a sign both of the defect in designation of three kinds of play as *Comedies* and the more serious nature of one of these kinds.

Although the ten history plays are separated from the tragedies on a different basis than are the comedies, they are, for the most part, more like tragedies than comedies. Nevertheless, an experience of trying to divide the plays suggests that one should set aside for awhile the ten history plays because of something particular and unique about some of them at least and divide the remaining twenty-seven plays into their kinds. Then one can compare the ten history plays with the division of the twenty seven other plays. We thus acknowledge some reason for the separation in the *Folio* of the history plays from the others.

Looking at the twenty-seven plays, we see at one end the ten tragedies and at the other end, the five comedies. In-between, we find the romances which are of two kinds: Six plays closer to tragedy (we do not mean here closer to tragedy than comedy, but closer to tragedy or more serious than the other six romances) and six plays closer to comedy.

Perhaps then there are four kinds of plays of Shakespeare, starting from one contrary and going to the other contrary. Starting with tragedy, one goes to the mercy and forgiveness romance and then to the love and friendship romance and ends with the other contrary the pure comedy.

The history plays are mainly tragedies while the *Henry the IV* and *Henry V* plays, with their mixed comic and tragic scenes, cannot be put into the spectrum from tragedy to pure comedy. We can consider them to be a prologue to the plays or a foretaste of them.

Although our understanding of the history plays may require us to know the chronological order of the historical events enacted there, the appreciation of the them as a kind of play may make that chronological order of secondary importance. We should understand and enjoy *Richard II*, for example, as a tragedy although the events therein are something to have in mind when reading the *Henry IV* plays and the *Henry VI* plays. (Of course, if one wants to consider the political problem revealed in the English history plays or in the Roman history plays, one would want to read them in chronological order. The same would be true if one wanted to read them as an historian.

Coming back to the word *comedy,* one kind of play is a comedy in the strict sense, a likeness of the laughable in words, acted out. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is an example of this kind of play. Another kind of play called a *comedy* in the folio is a likeness of the serious, even though it ends happily. *The Winter's Tale*

and *Measure for Measure* are examples of this kind of play. Such plays are called comedies, not because they are representations of the laughable, but because they end happily for the main characters although after much suffering and forgiveness. (For a similar reason, Dante calls his great work *The Divine Comedy* even though it is most serious in what it represents.) The Greeks called such serious works tragedies (such as *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Philoctetes* by Sophocles) even though they do not end tragically. Indeed this use of words is found in the Folio of 1623 where *Cymbeline* is put with the tragedies, even though it is the same kind of play as *The Winter's Tale*. Such plays can also be called mercy and forgiveness romances. They should be ordered immediately after tragedy or included with tragedy as a second kind of tragedy (a less tragic kind). The third kind of play found under the word comedy is the love and friendship play. This kind of play is between the comedy in the strict sense of a likeness of the laughable and the tragedy in the Greek or broad sense (including the mercy and forgiveness play). Indeed the lover is in one way pitiful and, in another way, laughable. Hence, Benvolio pities Romeo in his unreturned love for Rosalind and Mercutio makes fun of him.

The main reason for a division of Shakespeare's plays into kinds is to give the reader a different way to approach each or to receive each. One should not seek the same pleasure from each kind of work. As Aristotle observed in his book *About the Poetic Art*, one should not seek in tragedy the pleasure which is appropriate to comedy, but that which fits tragedy. Likewise Henry Fielding, in the preface to his work *Joseph Andrews* , finds it necessary to speak about the kind of work he is writing (it being an unfamiliar form to his readers) so that, as he says, the reader will not expect a pleasure other than the one intended.

One should not demand more precision in a division than is possible in the matter being divided. But Shakespeare's plays do not admit of a very precise division. Many of his plays, for example, have a mixed character; and others, a sub-plot somewhat different in spirit from the main plot. Hence a division of his works should not be taken too precisely, but should be understood with some qualifications and exceptions and border-line cases. Many works must be divided against others, not by something which they have which the others do not, but because they have more of something in comparison to the others.

One way to understand more the division of Shakespeare's plays is to consider the principal passions whose differences can be used to distinguish the plays on the basis of the passions to which they move us. In *Henry VI, Part Three*, Act IV, Sc. 6 (lines 1-5), King Henry touches upon the four principal passions:

> Master lieutenant, now that God and friends
> Have shaken Edward from the regal seat,
> And turn'd my captive state to liberty,
> My fear to hope, my sorrows unto joys,
> At our enlargement what are thy due fees?

These are the four chief or principal passions or emotions as Thomas explains in many places. His explains them thus in *Scriptum Super Lib. III Sent.,* Dist XXVI, Q. I, Art. IV, Ad 5:

> omnes praedictae passiones ad has principales passiones reducuntur
>
> vel sicut species ad genus, sicut admiratio ad timorem;
>
> vel sicut imperfectum ad perfectum, sicut concupiscentia ad gaudium;
>
> Vel sicut effectus ad causam et participans ad participatum, sicut audacia et ira ad spem, quia spes tendit in arduum bonum quod de se est tale ut in illud debeat tendi, audacia autem et ira tendunt in arduum nocivum repellendum, quod quidem non est tale ut in ipsum tendi debeat, sed magis ut fugiatur; tendunt tamen in ipsum inquantum participat aliquid de ratione boni quod est victoria ipsius; et ideo spes participatur quodammodo in audacia et ira, sicut quod est per se, in eo quod est per accidens.

Joy and sorrow or sadness are direct opposites. But hope and fear are not. Hope is directly opposed to despair. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act III, Sc. 1 (lines 247-248) Proteus says to Valentine who has been banished from the court and hence from Silvia:

> Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that,
> And manage it against despairing thoughts.

And In *Richard II*, Act II, Sc. 2 (lines 45-48 & 66-71):

> Queen: Then wherefore dost thou hope he is not shipp'd?
>
> Green: That he, our hope, might have retir'd his power
> And driven into despair an enemy's hope
> Who strongly hath set footing in this land...

Bushy: Despair not, madam.

Queen: Who shall hinder me?
I will despair, and be at enmity
With cozening Hope. He is a flatterer,
A parasite, a keeperback of Death.
Which false Hope lingers in extremity.

And fear is more directly opposed to confidence. In *Henry IV, Part Two*, Act IV, Sc. 1:

For, lo! within a ken our army lies
Upon mine honour, all too confident
To give admittance to a thought of fear.

There is a question about the words here. Should confidence or rather audacity or boldness be considered the opposite of fear? Consider this text of Thomas in *Scriptum Super Lib. III Sent.,* Dist XXVI, Q. I, Art. III, Ad 5:

> cum arduum sive difficile est proprium objectum irascibilis, differentiae facientes oppositiones in passionibus irascibilis sunt difficile facultatem superans vel non superans; et utrumque vel est bonum vel malum.
>
> Fiducia ergo seu confidentia importat motum irascibilis in quod aestimatur ut facultatem non excedens, quod quidem specialiter circa bonum importat spes, circa mala autem audacia, nisi quod audacia excessum importat quandoque, unde in malum quandoque accipitur.
>
> Motus autem appetitus in id quod aestimatur ut superans facultatem sive in bonum sive in malum, est diffidentia. In bonum autem specialiter est desperatio, in malum autem timor. Ira autem est passio composita ex audacia et tristitia et spe, ut ex dictis patere potest.

But hope of victory gives confidence (or audacity or boldness) and fear leads to despair. *Henry VI, Part Three,* Act I, Sc. 1 (line 178), Westmoreland says:

Base, fearful, and despairing Henry!

And in *Henry VIII,* Act II, Sc. 2:

fears and despairs

And in *Richard III*, Act V, Sc. 3:

Ghost of Vaughan to sleeping Richard:

Think upon Vaughan; and, with guilty fear,
Let fall thy lance! despair and die!

Ghost of Buckingham to Richard:

O, in the battle think on Buckingham,
And die in terror of thy guiltiness!
Dream on, dream on, of bloody deeds and death
Fainting, despair; despairing, yield thy breath!

And when Richard wakes:

Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear myself? there's none else by.....
I shall despair - There is no creature loves me.

And in *Henry VIII,* Act II, Sc. 2, Norfolk on Wolsley:

He dives into the king's soul; and there scatters
Dangers, doubts, wringing of the conscience
Fears and despairs; and all these for his marriage.

There is a cycle by fortune that goes from hope and joy to fear and sadness and back again, or vice-versa.

In *Antony & Cleopatra,* Act IV, Sc. 8 (lines 20-23):

.....Antony
Is valiant and dejected, and by starts
His fretted fortunes give him hope and fear
Of what he has and has not.
[fretted: checkered, varied]

And more fully in the wonderful lines from *King Lear,* Act IV, Sc. 1 (lines 1-6) spoken by Edgar:

Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,

Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear.
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter.

This is the cycle which goes from misery to happiness and from happiness to misery. The one in happiness fears to fall from it to misery as represented in the great tragedies. But the one who is miserable could wish to die. *Timon of Athens*, Act IV, Sc. 3:

Thou shouldst desire to die, being miserable.

And yet there is this medicine for the miserable they may stand still in *esperance* (hope). *Measure for Measure*, Act III, Sc. 1:

The miserable have no other medicine
But only hope.

But such a one may be in despair rather than hope. *Measure for Measure*, Act IV, Sc. 3:

But I will keep her ignorant of her good,
To make her heavenly comforts of despair,
When it is least expected.

In life, one should try to strike a balance, as in *Henry IV, Part One*, Act IV, Sc. 4:

Gent.: Doubt not, my lord, he shall be well oppos'd.

Arch.: I hope no less, yet needful 'tis to fear.

One can distinguish the kinds of play and, in general, the kinds of fiction by the emotions which they move. Even simple tales are so divided. Thus, in *Richard II*, Act III, Sc. 4:

Lady: Madam, we'll tell tales.

Queen: Of sorrow or of joy?

Here Shakespeare divides tales (and presumably plays) by two of the principal passions, if not the most principal passions. This is common. See, for example, Sir Walter Scott (Marmion?) quoted in Washington Irving's *Abbotsford*:

And ever by the winter hearth,

Old tales I heard of woe or mirth.

And in *Cymbeline*, Act II, Sc. 1:

Hermione: .....pray you, sit by us,
And tell's a tale.

Mamillus: Merry or sad shall't be?

Hermione: As merry as you will.

Mamillus: A sad tale's best for winter.

Sometimes, as in these words of Mamilllus, the sad tale is appropriated to winter and the merry tale to summer. A few examples of this will be useful.

In *Cymbeline,* Act III, Sc. 4, lines 12-14:

.....If't be summer news,
Smile to't before; if winterly, thou need'st
But keep that count'nance still.

And in *Richard III*, Act I, Sc.1 (lines 1-2):

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun of York.

And in *Sonnet 98*, lines 7:

Summer's story. [pleasant tale]

And the names of two plays: *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* and *Winter's Tale*

But there is also something in-between the sad and the merry, as there is something in-between winter and summer. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act I, Sc. 5, lines 50-52:

Cleopatra: What was he, sad or merry?

Alexas: Like to the time o'th'year between the extremes
Of hot and cold, he was nor sad nor merry.

Sometimes the plays at the end of the spectrum, tragedy and comedy, are spoken of under other opposites, the heavy and the light. In *Hamlet*, Act II, Sc. 2 (lines 403-404):

> Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.

And we find the following from Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia*, 1598, in The Yale Shakespeare, *Shakespeare of Stratford*, n. XIX, (A), p. 26:

> As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latins: so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage. For comedy witness his Gentlemen of Verona, his Errors, his Love Labors Lost, his Love Labors Won, his Midsummer's Night Dream, and his Merchant of Venice: for tragedy his Richard the 2, Richard the 3, Henry the 4, King John, Titus Andronicus, and his Romeo and Juliet."

But just as there is something in-between the contraries of summer and winter, so there is something in between the heavy and the light. Thus, in the play*Coriolanus*, Act II, Sc. 1, lines 202-203, Menenius:

> A hundred thousand welcomes; I could weep,
> And I could laugh; I am light, and heavy.

The first and greatest difference in Shakespeare's plays is between those that imitate a serious action and those that imitate a laughable action. Although plays are an imitation of human acts and these are divided by good and bad, that difference does not seem to be the first difference to be used in distinguishing plays. Rather the difference between the serious and the laughable is first. Shakespeare, having a noble nature, most of all imitates serious action. But the universality of his genius and art extends also to excellent comedy. (note that the word *sad* is often used as a synonym for serious.)

The serious and the laughable are contrary. One expels the other. Hence, the advice of Gorgias approved of by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric (1419b):*

> And one ought, as Gorgias says rightly, destroy the serious by the laughable and the laughable by the serious, their being contraries.

Likewise, the pity which is aroused by tragedy is excluded by the mirth of laughter. In *King Henry IV Part One* (Act II, Sc. 2), Prince Hal says:

.....Falstaff sweats to death,
And lards the lean earth as he walks along:
Were't not for laughing, I should pity him.

Cleopatra also touches upon this opposition of the mirth of comedy and the honor of tragedy in these words about Antony (*Antony and Cleopatra,* Act I, Sc. 2):

He was dispos'd to mirth, but on the sudden
A Roman thought hath struck him.

[Yale: A Roman thought - thought inspired by Roman virtue]

But Antony may forget his honor in eating and sleeping, as Pompey says about him (*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II, Sc. 1):

Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,
Keep his brain fuming; Epicurean cooks
Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite,
That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honor
Even till a Lethe'd dullness.

[Yale prorogue...dullness suspend completely his sense of honor]

Mirth becomes a feast. But Antony can remember his honor. (*Antony and Cleopatra,* Act II, Sc. 2):

The honor is sacred which he talks on now.

Our forefathers pledged their "sacred honor." (It is perhaps important to recall how pity is also called "sacred" by Shakespeare. Indeed pity or mercy is said to be an attribute of God himself to whom most of all honor is owed.)

Their contrariety is also spoken of in the Prologue to *King Henry VIII:*

I come no more to make you laugh: things now,
That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
Sad, high and working, full of state and woe,
Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow,
We now present. Those that can pity, here
May, if they think it well, let fall a tear;

The subject will deserve it. Such as give
Their money out of hope they may believe,
May here find truth too. Those that come to see
Only a show or two, and so agree
The play may pass, if they be still and willing,
I'll undertake may see away their shilling
Richly in two short hours. Only they
That come to hear a merry bawdy play,
A noise of targets, or to see a fellow
In a long motley coat guarded with yellow,
Will be deceived; for, gentle hearers, know
To rank our chosen truth with such a show
As fool and fight is, besides forfeiting
Our own brains and the opinion that we bring
To make that only true we now intend,
Will leave us never an understanding friend.
Therefore, for goodness' sake, and as you are known
The first and happiest hearers of the town,
Be sad, as we would make ye: think ye see
The very persons of our noble story
As they were living; think you see them great,
And follow'd with the general throng and sweat
Of thousand friends; then, in a moment, see
How soon this mightiness meets misery:
And if you can be merry then, I'll say
A man may weep upon his wedding-day.

Here Shakespeare distinguishes between tragedy and comedy (a likeness of the laughable). The tear is to pity as laughter is to mirth. *Richard III*, Act IV, Sc. 2:

Tear-falling pity

But it is pity over the fall of the great in tragedy. *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act V, Sc. 2:

She shall be buried by her Antony:
No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
A pair so famous. High events as these
Strike those that make them; and their story is
No less in pity than his glory which
Brought them to be lamented.

And in *Richard II*, Act II, Sc. 4:

Ah, Richard,with the eyes of heavy mind
I see thy glory like a shooting star

Fall to the base earth from the firmament.
The sun sets weeping in the lowly west,
Witnessing storms to come, woe and unrest:
Thy friends are fled to wait upon thy foes,
And crossly to thy good all fortune goes.

Richard II, Act V, Sc. 1, Richard to Queen:

In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire
With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales
Of woeful ages long ago betid;
And ere thou bid good night, to quite their griefs
Tell thou the lamentable tale of me,
And send the hearers weeping to their beds;

Tragedy moves us to fear as well as to pity. This is seen in the Prologue to *Romeo and Juliet:*

Two households, both alike in dignity
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife

The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffick of our stage.

The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

Pity is named in the second quatrain before fear in the third quatrain. Those two emotions go together as do their opposites. In *Henry IV, Part I*, Act IV, Sc. 1 (lines 41-45):

But to my charge. The king hath sent to know
The nature of your griefs. and whereupon
You conjure from the breast of civil peace
Such bold hostility, teaching his duteous land

Audacious cruelty.

Audacious cruelty is opposed to fearful pity.

There is also element of wonder as an effect of tragedy which, although sometimes considered a form of fear, can be distinguished from fear as ordinarily understood in tragedy. In *Hamlet*, Act V, Sc. 2, Horatio says:

> What is it you would see?
> If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

Fear is not mentioned here because of the alliteration, as is Shakespeare's custom. And in *King Henry VIII*, Act III, Sc. 2:

> Wolsley: Why, how now, Cromwell!
>
> Cromwell: I have no power to speak, sir.
>
> Wolsley: What amazed
> At my misfortunes? can thy spirit wonder
> A great man should decline? Nay, an you weep
> I am fall'n indeed.

As You Like It, Act III, Sc. 5. Rosalind to Phebe:

> Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?

Perhaps there is more connection here than alliteration. Fear retains pride and humility and pity have some connection. Tragedy humbles us. We fear because the same could happen to us. We pity others knowing that it could happen to us. But the proud man thinks it could not happen to him

The mirth and hope which comedy arouse (See my article on the Definition of Comedy) are opposed to the pity and fear of tragedy. LIkewise, when we speak of *laughing to scorn* we see how comedy is more akin to pride. Laughter is even closer to cruelty than to pity. Those who torture others may laugh, but not pity.

If tragedy and comedy are contraries, the other forms of the play or drama are in-between them and derived in some way from them, as the lukewarm is in-between the hot and the cold and having something of both of them.

But is there anything in Shakespeare's words useful for the consideration of whether it is reasonable to distinguish between tragedy and comedy two other kinds of play, the mercy romance and the love romance. In *Hamlet*, Act II, Sc. 2, lines 323-332:

Hamlet: He that plays the king shall be welcome,
his majesty shall have tribute of me;
the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target;
the lover shall not sigh gratis;
the humorous man shall end his part in peace;
the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs
are tickle o'the sere...What players are they?

Rosencrantz: Even those you were wont to take delight in,
the tragedians of the city."

Could Shakespeare in the above be touching a bit upon our distinction of the four kinds of play and in the same order?

Romantic love between men and women is close to comedy. In *As You Like It*, Act II, Sc. 4:

But if thy love were ever like to mine,
(As sure I think did never man love so)
How many actions most ridiculous
Hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy."

See also *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act V, Sc. 2, lines 761-784, spoken by Biron.

But insofar as the lover is not only ridiculous, but also pitiful in his misery, the love romance may depart a little from the pure comedy in the direction of the serious. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, Sc. 1 before it becomes tragic, Romeo is both laughable and pitiful:

Romeo: .....O me. What fray was here?
Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love.
Why, then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O any thing, of nothing first create!
O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!

This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
Dost thou not laugh?

Benvolio: No, coz., I rather weep.

Romeo: Good heart, at what?

Benvolio: At thy good heart's oppression.

Compare the above words such as "O heavy lightness" with Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light above.

And later in *Romeo and Juliet*, when Mercutio makes fun of Romeo and his unrequited passion and Romeo comments (Act II, Sc. 2, line 1):

He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

We have in Bandello, a source for Shakespeare, the following (quoted in Appendix I, p. 185 of Morton Luce's edition of *Twelfth Night*):

there is no misery in the world sharper or
more grievous than to love and be unloved

And this misery is the object of pity. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act III, Sc. 2 (lines 234-235):

But miserable most to love unloved.
This you should pity rather than despise.

Some other references to that wound which makes the lover miserable and an object of pity in the love romances:

In *As You Like It*, Act III, Sc. 5 (lines 28-34):

Silvius: O dear Phebe
If ever - as that ever may be near -
You meet in some fresh cheek the power of fancy,
Then shall you know the wounds invisible
That love's keen arrows make.

Phebe: But till that time
Come not thou near me; and when that time comes,
Afflict me with thy mocks, pity me not;

As till that time I shall not pity thee.

And in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Act I, Sc. 3, lines 209-212 and 221-225 spoken by Helena:

I know I love in vain, strive against hope;
Yet, in this captious and intenible sieve
I still pour in the waters of my love
And lack not to lose still.....

.....O! then, give pity
To her, whose state is such that cannot choose
But lend and give where she is sure to lose
That seeks not to find that her search implies,
But, riddle-like, lives sweetly where she dies.

And in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act IV, Sc. 4, lines 83-91:

Julia: I cannot choose But pity her.

Proteus: Wherefore should'st thou pity her?

Julia: Because methinks that she lov'd you as well
As you do love your lady Silvia.
She dreams on him that has forgot her love;
You dote on her that cares not for your love.
'Tis pity love should be so contrary;
And thinking on it makes me cry, alas!

Ibid., Act IV, Sc. 4, lines 103:

Julia about Proteus: Because I love him, I must pity him.
[n his unrequited love]

Shakespeare's mercy romances are akin to his tragedies for mercy is the same or almost the same as pity and the emotions of tragedy are pity and fear while those of the mercy romances are mercy and hope. In this way the mercy plays would seem to be between tragedy and comedy for comedy moves us to mirth and hope.

If pure comedy moves us to the emotions of mirth and hope and pure tragedy to the emotions of pity and fear, the mercy romance might seem to be exactly in the middle between these two contrary forms of play. For the mercy

romance moves us to mercy and hope and mercy is the same or almost the same as pity. But what has been called above the love romance may be between the mercy romance in the middle and pure comedy one of the contrary extremes. The love romance has something of the hope and mercy or pity of the mercy romance, but with a stronger infusion of mirth which places it closer to comedy or in-between the mercy romance and the pure comedy.

The identity or connection of pity and mercy is seen in *The Merchant of Venice,* Act IV, Sc. 1, lines 3-6 where the Duke says to Antonio about Shylock:

> I am sorry for thee. Thou art come to answer
> A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch,
> Uncapable of pity, void and empty
> From any dram of mercy."

But mercy is perhaps used more where the power to inflict punishment and misery is restrained. In *Measure for Measure*, Act II, Sc. 2, lines 59-63, Isabella:

> No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,
> Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,
> The marshal's truncheon,nor the judge's robe,
> Become them with one half so good a grace
> As mercy does.

And the famous lines in *The Merchant of Venice*, Act IV, Sc. 1, lines 184-197, spoken by Portia:

> The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
> It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
> It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
> 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
> The throned monarch better than his crown;
> His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
> The attribute to awe and majesty,
> Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
> But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
> It is enthroned in the heart of kings,
> It is an attribute to God himself;
> And earthly power doth then show likest God's
> When mercy seasons justice.

King John, Act IV, Sc. 3 (lines 117-118):

the infinite and boundless reach of mercy

Mercy in the mercy plays is associated with forgiveness. *Cymbeline*, Act V, Sc. 5 (lines 418-421) Posthumus to Iachimo:

> Kneel not to me.
> The power that I have on you is to spare you:
> The malice towards you to forgive you. Live
> And deal with others better,

Mercy seasons justice or anger. In *The Tempest*, Act V, Sc. 1 (lines 25-28) Prospero:

> Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick
> Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
> Do I take part: the rarer action is
> In virtue than in vengeance.

Vengeance is more proper to tragedy where anger is opposed to pity. *Coriolanus*, Act I, Sc. 9, line 86:

> And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity

It is remarkable that Shakespeare should have turned for most of his late plays to the mercy and forgiveness romance. For the passions which these arouse, mercy and hope, have a certain likeness to virtue. Thomas teaches this about mercy (*misericordia*) in *Scriptum Super Lib. III Sententiarum,* Dist. XXXIIII, Q. III, Art. IV, Sol. IV, Ad 3:

> aliquae passiones, quamvis proprie loquendo, non sint virtutes, tamen inquantum sunt laudabiles, habent aliquid de ratione virtutis; sicut misericordia et verecundia; et praecipue secundum quod est ibi electio.

And in *Scriptum Super Lib. III Sent.*, Dist. XXVI, Q. II, Art. I, Ad 1, he explains about hope:

> spes, secundum quod est passio, non est virtus, sed secundum quod est in appetitu intellectivae partis. Nec aliarum passionum nomina ita convenienter ad virtutes transumi possunt sicut nomen spei. quia spes dicitur in ordine ad bonum; et propter hoc importat

> motum appetitus in bonum tendentis, et sic habet quamdam similitudinem cum electione et intentione boni quae requiruntur in omni virtute.
>
> Timor autem dicatur in ordine ad malum. Recedere autem a malo, quamvis ad virtutem pertineat, non tamen in hoc consistit perfectio virtutis, sed in electione boni.
>
> Gaudium autem et tristitia magis dicunt impressionem boni et mali in appetitum quam motum appetitus in ea; unde non habent similitudinem cum electione virtutis.

Shakespeare also says about hope in *Richard III* (Act V, Sc. 2, Richmond):

> All for our vantage. Then, in God's name, march.
> True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings;
> Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.

Misericordia or pity is in tragedy and hope, in comedy. The other two emotions, fear (in tragedy) and joy or mirth (in comedy) are not like virtue. But the mercy romances of Shakespeare combine both hope and mercy. This is very interesting.

A DIVISION OF TWENTY-SEVEN PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

TRAGEDIES (10 plays)

NORTHERN TRAGEDIES

Hamlet
Lear
Macbeth

ITALIAN TRAGEDIES

Romeo & Juliet
Othello

CLASSICAL OR ROMAN-GREEK TRAGEDIES

Julius Caesar

Antony and Cleopatra

Coriolanus
Timon of Athens

(Titus Andronicus)

MERCY OR FORGIVENESS ROMANCES (6 plays)

Pericles
Cymbeline
Winter's Tale
Tempest

Measure for Measure
All's Well That Ends Well

LOVE ROMANCES OR ROMANTIC COMEDIES (6 plays)

Much Ado About Nothing
As You Like It
Twelfth Night

Midsummer Night's Dream
Two Gentlemen of Verona
Merchant of Venice

COMEDIES (5 plays)

GOOD NATURED COMEDIES

Comedy of Errors
Taming of the Shrew
Merry Wives of Windsor

SATIRES

WHITE SATIRE

Love's Labour's Lost

BLACK SATIRE

Troilus & Cressida

The Sub-Division of the Tragedies

There are at least three distinctions to be found among the tragedies. One is in place and time. A second is in the relative emphasis on nature (the natural and the unnatural) or on fortune and fate. A third is on the pitifulness of the character.

Three of the tragedies are set in the North (England, Scotland and Denmark) and in Medieval times. Two of the tragedies are set in Italy (around Venice or Verona) during late Medieval or Renaissance times. Five are set around Rome or Athens in Ancient times.

Although all the plays represent what is by nature and what is by fortune in human affairs, nevertheless compared to each other, some have more emphasis on nature (the natural and the unnatural) and some on fortune or fate. This is seen both in their plots and in their words. The Northern tragedies emphasize nature more than the Italian plays while the latter emphasize fortune & fate more than the former. In the Roman plays, fortune & fate are more emphasized in three of them (*Titus Andronicus, Julius Caesar, and Antony & Cleopatra*) while in *Coriolanus*, nature is again prominent. In the Athenian play, *Timon of Athens*, nature is also emphasized.

A third distinction is in the pitifulness of the character. Tragedy is defined by pity and pity is sadness over the *undeserved* misfortune or misery of another. Now King Lear is more pitiful than Macbeth in that the former's misery is less deserved. But Macbeth chooses the evil which brings about his downfall and, for that reason, deserves his misery. Yet we do pity Macbeth to some extent (and fear our own ability to choose evil).

Although each of these distinctions is important, and we have at different times divided the ten tragedies by each of these distinctions, it is perhaps best to distinguish them by the place and time in which they are set. For this distinction, besides being more able to be kept in mind, also includes to some extent the distinction by emphasis on nature or on fortune insofar as the Northern tragedies

emphasize nature and the Italian ones fortune & fate and the Roman plays, for the most part, fortune & fate. The Athenian play and one Roman play again emphasize nature. It is important for the imagination to connect the atmosphere of place and time with the more philosophical distinction made by reason between the causes nature and fortune. The distinction based on the pitifulness of the character is perhaps more limited in extent than to be the natural way of distinguishing all of the plays and is perhaps best brought in when contrasting say *Macbeth* with *King Lear* among the Northern tragedies.

The Sub-Division of the Comedies

The distinction in the comedies between the three *good-natured* comedies and the two *satires* is not into equals. It is proportional to the distinction made between *King Lear* and *Macbeth*. Just as the pity aroused by *King Lear* is more perfect than that aroused by *Macbeth*, so the mirth aroused by the good-natured comedies is fuller and more free of melancholy than that aroused by satire. And this is much more true of the black satire than of the white satire.

Among the good natured comedies, nature is more emphasized in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, but fortune, more in *The Comedy of Errors*.

If we compare the two satires to each other in this respect, fortune is more important in *Troilus & Cressida* and nature in *Love's Labour's Lost*. But our fallen nature is especially satirized in *Troilus & Cressida*.

The Sub-Division of the Mercy Romances

We have distinguished the four Mercy Romances which so many editors have put together under the title of *Romance* and which are the four last plays written by Shakespeare (apart from *Henry VIII* which some think is only in part by Shakespeare) and distinguished them from two other earlier plays which are not so closely related to the last four as those are to each other. For the closeness of the four, see the appendix of comments on the *Romances*.

The two earlier plays, *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well That Ends Well*, seem, from a long experience of reading them, more serious than the love romances or to have less of the comic in them. This is more clear in the case of *Measure for Measure* than in the case of *All's Well That Ends Well*. The latter resembles more the love romances because of the predominance of the theme of love in it. Yet the more one reads it, the more one is also struck by the aspect of forgiveness in it. Because of this and the seriousness or heaviness of the play as we read it, it seems to us better to place it with the mercy romances than the love romances.

In what may be the chronological order of the plays, these two plays were written after all the love romances and are followed by six tragedies and the (other) four mercy romances and *Henry VIII*.

Fortune and fate play an immense role in the mercy romances, but divine providence is also seen as extending to these chance events.

The Sub-Division of the Love Romances

We have distinguished the six love romances into the three earlier romances (*A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Two Gentlemen of Verona,* and *The Merchant of Venice)* and the three later and more mature works (*Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It,* and *Twelfth Night)*

In the love romances, as in the love tragedies of *Romeo & Juliet* and *Othello*, fortune & fate are usually more emphasized than nature, relatively speaking. But in *As You Like It*, nature is more important.

The Place of the Ten English History Plays

Most of the ten history plays resemble the tragedies, especially the northern European tragedies. In this regard, it is significant to note the importance of nature also in them.

Richard III is like *Macbeth* in that the main character seems to choose evil. *Richard II* is like *King Lear* in some ways, but the ways in which the chief characters come to lose their kingship are quite different. *King John* is like *Richard II*, but the main character is not as bad. *Henry VIII* has less unity, but the downfall of Wolsley and the Queen's suffering have something in common with *Richard II*. The *Henry VI* plays are somewhat episodic, but the likeness of the natural and unnatural is very prominent in them.

But the two *Henry IV* plays and *Henry V* cannot be placed in the above division and must stand by themselves apart from the division. The mixture of somewhat tragic scenes in the *Henry IV* plays with some of Shakespeare's best comic scenes makes it seem forced to place these plays with either the tragedies or with the comedies. The rise of one man seems to unify these plays and *Henry V* has epic proportions or dimensions.

Thus seven of the ten history plays may be placed with the tragedies. And three of the history plays do not seem to fall naturally into our division because of their unusual mix.

The Non-Dramatic Poems of Shakespeare and the Division of the Plays

Of Shakespeare's non-dramatic works, *The Rape of Lucrece* is like the tragedies and *Venus and Adonis* like the comic satires. The Sonnets are closest in theme to the love (and friendship) romances. The *Phoenix & the Turtle* is also like the love romances.

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APPENDIX I: FORTUNE-FATE AND NATURE PLAYS

Among the tragedies, the three Northern tragedies (*Hamlet*, *Lear* and *Macbeth*) are plays in which the natural and the unnatural are emphasized in the plot and in the words.

Among the Roman- Greek plays, *Coriolanus* and *Timon of Athens* are nature plays.

But the three remaining Roman plays (*Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Titus Andronicus*) are fortune-fate plays in their plots and words.

And the two Italian love tragedies *(Romeo & Juliet* and *Othello)* are both fortune-fate plays.

Thus, apart from the history plays, five of the tragedies are nature plays and five are fortune-fate plays.

But the ten English history plays seem for the most part to be nature plays.

The distinction of nature and fortune plays among the five comedies is less striking than among the tragedies. But perhaps two of the good-natured comedies, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* are more nature plays while the remaining one, *The Comedy of Errors* is a fortune-fate play. And when the two satires are compared, the white satire, *Love's Labour's Lost*, is more a nature play and the black satire, *Troilus & Cressida*, more a fortune-fate play. Yet the latter savages much, or says much about, our fallen nature.

The distinction between nature plays and fortune plays is much less marked in the romances. One might speak of *Pericles* (among the mercy romances) and to a lesser extent *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and perhaps *Twelfth Night* (among the love romances) as fortune-fate plays. The love romance *As You Like It* would seem to be a nature play with its emphasis on the goodness of nature as seen in the forest and the reconcilation of the two pairs of brothers in the forest.

But *if* and *how* one should distinguish the remaining five mercy or forgiveness romances *(Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, *Tempest*, *Measure for Measure*, and *All's Well That Ends Well)* by nature or fortune is not clear. Likewise, in the three remaining love romances (*Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*)

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ROMEO AND JULIET - A FORTUNE-FATE PLAY

Prologue to *Romeo and Juliet*:

Two households, both alike in dignity

In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife

Romeo and Juliet, Act I, Sc. 5:

Benvolio: Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

Romeo: I fear too early: for my mind misgives
Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels and expire the term
Of a despised life closed in my breast
By some vile forfeit of untimely death
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,
Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen

Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Sc. 2:

Juliet: Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,
His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell.

Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Sc. 3:

Romeo: O! let us hence; I stand on sudden haste

Fr. Laurence: Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast

Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Sc. 5:

Juliet: Hie to high fortune...

Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Sc. 6:

Fr. Laurence to Juliet: These violent delights have violent ends...
Therefore, love moderately.

Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Sc. 1, lines 1-4:

Benvolio: I pray thee, good Mercutio,let's retire:
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad.
And, if we meet, we shall not escape a brawl,
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Sc. 1, lines 116-117:

Romeo: This day's black fate on more days doth depend,
This but begins the woe others must end.

Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Sc. 1, line 133:

Romeo: O. I am fortune's fool!

Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Sc. 1, lines 139-140:

Benvolio: O noble prince, I can discover all
The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl

Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Sc. 5:

Juliet: O fortune, fortune; all men call thee fickle.

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 1:

Romeo: Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 2:

Fr. Laurence: Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
The letter was not nice but full of charge
Of dear import, and the neglecting it
May do much danger.

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, line 82:

Romeo about Paris: One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 109-112:

Romeo: O, here

Will I set up my everlasting rest,
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 116-120

Romeo: Come, bitter conduct, come, unsavoury guide!
Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
The dashing rocks they sea-sick weary bark!
Here's to my love. [drinks] O true apothecary!
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 135-136:

Fr. Laurence: Stay then; I'll go alone. fear comes upon me
O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 144-146:

Fr. Laurence: Romeo. O, pale! Who else? What, Paris too?
And steep'd in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 153-154:

Fr. Laurence: A greater power than we can contradict
Hath thwarted our intents.

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 250-252:

Fr. Laurence: But he which bore my letter, Friar John,
Was stay'd by accident, and yesternight
Return'd my letter back.

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 260-261:

Fr. Laurence: She wakes; and I entreated her come forth,
And bear this work of heaven with patience.

Romeo and Juliet, Act V, Sc. 3, lines 291-295:

Prince: Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!
See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,

That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love.
And I for winking at your discords too
Have lost a brace of kinsmen: all are punish'd

OTHELLO - A FORTUNE-FATE PLAY

Othello, Act II, Sc. 1:

Othello: .....If it were now to die
'Twere now to be most happy; for I fear,
My soul hath her content so absolute
That not another comfort like to this
Succeeeds in unknown fate.

Othello, Act IV, Sc. 1:

Lodovico: Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate
Call all in all sufficient? This the nature
Whom passion could not shake? Whose solid virtue
The shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce?

Othello, Act IV, Sc. 2:

Desdemona: It is my wretched fortune.

Othello, Act V, Sc. 2:

Othello: Who can control his fate? 'tis not so now.
Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt
And very sea-mark of my utmost call.

Othello about Desdemona: O ill-starr'd wench

Othello about himself: O fool! fool! fool!

Othello: When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am, nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak

Of one that loved not wisely but too well.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA - A FORTUNE-FATE PLAY

Antony and Cleopatra, Act II, Sc. 3:

Antony: Say to me, whose fortunes shall rise higher,
Caesar's or mine?

Soothsayer: Caesar's
Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side:
Thy demon, that's thy spirit which keeps thee, is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
Where Caesar's is not; but near him the angel
Becomes a fear, as being o'erpower'd: therefore
Make space enough between you.

Antony: Speak this no more.

Soothsayer: To none but thee; no more but when to thee.
If thou dost play with him at any game,
Thou art sure to lose; and, of that natural luck,
He beats thee 'gainst the odds: thy lustre thickens
When he shines by: I say again, thy spirit
Is all afraid to govern thee near him,
But he away, 'tis noble. [Exist soothsayer]

Antony: .....Be it art or hap,
He hath spoken true: the very dice obey him,
And in our sports my better cunning faints
Under his chance: if we draw lots, he speeds;
His cocks do win the battle still of mine
When it is all to nought, and his quails ever
Beat mine, inhoop'd, at odds.

Antony and Cleopatra, Act III, Sc. 11:

Antony about Caesar: .....He makes me angry
And at this time most easy 'tis to do't,
When my good stars, that were my former guides,
Have empty let their orbs and shot their fires
Into the abysm of hell

Antony and Cleopatra, Act IV, Sc. 14:

Second Guard: The star is fall'n

First Guard: And time is at his period

All Alas, and woe!.....

Antony: Nay, good fellows, do not please sharp fate
To grace it with your sorrows: bid that welcome
Which comes to punish us, and we punish it
Seeming to bear it lightly.

Antony and Cleopatra, Act IV, Sc. 15:

Cleopatra: No. let me speak, and let me rail so high
That the false housewife Fortune break her wheel
Provok'd by my offence.

Antony: The miserable change now at my end
Lament nor sorrow at, but please your thoughts
In feeding them with those my former fortunes
Wherein I lived, the greatest prince o'the world,
The noblest.....

Antony and Cleopatra, Act V, Sc. 1:

Dercetas: I say, O Caesar, Antony is dead

Caesar: Look you sad, friends?
The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings.

Agrippa: And strange it is
That nature must compel us to lament
Our most persisted deeds

Mecaenas: His taints and honours
Wag'd equal with him

Agripa: A rarer spirit never
Did steer humanity; but you, gods, will give us
Some faults to make us men. Caesar is touch'd

Mecaenas: When such a spacious mirror's set before him.
He needs must see himself.

Caesar: But yet let me lament.....
.....That our stars
Unreconciliable should divide
Our equalness to this.

Antony and Cleopatra, Act V, Sc. 2:

Cleopatra: My desolation does begin to make
A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Caesar,
Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,
A minister of her will; and it is great
To do that thing that ends all other deeds,
Which shackles accidents, and bolts up change,
Which sleeps and never palates more the dug
The beggar's nurse and Caesar's.

OTHER FORTUNE-FATE PLAYS

Titus Andronicus, Act I, Sc. 1:

Marcus: And welcome, nephews, from successful wars:
You that survive, and you that sleep in fame.
Fair Lords, your fortunes are alike in all,
That in your country's service drew your swords:
But safer triumph is this funeral pomp,
That hath aspired to Solon's happiness,
And triumphs over chance in honour's bed.

Titus Andronicus, Act V, Sc. 3, last words of play:

Lucius: See justice done on Aaron, that damn'd Moor,
By whom our heavy haps had their beginning.
Then, afterwards, to order well the state,
That like events may ne'er it ruinate.

Julius Caesar, Act III, Sc. 2:

Antony: .....Fortune is merry
And in this mood will give us any thing

Julius Caesar, Act IV, Sc. 3:

Brutus: There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

Julius Caesar, Act V, Sc. 3:

Cassius: This day I breathed first; time is come around,
And where I did begin, there shall I end;
My life is run his compass.

Plutarch, *Life of Caesar*, Modern Lib. ed. of the *Lives*, pp. 892-893:

> All these things might happen by chance. but the place which was destined for the scene of this murder, in which the senate met that day, was the same in which Pompey's statue stood, and was one of the edifices which Pompey had raised and dedicated with his theatre to the use of the public, plainly showing that there was something of a supernatural influence which guided the action and ordered it to that particular place.
>
> Cassius, just before the act, is said to have looked towards Pompey's statue, and silently implored his assistance, though he had been inclined to the doctrines of Epicurus.....
>
> when he saw Brutus' sword drawn, he covered his face with his robe and submitted, letting himself fall, whether it were by chance or that he was pushed in that direction by his murderers, at the foot of the pedestal on which Pompey's statue stood, and which was thus wetted with his blood. so that Pompey himself seemed to have presided, as it were, over the revenge done upon his adversary, who lay here at his feet, and breathed out his soul through his multitude of wounds, for they say he received three and twenty.

Twelfth Night, Act I, Sc. 5:

Olivia: I do I know not what, and fear to find
Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind.
Fate, show thy force: ourselves we do not owe;

What is decreed must be, and be this so.

Twelfth Night, Act II, Sc. 1:

Sebastian: My stars shine darkly over me; the malignancy
of my fate might perhaps distemper yours.

Twelfth Night, Act IV, Sc. 3:

Sebastian: this accident and flood of fortune

Twelfth Night, Act V, Sc. 1:

Viola: All the occurrence of my fortune

Pericles, Act I, Sc. 4:

Which welcome we'll accept; feast here awhile,
Until our stars that frown lend us a smile.

Pericles, Act II, Sc. 1:

Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven.

The Comedy of Errors, Act I, Sc. 1:

Aegeon: In Syracusa was I born, and wed
Unto a woman, happy but for me.
And by me too, had not our hap been bad.

Thus have you hard me sever'd from my bliss,
That by misfortunes was my life prolong'd,
To tell sad stories of my own mishaps.

The Comedy of Errors, Act V, Sc. 1, lines 125, 362-363, 396-398:

Who put unluckily into this bay.

These are the parents to these children,
Which accidentally are met together.

Abbess: Renowned duke, vouchsafe to take the pains
To go with us into the abbey here,
And hear at large discoursed all our fortunes.

Cymbeline, Act III, Sc. 4:

And you shall find me, wretched man, a thing
The most disdain'd of fortune.

The Rape of Lucrece, line 351, words of Tarquin:

Then Love and fortune be my gods, my guides

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