

Shakespeare under the Bed

By
Caroline Russell-King



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To Will

Yours was not sound and fury signifying nothing - it was everything.

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Dramaturgs - Bob White and Brad Fraser

Geillis Duncane - Valerie Planché

William Shakespeare - Trevor Leigh

Jack Horner - Chris Enright

Polly Palin - Shannon Stumecki

Dennis Graham - Luigi Riscaldino

Ivana Vagina - Gerald Matthews

Stage Manager- Donna Sharpe

The Players

Geillis Duncane (pronounced Jill iss) – *The Witch Apothecary*

William Shakespeare* – *The Player Poet*

Polly Palin – *The Fool*

Dennis Graham – *The King*

Ivana Vagina* – *The Queen*

Tiffin the black cat – *The Familiar*

(*Patrick Greene *The Player* and Will are one in the same as are Ivan Hascovitch and Ivana Vagina.)

The Set

The lab. Chapters Bookstore. Geillis' apartment. Ivanas' apartment The second floor at the Calgary Airport. Banff - a forest of green gobos. Theatre Calgary- lobby, reception area, Artistic Directors office and stage.

Notes on the set –The effect should be spare and economical rather than realistic or plush. All pieces (desk, garbage can, book shelf) should be on wheels. The airport can be done with just sound using the massive window as the fourth. Ivan's bed and equity cot could all be the same. The same goes for the blanket and arras. The forest should just be green gobos.

The Time

Winter 2023

Lab

A laptop projector projects dinosaur skeletons. Geillis Duncane, 30's, studies the scene. She looks at her watch. Then she pulls out a small tube from her lab coat and applies lip gloss. There is a knock on the door.)

Geillis

Come in!

(Enter Patrick Greene 30's wearing a Fed Ex shirt and carrying two packages)

Patrick

Hi Geillis, you have two today!

Geillis

So? Did you get the part?

Patrick

I did! I'm Henry Higgins.

Geillis

Congratulations!

Patrick

Would you like to come to opening, maybe we can get a drink after?

Geillis

I'd really like that.

Patrick

So now you don't have to fed ex your lunch to yourself anymore.

Geillis

(beat) You figured it out.

Patrick

Your handwriting is the same at the sender and I can tell it's a sandwich and a pop.

Geillis

I'm so embarrassed.

Patrick

Don't be. I wanted to ask you out a month ago but I thought you'd think I was just a delivery person with you being a paleontologist.

Geillis

Soon to be famous paleontologist! My boss, Jack Horner, found a coprolite outside of Drumheller.

Patrick

Oh a coprolite...

Geillis

That's a rock dating to the Cretaceous. A fossilized rock from of a gallon and a half of dinosaur excrement! Fossilized remnants of sixty-million-year-old blood vessels, still flexible. Red blood cells and bone cells, protein molecules with unchanged chemical structure.

Patrick

You've found viable blood samples?

Geillis

I work in the hybrid field of molecular paleontology. Evo-devo,

Patrick

Wasn't that a rock band in the 80s?

Geillis

Evolutionary developmental biology. We are five years away from reverse engineering a dinosaur from a chicken. Dinosaurs' genetic code lives on in modern birds.

Patrick

I like smart women. (He gives her the packages)

Geillis

This can't be for me it's from the forensic laboratories at the Canadian Conservation Institute.

Patrick

It must be important it has the highest priority shipping on it.

(She opens the envelope there is a test tube and a thumb drive. She looks into the test tube and snaps in thumb drive and begins to read the accompanying letter)

The test tube looks empty. I was hoping for mini dinosaur egg...

(The lap top projects onto the wall - the Saunders portrait of Shakespeare)

That's not a dinosaur, that's a Shakespeare!

Geillis

It's by an artist called Sanders believed to be his contemporary. The portrait belongs to Lloyd Sullivan. His mother kept it under the bed. Lloyd has spent his life savings trying to authenticate it. This *may* be the only known portrait of Shakespeare that was painted *in his lifetime*. This test was done yesterday. A sample of the paint. Most times in these cases they stick to the edges or the cracks.

Patrick

Obviously they are concerned to limit intervention on a portrait that once authenticated will be priceless.

Geillis

(Another image burns the wall) This is the ultraviolet-induced colour florescence photograph. Do you see this? (He indicates the place)

Patrick

Is it a scratch?

Geillis

Nobody but one person in the world knows this and you and I will be the second and third.

Patrick

What!?

Geillis

Sandwiched between the layers of paint. Hermetically sealed – a single hair.

(They both look at the test tube)

Patrick

Of the painter?

Geillis

These have been found in other portraits – used as a reference, a pigment match if you like, *of the subject*.

Patrick

Shakespeare.

Geillis

The hair was plucked. (pause) There is a bulb on the end of it.

Patrick

You have Shakespere's DNA?

Geillis

It starts to break down as soon as it has been exposed to air – this sample is degrading as we speak.

Patrick

So now what? You're going to grow a Shakespeare?

Geillis

It isn't that easy. For the project we want to work on we needed to implant DNA from a dinosaur into a chicken embryo. But we're you're not allowed to inject DNA into a human fetus.

Patrick

The fetus can't give consent. So you need somebody who can.

Geillis

It's pretty easy to rescue the DNA and mix it with a NK71 bio accelerator. (She puts the hair into a machine and adds some drops of NK71) I could inject it into me.

Patrick

Will that work you being a woman and all?

Geillis

I have no time to think about it. My specimen is losing potency.

Patrick

What would happen?

Geillis

The short answer is I don't know. I don't know if I could be the test subject and make the necessary observations.

Patrick

I could be the host body!

Geillis

Oh. No.

Patrick

How would you reverse it?

Geillis

Pluck a couple of your hairs to collect the necessary genetic material and then we can reverse the situation at will.

Patrick

At Will, as it were.

Geillis

(acknowledges the pun) I could study you for a period of time. You could unlock untold mysteries both in science and literature.

Patrick

I have this gig starting in two weeks. It's an eight-week run. Plus, buffet before each performance.

Geillis

You would be willing to consent to a temporary experiment? No! This is madness

Patrick

I don't know. Actors always say yes to gigs and then figure it out after.

Geillis

This isn't a *job*. I would be injecting you with someone else's DNA!

Patrick

Possibly William Shakespeare. A once in a lifetime experience. I'm lucky you picked me.

Geillis

I didn't cast you! I'm going to change you!

Patrick

But you've taking my hair as insurance. I trust you.

Geillis

That's crazy. I can't! It might hurt you.

Patrick

(pointedly) What do you care?

Geillis

(softly) I care.

(The timer goes from the machine -a kiss interrupted)

Geillis

This is a bad idea.

Patrick

It's an adventure! Take it with me.

Geillis

Alright! It has to go into the base of the skull. You'll feel a little prick.

(She injects him)

Patrick

You'll look after me?

Geillis

I promise.

Geillis

I have to take this hair now and now make the reversal serum. Where did I put that?

(She looks around for the hair on the table and seeing it and picks it up)

Geillis

This is so unethical I'm going to lose my doctorate, all my grants will get pulled....

Will

Who are thou? Why are you wearing pantaloons?

Geillis

Patrick, you're joking with me right?

Will

Who are thou? Where are we? What am I wearing? For what play is this, what is the call?

Geillis

Oh good Lord!

Will

No. I am Will.

Geillis

Mr. Shakespeare? You're Shakespeare.

Will

I'm Shack Spear. William Shack Spear.

Geillis

Oh, well over time it's morphed into Shakespeare.

Will

I have o'er slept what is the time?

Geillis
It is 2023 (beat) A.D.

Will
Time is out of joint.

Geillis
Yes. Science has brought you back to life but only for two weeks

Will
I have a fortnight to live, four hundred years in the future?

Geillis
Yes.

Will
There are more things in heaven and hell (beat) Take me to my family.

Geillis
Your family has, well died out I'm sure...

Will
Wife, daughters...

Geillis
I'm sorry!

Will
My friends Will Kempe, Thomas Pope, John Heminhes?

Geillis
Only you were...

Will
Resurrected? No, this is but a dream.

Geillis
No, it's real. You used to live in Stratford?

Will
I didn't live in Strafford. I retired to Stratford, I *lived* in Cripplegate on the corner of Mugwell and Silver Street, above a French wigmaker shop.

Geillis

Oh my god! I should be taking notes. Research. How did you get to be the famous playwright?

Will

Troupes came repeatedly to Stratford. The Earl of Leicester's Men in '73

Geillis

1573?

Will

When I was nine I saw the Earl of Warwick's Men and the Earl of Worcester's Men in 75. From the time I was eleven I knew what I wanted to do.

Geillis

Lots of boys want to perform or run away with troupes to sort of join the circus. What made you *the playwright*?

Will

Tamburlaine

Geillis

A percussion instrument?

Will

Nay! The play of Marlow's. Kit Marlow. No. Art thou Saint Peter?

Geillis

I am the one who will make the serum to reverse this.

Will

Apothecary!

Geillis

I just have to know that it's really worked. Tell me how you became The Bard, William Shakespeare and I can confirm this with Dr. Corbeil that the Lloyd Sullivan's portrait will be authenticated!

Will

Thou want to know how I became a playwright? The plays I saw were Morality plays, secular sermons, designed to show the terrible consequences of disobedience, and redemption. I became *the playwright* when I first went to London and saw Kit Marlow's *Tamburlaine* at The Rose. Marlow broke all the rules! His protagonist had no fear, no deference, and no respect for the established order of things. "*Emperors and kings lie breathless at my feet*". It was shocking. It was outrageous! The audience leapt to their feet cheering at the trampling of everything they held dear. I was transfixed. My voice

hoarse from shouting! My hands numb from clapping. I met him backstage. I was transfixed that day. Theatre, great theatre can change your life. Kit changed my life, saved me, made me the playwright.

Geillis

Okay great now we have to go because I have to get this hair sample on ice. I have to order the chemicals for the transformation back. Nobody wants to change a dinosaur into a chicken so it will take longer to get them.

Will

Cluck Chick I knowest not of what thou speaks.

Geillis

In the meantime, I did have two questions final that would prove this experiment. (She googles him and looks at the screen.) What was the year of your greatest loss?

Will

June 29th, 1599.

Geillis

That is not when your son Hamnet died. If you were him you would know that.

Will

You did not ask me when my son died, you asked me of my greatest loss. June 29th was the night the Globe burnt down. We were performing *All is True*, some small cannons were shot off and one did light the thatch. The roof kindled round the circumference. It took less than an hour to burn to the ground. We saved the costumes, and the box... no injuries or deaths, save the financial.

Geillis

And Hamnet?

Will

The authorities obtained an order temporarily closing all the playhouses. I had to fight that and arrange for the members to tour to keep their incomes. I sent the company to Faversham. I had to stay in London. I did attend his funeral Aug 11 in 96. Anne was inconsolable. *Grief fills the room up of my absent child, lies in his bed, walks up and down with me Puts on his pretty socks, repeats his words, Remembers me of all his gracious parts stuffs out vacant garments with his form.*

Geillis

Oooh is that when you wrote Hamlet? You were depressed.

ill

No, after his death I only had call for comedies, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Much Ado*, *As You like it*.

Geillis

So Hamlet and Hamnet wasn't based on the loss of your son?

Will

No, my father. I dreamt that my father was in purgatory. A catholic without a catholic burial. Hamlet's ghost refers to purgatory as the prison-house. Couldn't get purgatory past the censors. Hamlet swears by Saint Patrick the patron saint of purgatory. I played the ghost at the opening. Maybe death was my purgatory and this - my heaven.

Geillis

Was your father a protestant or a catholic?

Will

Yes.

Geillis

I'm confused.

Will

In '85 it was treason to be a catholic priest to harbor them or give them comfort and the penalty for the failure to attend protestant services in the local parish 20 pounds per week. My father a devout catholic was made a protestant civic officer – I learned acting at a young age.

Geillis

Alright, (she looks at her notes) I have enough for now.

Will

Have you told people I'm back from the grave?

Geillis

If you are to have any quality of life and freedom we should keep it quiet, a secret.

Will

Why?

Geillis

I'll lose my job, reputation, grants, and you won't get a minute's rest. You'll be an object of curiosity and exploited...

Will

By whom?

Media. Geillis

Medea? Will

No, the paparazzi! Geillis

Sounds Italian! Catholics? Are you Protestant or Catholic? Will

Atheist. Geillis

A witch! They will burn you! Will

Doubtful. Geillis

It is accepted? Well that's certainly an interesting act three of the Reformation. What is the Queen? King? Will

King Charles, but it's not important. Geillis

In my day it swung back and forth Catholic, Protestant, Protestant, Catholic, Montague Capulet. You had to know which way the wind was blowing. How doest thou know which church to attend? Will

I don't go to church. Geillis

You can afford the fines? Will

There are no fines. Geillis

Are the Spanish still killing the English? Will

Geillis

Not for years.

Will

I saw the Spanish Armada in the Channel. Doest thou fear the paparazzi?

Geillis

They won't come after me, I'm not famous. But you they will stalk every waking minute, chase you down, try to shoot you...

Will

Are they set to by the King?

Geillis

No. The King has no real power here. His relationship with the Paparazzi is cordial after they killed his daughter-in-law the Princess of Wales.

Will

And what revenge did he wrought for killing the Princess?

Geillis

Nothing...

Will

They can kill royalty with impunity! How will I recognize them?

Geillis

They carry cameras. Look you are in the body of Patrick a friend of mine. People will think you are him. It will be better for all concerned if you keep his identity.

Will

I am in disguise as thou, a woman in men's pantaloons.

Geillis

Yes. But I will help you navigate and be your friend.

Will

I am alone.

Geillis

I know. But you have me.

Will

I had a good life. I loved. I was a player in the theatre. I was a poet.

I know.

Geillis

How?

Will

After you died, a couple of your friends published your work it was called the First Folio.

Geillis

Dost thou have a copy?

Will

Come on, I'm taking you to Chapters.

Geillis

We are leaving this room? Thou is allowed to be dressed as such?

Will

It's a brave new world.

Geillis

And thou art?

Will

Geillis Dun-

Geillis

Cane.

Will

Yes, Duncane. It's an old family name.

Geillis

Scottish.

Will

Yes.

Geillis

T'is fate. Thy great, great grandmother was tortured as a witch by the Scottish King James. I wrote a play called *Macbeth* about a Scottish King whose death was instrumented by three witches. To see his face watch the play. I avenged thee in death.

Will

How odd.

Geillis

Will

And now witch, thou hast resurrected me. A good turn for a good turn.

Geillis

I'm not a witch. Come on I'm taking you to the book store.
(as they exit)

Will

Is it far? Has thou a horse?

Chapters Bookstore

(They enter, Geillis is distraught and Wills' hair is all standing up on end)

Geillis

I appreciate that it was your first time in a car but did you have to stick your head out of the window and yell Wheeee the whole time!?

Will

All these horseless chariots cantering together on the- what was it?

Geillis

The expressway.

Will

Why is everyone else so somber?

Geillis

They aren't somber; they're just used to it!

Will

I never shall!

Geillis

I got a ticket from the police!

Will

They were more understanding when thou did speak to them, I was artistic.

Geillis

I told them you were autistic!

Will

Why did they think thou had stoned me?

Geillis

They thought you were stoned.

Will

I was exuberant!

(Polly wheels on the shelf of books)

Will

Look at all these books! Thousands How could one read all of them in a lifetime?

Geillis

We don't even try.

Will

Do they have *Ovid*?

Geillis

If they don't, there's always Amazon.

Will

A bigger bookstore by the river in Brazil?

Geillis

It's a virtual --- yes Brazil.

Will

I knew the man who discovered that river, Vincente Pinzon, we called him Vince the Pinz, he first went out with Chris Columbus told me all about it in the bar one night. (beat) Do they have a copy of Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*? Out of that grew *Julius Caesar*, *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*...

Geillis

They probably don't have those but they have your plays.

Will

Ars Longa, Vita Brevis

Geillis

What?

Will

Hippocrates – Art is long, life is short. (He sees them, he is thrilled) Published by John Heminges and Henry Condell. Friends and thieves. So I'd never see a penny!

Geillis

Many books have been written about your life. But you didn't leave any diaries.

Will

I was busy.

Geillis

That's no excuse.

Will

I was finding players and a keeper of the house, land acquisition, the refurbishing of the house in Stratford, merrymaking. The relocation of The Globe after the fire. I was made part of The Kings Men, recruiting new players, court performances, provincial tours, negotiation over opening the Blackfriars, hurried trips back to the family for mothers' death, Susanne's marriage, a few lawsuits... So have these scribes known mine life?

Geillis

They pieced your life together from legal documents and registries...

Will

Would thou want thy life's story writ from bills and law suits?

Geillis

Well...

Will

Preposterous! *The Truth Will out Unmasking the Real Shakespeare, Shakespeare by Another Name. Contested Will who Wrote Shakespeare?*

Geillis

Don't get upset, as a race we are fond of conspiracy theories. If we don't have all the information perfectly packed, we tend to let conspiracy theories fill in the cracks – the grassy knoll, 9/11 – never mind.

Will

I am Shakespeare. I - wrote - those - plays.

Geillis

I know. I'm sorry.

Will

To whom do I speak? I will meet these villainous plume-plucked scuts. If I had a sword I would set them straight. Will thou arrange meeting for thee with them. Where do they crawl? We will go!

Geillis

Calm down!

(Enter Polly carrying a blue string bag)

Polly

Would you like a bag for all your purchases?

Will

Those are *my* plays! I don't have to purchase them!

Geillis

But you don't own them.

Will

Why not? They are mine!

Geillis

The publishers own them and they sell them to the store.

Will

Oh, how cruel the winds of time! And most of those books – that portrait is not me! Sanders painted my portrait.

Polly

The Complete Works is on sale. (She offers him a copy)

Will

(looking inside) *Complete Works!* Not by half! Where are the others? WHERE ARE THEY?

Geillis

Sorry, he thinks he is Shakespeare.

Polly

It's okay; I had an uncle who thought he was Elvis. Not an impersonator, really Elvis.

Will

Where are *all* my plays? Not even *Cardenio*? I worked on *The Two Noble Kinsmen* with John Fletcher we did *Cardenio* the Don Quixote play...

Geillis

Lost over time I suppose. Maybe you could re-write them.

Will

All my pretty chickens and their dam at one fell swoop?

Geillis

Chickens? What?

Will

Thy line would be *Be comforted: Let's make medicines of our great revenge, To cure this deadly grief. Revenge upon the ones who said I did not write them! But I did not write this-*

Geillis

No. this playwright borrowed two of your characters from the line *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead-*

Will

I killed off Prince Hamlet, Laertes, Ophelia, King Claudius and Gertrude. Don't you think Rosencrantz and Guildenstern would have been overkill? The line is Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are fed. Rewarded!

Geillis

Oh -

Will

I will Stoppard this Tom.

Geillis

It's a form of adoration. You are the greatest dramatist ever! It's an homage!

Polly

Yes, I work in professional theatre part time as a receptionist. We do your plays all over the world, all the time. You are in the canon of English literature. You are the canon!

Will

How many reside in this city?

Geillis

A few million.

Will

Your theatre must seat a hundred thousand, a colossal coliseum!

Polly

Er, no, a few hundred.

Will

Outdoor like the globe or indoor like Blackfriars?

Geillis

You've seen the snow.

Will

And tis better in the summer, no seagulls. I liked the Blackfriars, small house but I made enough of *Henry 8th* there. Who's the housekeeper?

Polly

I don't know.

Will

Who gives thee thy farthings?

Polly

Oh, do you mean producer?

Will

Yes wiggle waggle.

Polly

Dennis Graham

Will

Have they done me?

Polly

But we are! It's the last night of the Scottish play.

Will

We will go.

Geillis

Bad idea.

Polly

Here, I have two comps, usually I give them to my friends but who wants to be reminded of high school English... Take your special needs friend.

Will

Yes! Take me. I have special needs.

Geillis

I'm going to regret this.

Will

(Dancing and clapping) We will go! I will act!

Geillis

That took two seconds.

Will

I am no Burbage but I will act in it. Burbage started out as a carpenter built great sets we had to let him act.

Geillis

They already have a cast.

Will

I will replace someone.

Geillis

No!

Will

Why not? I know all the lines.

Polly

That's not how it works. If actors want roles they have to audition -

Will

Don't they know who I am?-

Geillis

(aside) Again. No you look and sound like Patrick Greene.

Will

How do I audition?

Polly

Typically with two monologues one contemporary, one classical.

Will

A contemporary piece I know not but classical... Greek or Latin?

Polly

Most people do you -

Will

I'll do Hamlets ghost's big purgatory monologue, (he flips through) they cut the-Venomed hell-hated Barnacles!

Polly

You're too young for the father's ghost!

Will

I'm four hundred and fifty-nine.

Geillis

Yes, but you look 39 on your head shot.

Will

Head shot? Bequillifux! My god woman, most time I can't understand a word.

Geillis

A photograph, it's like a portrait only I can't explain...but it doesn't matter because you *look like Patrick Greene*.

Will

Take me to the theatre-

Geillis

Will, I'll show you the performing arts building but no talking to anyone!

Will

Vendi, Vidi Vici!

Geillis

What?

Will

Dost thou not know Latin?

Geillis

It's a dead language.

Will

As am I apparently. But alive enough to act! I'm alive and (beat) I am rich! I can charge back royalties for every show! Who has all my money?

Polly

I'm so sorry, sir. There are no royalties for your work because it is in the public domain.

Will

I have lots of royalties waiting for me to collect. I am rich beyond measure.

Polly

Your plays don't generate royalties. I'm sorry.

Will

Why dost thou thwart me? I will set right this injustice. I'll challenge the law, change it!

Geillis

You have such little time. Do you want to waste it changing legislation which even if you could, you won't be around to collect?

Will

Some of my babes lost and these impotent! (Holds up a book) and this isn't even my picture!

Polly

No crying allowed on the books, sir.

Will

I'm taking them all!

Polly

I'll get you a cart.

Geillis

Sorry no, we are not taking them all.

Will

We will.

Geillis

I should have taken you to the library.

Polly

If you're not going to purchase them, you're going to have to put down the books sir, or else I'm going to have to call security.

Will

But not the paparazzi! Thy befuddlest me, but I'm alone in this new world as these are my security. (He starts grabbing more books)

(Polly hurries off)

Geillis

Put those back.

Will

Only if thou does take me in thy chariot to the theatre!

Geillis

Look you can't- Firstly, he won't believe you, you look like Patrick Greene. And secondly, he'll think you – Patrick - are crazy and that will ruin Patrick's chances of ever working with the theatre.

Will

I shall voyage to England.

Geillis

No, you'll stay where I can keep an eye on you and your host body. I want him here!

Will

Dost thou find him saucy?

Geillis

Yes.

Will

Ah, love!

Geillis

I think I really do. I've had a crush on him ever since I...Oh here comes someone in a uniform – that's our cue to exit.

The Artist Directors Office

(Dennis Graham sits feet up on his desk. Will arrives in a fake moustache)

Will

I am here to perform. Lucky cur.

Dennis

Sorry, you've missed the generals.

Will

I am not looking for generals or sergeant majors!

Dennis

Ha ha. Leave your resume with me and let me know if you're in anything around town I'll try to get to see it. But, I have a busy year. We will call you in the fall.

Will

I won't be here in the fall, if by the fall thou dost mean autumn.

Dennis

Is that a false mustache? Well, that's chutzpah.

Will

I look like a Muscovite from *Love's Labour's Lost*?

Dennis

I'm considering doing *Love's Labour's Lost* next season.

Will

Only?

Dennis

What?

Will

It ends with not the lovers together it has to be paired with *Love's Labour's Wonne*. Doesn't that sound like a better ending with only a play with one act?

Dennis

There isn't such a play.

Will

I can unlock it from my head for thee. But first I want to be back on the boards. As a player! I can stage fight, dance, play the lute- And I don't need the king roles, any is fine.

Dennis

I have no roles right now for you Patrick, I'm sorry.

Will

I can't quite explain it myself but I'm William Shakespeare.

Dennis

That's quite a delusion of grandeur.

Will

Grandeur yes. I'm famous! Still, I was quite pleased to find this so. (beat) It comes to mine ears you are doing *Much Ado*. I can tell how t'was done. I can play Benedick. (sings) *The god of love, That sits above*. That rhyme has always been weak, I can fix it in rehearsal, *And he knows me and knows me, how pitiful I deserve-*

Dennis

-you deserve to be congratulated on the unique approach but I'm sorry Patrick, the show is cast.

Will

But thou dost seek to show in March or April and if thou move'est it to January, thou could have me! Think of the publicity! The box!

Dennis

If you'll excuse me I have a production meeting.

Will

Move the show to January. I beseech thee. I'll be dead by then.

Dennis

(beat) Oh! I see! I'm so sorry. I didn't know you were sick.

Will

Thou think me mad! *Though this be madness yet there is method in 't.*

Dennis

Er yes, must go. Well, rehearsal, must go.

Will

Fine, then I won't let you do my play!

Dennis

Yes, well-

Will

Give me the royalties up front. I demand the payment for the use of my script.

Dennis

Patrick, I want you to leave the building before I call security.

Will

Those beslubbering scurvy-valiant malcontent from Chapters!

Dennis

But do consider becoming a subscriber! (He is off)

(Enter Geillis)

Geillis

There you are! What are you doing in that ridiculous moustache?

Will

I nicked it from the store downstairs but it didn't work. Dennis didn't believe me.

Geillis

You shoplifted and you talked to Dennis! You're going to ruin Patrick's career!

Will

Dennis thinks Patrick is mad.

Geillis

You can't be trusted! I leave you alone for five minutes while I go to the ATM to pay for parking... no more performing arts centre for you. We're going to go pay for the moustache then I'm taking you home, and keep the window rolled up!

Geillis' Apartment

(Geillis and Will enter with McDonalds food.)

Geillis

You can stay with me. I don't trust you out in the world by yourself. You're going to get in trouble.

Will

What else is there to see? I want to see it all!

Geillis

Impossible! You have two weeks. Then it will all end.

Will

I am dead. Surely I cannot die again!

Geillis

I'm sorry.

Will

But why?

Geillis

It's scientific.

Will

And we cannot argue with alchemy.

Geillis

(Getting her cat) This is Tiffin.

Will

She is your familiar.

Geillis

Very familiar, she's my cat. (beat) Why don't you work on your autobiography?

Will

There are enough books about me.

Geillis

Yes, but they don't all agree. Set them straight.

Will

(Eating a bite of his burger) This tastes like sweet, fatty, mush.

Geillis

It's true but you said simple peasant food this was the best I could come up with. How about the coke?

Will

Coke kills –

Geillis

I don't think I've heard that slogan.

Will

Sir Edward Coke, worked for the King, killed Catholics Heretics. (beat) Where is thy Black Bull, Four Swans, thy Green Dragon?

Geillis

Sorry?

Will

Thy taverns! To sup Left Leg, Mad Dog!

Geillis

A Grasshopper at the Rose and Crown?

Will

Grasshopper?

Geillis

Or Warthog. I have some in the fridge.

Will

Who is the brewer?

Geillis

Big Rock.

Will

Thy most revered ale is by Big Rock?

Geillis

Do you want a drink or not? (she goes to the fridge and opens him a can).

Will
Is this thy caldron?

Geillis
We call them rice cookers. (She opens two beers) What do you think of the Traditional Ale?

Will
It doesn't taste traditional to me.

Geillis
And the Grasshopper? (she gives him a drink of hers.)

Will
Thames water.

Geillis
Which in your day must have been pretty clear.

Will
After the barges pass.

Geillis
So, what will you do with your time here?

Will
There is only theatre and love.

Geillis
Whom did you love?

Will
Many, all.

Geillis
But your greatest love?

Will
.I loved, love theatre. Like a sickness. Like a sacrifice at an altar.

Geillis
Yes, I know you loved to write-

Will

No, a lie! I didn't love to write, I enjoyed having written. I was more like a woman heavy with child who labors and bites upon a rag at the pain of it all and is grateful when it is finally out. Then Melpomene and Thalia laid with me again, ad infinitum.

Geillis

I don't understand what you are saying. I think you're skirting the issue.

Will

Skirting the issue? (pause)The issue was skirted.

Geillis

What?

Will

In school we did Plautus's *The Two Menaechmuses*. Know you of this old play?

Geillis

The old plays I did were *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*.

Will

Great! Back then I played Menaechmus of Epidamnum. I squabble with my wife and go to see my mistress the courtesan Erotium. T'was an all-boys schools. Adrian Tyler played Erotium. There was this kiss... my character fell in love with...

Geillis

And you fell in love with him?

Will

We were caught under my bed. That's where they hid the Jesuit priests. I persuaded my father we were rehearsing but my father told his father. He took the news less well. Adrian ever after in school was the object of conjecture, torture.

Geillis

Teased, bullied.

Will

Adrian wanted me to go run away with him to London. One night he scaled the wall my father had built. He stood below my window. I called down to him afraid "*the place death considering who thou art. If any of thy kinsmen find thee here.*" He said "*With love's light wings did I e'er perch these walls: For stony limits cannot hold love out: and what love can do, that dares love attempt: Therefore thy kinnsmen are no set to me*" And said I "*If they do see they will murder thee*" And he "*I have night's cloak to hide*"

me from And, but thou love me, let them find me here: My life were better ended by their hate than death prerogued wanting of they love. "He begged me to climb down.

Geillis

Is that how you got to London?

Will

I didn't go with him.

Geillis

What happened to Adrian? Did you ever see him again?

Will

The night before I told him I was getting married. *Lord of my love*, went to Arden Woods. They found him there, by his hand or others, hanging from a tree.

Geillis

I'm so sorry. (beat) He was your brave Romeo.

Will

The play *The Two Menaechmues* was a frenetic farce about identical twins. I later added a second set of twins.

Geillis

I don't—

Will

Comedy of Errors. To honor him.

Geillis

That's nice. Did your father come and see it?

Will

The merchant of Syracuse in search of the twins is arrested in the rival city Ephesus and threatened with death if he cannot pay a heavy fine. He was in it.

Geillis

Your father had financial troubles?

Will

In *The Merchant of Venice* a wealthy merchant loses all his wealth in a series of ship wrecks... *Lear*, *Winters Tale*, *Tempest*, all old men trying to regain property and title. I write tragedies that end in death and comedies that end in marriage – t'is the same thing.

Geillis

Did you love Anne?

Will

When she saw my woeful state Straight in her heart did mercy come. I hate from hate away she threw and saved my life saying "not you".

Geillis

She saved you.

Will

She was pregnant with my child when I married her. I saved her in return.

Geillis

You knew getting her pregnant would stop the rumors of you and Adrian.

Will

She was an older maid in need of a husband.

Geillis

What did her parents think of the rumors and the match?

Will

She was an orphan with resources left to her by her father's will and more due upon her marriage.

Geillis

So she came into more money when she married you maybe that's why she didn't mind that many of your sonnets were written to men.

Will

How does thou knowest?

Geillis

(she shows him) They are published. This is the dedication of the Rape of Lucrece 1594
"The love I dedicate to your lordship is without end. . . What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours"

Will

(scans them, horrified) I did not give permission for all of these, some are private.

Geillis

Sorry. What was he like?

Will

Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton - *my summers day but more lovely*

Geillis

In this poem it sounds like you're encouraging him to mate-

Will

Only to produce children so that there be more reflections of his beauty. He was above my class, my station *Being your slave, what should I do but tend Upon the hours and times of your desires?* And there was an age difference. *As a decrepit father takes delight To see his active child do deeds of youth* I would have done anything for him. I was beside myself because Henry was locked up.

Geillis

Why was he locked up?

Will

He joined the Earl of Essex in a failed attempt to quash an Irish uprising and the queen was displeased by the failed attempt. At least that what they ported. I do not believe it. Three strokes of the axe separated The Earl of Essex's head from his shoulders and I was frantic that the fate befell Henry.

Geillis

Did Anne know?

Will

Thou reasoned she read. Do you think schools would study me and theatres perform my works if they knew?

Geillis

You might get dropped by some religious schools. Some Americans are pretty uptight about these things. Although, they did repeal "don't ask don't tell."

Will

I understand half of what thou sayest.

Geillis

And I you.

Will

If all the poets and painters and players were sanctioned how barren the landscape. So, will they kill me if they find out?

Geillis

Unlikely. The consensus I believe is that "it gets better".

Will

Nay, for some it gets worse. They killed Kit Marlow.

Geillis

We were told it was a brawl, over a bar bill. If I remember "*Shakespeare in Love*".

Will

Thou speaks in riddles.

Geillis

A movie.

Will

Still.

Geillis

Stories told acted out, captured on film – never mind it will take too long to explain. What happened to Marlow the playwright? He didn't die in a tavern over a bar bill?

Will

Nay, in a house in Deptford, down by the shipyards in the east of London. Three men, Ingram Frizer, Nicolas Skere and Robert Poly, stabbed through the right eye. (He puts his hand to his eye as though he holds a sharp item and shudders) The queen pardoned Frizer whose account of self-defense was corroborated by the two men.

Geillis

They didn't like his plays?

Will

Kit was recruited as a spy in Cambridge. Their error; a spy should be discreet, quiet. Kit was - not. T'was an assassination. Elizabeth's spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham sent him to Reims to mingle with the English Catholics living in France. He was sent to ferret out plots against the Queen. He must have been good at it for the Privy Council wrote to Cambridge to award him his M.A. even though he was absent during term time. His degree made him a gentleman. But discreet he was not. He loved men openly and declared Jesus a bastard and his mother a whore. *Dead Shepherd, now I find thy saw of might.*

Geillis

Did you and Marlow...?

Will

He said "All they that love not Tobacco and Boys are fools". He liked the pretty boys. He never saw me in that light. But now, all my playwright companions dead, Greene, Watson and then Marlow. By the time I was thirty there were none to rival me. None of

them saw my plays that followed - the *Henry* plays *Richard the Third*, *Two Gents*, *Shrew* and *Comedy of Errors*.

Geillis

I'm sorry your friends died.

Will

Greene, was not my friend, called me the upstart crow, someone who dresses himself up as a nightingale though caws as a crow. I would be in the pub and they would caw at me. I never went to university. I was a player turned poet.

Geillis

Well, the jokes on them, I don't even know who you are talking about.

Will

The Whirligig of time brings in his revenges. I made Greene my Falstaff with his binging and whoring and dropsical belly.

Geillis

So your fools were people you wished to look foolish. And you made the witches triumphant in Macbeth.

Will

(sees the letter opener on her desk) *Is this a dagger I see before me? The handle towards my hand?*

Geillis

No, it's a letter opener.

Will

Come let me clutch thee!

Geillis

No, you'll hurt yourself. I have to keep you intact.

Will

I have thee not and yet I see thee still.

Geillis

(Distract with a shiny object) Let me show you something much more interesting.

Will

What is this box?

Geillis

Prepare to have your world rocked. It's a television. (She turns it on)

Will

Witch and heretic! Thou visions bright, thou magic art strong.

Geillis

Calm down!

Will

What is it for?

Geillis

It tells us news. It entertains us with acted out stories - like plays. But mostly it sells us stuff. It has different channels which you can change by pushing these buttons. (She picks up the remote and flicks channels. We hear a variety of channels being changed. He is transfixed. He walks around to look behind the screen. She turns it off)

Will

It is thy wand?

Geillis

Nay, it's a remote control.

Will

What spell?

Geillis

I'm not a witch!

Will

I am too lily livered to contradict thee.

Geillis

If you think TV is amazing – wait until thou see'est the internet. (She opens the laptop and turns it on.) In this little box you can type, by pressing on these keys any subject you are interested in (she demos) Look Shakespeare. Then you click on the topics and videos – voila!

Will

Look! I don't like that picture, my head looks like a balloon about to float away off of my neck. Let me put in your name.

Geillis

Nobody has my name.

Will

Not now but as Queen Elizabeth was afeared of Catholics, James was afeared of witches. Geillis Duncane a maidservant from North Berwick. She played a small trumpet and danced. She provided help to those aggrieved or sick.

Geillis

(reading the screen) She was brought up before James and tortured for his pleasure.

Will

Pilliwinks and cords. I told you!

(her phone rings)

Will

What is that?

Geillis

Hello? (To Will) It's Dr. Horner.

Will

Nay it isn't.

Geillis

(hands him the phone) Say Hi.

Will

High? (His eyes open wide, louder) Dr. Horner can thou hear me? How did thou get in such small a space? Was thou shrank by a spell?.. He bid you speak to him. (He returns to the laptop, fascinated)

Geillis

(Into the phone) You got my email... No, it's been fun. I got a ticket for not restraining the Shakespeare in a seatbelt. We got kicked out of Chapters. He shoplifted a moustache. Caused a scene at the office at the theatre - I can't keep him locked up in my apartment.... I can't take him to Patrick's place. Today was the first time he saw a flush toilet you want me to leave him alone with a microwave?

Will

I heard that.

Geillis

He'd burn the place down. (to Will) You can't be trusted. You burnt down your own theatre.

Will

True enough.

Geillis

(back into phone) Tonight is the closing night of *Macbeth* I'm going to take him to that if he promises to be good... Where else am I going to take him? The zoo? Have you shipped me the reversal serum yet?... Then you're going to have to smuggle it across the border... No, he has a show – I gave my word... I've just introduced him to TV, Google... What's he doing, right now? (she looks) The greatest English language, dramatic literary mind of the last four centuries?... He's drinking beer and surfing for porn. (She hangs up) Okay that's enough of that! My laptop will get a virus!

Will

What will get a what?

Geillis

Pox!

Will

Do playwrights use these to write? How do the words get from here to paper or books? Dost thou have a spell for that? Can thy wand do it? (He picks up the remote control and points it at the screen and then the paper)

Geillis

You know this is technology and not me right?

Will

Thou has whatever name thou commands.

Geillis

What are you going to write? We also have pen like quills that you don't have to keep dipping in ink. (She shows him on a pad of paper)

Will

Black magic! Now tragical? Historical? Hysterical?

Geillis

What?

Will

Thou mean'st which. Witch.

Geillis

Geillis!

Will

Geillis. I will write a comedy.

Geillis

Comedies are good.

Will

Which of my plays are the most famous?

Geillis

Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Hamlet...

Will

Tragedy it is.

Geillis

But those don't really sell now. People don't flock to plays with down endings anymore. And the genre doesn't hold up.

Will

Aristotle was wrong? I think not. I don't understand what has changed?

Geillis

In tragedy the end is brought about by the characters fatal flaw.

Will

Yes.

Geillis

Well we don't believe in fatal flaws anymore. If a person is depressed-

Will

Depressed?

Geillis

-Melancholic, we would just treat them for the mental illness. We have cures now. Pharmaceuticals and psychotherapy. So you see with Hamlet for example, we would expect the outcome to be different, the patient would get well, he wouldn't have an excuse to murder someone.

Will

You think Hamlet mad? Maybe I should re-write Hamlet.

Geillis

No, it's fine the way it is.

Will

Thank you. So a comedy! Not fantastical and magical but relevant. A play so that all who see it will know it is of this time and I was here.

Geillis
Good! A topical comedy.

Will
Tell me about thy King.

Geillis
Royalty are just figureheads. We have pictures of them on our coins and stamps but mostly it's because of tradition and it annoys the French.

Will
The French?

Geillis
There was some dispute over who colonized this land but there was some battle and that settled it with the English winning.

Will
Naturally.

Will
So if not by Royalty, how art thy ruled?

Geillis
We have a democracy. Everyone over the age of 18 gets one vote and we pick the leaders accordingly.

Will
But there must be scandals.

Geillis
The government once broke the law by allowing the torturing of detainees.

Will
The government aren't allowed to torture? They were big on it in my day. Hanging, drawing and quartering people all over the place and the dungeons, the wrack...

Geillis
(looking at her phone) What did you do during the lost years?

Will
I was deceased!

Geillis
No, I mean...

Will

There was nothing until the head prick. And now I have little time because of your alchemy. T'is my mid winter night's dream!

Geillis

I'm going to go to Patrick's apartment and pick up a change of clothes for you. I don't know if he has a fish that will starve or a dog to be rescued. But you will stay here. Do NOT leave the apartment. Do you hear me? Watch TV, have another ale. I will be back in an hour then I'll take you to the closing of your play. But you have to be good. Promise?

Will

I promise. I know thy powers witch.

Geillis

I prefer Geillis.

Will

Geillis.

(Geillis leaves and Will looks at the TV and the Laptop but something catches his interest outside.)

(Enter Ivana goes out onto her balcony to have beer and a smoke. She stands over six feet tall in heels. A creature resplendent in rich velvets, sparkles and tiny tiara perched high in her curls)

Will

(calls over to her) And with a crown! The Queen. Oh beauty. *See how she leans her cheek upon her hand! O that I were a glove upon that hand, That I might touch that cheek!*

Ivana

(looking down, in her lower register) Oi! You kids get away from my car!

Will

She speaks! Oh speak again bright angel.

Ivana

(dumping her beer on the culprits below) Next time it won't be beer! (Satisfied the kids have scarpered she lights her cigarette. She sees Will watching her) You never seen a queen before?

Will

I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

Ivana
Am I being wooed?

Will
Are thou art a queen? Thou art so majestic!

Ivana
I'm one blushin' drag queen!

Will
Oh! (bowing deeply) Your Majesty!

Ivana
Well, aren't you a little pistol!

Will
Nay, I am Shakespeare, I am the cannon.

Ivana
I see.

Will
News spread, thou sought me out and unescorted!

Ivana
I left my entourage in my other pocket.

Will
Art thou royalty?

Ivana
Queen Ivana.

Will
(Confused) Geillis said there are no Queens in Canada.

Ivana
You just have to know where to look. You enjoying looking don't you?

Will
Oh, Regina!

Ivana
Close. I am Vagina. *Miss Vagina.*

Will
Oh Queen! Unmarried!

Ivana
Now.

Will
Vagina - Latin for scabbard, a sheath for covering a sword!

Ivana
Do you like swordplay?

Will
(Confused) Whatever your Majesty commands. I am thy humble servant, nay thy slave.

Ivana
We're going to get along just fine.

Will
Yes, Your Majesty.

Ivana
Call me Ivana.

Will
I should like to know thee. Majesty, I wonder if I might ask?

Ivana
(Here it comes)Yes.

Will
I wonder if I might be one of thy players? I was before. I'm very good, so I've been told.

Ivana
Oh, you're a player?

Will
May I perform for Your Majesty at thy castle? Is it a big one? Dost thy castle also have a dungeon?

Ivana
Oh, you're hardcore.

Will
I don't know what hardcore means but I am a very good performer. Please let me show thee. I will get on my knees and beg. Your Maj – Ivana.

Ivana

Well, that's not usually my thing but I might be able to arrange a little play session.

Will

A play session! Yes! (Claps in delight) I'm very good. I'm sure I will please thee.

Ivana

I'll wear my boots.

Will

I'm very excited. When shall I come?

Ivana

Not a moment before I tell you.

Will

Oh Majesty if thou can restore me to this I will give thee my all, my life short as it is. I pledge you my loyalty always. I will lay down my life for thee, in the face of adversity. I will protect thee from the paparazzi!

Ivana

Well, it's been nice chatting with you, but I have a show.

Will

As do I! Are you going to *Macbeth*?

Ivana

No.

Will

What is your show?

Ivana

I'm competing! It's a Snow Ball (She exits)

The Lobby of Theatre Calgary

(Applause sounds dies then of patrons mingling in the act break)

Will

What- is -this...

Geillis

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, let's go!

Will

This misshaped, mangled....

Geillis

It's an adaptation, it's from World War Two, a real war we had....

Will

A war! I see no casualties *but for my play*.

Geillis

Calm down. It's been a very long day, never mind.

Will

Never mind? I mind! From my mind! Who is the cur responsible for this travesty? The wild beast that chews my words and has the player spit them out thus?

Geillis

If I tell you will you promise to leave?

Will

Tell me the meat grinders' name!

Geillis

The buck-stops-here man would be (she winces) Dennis.

Will

My sweet foe. We shall *meat* again. (Dennis enters) There he is!

Geillis

No! Will, please I beg you, don't cause a scene.

Will

I am Will Shakespeare and I cause scenes.

Geillis

No, you are Patrick, remember, incognito.....

Will

Damn the paparazzi! I am not afraid! Let them hunt me down and chase me through tunnels to my death. I am not a coward. I am Will Shakespeare who bore *Macbeth* the babe. Thou scurrilous midwife, hath murdered *Macbeth*!

Dennis

You don't like the adaptation but let's not be dramatic!

Will

I am the dramatist, I am Will, both Player and Playwright! I bore that sweet babe that thou bashed. Thou dashed his bones upon the rocks and sucked out the marrow. It's a play of Scotland and kings not Germany and Nazis!

Dennis

You're creating a disturbance and upsetting the patrons. Perhaps a comp to the next play?

Will

So thou can set *Julius Caesar* underwater or *Coriolanus* on the moon?!

Geillis

Look, Will, he meant no harm. Come away.

Will

No harm. Where is my foil? As he has foiled me, so I may foil him!

Dennis

That sounded like a threat to me.

Will

So thou knows words as they are meant!

Dennis

I'm sorry you don't like the show. But we spent a lot of time on it, and a hundred thousand dollars on the production.

Will

And how much of it mine? Not a pound, not a farthing. Thy bludgeoned the child and steals from its father.

Dennis

I'm going to have to call security.

Will

Bring them forth. I am friends with the Queen.

Dennis

Patrick there are medications...

Will

Thou will administer to me no poisons.

(enter Polly)

Polly
Do you want me to call someone, Dennis?

Will
Speaking of fools. How now book stealer?

Polly
Book *seller*, part-time.

Dennis
Polly fetch the house manager. She has all security numbers on speed dial.

Geillis
Will, we don't want trouble here.

Will
Hush, I am speaking with Foe and Foe's Fool. I demand royalties for this travesty, past travesties since the birth of thy theatre and future royalties for *Much Ado*. Set accounts straight for all time and in two days I shall collect what's mine. From me, words come streaming through, I iambic without meaning to.

Geillis
I'm sorry, he's not well.

Dennis
So I've been told, which is the only reason I haven't taken action. (The chimes) Act Two!
And we're done.

Will
(Calling after him) There are five acts, five!

Geillis' apartment

Will
I will produce my own plays. The King Charles will underwrite the costs.

Geillis
I really doubt it Will.

Will
I used to know the King. Who runs the country?

Geillis
The Prime Minister.

Will

Who plays in his court? In his castle?

Geillis

He doesn't have a castle-

Will

-he doesn't have a castle?

Geillis

No and whoever is in power doesn't really care about the arts. Especially the Conservatives. The Liberals care little about the arts if it includes multiculturalism. The NDPs care a lot about the arts but they never get elected. And the Green Party who don't care either way, as long as we make art with low greenhouse gas emissions.

Will

Who is thy Shakespeare now? I will meet with them, and we will form a union and together we will get back my royalty payments, open a theatre, collaborate on a play.

Geillis

There is no you.

Will

But of course. But the second biggest. The moon to the sun? Who is it, what is his name?

Geillis

I don't know -

Will

I will go to his theatre.

Geillis

Playwrights don't have their own theatre-

Will

Why ever not?

Geillis

I don't know. Theatres are either part of the community, theater companies that get subsidies to rent old buildings, pump houses, or churches. And there are non-subsidized public companies.

Will

Who is the biggest?

Geillis

They don't do your shows-

Will

Thou sayest I am the most popular on the orb!

Geillis

I know but they generally do dinner theatre, comedies, Broadway musicals -

Will

I have comedies-

Geillis

Yes, but their patrons are more...

Will

What?

Geillis

Well, your comedies are considered more – highbrow. They are harder to understand now, not popular with the masses-

Will

I am the most produced playwright of all time but not popular?

Geillis

Your themes universal, your words are harder to understand-

Will

Which writer in the world makes the most money and produces?

Geillis

Andrew Lloyd Webber? But he does mostly musicals. *Phantom of the Opera*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, (Looks at Tiffin) *Cats*...

Will

What was the last one about?

Geillis

Cats? Cats.

Will

Cats?

Geillis

Yes.

Will
Not a metaphor?

Geillis
No.

Will
Allusion?

Geillis
No!

Will
Reference to some unspoken political upheaval? Peasant uprising? Religious injustice?

Geillis
No.

Will
(beat) How much at the box?

Geillis
Millions and millions.

Will
Thou doesn't know Latin, is it possible thy light is dim?

Geillis
Do you want to insult the one woman who can turn you into a toadstool?

Will
I don't understand. (Beat) Where is thy London?

Geillis
We have London Ontario, but you don't want there. Ottawa is the capital but has no real theatre to speak of; for that we have Toronto.

Will
They do my work there?

Geillis
Yes. As I've said everyone does your work but mostly at Stratford-

Will
England?

Geillis

Ontario.

Will

Do they do my work because they are cheap and can't afford the royalties?

Geillis

No – they have money. They perform for academics and the American tourists when the dollar is strong.

Will

I'll pretend I know what thy gibberish is.

Geillis

So will they.

Will

I have to cram a lifetime into two weeks. I have no home, no family, no friends, no landmarks, no touchstones. There is preserved some of what I writ but what now? There is only one thing to do, in this time as mine, there is theatre.

Words and worlds live and die here on this stage, hearts are ripped apart with savagery, mended and rendered again.

Family comes together to break bread but it is with strangers that we break theatre. And when we leave we carry a small part of the play with us. The bad we shat away but the good we take with us forever. It is digested into our bones. It becomes our skeleton on which we hang ourselves. It runs in our blood and pumps a beating heart. It can become our sinew, muscle for action. It sustains us. And it tastes like no other.

Mine is a ferocious appetite. Whet by Marlow not yet satiated. Until now. Cowed by those in parliament at tables, in castles, on thrones and in churches at pulpits. But now I do not fear them or death. I am liberated by my rebirth for this fortnight. Now I write without abandon, without impunity, without restraint. I write to stir the hearts and minds and tickle the brains and prick the conscience. This is my work now.

Geillis

You can use my laptop if you promise not to look at naughty things.

Will

I used to write in the desk by my window to birdsong. Where are all the birds? There are no birds except that big white one with the blue tail that soars. What is its' name?

Geillis

Westjet.

Will

I should like to see its' nest! Do you have a London Tower?

Geillis

The CN Tower.

Will

Do they stretch people on the rack?

Geillis

No, they revolve them 360 degrees.

Will

Lord, what feels these mortals be! I will go to England. How many months does it take?

Geillis

About, eight hours when you fly-

Will

I could fly?! - in - the - sky!

Geillis

But it costs more money than I have, and I have to work tomorrow.

Will

And tomorrow and tomorrow, creeps this petty pace -I want to go-

Geillis

No not even using Patrick's passport – don't even mention that you are Will at the airport, they have no sense of humor at security.

Will

I will go! I will be humble as Patrick, I will not be bombastic.

Geillis

You can't say bombastic at an airport they have no sense of humour.

(The phone rings, Will writes at the desk)

Jack....Oh, he rigged up this curtain like an arras by the desk. to divide the room so that he can write without interruption on the other side. He's been obsessed with a new play. It will keep him busyHe is a little sleep deprived. He says his doesn't want *to knit the raveled sleeve of time* because his time is so sort here. He does seem a little paranoid.

(she undoes a box) Yes I have the tripod. I've brought the camera. I have 10 pages from the most prestigious literature experts in the world – from Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard-

I'll get it all on tape Jack I promise! It will help your research not harm it! Fine. It can shoot from this angle.

(She hangs up)

Batteries! Will, I've gone to 7/11 be back in 10.

(She exits Will pops his head out from behind the curtain)

Will

She didn't think of my listening behind the arras. And how will I recognize the paparazzi – they carry a camera. The witch and the apothecary, in cahoots and undercover as paparazzi. They are going to interrogate me and shoot me with a camera! Oh, vile treachery!

Where will I make my escape to?

Condemned a traveling player...

What is life without passion? Where is passion in the heart? And in the heart of the city it is the theatre. Alive and beating. And the blood which pumps the arteries, mine. Mine is that blood, as rich as that with now I draw. This vow I solemnly make. (he tries to cut his hand with the letter opener but it is too blunt, he gives up on the idea) I will have my play done or if not I Will, reclaim that theatre! I will unseat the present king. My Globe, my Curtain, my Rose, My house - If my blood flow through then my body will inhabit it too. It is said. It is done. I shall return to the theatre! I shall unseat the King from his Castle!

I will leave a letter for the Witch Geillis so as not to anger her but before she shoots me.

I thank thou, good host. I have gone to reclaim what has been stolen from me. No cause for alarm and then I will reside at the theatre, steering her, the great ship on her voyage to I have no need of the Apothecary. I will live out this natural life on the stage, behind the stage. I will be a loyal subject to Her Majesty Queen Ivana. She will take us in her chariot car the Golden beetle. If the Queen will let me I will slay my foe the King, if not, I will banish him and the Fool to the forest.

Hark! I hear them on the stair.

(He grabs his coat and script and goes down the fire escape)

(Geillis enters she peers behind the curtain and then pulls it back. She looks around and then see the note. Panicked she is on her phone.)

Geillis

Jack? He's gone... But he left a note. He's planning to elicit the help of the drag queen, kidnap the artistic director and banish him to the forest.

Ivana's' apartment

(Ivan a little worse for wear, flat chested dressed in a beautiful housecoat opens her door)

Ivan

Morning.

Will

Is Ivana within?

(Ivana returns in her hair and breasts)

Will

Ah, like Adrian.

Ivana

What can I do for you?

O.S.

(Geillis) Will! Where are you?

Will

Hide me.

Ivana

(admits him) In the closet? Under the bed?

(Will goes under the bed)

Will

Geillis is coming after me she wants to shoot me.

Ivana

She has a hand gun!?

Will

A Nikon.

Ivana

Okay.

(There is a knock)

Geillis

Hi. I'm your neighbour Geillis. Have you seen my friend Will or Patrick or that guy who's been living with me these past days?

Ivana

Haven't seen him.

Geillis

He's not well. If he shows up will you give me a call? Thanks, this is my card.

Ivana

Sure.

(She leaves Will comes out from under the bed)

Will

Thank you for not revealing me.

Ivana

That's what Jews do. Hide people first and ask questions later.

Will

You're Jewish.

Ivana

On my mother's side. My father is Irish Catholic. So I drink, but I feel guilty about it.

Will

Oh.

Ivana

My father drank.

Will

Mine also.

Ivana

When I was ten, he beat me for wearing my mothers' shoes. When I was 15 I ran away from home with my cousin. When I was 19 my cousin died of cancer.

Will

When I was 10 my father got into trouble with the authorities. When I was 15 my sister died. When I was 19 my cousin's head was chopped off and stuck on a spike on London bridge.

Ivana

You win.

Will

I died once after I drank, from such a fever. So now I drink very little.

Ivana

12 step?

Will

12 step? Is that the meter of a poem or the dance of a song?

Ivana

It's a dance alright.

Will

Do you like music?

Ivana

What's a queen without music? And a disco ball.

Will

I have gone to a few balls, I like the harpsichord.

Ivana

Where you from?

Will

A place of civil war and plague but great architecture and lush forest.

Ivana

So not Saskatchewan?

Will

Is that where you hark from?

Ivana

Queens .Yes I'm aware of the irony. I'm the only performer who ever ran away from New York.

Will

You are a player?

Ivana

Only part time I came here for work with Husky, fell off the wagon and now I work from home.

Will

I fell off a cart once.

Ivana

For a sober guy you've done more damage than me. Where did you drink at home or the bar?

Will

The Mermaid was my best tavern, filled with scribes, alchemists, translators and sailors.

Ivana

Sailors mmmm.

Will

Their tales fed my *Tempest*.

Ivana

I bet they did. (beat) You have family?

Will

All gone. Wife, children, friends.

Ivana

Lou got everything I owned. Yours?

Will

Only my second best bed.

Ivana

Harsh.

Will

Nay, Susanne my daughter received the bulk of my estate.

Ivana

Why the second best bed?

Will

I died in the best one, didn't want her to get the fever, should it be fatal.

Ivana

Considerate. Are you sick? Did you survive the 80s unscathed?

Will

I was in London in the 80s.

Ivana

What was the scene like?

Will

Yes, I lost my friends. I miss Kit the most. I called him Kit he was named Christopher. But I survived, incredibly.

Ivana

We all lost people we loved.

Will

Tis true. *We ripe and we ripe and then we rot and we rot.* And then inexplicably for some we ripe again. I was reborn but into the wrong body.

Ivana

I hear you. (beat) I'm having breakfast. I'm out of milk but with a little hair of the dog ingenuity (He takes a beer and pours it into cereal) Snap, Crackle and Burp.

Will

Who art thy best friends?

Ivana

Ben Nye and Max Factor.

Will

And now me.

Ivana

Yes, and now you.

Will

Ivana, after breakfast will't thou drive me in your chariot to the theatre and then to the forest?

Ivana

I'll put on my face.

Will

Thou art a true friend. Did thou ever read my *Merchant of Venice*?

Ivana

Can't say as I did.

Will

Well don't. It's not finished yet. I have to do some re-writes.

The reception at the Theatre

(Polly works as Will flips through *Us* and *People* magazines)

Will

The Queen awaits for me across the street.

Polly

Dennis is still at lunch, he'll pass back this way when he comes back.

Will

What do you call one who dresses as a woman on stage and not and may love men?

Polly

A person.

Will

I tire of waiting. I have talent but no time. I have read all these magazine waiting for The King Dennis. They are all the same the life of thy celebrities.

All the worlds a stage and in this time much rougher.

His acts being seven stages in which famous gods do suffer.

At first the meteoric rise, burning bright he flies

Then gets arrested, has a breakdown and almost dies.

Then this beast which I find odd

“Serves time”, “enters rehab”, “finds god”.

Next in an attempt to fix his image, and mend ways

Attributes trouble to some disease in this third phase.

Fourth for the good of all mothers, fathers, sisters brothers,

Celebrity “goes public” to “help others”.

Then Celebrity Disease is declared more common than previously believed;

More common with Commoners, who are relieved.

While celebrity disease gets its' own web site,

In the sixth stage, follows tweets, blogs and talk-show insight.

The last scene of all for our Latin thanks, our gratis,

Celebrity disease gets tax-exempt status:

And he is reborn with all the plastic surgery, eternal life can bring,

Whiter teeth, pulled back eyes, better dress taste, everything!

Polly

Cute. Have you come to audition? He probably won't see you.

Will

I have come to collect my fortune. And unseat the king. *I'll make my heaven to dream upon the crown.*

Polly

I didn't think you were here to subscribe.

Will

(Bows) More of the scribe than subscriber.

(Dennis enters, tries to ignore Will)

Will

Dennis! Mine Foe, the King of the theatre. I have writ for thy theatre a play! Here are the pages! It is about your government the budget, those that leach of the coffers, the RCMP, conspiracy! There is perpetrated media and propaganda fraud! The peasants gather and riot in the streets! Peasants scurrying for cover, carts overturned, shopkeepers lose their wares. I know it's a lot of extras but we can double the parliamentarians with the street crowd.

Dennis

Patrick –

Will

I am Will! What thinkest thou?

Dennis

Submit it for consideration.

Will

I just did!

Dennis

We have the season planned...

Will

The next play is a musical about a singing teapot and chandelier.

Dennis

A real crowd pleaser.

Will

The Puritans tried to close the theatre saying it would have too strong an influence. Art thou worried? I have experience in such matters!

Dennis

I don't need any help from you on how to run a season.

Will

You only do six plays a season. You can squeeze this one in. We produced twenty *new* plays a year.

Dennis

Your pages aren't even typed!

Will

This is not the play! My words aren't on these pages; they exist only in the breath of actors! Find me players!

Dennis

I appreciate your exuberance-

Will

This is theatre! How could I not approach it without exuberance? This is meeting place of great minds, it is the market square of converse. It is the ring of passion. It is the heaven and the hell. There is no place for the tepid, the insipid, the nonchalant. Thou currish boil-brained barnacle doth shame these hallowed halls.

Dennis

Alright, I've heard just about enough!

Will

I will unseat you! I will take over this bastion of mediocrity and restore it to the glorious globe it was meant to be!

Dennis

How can it be mediocre? We just produced Macbeth!

Will

That was only the shadow of my play!

Dennis

It's called artistic license.

Will

I did not sign that license!

Dennis

You're dead!

Will

No more!

Dennis

Enough!

Will

You may choose between being banished or stay as a player –

Dennis

What?!

Will

-though I would cast you as the fool if thou be comic enough!

Dennis

Out!

Will

Surrender your throne. Will Shakespeare is taking over the kingdom.

Dennis

You are beyond preposterous. You think my job is easy? I spend 75% of my time chasing the money and twenty percent administering the money for the five percent I get to make art...at his moment I'd get in bed with big pharm, and tobacco if it'll keep the lights on...

Will

Alright! Banishment it is! Into the woods. I have the Queen downstairs she will drive us to what does she call it – Banff!

Dennis

You are crazy!

(Wills pulls out the letter opener)

Is that a letter opener?

Will

Though marshall' st me the way that I was going and such and instrument I was to use!

Dennis

Oh good grief!

Will

Thane, I unseat you here! All despots are banished to wander with a Fool.

Dennis

You're just going to drop us off and leave us there? That's the deal?

Will

Come, she can be yours and you can in each other's company maybe under the moon fall in love...

Dennis

She is my receptionist and I am gay!

Will

Well, I'm glad you're happy about it!

The Forrest

(The lights change from the blare of the office to the green of the forest sound of a car driving off)

Dennis

Alright! You have a cel phone?

Polly

(flips it out) No coverage. Mountains. Telus.

Dennis

We're probably an hour to the highway. Did you get the name of the tipsy drag queen? We'll need it for the police.

Polly

You're going to go to the police and tell them you were kidnapped by William Shakespeare and Ivana Vagina?

Dennis

We are fools in the forest!

Polly

As you like it.

On stage at the theatre

(The green of the forest is replaced by a spot on the stage. Will is on stage. Writing furiously onto the whiteboard. He is wearing a doublet and pantaloons. There is an equity cot on wheels with an oversized blanket on it. Script pages are strewn over the stage and there are piles of actor resumes and head shots. There are various props lying around

including two swords and a crown. A rolling white board has diagrams and scribbles on it the heading is “The Plan”)

(Enter Geillis)

Geillis

You dropped them off by the highway! You’re lucky they didn’t freeze!

Will

Such foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Geillis

Welcome to Canada.

Will

Why art thou here?

Geillis

Ivan called.

Will

Who is Ivan?

Geillis

Ivana tracked me down. She’d sobered up and was having second thoughts about having left two strangers an hour off highway. You didn’t notice that Ivana wasn’t sober?

Will

She had been hit by a Big Rock.

Geillis

You’re driving me crazy and you’re so self-centered. No “Hi Geillis why are you here why aren’t you at the lab?”

Will

Why are you not-?

Geillis

I had to leave there to deal with her and look for you! Funnily Jack wasn’t understanding. He fired me!

Will

I’m sorry but there is work for you here...

Geillis

Are you kidding me?

Will
I am in earnest.

Geillis
I am incensed!

Will
All's well that ends well.

Geillis
All is not well! You got me a ticket from the police, you tried to steal books at Chapters, and you abducted two people. What next?

Will
I'm going to overthrow the government.

Geillis
Will! What have you done? What are you doing here? And what are you wearing?

Will
From costumes. I think I look splendid. (Picks up his sword)

Geillis
Put that down! Have you lost your mind?

Will
From props. Now I know your true identity witch! Don't come any further. You are an undercover member of the paparazzi!

Geillis
I'm not a witch! Is that why the camera was smashed when I got home?

Will
I overheard you talking to Jack Horner you were to set up a camera and shoot me!

Geillis
Paparazzi have cameras but cameras aren't weapons! They capture images. I was going to VIDEO tape you taking about the past, so that scholars could know about your life and ask the questions that Jack has been garnering surreptitiously from literary types in universities.

Will
Nay!

Geillis

Yes, crazy man! You have to give me the keys to the theatre back before you end up in jail! Come on home. You can check out the camera and know that it's harmless.

Will

The theatre is mine! I have taken the helm. I am going to live here. I found this in the dressing room. It said "equity cot," how fair! There is some food in the icy box in the green painted room. This is my home now.

Geillis

Will, you can't live here.

Will

I had a theatre, t'was grander than this. But of all the things I have seen in this strange city this ugly theatre is where I am most of all, home.

Geillis

I understand you are homesick and want something familiar. It must be very strange from your point of view living in the future.

Will

I have a plan! These theatres are too small for the population. I need a bigger arena. I will put on my play, in the large arena.

Geillis

We have no large arenas for theatre.

Will

The buildings are there for - what is it that? The game with the sticks?

Geillis

Hockey!?

Will

That's were all the people are. We take the theatre to them.

Geillis

People go to the arena to see hockey players!

Will

We will cast them in the riot scenes, they can be the police and the protesters. It will be exciting. We can even invite two hockey teams from opposing sides to fight out the battles.

Geillis

On ice?

Will

(As if she is mad) No, it's a play.

Geillis

You're going produce the play with players?

Will

It's brilliant, as am I.

Geillis

People don't go to theatre like that.

Will

Of course they will. I will be in it! That will sell tickets! The others will come for the players in the crowd scenes. I will need a little starting capital but not much. With the size of the house we will cover costs. I have been doing the numbers. There are props and costumes here. Actors don't cost much. But touring is expensive.

Geillis

Touring!?

Will

Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto ending up with Ottawa! I will invite the Prime Minister! After all the play was writ for him. It will defeat him.

Geillis

He's still in power how will it defeat him?

Will

He will squirm when he sees it! That part is fun, I remember. "*Emperors and kings and prime ministers lie breathless at my feet*".

Geillis

He's going to leave government because he's embarrassed, that's your plan?

Will

No! Nothing is stronger than the outrage of the moral citizen. He will be run out of office. The audience will demand it! One of the big things that has changed these 400 years is that there are no Puritans and the church doesn't have the stranglehold it used to. We had to be careful of fines, not use certain words. Ten pounds for each profanity! But now there has been won a freedom.

Geillis

You want to cause a riot?

Will

The power of theatre can do that you know. The thumbers congregate after the hockey games when some tournament is lost, there is some window breaking and car turning, but it all blows like the wind.

Geillis

Thumbers?

Will

Yes the (he imitates texting on a cel phone) regular folk. The groundlings, they will storm parliament! To great avail. To glorious good. I have written the play that is the tinderbox. It will all explode like fireworks on Guy Fawkes Day.

Geillis

Didn't they kill Guy Fawkes for treason?

Will

Yes. I was there. He had thirty-six barrels of gunpowder! Plays are my weapon. My play will wreak as much havoc. And the government will have to pay artists to be silent.

Geillis

So not the shy Will anymore but more of the Kit Marlow Shakespeare?

Will

Not so brave. Outspoken. In googling I found no playwright has been hung, imprisoned, drawn quartered or beheaded in the whole history of Canada, what are the odds?

My final opus. This play will right it all. In memory of my cousin Edward Arden, who was beheaded and put on a spike! But moreover I wrote this play for Kit Marlow the Brave. He openly loved and the government assassinated him. This play is for Marlow. Wordgod. He conjured words like you conjure spells. Think you of the plays that died when he was murdered! Had he been not killed it would have been Marlow on the lips of the unwilling schoolboy not Shakespeare!

Geillis

This won't right any wrongs done to Marlow.

Will

It will honor his memory. I wasn't as brave as my hero. I was a coward. I spurned Adrian and sent him to his death. I loved the Henry the Earl of Southampton but kept it hid. I was a coward and now no more! *The Tragedy of Parliament* is for them.

Geillis

Oh good lord.

Will

I am only a gentleman not a lord. I received a coat of arms. The motto on is “not without right”.

Geillis

Where to begin-

Will

Where we always begin, with rehearsals! First here, then we will move to the arenas. Maybe you can help – You can do publicity on the goggles, more efficient than handbills-

Geillis

No.

Will

Yes.

Geillis

Look, I understand that you’ve written your play to assuage your guilt with Adrian and remember your cousin and honor your friend Marlow by avenging the PM-

Will

-Yes! That is why you have me. Geillis you brought me back for this! And I too am changed. And you have made me brave. I will have my queen by my side and damn be to them that scoff.

Geillis

Oh, Will.

Will

Do you doubt my play?

Geillis

(pause) No.

Will

Who is your Burabge?

Geillis

What?

Will

Burabge – he played, Bottom. Who is your Bottom? (Holding up resumes and headshots) ...I have the histories of the players. I need your voice box to talk to them.

Geillis

You can't start calling actors!

Will

You do not think they would want to be in a premiere of a Shakespeare play directed by Shakespeare? In front of an audience twenty times the size of this house?

Geillis

I don't – oh my –

Will

I might cast myself as a lesser Minister. I was Hamlet's ghost. That drew a crowd. One drunken groundling was so scared he wet himself! (He turns to his resume pile and text)

Geillis

(Speed dials) Jack I've found him. Forget the syringe you're going to need a blow dart and a stun gun... He's been up for days, writing and ranting... Let me tell you, after Will, a Tyrannosaurs Rex will be anti-climatic ... Just get here! The Theatre!

(Dennis enter the theatre he is wearing a "I've been to Banff t-shirt" with trees on it. Trailing behind is Polly eating a candy apple.)

Dennis

Alright Greene, hand over the keys and vacate the building before I call the police.

Will

Banff has returned *and now a wood comes to Dunsinane - Arm, arm and out-*
(He picks up a sword)

Dennis

Give me back the keys to my theatre.

Will

Keys to my castle!

Dennis

They are not yours!

Will

This is my home, my refuge, my workplace, my religion, my love. And I will fight thee to the death foe, and false King.

Dennis

I studied stage fighting in New York.

Will

And I in Old York. Let's see who's the better.

(They fight, there is a scream from the back of the theatre runs Ivana to protect Will.)

Will

Ah! It is my love! Ivana.

(The scream distracts Dennis who falls backwards as Ivana swings with her bag and Will has his sword to his chest)

Ivana

Hi Will. I thought I would find you here. I came to see if you were okay. I picked them up and took them to lunch. Then I dropped them off here. I would have left him there to be eaten by a bear if I'd have known he was doing to hurt a hair on your head.

Will

So not betrayed by my love?

Ivana

I thought you wanted to show them the mountains. I didn't know he was like this.

(They tower over him still)

Will

I wrote you a sonnet. (He fishes it out of his shirt)

Ivana

Nobody's ever done that before.

Will

O'er heart to mind to page to voice to ear,
Midnight ink that spurts forth from quill Speare pen.
Carry these words from ear canal mine dear,
To thy canal where wet rivers run then.

Eyes that do light like royal diamonds seen;
Whose rosy cheeks make mine resolve so hard.
A slave on bended knee worship O Queen;
Suckle thy fold, poetry from the bard.

Climb slowly up the mount, the summit take.
Let me love thee for loves sake ever more,
Stars move and terra firma to Shake,
For thee to hear the mighty Cannon roar!

To this endeavor I am beguiled!
Queen's sweet vessel for thy love child.

Ivana

You cannot have a child with me. I have no fold.

Will

More perfect then. Art thou a queen? In my day satin and silk are officially reserved for the gentry.

Ivana

I just do drag on the side, I'm an accountant.

Will

Whom man dressed as a woman do you love, man or woman?

Ivana

Man.

Will

And woman dressed as a man whom do you love?

Geillis

Man.

Will

This man?

Geillis

No, this man.

Will

Myself?

Geillis

No, Patrick. I love Patrick.

Will

That is why you looked after me to keep him safe.

Geillis

But I've grown fond of you too Pain in the Pantaloon.

Ivana

I just dress as the opposite sex.

Will

As do those in a fifth of all my plays.

Ivana

I am cross-dressed.

Will

I am star crossed.

Ivana

Ah Will.

(She kisses him. Dennis uses the diversion to get up)

Dennis

I'm going to call the police. (He exits)

Will

My first love wore a skirt of the same colour, cornflowers and summer sky.

Ivana

Were you lovers?

Will

Boys, giddy, we started to kiss but we were interrupted under the bed.

Ivana

I see a bed.

Will

Then my true love, my queen, will thou kiss me under there?

(Will holds his hand and they go under the bed and pull down the blanket so that Geillis can't see)

Geillis

Um, I'll just be in the lobby or get a coffee...

(Polly enters)

Polly

Where is he?

Geillis

Well...

Polly

This was dropped off for you. Someone called Jack.

(Geillis looks into the envelope)

Geillis

The serum but every second it's not temperature controlled it loses viability. I don't know if it's going to work, and I don't know if it's ethical to use it.

Polly

I don't know if you should!

Geillis

The police have been called. He abducted you and Dennis. He's planning to overthrow the Canadian government! He wants to bring down the Prime Minister!

Polly

With a sword?

Geillis

No not with a sword. He's Shakespeare - with a play!

Polly

You still think he's Shakespeare?

Geillis

He has a plan and he can't be stopped. Dressed in yellow tights like some demented Elizabethan super villain!

Polly

You really think he's really Shakespeare?

Geillis

I know he's Shakespeare and it's pronounced Shack Speare.

Polly

How are you sure?

Geillis

Yes! He knows shit nobody else would know.

Polly

Let's pretend your hypothesis is correct. Do you want to kill Shakespeare?

Geillis

(pause) Not when you put it like that...

Polly

You see my point.

Geillis

And Patrick? If he doesn't go away, Patrick will be dead for all intents and purposes.

Polly

If we can only have one, who is more valuable?

Geillis

(Beat) I have to bring Patrick back. I promised.

Polly

Because you love him?

Geillis

Well, yes but...

Polly

And Shack Speare is high maintenance?

Geillis

That doesn't begin to describe it.

Polly

This can't be about what's best for you. It would be a loss to the world.

Geillis

Think it through, he topples the government or ends up in jail... then what happens? In order for them to believe him, they have to know everything, the painting, the hair and Jack. Jack is a genius he is going to make a dinosaur. Will has already made his mark. I have to let Patrick have a chance to make his.

Polly

Where is he? Somewhere in the building you think?

(Geillis points to the bed.)

Polly

What's he doing under there!?

Geillis

He's with Ivana...

Polly

What's the morality in that!? He's in Patrick's body!

Geillis

I know! But there wasn't time to write a dear Dan Savage letter. "I'm in love with a straight man whose body has been taken over by another man who wants to do a drag queen!"

Polly

Why didn't you stop him!?

Geillis

How could I? He's not going to overthrow the government, nor tour his show, produce his play, have his turn on the stage... okay so he is having that but...

Polly

But still!

Geillis

I couldn't keep him from going under the bed. All his love was ill fated or unrequited! His high school sweetheart was bullied. Next he fell for Kit Marlow, but Marlow loved younger boys. Then he fell in love with Henry the Earl of Southampton. He wrote beautiful sonnets to him but to no avail because of age and social status.

All his love was unrequited. So much yearning, you can hear it in his plays and poems. I've been reading them – Look at it from his point of view. What happened to the boy and men that he loved? Adrian was bullied and hung from a tree either by them or his own hand. Kit Marlow was assassinated by the government, stabbed through the eye, Henry the Earl was put in the tower and threatened with being beheaded! Bullied! Hung, stabbed and imprisoned!

(Will and Ivana happily emerge from under the bed)

(Geillis brings out the syringe)

Will

Pr'ythee, see there! Behold. Look The ghost apothecary comes in the shadow to foreshadow my death.

Ivana

I will protect you!

Will

No sweet queen, the apothecary is here. It's scientific. I have to go.

Ivana

Where are you going?

Will
Is it time?

(Geillis nods)

No play, no show performed?

Geillis
No.

Will
Sound and Fury.

Geillis
No.

Will
Signifying nothing.

Geillis
It was everything.

Will
But I have loved and that is all there is.

(Geillis nods)

You will remember me?

Geillis
I will.

Will
(twinkles) No, I Will.

Geillis
Yes, you Will.

Will
How is it to be?

Geillis
A painless injection. I'm not protecting government, but it's time. I don't want to. But I must.

Will
It's alright. I know.

Geillis
Will, I'm so sorry.

Will
Geillis?

Geillis
Yes.

Will
You said that tragedies are no more because modern science cures fatal flaws.
Yet I am already dead in the borrowed body of your love.

Geillis
Alive and dead all at the same time.

Will
Isn't that my flaw?

Geillis
Yes.

Will
So, therefore the ending is preordained, as inevitable as sunset. Do not be sad. Weep not.
A player knows when it is his curtain.

Geillis
It's not just curtain it's a permanent exit.

Will
All exits are entrances to somewhere else. *We are such stuff as dreams are made on,
and our little life is rounded out with sleep.*

Geillis
You are annoying and infuriating and...

Will
And?

Geillis
So passionate and exuberant and -

Will

Bombastic?

Geillis

It has been my greatest pleasure to know you.

Will

And you sweet witch Geillis. T'was quite a spell.

Geillis

You are the greatest dramatist of all times.

Will

Nay, groundlings come together in the dark looking to the light, to laugh and weep and what do they see? They think they see Kings and Queens and rogues and knaves and peasants and babes- but what they really see is them-self. And when the house lights come up, the strangers are less strange to them now. They say I am the great architect of plays but I not did not erect magnificently 'spired cathedrals. Nay, I was but a simple market craftsman, I made mirrors.

(Will takes the needle and shoots himself in the eye.)

Geillis

Oh my god oh my god what have we done?

(Ivana takes him in her arms and kisses him)

Will

Oh True apothecary. Thy drugs are quick thus with a kiss I die.

Geillis

Oh no!

Will

(looks at his script) Ars Longa, Vita Brevis.

(He dies, Dennis enters)

Dennis

The police are on their way.

Geillis

I'm so sorry for the trouble you've been put through.

Dennis

Well be that as it may, this has gone too far. Breaking into my office...

Geillis

He had a breakdown. I called his doctor. He's given him his meds, (she points to the needle) It won't happen again. It's just a psychotic episode, delusions...

Patrick

What am I doing here?

Geillis

I'll take care of him. I promise you won't be bothered by him ever again.

Patrick

Dennis? Patrick Green! Come and see me as Henry Higgins!

Dennis

Alright, now that you've got him medical assistance I'll not press charges. Keep him safe. (exiting)

Polly

(Wheels the bed off) Nobody would ever believe me if I told them I've seen Shakespeare on the stage.

Ivana

I think I understand what happened but-

Geillis

He gave himself the shot before I could get a hair sample! His DNA is lost forever now.

Ivana

Remember Monica Lewinski's blue dress?

Geillis

Yes.

(Ivana takes off her dress and hands it to Geillis)

Ivana

I miss him already, bring him back.

(She grabs a cape from the stage dramatically drapes herself with it and makes her exit)

Geillis

I have to get this to the lab! (She faces Patrick) It's so good to have you safely back. I was so worried.

Patrick

I'm Fine. I don't remember anything, want to fill me in?

Geillis

Well, there's good news and bad news. The good news is you didn't get arrested...

Patrick

And the bad news?

Geillis

You had sex with a drag queen, and you'll never get hired at this theatre.

Patrick

I'll never get hired at this theatre!?

Geillis

I had a feeling that one would bother you more. It's a bit more complicated you kinda abducted him and his assistant and abandoned them in Banff then you B and E'd the theatre.

Patrick

Oh. Why did I do that?

Geillis

It was all part of your plan to overthrow the government.

Patrick

Wow. Did you get any of this on tape?

Geillis

You broke the camera when you thought it was a weapon used by a repressive thug Catholic Italian group named the Paparazzi.

Patrick

I'll replace it. You really looked after me.

Geillis

I tried.

Patrick

What else should I apologize for?

Geillis

Nothing. I wouldn't change it for the world.

Patrick

Where did I stay?

Geillis

My place.

(Patrick raises his eyebrows)

On the sofa bed. Some of your clothes are at my house. Would you like to come back and pick them up?

(Polly enters with a garbage can and begins to drop the pages of his script into it.)

Patrick

Is that the only reason, you'd invite me back?

Geillis

No.

(They kiss)

(Hand in hand they begin to leave the theatre through the house)

(Polly exits carrying the swords and rolling out the whiteboard)

(Geillis suddenly gasps then runs onto the stage, takes the liner out of the garbage can and carries it off.)

CURTAIN