

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

When asked the number-one challenge with Shakespeare's works, modern-day audiences will almost always respond: "the language." It's true that the language does sound different to our ears and that Shakespeare uses phrases we no longer use in our everyday speech. But think of this: There are phrases that we use today that would baffle Shakespeare, should he magically time-travel to this day and age. That's because language (especially English) is constantly transforming.

Can you match these original quotes from *The Taming of the Shrew* to their modern-day translations?

No shame but mine. I must, forsooth, be forced
To give my hand, opposed against my heart
Unto a mad-brain rudesby, full of spleen
Who wooed in haste and means to wed at leisure
- Act 3, Sc. 2

There's small choice in rotten apples.
-Act 1, Sc. 1

If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,
though she bid me stay by her a week:
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day
When I shall ask the banns and when be married.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

Moved! in good time: let him that moved you hither
Remove you hence: I knew you at the first
You were a moveable.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

Be thou armed for some unhappy words.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

Of all the men alive
I never yet beheld that special face
Which I could fancy more than any other.
-Act 2, Sc. 1

What, did he marry me to famish me?
Beggars, that come unto my father's door,
Upon entreaty have a present alms;
If not, elsewhere they meet with charity
-Act 3, Sc. 3

Your betters have endured me to say my mind,
And if you cannot, best you stop your ears.
-Act 4, Sc. 3

See Brush Up Your Shakespeare on page 39.

**People who are better than you can handle
me saying what I really feel. If you can't
deal with it, don't listen.**

**Of all the men I've met, I've never found
the one I really loved.**

**If she tells me to get lost, I'll say
"thank you" and stay right here. If she
says she won't marry me, I'll ask her
when I should book the church for the
wedding.**

**Did he marry me to starve me?
Everywhere else beggars find food
and help, but not me.**

Get ready for some bad news.

**You want to marry me? Too bad! Whoever
brought you here should take you away
now! When I first saw you I knew you were
crazy.**

**I feel so stupid. I have to marry some idiotic,
rude guy who has fun dating me but can't bring
himself to actually marry me.**

**When you're stuck with a bunch of bad
choices, it's like having a bunch of rotten
fruit—nothing's any good.**

